

# ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

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## GENERAL OBJECTIVES OF THE SUBJECT

At the end of the course, students will examine the principles of organizational psychology; apply them within companies; critically reflect emotional behavior within companies *and* their impact on the development of this.

## 2. MOTIVATION

2.1 Motivational Concept

2.2 Hierarchy of Needs

2.3 Motivational Theories

### 2.1 Motivational Concept

Motivation is a problem in the U.S. workforce. Poorly motivated workers express themselves through detrimental behaviors such as absenteeism and high turnover. It is important that motivational theories are understood and applied in the workplace.

- a) **Motivation:** the processes that account for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal, specifically for attaining an organizational goal.
- b) **Intensity:** how hard a person tries to meet a goal.
- c) **Direction:** efforts are channeled toward organizational goals.
- d) **Persistence:** how long a person maintains effort toward a goal.

People in different cultures have strikingly different construal of the self, of others, and of the interdependence of the 2. These construal can influence, and in many cases determine, the very nature of individual experience, including cognition, emotion, and motivation. Many Asian cultures have distinct conceptions of individuality that insist on the fundamental relatedness of individuals to each other.

The emphasis is on attending to others, fitting in, and harmonious interdependence with them. American culture neither assumes nor values such an overt connectedness among individuals. In contrast, individuals seek to maintain their independence from others by attending to the self and by discovering and expressing their unique inner attributes. As proposed herein, these construal are even more powerful than previously imagined. Theories of the self from both psychology and anthropology are integrated to define in detail the difference between a construal of the self as independent and a construal of the self as interdependent. Each of these divergent construal should have a set of specific consequences for cognition, emotion, and motivation; these consequences are proposed and relevant empirical literature is reviewed. Focusing on differences in self-construal enables apparently inconsistent empirical findings to be reconciled, and raises questions about what have been thought to be culture-free aspects of cognition, emotion, and motivation.

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If a cognitive activity implicates the self, the outcome of this activity will depend on the nature of the self-system. Specifically, there are three important consequences of these divergent self-systems for cognition. First, we may expect those with interdependent selves to be more attentive and sensitive to others than those with independent selves. The attentiveness and sensitivity to others, characterizing the interdependent selves, will result in a relatively greater cognitive elaboration of the other or of the self-in-relation-to-other. Second, among those with interdependent selves, the unit of representation of both the self and the other will include a relatively specific social context in which the self and the other are embedded. This means that knowledge about persons, either the self or others, will not be abstract and generalized across contexts, but instead will remain specific to the focal context. Third, a consideration of the social context and the reactions of others may also shape some basic, nonsocial cognitive activities such as categorizing and counterfactual thinking.

The present analysis suggests several ways in which emotional processes may differ with the nature of the self-system. First, the predominant eliciting conditions of many emotions may differ markedly according to one's construal of the self. Second, and more important, which emotions will be expressed or experienced, and with what intensity and frequency, may also vary dramatically.

***Ego-focused versus other-focused emotions.*** The emotions systematically vary according to the extent to which they follow from, and also foster and reinforce, an independent or an interdependent construal of the self. This is a dimension that has largely been ignored in the literature. Some emotions, such as anger, frustration, and pride, have the individual's internal attributes (his or her own needs, goals, desires, or abilities) as the primary referent. Such emotions may be called *ego focused*. They result most typically from the blocking (e.g., "I was treated unfairly"), the satisfaction, or the confirmation (e.g., "I performed better than others") of one's internal attributes.

Experiencing and expressing these emotions further highlights these self-defining, internal attributes and leads to additional attempts to assert them in public and confirm them in private. As a consequence, for those with independent selves to operate effectively, they have to be "experts" in the expression and experience of these emotions. They will manage the expression, and even the experience, of these emotions so that they maintain, affirm, and bolster the construal of the self as an autonomous entity. The public display of one's own internal attributes can be at odds with the maintenance of interdependent, cooperative social interaction, and when unchecked can result in interpersonal confrontation, conflict, and possibly even overt aggression.

These negative consequences, however, are not as severe as they might be for interdependent selves because the expression of one's internal attributes is the culturally sanctioned task of the independent self. In short, the current analysis suggests that, in contrast to those with more interdependent selves, the ego-focused emotions will be more frequently expressed, and perhaps experienced, by those with independent selves. In contrast to the ego-focused emotions, some other emotions, such as sympathy, feelings of interpersonal

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communion, and shame, have another person, rather than one's internal attributes, as the primary referent. Such emotions may be called *other focused*. They typically result from being sensitive to the other, taking the perspective of the other, and attempting to promote interdependence. Experiencing these emotions highlights one's interdependence, facilitates the reciprocal exchanges of well-intended actions, leads to further cooperative social behavior, and thus provides a significant form of self-validation for interdependent selves. As a consequence, for those with interdependent selves to operate effectively, they will have to be "experts" in the expression and experience of these emotions. They will manage the expression, and even the experience, of these emotions so that they maintain, affirm, and reinforce the construal of the self as an interdependent entity. The other-focused emotions often discourage the autonomous expression of one's internal attributes and may lead to inhibition and ambivalence.

The study of motivation centers on the question of why people initiate, terminate, and persist in specific actions in particular circumstances (e.g., Atkinson, 1958; Mook, 1986). The answer given to this question in the West usually involves some type of internal, individually rooted need or motive—the motive to enhance one's self-esteem, the motive to achieve, the motive to affiliate, the motive to avoid cognitive conflict, or the motive to self-actualize. These motives are assumed to be part of the unique, internal core of a person's self-system. But what is the nature of motivation for those with interdependent self-systems? What form does it take? How does the ever-present need to attend to others and to gain their acceptance influence the form of these internal, individual motives? Are the motives identified in Western psychology the universal instigators of behavior? As with cognition and emotion, those motivational processes that implicate the self-depend on the nature of the self-system.

If we assume that *others* will be relatively more focal in the motivation of those with interdependent selves, various implications follow.

- **First**, those with interdependent selves should express, and perhaps experience, more of those motives that are social or that have the other as referent.
- **Second**, as we have noted previously, for those with independent selves, agency will be experienced as an effort to express one's internal needs, rights, and capacities and to withstand undue social pressure, whereas among those with interdependent selves, agency will be experienced as an effort to be receptive to others, to adjust to their needs and demands, and to restrain one's own inner needs or desires.
  - Motives related to the need to express one's agency or competency (e.g., the achievement motive) are typically assumed to be common to all individuals. Yet among those with interdependent selves, striving to excel or accomplish challenging tasks may not be in the service of achieving separateness and autonomy, as is usually assumed for those with independent selves, but instead in the service of more fully realizing one's connectedness or interdependence.
- **Third**, motives that are linked to the self, such as self-enhancement, self-consistency, self-verification, self-affirmation, and self-actualization, may assume a very different form depending on the nature of the self that is being enhanced, verified, or actualized.

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## Conclusions

We have described two divergent construal of the self—an *independent* view and an interdependent view. The most significant differences between these two construal is in the role that is assigned to the other in self-definition. Others and the surrounding social context are important in both construal, but for the interdependent self, others are included *within* the boundaries of the self because relations with others in specific contexts are the defining features of the self. In the words of Lebra (1976), the individual is in some respects "a fraction" and becomes whole when fitting into or occupying one's proper place in a social unit.

The sense of individuality that accompanies an interdependent self includes an attentiveness and responsiveness to others that one either explicitly or implicitly assumes will be reciprocated by these others, as well as the willful management of one's other-focused feelings and desires so as to maintain and further the reciprocal interpersonal relationship. One is conscious of where one belongs with respect to others and assumes a receptive stance toward these others, continually adjusting and accommodating to these others in many aspects of behavior (Azuma, 1984; Weisz et al., 1984).

Such acts of fitting in and accommodating are often intrinsically rewarding, because they give rise to pleasant, other-focused emotions (e.g., feeling of connection) while diminishing unpleasant ones (e.g., shame) and, furthermore, because the self-restraint required in doing so forms an important basis of self-esteem. Typically, then, it is others rather than the self that serve as the referent for organizing one's experiences. With an independent construal of the self, others are less centrally implicated in one's current self-definition or identity. Certainly, others are important for social comparison, for reflected appraisal, and in their role as the targets of one's actions, yet at any given moment, the self is assumed to be a complete, whole, autonomous entity, without the others.

The defining features of an independent self are:

- Attributes
- Abilities
- Traits
- Desires
- Motives

It may have been social products but that have become the "property" of the self-contained individual and that are assumed to be the source of the individual's behavior. The sense of individuality that accompanies this construal of the self includes a sense of oneself as an agent, as a producer of one's actions. One is conscious of being in control over the surrounding situation, and of the need to express one's own thoughts, feelings, and actions to others, and is relatively less conscious of the need to receive the thoughts, feelings, and actions of others. Such acts of standing out are often intrinsically rewarding because they elicit pleasant, ego-focused emotions (e.g., pride) and also reduce unpleasant ones (e.g., frustration). Furthermore, the acts of standing out, themselves, form an important basis of self-esteem.

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## 2.2 Hierarchy of Needs

**Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory.** In this, perhaps best known (and least supported) of all motivational theories, Abraham Maslow proposed that there are five levels of human needs. As each of the lower level needs are satisfied, the next unsatisfied need becomes dominant. Satisfied needs no longer motivate, only unsatisfied needs motivate people.

1. *Physiological*: lower order need, includes hunger, thirst, shelter, sex, and other bodily needs. Lower order needs are satisfied externally, through forces outside of the person.
2. *Safety*: lower order need, includes security and protection from physical and emotional harm.
3. *Social*: upper order need, includes affection, belongingness, acceptance, and friendship. Upper order needs are satisfied internally, that is, from within the person.
4. *Esteem*: upper order need, includes internal (self-respect, autonomy, and achievement) and external (status, recognition, and attention) esteem factors.
5. *Self-actualization*: upper order need, defined as the drive to "be all one can be" it includes growth, achieving one's potential, and self-fulfillment.

**McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y.** Douglas McGregor's theory proposed that there were two basic views of human nature, one essentially negative (Theory X) and the other positive (Theory Y). Which view a manager believed was true would give that manager a pre-set series of assumptions and related behaviors.

1. *Theory X*. In this negative view of human nature, workers are basically lazy and need firm guidance. The assumptions related to Theory X are:
  - a. Work Avoidance. Employees dislike work and so will try to avoid it.
  - b. Need for Control. Since employees dislike work, they must be coerced, controlled, or threatened with punishment to get them to achieve organizational goals.
  - c. Avoidance of Responsibility. Workers seek formal direction and dislike taking responsibility.
  - d. Security is Paramount. Employees value security above all else and display little ambition.

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In Maslow's terms, a Theory X viewpoint means that lower-order needs dominate individual needs. Theory X managers tend to be very directive, or seen as harsh and unbending, and will often be accused of "micro-management."

2. *Theory Y*. In this positive view, employees are willing workers who actively seek responsibility. The underlying assumptions are:
  - a. Work as play. Work is as natural as play or rest.
  - b. Commitment. When employees are committed, they will exercise self-direction and self-control.
  - c. Accepting Responsibility. Workers accept, and will even seek, responsibility.
  - d. Innovation is Common. The ability to make innovative decisions is widely disbursed throughout the population; it does not only exist in the managerial ranks.

In Maslow's terms, a Theory Y viewpoint means that higher-order needs dominate individual needs. Managers who hold to this view tend to use participative decision-making, create responsible and challenging jobs, and build good group relations in an attempt to motivate employees. Unfortunately, as with Maslow's theory, there is no research evidence that either view of human nature is valid or that taking actions based on Theory Y will increase motivation in workers.

**Herzberg's Two-Factor (Motivation-Hygiene) Theory.** Frederick Herzberg proposed that an individual's relation to work is basic and that one's attitude toward work can very well determine success or failure. In other words, things that people feel good about at work are motivating and those things they don't feel good about are de-motivating. In his research, Herzberg realized that the opposite of satisfaction is not dissatisfaction; rather there are two different factor scales, one ranging from satisfaction to no satisfaction and the other from dissatisfaction to no dissatisfaction. When he related a number of workplace factors against these two scales, he realized they were very different concepts. He called the first set of factors *motivation factors* and the second *hygiene factors*.

- **Hygiene Factors.** These workplace factors, when not met, lead to job dissatisfaction. When they are met, they do NOT lead to job satisfaction, but rather, to a lack of dissatisfaction. So, meeting hygiene factors does NOT increase motivation, it merely placates the workers. Hygiene factors include quality of supervision, pay, company policies, physical working conditions, relations with others, and job security.
- **Motivation Factors.** These are intrinsically rewarding factors in the work environment such as promotion and personal growth opportunities, recognition, responsibility, and achievement. Meeting these factors will increase motivation by creating a satisfying work environment.

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- As with the other two main motivational theories, this very popular theory is also not well supported in the research literature. There are many criticisms of the Two-Factor Theory, mostly dealing with the methodology Herzberg used in his initial studies.

**2.3 MOTIVATIONAL THEORIES:** Unlike the historic theories of motivation, these contemporary theories of motivation do have a reasonable degree of supporting documentation. It is important to remember that these are still theories. None of these has been totally proven to be true.

**McClelland's Theory of Needs.** David McClelland created a theory based on three needs:

**Need for Achievement (NAch):** *the drive to excel and to achieve in relation to a set of standards.* Achievers seek rapid feedback on performance, they like tasks of intermediate difficulty, and they accept personal responsibility for success or failure.

High achievers tend to be successful entrepreneurs. However, having a high need for achievement does not necessarily mean the person would be a good

her desire for recognition supersedes his or her concern for the organization. Employees with low achievement needs can be trained to increase their need for achievement.

**Need for Power (nPow):** *the need to make others behave in a way they would not have behaved otherwise.* People with high power needs feel they have to have an impact or be influential with other people. They prefer to be placed into competitive and status-oriented situations. High power people are more concerned with prestige and gaining influence over others than with effective performance.

**Need for Affiliation (nAff):** *the desire for friendly and close interpersonal relationships.* Affiliates strive for friendship, prefer cooperative situations, and desire friendships with a high degree of mutual understanding.

The best managers appear to be those with a high need for power, and a low need for affiliation.

**Cognitive Evaluation Theory:** This theory proposes that the introduction of extrinsic rewards, such as pay, tends to decrease overall motivation. This is because the intrinsic reward of the work itself declines in the face of extrinsic rewards.

One of the implications of this theory is that a truism in management, pay or other extrinsic rewards should be tied to effective performance, is false. This technique will actually decrease the internal satisfaction the employee receives from doing the job. Therefore, the cognitive evaluation theory suggests that an individual's pay should be non- contingent on performance, in order to maintain maximum intrinsic motivation. This is not a hard and fast rule, however. The type of rewards makes a difference. Verbal rewards are intrinsic and can increase intrinsic motivation, while tangible rewards, such as pay, undermine it. Managers should provide

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intrinsic rewards in addition to any extrinsic incentives in order to make employees more motivated.

**Goal-Setting Theory:** This theory studies the effects goal specificity, challenge, and feedback has on Performance. The study of goal setting has created the following general rules: Specific goals produce a higher level of output than do generalized goals. Typically, the more difficult the goal, the higher level of performance, assuming that goal has been accepted by the employee. This is because:

- Difficult goals focus attention on the task and away from distractions.
- Difficult goals energize employees.
- Difficult goals tend to make people persist in efforts toward attaining them.
- Difficult goals force employees to discover strategies to help them perform the task or job more effectively.

Feedback is important in goal-setting theory, especially self-generated feedback. The question of whether participative goal-setting increases motivation has not yet been resolved. The assumption is that when employees are involved in setting the goals, they have greater buy-in and therefore will have a higher level of commitment.

**MOTIVATION THEORIES ARE OFTEN CULTURE-BOUND** It must be noted that most motivational theories have been developed in the United States; based on, and for, Americans. Other cultures that do not share the cultural traits of the United States may not find these theories very useful.

**Maslow's Needs Hierarchy.** In cultures that do not share American traits, the hierarchical order of needs may be out of sequence.

**McClelland's Three Needs Theory.** The need for achievement presupposes certain cultural characteristics such as moderate degree of risk acceptance and a concern with performance. These two cultural characteristics are not universal, and therefore the need for achievement may not be as powerful in other cultures.

**Adams' Equity Theory.** This theory is very closely tied to American pay practices and may not be relevant in collectivistic or socialistic cultures in which there is more of a sense of entitlement or the desire to be paid based on need rather than performance.

**Hertzberg's Two-Factor Theory.** This theory does show some cross-cultural consistency. The desire for interesting work, growth, achievement, and responsibility, all intrinsic motivation factors in Hertzberg's theory, do seem to be supported across a number of cultures.

An important consideration for managers when reviewing these motivational theories is to determine their relevance, which outcomes they are measuring or influencing, and their relative predictive power.