

ACHIEVEMENT MOTIVATION : NEED OF THE HOUR

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This paper is an attempt at empirical testing of McClelland's theory of motivation. The empirical findings are in tandom with the theory.

I. INTRODUCTION

Many authors have defined the concept of motivation. Motivation has been defined as the will to achieve an internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need; the psychological process that gives behaviour purpose and direction and a predisposition to behave in a purposive manner to achieve specific, unmet needs. Motivation, in psychology, is the intention of achieving a goal, leading to goal-directed behaviour.

Some human activity seems to be best explained by postulating an inner directing drive. While a drive is often considered to be an innate biological mechanism that determines the organism's activity, a motive is defined as an innate mechanism modified by learning.

Motives are sometimes classed as deficiency motives, such as the need to remove the physiological deficiency of hunger or thirst, or abundance motives, i.e., motives to attain greater satisfaction and stimulation.

The American psychologist Abraham Maslow has classified motives into five developmental levels, with the satisfaction of physiological needs most important and esteem and self-actualization needs least important. According to Maslow, the most basic needs must be satisfied before successively higher needs can emerge. Cognitive psychologists such as Albert Bandura have suggested that individual mental processes, such as beliefs, play an important role in motivation, through the expectation of certain reinforcements for certain behaviours.

II. McCLELLAND'S THEORY OF NEEDS

McClelland's theory of needs focuses on three needs viz., achievement, power and affiliation. They are defined as follows:

Need for achievement

The drive to excel, to achieve in relation to a set of standards, to strive to succeed. Some people have a compelling drive to succeed. They have

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a desire to do something better or more efficiently than it has been done before. This drive is the achievement need. From research into the achievement need, McClelland found that high achievers differentiate themselves from others by doing things better.

Need for affiliation

The desire for friendly and close interpersonal relationships. The third need isolated by McClelland is affiliation. This need has received the least attention from researchers. Affiliation can be likened to Dale Carnegie's goals—the desire to be liked and accepted by others. Individuals with a high affiliation motive strive for friendship, prefer cooperative situations rather than competitive ones, and desire relationships involving a high degree of mutual understanding.

Need for power

The need to make others behave in a way they would not have behaved otherwise. The need for power is the desire to have impact, to be influential, and to control others. Individuals with high power enjoy being in charge, strive for influence over others, prefer to be placed into competitive and status-oriented situations, and tend to be more concerned with prestige and gaining influence over others than with effective performance.

III. OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

In order to understand the applicability of McClelland's theory of motivation in

Pondicherry region, this study has been undertaken with the following objectives.

(a) To understand what motivates the surveyed respondents; (b) To know what the respondents expect from their jobs; and (c) To find out the priority given to different needs viz., Achievement need, Affiliation need and Power need by the surveyed respondents.

Data for the survey was collected from 600 respondents belonging to different groups, viz., entrepreneurs, professionals, employees working both in private and government organizations located in and around Pondicherry region. Using convenient and judgement sampling techniques, 150 respondents were chosen from the above mentioned groups.

Close-ended questionnaire was used to collect the data from the respondents during July and September 2001 in their workplace and in their offices. Simple statistical tools such as percentage and averages were used to analyze the data.

IV. FINDINGS

The major findings are summarised in Table 1.

Achievement Need

Majority of the surveyed entrepreneurs have given *top rank* to achievement need.

However, only one-third of the surveyed professionals, employees working both in government and private concerns have given *top rank* to achievement need satisfaction.

Affiliation Need

Majority of the surveyed entrepreneurs have given affiliation need only *third rank*.

Majority of the surveyed respondents working both in government departments and in private concerns and also the surveyed professionals have given either *first or second rank* to affiliation need.

Power Need

Majority of the surveyed respondents have given *second rank* to power need.

Table 1 : Survey Findings

<i>Entrepreneurs</i>			
Type of Need			
Rank	Achievement	Affiliation	Power
First	57	18	25
Second	11	27	63
Third	32	55	12
Total	100	100	100

<i>Professionals</i>			
Type of Need			
Rank	Achievement	Affiliation	Power
First	33	30	27
Second	27	30	53
Third	40	40	20
Total	100	100	100

Table 1 Contd.

Employees of Private Concerns

Type of Need			
Rank	Achievement	Affiliation	Power
First	35	33	31
Second	23	32	46
Third	42	35	23
Total	100	100	100

<i>Government Servants</i>			
Type of Need			
Rank	Achievement	Affiliation	Power
First	36	40	24
Second	16	40	42
Third	48	20	34
Total	100	100	100

Note : All the figures above are given in percentages.

V. SUMMING UP

It is interesting to note that the findings of this study are in conformity with the findings of the study carried out by McClelland. According to McClelland, it is only the *entrepreneurs who possess the urge for achievement need*. A similar picture emerges even in the present study.

Further, from the study, it can be concluded that the majority of the surveyed respondents belonging to other groups have not probably been

given the environment for aspiring the fulfillment of achievement need.

Hence, it is suggested that efforts should be made by the employers to motivate their employees to strive for achievement and need satisfaction. This then clearly shows that the need of the hour is achievement motivation.

References

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