CHAPTER 5
THE MOTIVE PERSPECTIVE

CHAPTER OUTLINE

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  Motives
  Press

Needs, Motives, and Personality
  Motive States and Motive Dispositions
  Measuring Motives: The Thematic Apperception Test or Picture Story Exercise

Studies of Specific Dispositional Motives
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  Need for Power
  Need for Affiliation
  Need for Intimacy
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Motive Theories: Problems and Prospects

Summary

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The motive approach to personality assumes that behavior reflects a set of underlying needs. As a need becomes more intense, it is more likely to influence behavior. Behavior is also affected by press: external stimuli that elicit motivational tendencies. Needs (and press) vary in strength from moment to moment, but people also differ in patterns of chronic need strength. According to this viewpoint, this difference is the source of individual differences in personality.

Murray catalogued human motives, several of which later received systematic study by others. One (studied by McClelland, Atkinson, and others) was the need for achievement: the motive to overcome obstacles and to attain goals. People with high levels of the achievement motive behave differently from those with lower levels in several ways: the kinds of tasks they prefer, the level of task difficulty they prefer, their persistence, and their performance levels. Early research on achievement tended to disregard how approach and avoidance motives might separately influence behavior. More recent work has begun to examine those distinct influences.

The need for power—the motive to be strong compared to other people—has also been studied extensively. People who score high in this need tend to seek out positions of influence, to surround themselves with the trappings of power, and to become energized when the groups they are guiding have difficulties. People with high levels of the power motive tend to choose as friends people who aren’t influential or popular, thereby protecting themselves from undesired competition. The power motive can lead to unpleasant forms of social influence unless it’s tempered by a sense of responsibility.
The need for affiliation is the desire to spend time with other people; to develop and maintain relationships. People who score high in this need are responsive to social influence, spend a large proportion of their time communicating with other people, and when alone often think about being with others. A related motive that isn’t represented in Murray’s list but has received attention in recent years is the need for intimacy. People high in this need want warm, close, and communicative relationships with other persons. People with strong intimacy needs tend to spend more time in one-to-one interaction and less in groups. They tend to engage in interactions that involve lots of self-disclosure and are concerned about their friends’ well-being.

Research has also investigated patterns of motives, such as inhibited power motivation. This pattern is defined by having more of a need for power than a need for affiliation and by restraining the power need. People with this pattern do well in managerial careers, but the pattern has also been linked to political stances that preceded wars.

Theorists of this view use other concepts besides motives in talking about behavior. Incentive value, the extent to which a given action will satisfy a given need for a person, helps to explain why people with the same motive express it in different ways. Indeed, the concept of incentive provides an opening into a broader issue. Specifically, assessment of motives by the picture story exercise (PSE) technique does not relate well to assessment by self-report. The former have come to be called implicit motives; the latter self-attributed or explicit motives. The former are thought to function mostly unconsciously; the latter consciously. One active area of interest is how these two aspects of motives function and relate to one another.

Murray emphasized the study of individual lives in depth over extended periods of time. He coined the term personology to refer to the study of the whole person, and personology was his goal. This emphasis has not been strong in the work of most others, but it has reemerged more recently in the work of McAdams and his colleagues.

The contribution to assessment that is most identified with the motive approach is the PSE. It is based on the idea that people’s motives are reflected in the imagery they “apperceive,” that is, read into ambiguous stimuli—a set of pictures depicting people in ambiguous situations. There are also self-report measures of motives, but they appear to measure something different from what the PSE measures.

The motivational approach to personality has largely ignored the issue of analyzing problems in behavior, although at least some evidence links the need for power to the misuse of alcohol. It’s possible to infer from this evidence, however, that many problems in behavior may stem from inappropriate channeling of motives. It’s also reasonable that people can be helped by increasing their awareness of the motive that underlies the problem, so the motive can be channeled in alternative ways. Research on increasing the need for achievement suggests that it may be possible to alter people’s dispositional levels of the motives that make up personality.
KEY TERMS

Apperception: The projecting of a motive onto an ambiguous external stimulus via imagery.

Diagnosticity: The extent to which a task provides information about something.

Implicit motive: A motive assessed indirectly because it is relatively inaccessible to consciousness.

Incentive: The degree to which an action can satisfy a particular need for a person.

Inhibited power motivation: The condition of having more need for power than for affiliation, but restraining its use.

Motive: Cognitive–affective clusters organized around readiness for a particular kind of experience.

Motive disposition: Dispositional tendency toward high or low level of some motive.

Need: An unsatisfactory internal condition that motivates behavior.

Need for achievement: The need to overcome obstacles and attain goals.

Need for affiliation: The need to form and maintain relationships and to be with people.

Need for intimacy: The need for close communication and sharing with someone else.

Need for power: The need to have influence over other people.

Personology: Study of the entire person.

Picture story exercise (PSE): Any one of a family of tests that uses stories written about pictures to assess motive strength through narrative fantasy.

Press: An external stimulus that increases the level of a motive.

Self-attributed motive: A motive that is consciously reported.

Thematic Apperception Test (TAT): A particular method of assessing the strength of a motive through narrative fantasy.
Multiple Choice

1. According to the motive approach to personality, human behavior is best understood as:
   a. a manifestation of unconscious wishes.
   b. a series of reinforced responses.
   c. a reflection of the strength of a person’s needs.
   d. the myriad roles a person plays.

2. Primary needs:
   a. include the needs for power and intimacy.
   b. are limited to nutritional and sexual needs.
   c. are based in our biological nature.
   d. all of the above

3. The need for sex is an example of a(n):
   a. primary need.
   b. advanced need.
   c. latent need.
   d. secondary need.

4. According to Murray, the need for achievement and the need for power are best characterized as:
   a. specific.
   b. latent.
   c. primary.
   d. secondary.

5. Needs influence which two aspects of behavior?
   a. direction and intensity
   b. direction and duration
   c. force and specificity
   d. force and duration

6. The distinction between needs and motives involves:
   a. that motives are more closely related to behavior.
   b. whether the construct is quantifiable.
   c. whether the desired object is tangible or intangible.
   d. that motives are unrelated to behavior.
7. An external stimulus condition that elicits a desire to obtain or avoid something is a:
   a. construct.
   b. press.
   c. bind.
   d. prompt.

8. According to Murray, hunger would be a _________, whereas the smell of a fresh pizza
   would be a _________.
   a. motive, need
   b. need, motive
   c. press, need
   d. motive, press

9. Which of the following are true about motives?
   a. They influence behavior.
   b. They vary across time and situation.
   c. They vary dispositionally.
   d. all of the above

10. Murray believed that:
    a. not all people have the same basic needs.
    b. within cultures people have the same basic needs, but not across cultures.
    c. all people have the same basic needs, but different levels of them.
    d. none of the above

11. Murray used the term _________ for the process of projecting one’s fantasy imagery
    onto some objective stimulus.
    a. apperception
    b. introjection
    c. proprioception
    d. reflection

12. **Apperception** refers to the:
    a. study of nonverbal behavior.
    b. process of projecting imagery onto an outside stimulus.
    c. tendency to see different events as satisfying the same needs.
    d. none of the above
13. If you were taking the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), you would be:
   a. writing about your early experiences with your mother.
   b. rating the extent to which a variety of words apply to you.
   c. writing stories about pictures you are shown.
   d. completing word-association tasks.

14. Early research using the TAT to assess achievement motivation revealed what about subjects exposed to success or failure feedback?
   a. If people succeed at a task they show a decrease in achievement imagery, but if they fail they show an increase in achievement imagery.
   b. If people fail at a task they show a decrease in achievement imagery, but if they succeed they show an increase in achievement imagery.
   c. Whether people fail or succeed at a task, they show a decrease in achievement motivation.
   d. Whether people fail or succeed at a task, they show an increase in achievement motivation.

15. In laboratory settings, people lower in need for achievement prefer tasks that are:
   a. very easy.
   b. very hard.
   c. somewhere in the middle.
   d. either very easy or very hard.

16. People higher in need for achievement prefer tasks that are:
   a. very easy.
   b. very hard.
   c. somewhere in the middle.
   d. either very easy or very hard.

17. People high in need for achievement prefer tasks of intermediate difficulty because:
   a. such tasks make them look good to others.
   b. such tasks provide the greatest information about the person's ability.
   c. they fear failing at a task that is too easy.
   d. they know they will be unable to perform a difficult task.

18. A task that provides an accurate assessment of ability is considered:
   a. low in difficulty.
   b. distinguishable.
   c. high in diagnosticity.
   d. high in apperception.
19. Need for achievement plays a role in:
   a. persistence in the face of failure.
   b. preference for diagnostic test items.
   c. economic rise and decline of cultures.
   d. all of the above

20. Among family-oriented women, high achievement needs are associated with:
   a. early career success.
   b. energy invested in activities leading to marriage and family.
   c. roughly equal energy invested into career and family activities.
   d. none of the above

21. Women who scored high in need for achievement in college were:
   a. more likely to become businesswomen.
   b. more likely to become teachers.
   c. more likely to challenge the female stereotype.
   d. less likely to be restricted by their social environment.

22. The motive to have impact on other people is known as:
   a. dominance motive.
   b. status motive.
   c. aggression motive.
   d. need for power.

23. The motive reflected in PSE responses involving strong, vigorous action or concern about reputation or position is the need for:
   a. aggression.
   b. control.
   c. power.
   d. recognition.

24. People high in the need for power tend to:
   a. form friendships with people who are equivalent in need for power.
   b. be more sexually active.
   c. choose spouses with similar career paths.
   d. all of the above
25. High need for power is associated with a:
   a. lesser tendency to make concessions in negotiation, leading to better outcomes.
   b. lesser tendency to make concessions in negotiation, leading to worse outcomes.
   c. greater tendency to make concessions in negotiation, leading to better outcomes.
   d. greater tendency to make concessions in negotiation, leading to worse outcomes.

26. Women high in the need for power tend to have:
   a. more job-related satisfactions, and fewer job-related dissatisfactions.
   b. fewer job-related satisfactions, and more job-related dissatisfactions.
   c. fewer job-related satisfactions and fewer job-related dissatisfactions.
   d. more job-related satisfactions and more job-related dissatisfactions.

27. Among men who scored low in responsibility, need for power was:
   a. related to less drinking and fighting.
   b. related to less sexual possessiveness.
   c. related to more sexual possessiveness.
   d. unrelated to drinking, fighting or sexual possessiveness.

28. In a sample of low-responsible men, need for power was related to:
   a. drinking.
   b. passivity.
   c. physical health.
   d. all of the above.

29. People high in need for affiliation tend to feel ________ when they think others are
    judging their interpersonal skills.
   a. validated
   b. angry
   c. nervous
   d. reassured

30. After participating in five-week discussion groups, people high in the need for affiliation
    were:
   a. more likely to remain quiet in the group.
   b. less likely to attend group sessions.
   c. more likely to be nominated as group leaders by their peers.
   d. none of the above.
31. People who score low in the affiliation motive:
   a. make more telephone calls.
   b. are less likely to be letter writing when interrupted randomly by a paging device.
   c. are nervous when they believe others are judging their attractiveness.
   d. are more likely to want to be interacting with others when they are alone.

32. Well-adjusted husbands and wives were found to have levels of need for affiliation that:
   a. significantly correlated with each other.
   b. were unrelated to each other.
   c. were inversely related to each other.
   d. fluctuated significantly over time.

33. McAdams and Constantian report a correlation between need for affiliation and need for intimacy of:
   a. almost 0.0
   b. about 0.3
   c. about 0.6
   d. almost 1.0

34. People high in the need for intimacy:
   a. have more one-on-one exchanges with others.
   b. have more large-group interactions.
   c. report lower levels of self-disclosure.
   d. try to dominate social interactions.

35. In terms of self-disclosure, people high in the need for intimacy report disclosing:
   a. less and listening less to others’ disclosures.
   b. more and listening less to other’s disclosures.
   c. less and listening more to others’ disclosures.
   d. more and listening more to others’ disclosures.

36. People high in both the need for _________ and _________ are often poorly adjusted.
   a. power, intimacy
   b. achievement, intimacy
   c. power, achievement
   d. intimacy, affiliation
37. In a 16-year study, successful managers were found to be:
   a. low in need for power.
   b. high in inhibited power motivation.
   c. high in need for affiliation.
   d. none of the above

38. The pattern of high power motivation and low intimacy motivation is conducive to:
   a. a happy marriage.
   b. an unhappy marriage.
   c. starting wars.
   d. none of the above

39. Incentive value:
   a. is the degree to which a given action is able to satisfy a need.
   b. has little to do with how a motive is expressed.
   c. is poor at predicting choices within a domain of action.
   d. none of the above

40. Need strength relates to ______ whereas incentive value relates to _________.
   a. choices of relevant actions, frequency of relevant actions
   b. frequency of relevant actions, choices of relevant actions
   c. biological processes, psychological processes
   d. psychological processes, biological processes

41. McClelland has suggested that self-reports measure ________. In contrast he has suggested that the TAT measures _________.
   a. self-attributed motive, implicit motive
   b. cultural norms, motives
   c. implicit motive, self-attributed
   d. motives, needs

42. According to McClelland:
   a. needs influence behavior at a conscious level.
   b. incentive values exert their influence at a nonconscious level.
   c. measures of incentive values are good at predicting choices within a domain of action.
   d. measures of motive strength are good at predicting choices within a domain of action.
43. McClelland has argued that the TAT and self-report measures tap two different kinds of motives:
   a. implicit and self-attributed.
   b. primary and secondary.
   c. hunger and sexual.
   d. appetitive and nonappetitive.

44. McClelland believed that _________ are better at predicting broad behavior patterns over time whereas _________ are better at predicting behavior in specific situations.
   a. self-attributed motives, implicit motives
   b. implicit motives, self-attributed motives
   c. latent motives, active motives
   d. active motives, latent motives

45. McClelland believed that:
   a. implicit and self-attributed motives are both important and should be viewed together.
   b. implicit and self-attributed motives are both important and should be viewed separately.
   c. implicit motives are important whereas self-attributed motives are not.
   d. self-attributed motives are important whereas implicit motives are not.

46. People with high fear of failure feel _________ when they imagine success.
   a. happy
   b. confident
   c. upset
   d. none of the above

47. The idea of separate approach and avoidance motives applies to:
   a. all motives.
   b. achievement and power, but not affiliation.
   c. achievement and power, but not intimacy.
   d. achievement and power, but not status.

48. In terms of studying motives, Murray:
   a. preferred a nomothetic approach.
   b. preferred an idiographic approach.
   c. was unconcerned with individual subjects’ personal lives.
   d. conducted research almost single-handedly.
49. According to McAdams, a person’s identity lies in:

a. keeping a coherent self-narrative across time.
b. focusing on positive qualities and only examining negative qualities when necessary.
c. ignoring negative qualities completely.
d. being surrounded by others who support the sense of identity.

50. The technique most distinctly associated with assessment of needs is:

a. self-report.
b. interview.
c. the PSE/TAT.
d. none of the above

51. The need for power appears to be involved in the development of:

a. diabetes.
b. alcoholism.
c. cancer.
d. depression.

52. Which of the following statements concerning McClelland’s program for achievement motivation is incorrect?

a. The program’s basic purpose is to have people think constantly in need for achievement terms.
b. Achievement-related cognition is enough to ensure that need for achievement will be manifest in behavior.
c. The client must see achievement orientation as being congruent with her/his self-image.
d. The program links achievement thoughts to concrete action patterns.

53. Motivational theorists place more emphasis on _________ than trait theorists do.

a. intrapersonal functioning
b. individual differences
c. human uniqueness
d. none of the above

54. Which of the following is NOT a valid criticism of the motive approach?

a. Decisions about what qualities to study have been arbitrary.
b. The approach fails to specify types of intrapersonal functioning.
c. Murray’s list of motives was not complete.
d. Most research within this approach has failed to look at multiple motives simultaneously.
True and False

(F/84) 1. A need is an internal state that may or may not be satisfying.

(T/84) 2. Henry Murray began the motive approach to studying personality.

(F/84) 3. According to Murray, primary needs are psychological in nature while secondary needs are biological.

(T/84) 4. Primary needs are based in biological nature.

(F/84) 5. The strength of a need has no influence over the intensity of the behavior to which it relates.

(T/85) 6. Needs direct behavior by specifying whether to move toward an object or goal or away from it.

(F/85) 7. Needs direct people in a nonspecific way; they do not direct people toward particular things.

(F/86) 8. Motives are free of emotional or affective overtones.

(F/86) 9. Needs are physiological conditions experienced directly.

(T/86) 10. Motives are experienced physically and directly.

(F/86) 11. A press is an internal state that creates a desire to obtain or avoid something.

(T/86) 12. It is harder to distinguish motives from presses for psychological needs than for physical needs.

(T/86) 13. It is common for psychologists to use the terms needs and motives interchangeably.

(T/87) 14. At a dispositional level, people differ in terms of how much of any given need they have.

(T/88) 15. The term apperception refers to the process of projecting imagery.

(F/88) 16. In the earliest motive research, Morgan and Murray began by asking people to report on their motives.

(T/88) 17. The TAT consists of creating a story about each of a set of pictures.

(T/88) 18. Subjects induced to fail at a task subsequently show greater achievement imagery in responses to TAT pictures.

(T/88) 19. Participants deprived of food included more food-related imagery in a subsequent TAT.
20. TAT responses that mention performing well and positive feelings about success are thought to reflect need for esteem.

21. People low in need for achievement prefer tasks that are either very easy or very hard.

22. People high in need for achievement, given a choice, prefer tasks that are moderate in difficulty (as opposed to very easy or very hard).

23. In laboratory settings, people low in need for achievement prefer tasks that are moderately difficult.

24. The level of economic growth that a country shows can be predicted from the level of achievement imagery that is present in its characteristic children’s stories.

25. Research by Jenkins indicated that women high in need for achievement were more likely to go into business than become teachers.

26. People high in the need for power tend to not particularly have images of actions that evoke strong emotional responses in others.

27. People high in the need for power tend to be somewhat narcissistic.

28. People high in the need for power are more sexually active than others.

29. Men high in the need for power say that their ideal wife is a strong, independent woman.

30. Recent research suggests that the need for power does not matter among women.

31. People high in the need for power do not experience an increase in cortisol (a stress hormone) after a failure.

32. If they think others are judging their social skills, people high in the need for affiliation become nervous.

33. People who are high in need for affiliation are more likely to be nominated as group leaders.

34. Someone with low affiliation needs is better off with someone high in affiliation need.

35. The need for intimacy differs from the need for affiliation in its emphasis on closeness and open sharing with others.

36. McAdams suggested that the need for affiliation has more of a “doing” orientation and the need for intimacy has more of “being” orientation.

37. The need for intimacy is generally associated with negative outcomes.

38. People high in both need for intimacy and need for power are poorly adjusted.
39. An inhibited power motivation reflects a low need for affiliation combined with a high need for power.

40. A combination of a low need for affiliation and a high need for power relates to managerial success.

41. From the motivational point of view, personality is a system of multiple needs.

42. Incentive values have little to do with how a motive is expressed in behavior.

43. McClelland used the term self-attributed motive to refer to motives measured by the TAT.

44. According to McClelland, self-reports assess the implicit motive.

45. McClelland argued that implicit motives are more basic than self-attributed motives.

46. According to McClelland, implicit and self-attributed motives should be viewed separately.

47. Implicit and self-attributed motives are always congruent with one another.

48. Early research on achievement focused on approach rather than avoidance motives.

49. People with high fear of failure become upset when they imagine success.

50. Commitment, whether based in approach or avoidance motivation, predicts more relationship satisfaction several months later.

51. To Murray, the nomothetic approach yields only a superficial understanding of people.

52. The PSE exhibits high internal consistency and test-retest reliability.

53. The PSE has been criticized for being difficult to administer and score.

54. The TAT measures semantic connections in memory that are easily detected by introspection.

55. Drinking can be viewed as a means to satisfy people's need for power.

56. McClelland's training program has been used primarily among people in business enterprises.

57. McClelland's training program deemphasizes cognitive processes.

58. Murray developed his list of needs in a fashion that some have considered arbitrary.
Motivation theorists have been criticized for studying too many needs and motives simultaneously.

**Short Essay**

1. Briefly define what is meant by *need* and *press*.

   Both are motivational influences.

   **NEED**: An internal state of affairs that is less than satisfactory; a lack of something needed for well being; "...(A)n internal directional force that determines how people seek out or otherwise respond to objects or situations in the environment." (Murray, 1938).

   **PRESS**: An external condition that creates a desire to obtain (or avoid) something.

2. Briefly describe the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) and why its developers thought it would be effective.

   Taking the TAT involves viewing ambiguous pictures and writing stories about them. The stories are then coded to determine whether they reflect a variety of different themes. Morgan and Murray thought it would be effective because they assumed that people's needs would be projected onto the stories.

3. Briefly explain how people who are high in need for achievement differ from people low in need for achievement in terms of their approaches to achievement-related situations. Why are their approaches different?

   People low in need for achievement choose tasks that are either very easy or very hard, while people with a high need for achievement choose tasks that are moderately difficult. People with a high need for achievement choose challenging (but not impossible) tasks because they want to assess their own abilities. (Very easy or very hard tasks do not give a good indication of one's ability level.)

4. Briefly explain how level of responsibility can affect the behavioral manifestations of the need for power.

   - **HIGH IN RESPONSIBILITY**: The power motive is reflected in the conscientious pursuit of prestige, in which power is exercised in socially acceptable ways.
   - **LOW IN RESPONSIBILITY**: The need for power can lead instead to less acceptable ways of influencing others, including impulsive aggressiveness, sexual exploitation, and alcohol/drug use (what Winter described as "profligate, impulsive power").

5. Describe what people who are high in need for affiliation are like.

   - **HIGH IN NEED FOR AFFILIATION**: (1) Need to be with others and would not want to be thought of as disagreeable, therefore, if a group exerts pressure on them, they are likely to go along with the group compared to those lower in need for affiliation; (2) get nervous when they think others are judging their attractiveness and interpersonal skills; (3) are likely to initiate contacts and try to establish friendships with others; (4) are nominated more often as group leaders; (5) spend more of their time actively engaged in social activities (such as conversing or letter writing when randomly paged, making more phone calls, and, when alone, likely to express a wish to be interacting with others).

6. Briefly define the need for intimacy. How does need for intimacy differ from need for affiliation?

   **NEED FOR INTIMACY**: The desire to experience warm, close and communicative exchange with another person; in the extreme, to merge the self with another person. Need for intimacy goes beyond need for affiliation in its emphasis on closeness and open sharing with another person. In addition, need for affiliation is an active,
striving, “doing” orientation towards relationships; need for intimacy is a more passive, uncontrolling, “being” orientation. Need for affiliation does not focus as much on positive, affirmative aspects of close relationships.

(97) 7. Briefly describe the inhibited power motive. Why is it good for leadership?

INHIBITED POWER MOTIVE: Combination of high need for power, low need for affiliation, and tendency to inhibit the expression of power. People who have this pattern of traits have good leadership abilities because they like to influence people, they are not overly concerned about being disliked, and they want to follow orderly procedures and stay within an organizational framework.

(98-99) 8. Identify the distinctions McClelland made between implicit motives and self-attributed motives.

According to McClelland, implicit motives are basic. These are the recurrent preferences for particular types of affective experiences (e.g., “feeling close” for the intimacy motive). Because implicit motives are basic, they are good predictors of behavioral trends over time. Self-attributed motives are tied to specific action goals. They tell how a person will act in a particular situation. For this reason, they are better at predicting responses in structured settings.

(106-107) 9. Describe McClelland’s program to raise achievement motivation among businesspeople. What evidence exists for this program’s effectiveness?

The program first teaches participants about the concept of achievement motivation. It then teaches people how to score TAT protocols and to think in terms of achievement imagery as often as possible. Finally, it encourages people to think about linking achievement imagery to specific patterns of action. At follow-up, the people who had participated in the program were more successful in terms of starting new business ventures and employing more people.

PRIMARY SOURCES


