

Achievement Motivation: A Dual Modality

Jacquelynne E. Parsons

Susan B. Goff

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Unequal participation of the sexes in the domain of employment has become increasingly difficult to ignore. Although increasing numbers of women are working, these women are still concentrated in the lower levels of the professional hierarchy in spite of attempts in recent years to decrease discrimination in hiring and salaries of women. For example, the percentage of women in professional and technical occupations has increased from 39% in 1968 to 42% in 1976 while during the same time period the percentage of women clerical workers increased from 73% to 80% (U.S. Department of Labor, 1977). It is interesting to note in 1970, when women occupied 40% of the professional and technical positions, more than 62% of these women were nurses, physical therapists, dieticians and elementary and secondary school teachers. In comparison, 12.6% of men occupy these lower status professional occupations (Carnegie Commission on Higher Education, 1973). Even with the professional domain, women cluster in the lower realm of the status hierarchy. The underemployment of women implied by these figures is widespread:

Although college-trained women are more likely than other women to become gainfully employed and although more women are college trained now than in the past, they are taking positions lower than in the past and lower than their potential, as measured in terms of education, would indicate. The problem is not, therefore, that the talented women are not in the labor force but rather that they are not contributing at the level their talents would justify. (Bernard, 1971, p. 123)

Although highly important, institutional barriers and sex typing of jobs are not entirely responsible for this phenomenon. There is evidence that other factors might also contribute to the fact that women are underrepresented in professional careers. Psychological investigations have highlighted several such factors which could affect female professional participation by influencing career aspirations in such a way as to predetermine the training young

women seek and the skills they acquire.

The study proposed herein is designed to investigate one set of intrapsychic variables that might influence women's career aspirations; namely, those associated with the value and motivational components of the expectancy x value model of task choice (Weiner, 1972). Bakan (1966) suggested that there are two basic modalities of life that encompass both values and motivation, "communion" and "agency," and that men and women, as collectives, differ in their orientation to these modalities. Women, much more than men, have been noted as conforming to the "communion" disposition of existence: characterized by openness, non-contractual cooperation and the sense of being at one with others within the non-traditional motive theories. Communion could be described as an integration of achievement and affiliation. In contrast, men's orientation to life goals conform more to the "agency" modality: characterized by isolation, self-protection, self-assertion, self-expansion, the urge to master, and the urge to remain separate from others. Again within a motivational framework, agency could be considered as the segregation of achievement and affiliation. If there is such a tendency for men and women to cluster around the separate modalities, then it should affect many facets of behavior, including life and career goals.

In an investigation of college students' considerations for choosing a particular career, Astin (in press) found that women appeared to be more motivated by intrinsic considerations and men by extrinsic considerations. In particular, women were more likely than men to endorse the following job characteristics as influential in their career choice; relevance of the field to their intrinsic interests, the opportunity to contribute to society, to work with ideas and people, to be helpful to others, and to express one's identity. In contrast, more men than women rated the following as important job characteristics: the

opportunity for high salaries, high prestige, rapid advancement, and a stable future. These value structures are similar to Bakan's descriptions of the "communion" and "agency" modalities. The desire to be at one with others and to gain rewards through one's interaction with others reflects communal characteristics; the desire to be both separate from "the people" and to ascend to a position that few attain and many respect reflects a more agentic orientation.

This paper represents the beginning of a research effort aimed at substantiating the link between the response styles suggested by Bakan's "agency-communion" model and individual differences in life goals, especially in career aspirations.

Among the many factors that undoubtedly affect career aspirations (see Parsons, Ruble, and Frieze, 1976, 1978, for full discussion), the motive to achieve has received considerable attention. McClelland and Atkinson have been key figures in this research arena. Within the McClelland/Atkinson tradition, achievement behavior and career choice have been linked to two basic motives: the hope for success motive (M_s) and the motive to avoid failure (M_{af}). These motives are assumed to be latent, stable characteristics acquired early in life. They are aroused in situations in which the standard of performance is evaluated against some measure of excellence: M_s being aroused at the prospect of doing well and by the anticipated feeling of pride that accompanies success, and M_{af} being aroused by the prospect of failure and the shame that accompanies it. The strength of the positive tendency to approach success, T_s , and the negative tendency to avoid failure, T_{-} , are multiplicative functions of their respective motives, incentive values, and the perceived chance of success or failure: $T_s = M_s \times I_s \times P_s$ and $T_{-} = M_{af} \times I_{-} \times P_{-}$, respectively (Atkinson, 1958). The tendency to respond to an achievement situation is predicted by the tendency to approach success minus the tendency to avoid failure plus tendencies aroused by extrinsic factors (viz., peer pressure).

While Atkinson's mathematical model predicted men's career aspirations and related adult achievement behaviors reasonably well, it did not predict reliably

either women's adult achievement behavior or career aspirations. In an effort to account for the failure of Atkinson's model to predict female adult achievement patterns, Horner (1968) posited the existence of an additional avoidance motive: the fear-of-success motives (M_{-}). She proposed that fear of success was higher in females than in males and that the inclusion of M_{-} into Atkinson's model would increase its accuracy as a predictor of female achievement behavior. More specifically, Horner suggested that women are less likely to approach achievement situations not because of a weakness in the achievement motive, but rather because potential success aroused their fear-of-success motive, which, in turn created enough anxiety to impede the tendency to approach achievement situations. Responses to verbal leads such as "after first-term finals, Ann finds herself at the top of her medical school class," were used to measure the "fear-of-success" motive. A response was considered high in fear of success if it contained negative imagery reflecting anxiety about the success. The negative imagery most frequently took the form of Anne's physical unattractiveness and lonely Friday and Saturday nights with her books. Horner interpreted these responses as a projection of the writer's fear of success.

Based on the differential response patterns of college women to the female cues and of college men to the male cue and the relationships of these patterns to a measure of achievement behavior, Horner concluded that women have higher fear of success than men and that fear of success does interfere with achievement behavior in some settings. She generalized these results to the broader domain of adult achievement patterns including career aspirations. Subsequent research and theoretical analysis have not substantiated these conclusions (Condry & Dyer, 1976). Thus, despite initial support and widespread enthusiasm, the fear-of-success model as conceptualized by Horner has not clarified our understanding of female achievement behavior.

The focus of the criticism of Horner's work has ranged from methodological inadequacies to conceptual disagreement. The criticisms have been adequately reviewed elsewhere (e.g., Condry & Dyer,

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1976) and will not be reviewed here. We will focus instead on our evaluation of the shortcomings inherent in both the Atkinson model and in Horner's refinement. We believe that the failure of both of these achievement models to account for female adult achievement behavior lies in their narrow operationalization of success and achievement goals. The achievement tasks selected and the criterion of success were usually individual tasks on which success is the result of one's own actions and attributes, rather than cooperative or group achievement tasks on which success is the result of joint efforts. The adult achievement tasks were generally careers with success being defined in terms of the status of the professions aspired to, rather than familial or social roles on which success is not as easily defined in terms of one's position in value-laden hierarchy. When considered from this perspective, it seemed to us that the assumptions underlying both the traditional Atkinsonian achievement model and Horner's subsequent refinement reflected what Bakan (1966) had labeled an "agentic" perspective on achievement, that is, a perspective of achievement in which success is defined in agentic terms: personal achievement with a view of self as separate from others and success as a result of one's own actions and attributes.

Defining achievement in the agentic mode has had three major consequences, all of which have reduced the explanatory power of the Atkinsonian model for female achievement. First, because achievement is so highly valued in our society, the researcher's question asked by Horner and others became why don't high need-achievement women aspire to high-status careers, instead of why do women aspire to the careers they ultimately choose. Consequently, Horner added an avoidance rather than an approach motive to the model.

Second, the focus of achievement was directed to the goal itself, instead of to the process involved in gaining the final reward. Veroff (1977) has recently recognized the importance of dissecting the more global concept of achievement into two levels: the process of achieving and the impact of the accomplishment. Traditional models of achievement have ignored the process of achievement, fo-

cus on the outcome and its meaning for the achiever. Horner, for example, directed her study to the projected effect of final success upon one's available social rewards. Fear of success was the fear of the negative consequences of success; but a careful look at some of the responses classified as evidencing fear of success suggests that the subjects were concerned with the costs of success in terms of the process of seeking success rather than the costs of success in terms of the social rejection following success. The lovely Saturday nights studying could reflect concern over the cost of succeeding in medical school rather than fear of being rejected once one had become a successful doctor.

Third, the agentic biased models consistently ignore any motive systems other than the one stemming from a simple need to achieve. Douvan and Adeison (1966) and Hoffman (1972) noted the part that the motive to affiliate plays in the development of self-esteem. Hoffman proposed that affiliation was seen as success in women, and furthermore, was an affirmation of the self. Neither of these papers, however, connected the woman's perceived value of social behavior with achievement motivation. When the female's affiliative orientation was finally applied to achievement motivation in Horner's (1968) thesis, it was negatively valued as "fear of success" instead of being labeled as a need for affiliation within the achievement setting. As suggested by Stein and Bailey (1973), we see affiliative factors as integral to female achievement motives and as a characteristic of the communion modality. Further, we believe that the failure of both the Atkinson and Horner models to illuminate female achievement behavior is the consequence of the neglect of a more communal perspective.

A view of achievement and success from a communal perspective raises issues that have not been considered fully in the past. Agentic rewards alone offer little reinforcement to a communally oriented person. Agency-type rewards can be defined as the fulfillment of long-term goals. Attention is paid to the ultimate fulfillment of the goal rather than the characteristics of the task and the process of achieving it. A communion-oriented per-

son is perceived to attend to the factors mediating the actual achievement of the goal. The worthiness of the goal, for example, cannot be estimated without regard to continued intrinsic interest in the task, possible affiliative loss or gain, possible benefit or harm to others, and/or the likelihood that the pursuit of the task will lead to self-growth and realization of certain intrapsychic goals. In view of this, the woman's tendency to focus on the process of achieving an end (Veroff, 1977) may be directly applicable to her life goals and career aspirations. Women may weight the procedural costs in an achievement setting more than man. These procedural costs often take the form of affiliative costs: an inability to interact socially because of a task's demands on one's time, an inability to assist people directly in one's career due to its nature, and a lack of affiliation with co-workers due to the supervisory nature of the position.

When one considers the relation of intrapsychic variables to women's attitudes toward achievement, and their resultant behavior, the necessity of incorporating affiliative factors within the traditional achievement model becomes increasingly clear. In addition to the predictive power it will lend the model with respect to women's achievement behavior and life choices, we expect that it will shed more light on intrapsychic factors mediating men's achievement behavior. It cannot be assumed that men pursue goals without any regard to communion-type factors. In view of traditional societal demands on men to adhere to an agentic-type path for career and life success, however, it is hardly surprising that affiliative elements have not been considered as related to achievement. It will be interesting to note the role that communion factors play in men's life choices and life goals. Perhaps a more realistic illustration of achievement behavior will aid in dispelling some of the more inhumane concepts and demands of "success" as we know it.

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