

08 - 7. Motivation needs and drives

7. Motivation: needs and drives

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Motivation refers to the process involved in initiation, direction and energisation of behaviour. It can have various dimensions including internal vs. external, innate vs. learned, conscious vs. unconscious and mechanistic vs. cognitive. Maslow identified deficiency needs called D motives and growth needs (or 'being') needs called B motives. He proposed a hierarchy of human needs with phylogenic and ontogenic evolution through the hierarchy. The needs become less biological as one ascends through the hierarchy. The higher needs come into focus only when the lower needs are satisfied at least to some extent. Once an individual has moved upwards to the next level, needs in the lower level will no longer be prioritized. If a lower set of needs is no longer being met, the individual will temporarily re-prioritize those needs by focusing attention on the unfulfilled needs, but will not permanently regress to the lower level. Some authors place aesthetic needs and cognitive needs (need to know & understand) in between esteem needs and actualisation. Transcendence can be placed above self-actualisation. The need for self-actualisations is "the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming." According to Maslow, the following characters are seen in self-actualizing people: □ Spontaneous in their ideas and actions. □ Creative. □ Interested in solving problems. □ Appreciate life. □ Have a system of internalized independent morality. □ Able to view all things in an objective manner. Law of Effect related to learning theories can also be considered as a theory of motivation. A satisfying effect strengthens behaviour; a dissatisfying effect weakens behaviour. So behaviour is contingent on the consequences (the basis of behaviourism) (Thorndike, 1911).

© SPMM Course Drive-Reduction Theory (Hull): According to this, the physiological aim of drive reduction is homeostasis- the tendency for organisms to keep physiological systems (e.g. temperature) at equilibrium. Any imbalance in homeostasis creates a need – a biological requirement for well-being. The brain responds to such needs by creating a psychological state called drive – a feeling of arousal that prompts action to reduce drive. According to Hull, primary drives stem from biological needs; secondary drives are psychological and learned from primary

drives (e.g. self-esteem, power etc.) Similarly Murray (1938) divided needs into primary or vasculogenic needs that are physiological (e.g. air, water, food, sex) and secondary needs that are acquired or learned through experiences e.g. money etc. Yerkes-Dodson Law: An inverted U-shaped curve relates the level of arousal with the performance of an act. Optimum arousal (moderate) is required for best performance; too low or too high arousal proves to be a hindrance e.g. sexual performance. But it is demonstrated that the relationship is not as simple as proposed as task difficulty varies highly. So, difficult or intellectually demanding tasks may require a lower level of arousal (to facilitate concentration). But tasks demanding stamina or persistence may be performed better with higher levels of arousal (to increase motivation). Because of task differences, the shape of the curve can be highly variable. Curiosity is an intrinsic motivator – it is stimulated when something in our environment attracts our attention. There are two types of curiosity that can stimulate intrinsic motivation – sensory curiosity (change in tone of voice or level of contrast e.g. typing bold letters) or cognitive curiosity (learner believes it may be useful to modify existing cognitive structures e.g. improving knowledge in statistical models in order to improve understanding of baseball batting averages). The optimal discrepancy is the strongest curiosity when information appears different from what we know but is not so dissimilar as to be considered strange or irrelevant. Cognitive consistency theory focuses on the cognitive balance that is created when inconsistencies result in tension, which motivates our brains/body to respond. The theory suggests people see imbalances and correct them through the motivation to make things consistent.

1. People expect consistency.
2. Inconsistencies create a state of dissonance
3. Dissonance drives us to restore consistency.

Need for achievement (nAch) refers to the individual's desire for significant accomplishment and mastering skills to a high standard. First used by Henry Murray, it is associated with a range of actions. Need for achievement motivates an individual to succeed in competition. People high in nAch are characterised by a tendency to seek challenges and a high degree of independence. nAch is a personality trait measured in the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT). Sources of high nAch include:

1. Parents who encouraged independence in childhood
2. Praise and rewards for success

© SPMM Course 3. Association of achievement with positive feelings 4. Association of achievement with one's own competence and effort, not luck 5. A desire to be effective or challenged 6. Intrapersonal strength 7. Desirability 8. Feasibility 9. Goal Setting abilities

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