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CHAPTER - 3

THE PRESENT STUDY

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In view of the importance of motives observed in determining academic achievement on the one hand, and the conflicting results of studies reported on relationship between motives and achievement on the other, it was felt that the problem under study needs to be investigated in a broader perspective, at both conceptual and methodological level.

### 3.1 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Academic achievement, as a matter of fact, is a very complex variable. It is the resultant of diverse factors acting and interacting in a variety of ways. Lack of consistency in the results relating motives to achievement leads to the assumption that probably the interaction of motives alongwith co-variability among them, would be able to explain the role played by different motives in achievement further. However, these motives though basically and inevitably being a personal matter cannot be studied in isolation. They have shown to be in a large measure, the product of social and cultural influences from which they can never really be separated. Various organic and environmental factors like sex, intelligence, birth order,

ethnic groups, socio-economic differences etc., have shown to effect motives on one side and academic achievement on the other.

### 3.1.1 Variables Related to Motives

Intelligence the most potent factor in academic achievement remains as a contaminating and confounding variable in studies of this type. It favours the intensification of some motives and provides for defense mechanisms, especially in the form of rationalization, compensation etc., in others. Further, differences in academic achievement have frequently been described as a function of relative opportunity available to individuals in social settings (Rosen, 1956; Wolfe, 1972). Development of motives too, have been traced to early experiences and training received at home (Winterbottom, 1958). Sociologists have studied background factors on the basis of education of parents, their income, as well as sources of income under the assumption that their statuses determine the values accepted which in turn places different emphasis on things like education, goals, interpersonal relations, etc. They have also tried to link birth-order and number of siblings in the family with the type of experiences provided leading to development of various motives. A word about sex differences in motives would also be in order here. The expectations of the society are different for boys and girls, especially so in the tradition bound culture of India. It is strongly polarised in its treatment of the two sexes, laying more emphasis on orientation to achievement in boys and to that of resignation in girls. With the result, different experiences may lead to differences in their motives and its relation to achievement.

It was hypothesized, therefore, that probably these factors along with the three motives may be playing a significant role in determining the academic achievement.

### 3.1.2 Measurement of Motives

Discrepancies in results obtained across studies have further raised doubts regarding the adequacy of current efforts to measure motives. The most commonly used procedure has been to score responses to certain pictures from the TAT according to the theme of the responses (McClelland et al., 1953; Heyns et al., 1958; Mehta, 1969; Winter, 1973). This projective technique has been credited to be especially sensitive to covert or unconscious aspects of behaviour by permitting and encouraging a wide variety of subjects' responses and by evoking unusually rich and profuse response data with a minimum of subjects' awareness concerning the purpose of the test. Thus controlling the variable of social desirability, thereby enhancing its validity.

Nevertheless, several critical problems arise insofar as the scientific use of such measures in research is concerned. Lazarus (1961, 1966) and Shaw (1961) raised doubt as to whether the motives appear directly or inversely in the TAT. Murstein (1963) and Carney (1966) showed the extraordinary sensitiveness to the effect of immediate situation and mood in which it is taken. Klinger (1966), Weinstein (1969) and Entwisle (1972) pointed to their lack of reliability, which may be leading to conflicting results observed in the review. Actually, the lack of standardized objective scoring procedure seems to be the

major problem (Voigt and Dana, 1964). Without which neither consistency estimates nor adequate normative data can be provided for and the scores have to be interpreted in idiographic rather than nomothetic form (Brown, 1970). Though this scoring unreliability, can almost always be reduced to a negligible level by intensive training, it makes such a free-response technique highly expensive. These drawbacks coupled with difficulty in administration and scoring poses problems when used in an applied situation.

Attempts to alleviate these drawbacks led to the development of a number of objective self-report inventories where the individual provides a description or reports his own behaviour in a way that could be later scored and analyzed objectively (Edwards, 1954; Gough, 1957; Alpert and Haber, 1960; Jackson, 1967; Lynn, 1969; Mehta, 1969; Stern, 1970; Dutt, 1973; Tripathi and Misra, 1976 etc.). Such an attempt, inspite of low connection between language and conduct, between what a person says and does, has proved its usefulness in different fields like attitudes, interests and personality. It seems to have convincing psychometric requirements creating a meeting ground for theoretical and practical considerations (Sundberg, 1977). It was, therefore, decided to measure the respective motives in the present study with the help of objective devices.

However, a number of studies have shown that the objective measures have not had notable success and are questionable substitutes for projective devices (DeCharms et al., 1955; McClelland, 1958; Atkinson and Litwin, 1960; Heckhausen, 1967).

With discouraging regularity investigators have reported lack of high significant correlation between projective and self-report inventories and also among various inventory measures (Bendig, 1957; Himelstein, 1958; Meliklan, 1958; Marlow, 1959; Shaw, 1961; Reiter, 1962; Burnstein, 1963; Morrison, 1964; Weinstein, 1968; Amin, 1968; Mukerjee, 1972; Pandharipande, 1972; Gandhi, 1981). Thus questioning the very validity of the measure and dramatically reinforcing the statement that different approaches to measuring human motives do not yield comparable results (McClelland, 1958).

It may, however, be noted that the TAT has been devised to give a generalized motive orientation that affects the individual's behaviour under many and varied circumstances. It shows a cluster of traits that are apparently seen as related to the particular motive. Whereas an appraisal of the self-report inventories developed reveal that they are concerned with narrowly defined, a-prior aspect of motives, placing emphasis upon measuring of individual differences into the normal range variation of that aspect only.

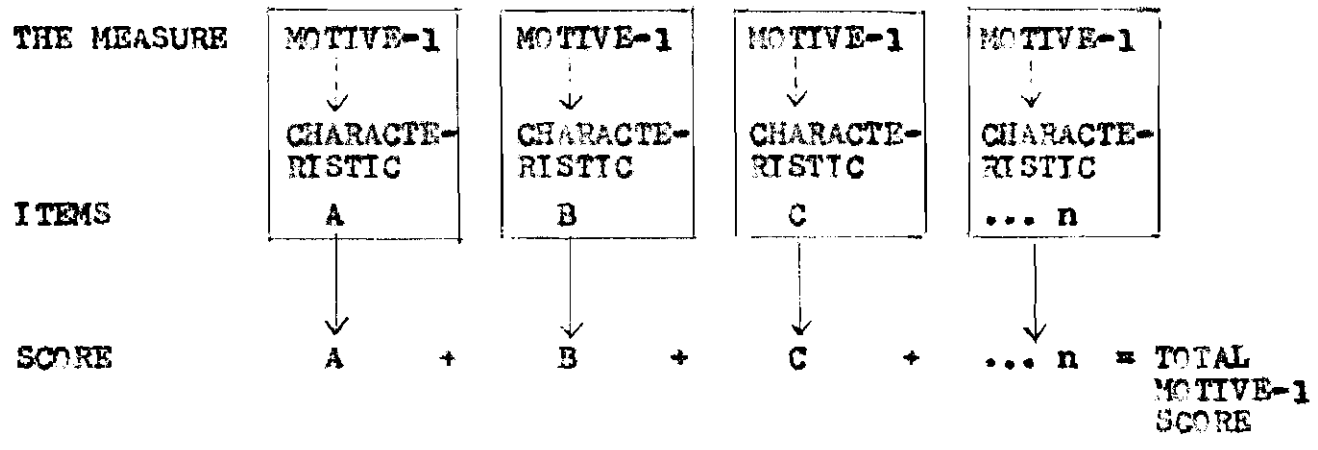
Lately, factor analysis of a number of measures, by Michael et al. (1959) and Mitchell (1961), in the area of achievement motivation have indicated the highly complex nature of the construct. No single factor could be identified in their studies which adequately described the motivational phenomena. With the result Mukerjee (1972) came to the conclusion that self-reporting measures which <sup>have</sup> been claimed in the past as measures of achievement

motive reflect very little of the dimensions covered by projective measures. Thus suggesting that perhaps test development has simply proceeded along inappropriate lines. It appears that in order to have meaningful measures the concept of a particular motive must be operationally redefined in the context of individual's phenomenal field (Ryan, 1970). Now with empirical researches and the theory of achievement motivation to guide, the time seems ripe for a renewed attack on the problem of developing more valid diagnostic measures.

Motivation is a theory of an active individual, one whose behaviour is a series of action and not merely reactions. Practically all psychologists appeal to some concept of motivation in their explanations of human action. Agreement on this point arises from the widely acknowledged utility of breaking up the flux of human behaviour into identifiable sequences of action which differ in direction, vigor and persistence through time. As such an appropriate tactic for measuring motives might be to build a scale empirically, by selecting the items that differentiate between characteristic behaviour of individuals who are high from those who are low on that particular motive. The main impetus for such an approach has been provided by some encouraging preliminary results concerning a paired-comparison test, of strength of achievement motive relative to strength of motive to avoid failure (O'Connor and Atkinson, 1962; Mehrabian, 1968, 1969).

This and the results of factor analytic studies redirect ones attention to the task, initially undertaken by McClelland

et al. (1953), of discovering and refining the definition of the unique characteristics of particular motives. An enquiry into this, under the assumption that greater the number of characteristics identified and measured greater will be the understanding of the motive, would probably yield a better and comprehensive measure. The scores on these characteristics may then be summated to yield a composite score of the respective motive. Such an approach has been diagrammatically presented below.



It represents an effort to exploit the behaviour implications of motives. The position taken here is that when an individual is motivated he expresses himself in a number of diverse action correlates, which when observed would be proportionate to the strength of his motive. Such an attempt, it was assumed would not only give deeper insight into the basic nature of the motive by providing multiple landmarks that may help in plotting the course of human behaviour, but would also enhance the substantive validity of the measure alongwith its reliability.

The brief analysis of the problem presented in the foregoing pages thus leads to the conclusion that there is a need for development of comprehensive multi-dimensional, objective devices for measuring motives. It has also brought forth the importance of multivariate designs in predicting academic achievement.

As such, the present study undertook to develop comprehensive, objective devices, encompassing different dimensions, for the measurement of achievement motive, affiliation motive, and power motive. Instead of merely correlating or contrasting arbitrarily cut off groups of extremes, this study ventured to go a step further than the previous researches and find out the interaction effects of the three motives on academic achievement. It further proposed to study the three motives alongwith intelligence and background factors of the students in order to predict and explain the differences in academic achievement at high school stage. This stage is both a terminus and a continuum - terminus for those who leave school for other pursuits and continuum for those who pursue further. It was, therefore, considered ideal for studying certain entering characteristics of these students. Man-making programmes too find their strong foothold at this transition period, after which the personality, values, attitudes etc. seem to become more conditioned and stable. Any venture to implement the findings, it was thus assumed, would be more fruitful and feasible at this stage.

### 3.2 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the present study was to find out the relationship between achievement motive, affiliation motive,

power motive and academic achievement in high school students. Stated in more specific terms, following objectives were formulated to achieve this aim:

1. To develop and standardize objective measure of achievement motive, affiliation motive, and power motive in Hindi, for school going population.
2. To study the nature and sex differences in achievement motive, affiliation motive, and power motive scores of high school students.
3. To find out the interrelationship among achievement motive, affiliation motive, and power motive scores of high school students.
4. To study the relationship of achievement motive, affiliation motive, and power motive with the academic achievement of high school students.
5. To study the joint and relative contribution of achievement motive, affiliation motive, power motive, intelligence, and background factors (viz., parents' education, their income and occupational level, birth order of the student and number of siblings in the family) in determining the academic achievement of high school students and to derive a multiple regression equation for predicting the same.
6. To measure the interaction effect of high, average, and low levels of achievement motive, affiliation motive and power motive scores on the academic achievement of high school students.

### 3.3 HYPOTHESES FORMULATED

The present study proposed to test the hypotheses that academic achievement of high school boys and girls was differently related to their (i) achievement motive, (ii) affiliation motive, (iii) power motive, (iv) intelligence, and (v) background factors on the basis of which it may be possible to develop a specification equation for predicting the academic achievement. These were stated in the null-form so that they may be tested statistically. Hypotheses thus formulated were:

- $H_01$  - There is no significant sex difference in the (a) achievement motive; (b) affiliation motive; (c) power motive scores of high school students.
- $H_02$  - There is no significant relationship between the (a) achievement motive and affiliation motive; (b) achievement motive and power motive; (c) affiliation motive and power motive scores of high school students.
- $H_03$  - There is no significant relationship between academic achievement and (a) achievement motive; (b) affiliation motive; (c) power motive scores of high school students.
- $H_04$  - Academic achievement of high school students cannot be significantly predicted with the help of scores on nine predictor variables, viz., achievement motive, affiliation motive, power motive, intelligence, parents's income, their educational and occupational level, birth-order of the student and number of siblings in the family.

- H<sub>0</sub>5 - There is no significant difference in the academic achievement of high, average, and low levels of (a) achievement motive; (b) affiliation motive; (c) power motive scores of high school students.
- H<sub>0</sub>6 - There is no significant interaction effect of high, average, and low levels of (a) achievement motive x affiliation motive; (b) achievement motive x power motive; (c) affiliation motive x power motive; (d) achievement motive x affiliation motive x power motive scores on the academic achievement of high school students.

#### 3.4 DEFINITION OF TERMS

A few terms have been used in a very restricted sense in this study. For the sake of clear and effective communication they have been defined in the following paragraphs. Other technical terms used have their standard meanings conveyed by different educational, psychological and statistical researches.

Academic Achievement:- Total marks obtained in the public examination held for class X has been delineated as the academic achievement of high school students.

Achievement Motive:- This has been defined as the tendency to strive for success in competition against some standard of excellence (McClelland, 1961). However, in the present study the achievement motive has been considered as a multidimensional attribute which may be indicated by showing persistence, personal

responsibility, realistic goal-orientation, moderate-low risk taking, upward mobility, future-time perspective, dynamic perception of time, choice of experts as partners, achievement satisfaction and recognition behaviour. It has been expressed here in terms of total achievement motive scores formed by summing the scores gained by different respondents on these characteristics when measured by the 'Achievement Motive Inventory' developed by the researcher.

Affiliation Motive:- This has been viewed as the concern over establishing, maintaining or restoring a positive affective relationship with another person (Heyns et al., 1968). It may be indicated by showing preference for friends and attachments, positive-negative feeling associated with the presence of many people, preference for expressing affection towards people, active seeking of friends, preference for behaviour or situations which minimize negative feedback from others, preference for warm and accepting people, concern about being liked, concern over separation and preference for group versus individual activities. It has been operationally defined here, in terms of total affiliation motive score obtained on the 'Affiliation Motive Inventory' developed by the researcher.

Power Motive:- It is a concern about having impact on another or other (Winter, 1967), which may be signified by strong, forceful actions affecting others; giving help, assistance, advice or support if it has not been solicited by the other person; trying

to control another person through regulating his behaviour or the conditions of his life; trying to influence, persuade, or argue with a person; trying to impress some other person or the world at large; wanting to gain control by high position; and concern expressed over one's reputation or position. It has been expressed here by the total score obtained on the 'Power Motive Inventory', developed by the researcher for the present study.

### 3.5 IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

The importance of the present study can hardly be over-emphasized. Though life success is not synonymous with school success, but on the other hand success in school has been the only yardstick for majority of children for their future life. A need was felt, therefore, to explore this domain empirically and specify the role of achievement, affiliation, and power motives along different levels of achievement. Such a study it was assumed, would not only help in analyzing the inner forces underlying the achievement of high school students but would also help in providing a framework for the conceptualization of an academic motivation theory.

Besides this the findings can be of great practical value, as they may help parents in creating favourable conditions for scholastic growth of students. They can be of special value to those psychologists who are engaged in counselling and guiding students and also to the educators concerned with admission policies, curriculum planning, instructional evaluation and

development, and basic educational research (Moen and Doyle, 1977). While innate abilities cannot possibly be increased or made more favourable, these motives, being more or less acquired can to a certain extent be controlled, changed and improved. A solid programme may be implemented, manipulating these variables in teaching-learning situation to yield more satisfactory results (Alschuler et al., 1972).

The study is justified for still another reason. The problem of talent search and development is a general problem, more so in a developing country like India, which requires highly capable individuals to shoulder the heavy responsibilities created by the demand for national development. Various committees have been appointed and seminars held from time to time to suggest, apart from other things, what can be done with the limited resources available for the maximum development of talented boys and girls. The present study, which is expected to throw some light on the inner forces associated with academic achievement, is amply justified and desirable in this context.

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