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**Q. Evaluate what psychologists studying motivation to work have discovered about:**

- Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and
- McClelland's theory of achievement motivation, including a discussion about determinism versus freewill.

**Evaluation in your answer can include strengths, weaknesses and a discussion of issues and debates. [10] (May/June 2024)**

One relevant issue to the need theories of motivation is determinism versus free will. Maslow's theory is highly deterministic because of the strict hierarchy in which needs are presented. It assumes that basic physiological needs must be satisfied before higher order psychosocial needs can be pursued. For example, an employee who is struggling to meet his basic needs for survival such as food and shelter, must first focus on acquiring decent wages from the job before thinking of socialising with colleagues or seeking promotion. This ignores the role of free-will, that is, the employees' decision to pursue needs of their choice. For example, many artists and social activists seek to self-actualise, that is, use their creativity fully or do the most they can for people even when they do not have enough financial stability. In contrast, McClelland's theory is less deterministic to an extent. It suggests that though everyone has the need for affiliation, achievement and power, how much of these needs an individual has is shaped by their life experiences and culture. However, there is no hierarchical order in which needs have to be pursued which suggests that individuals are free to try to satisfy the need of their choice over other needs. For example, an employee might choose to seek better projects and better in pay in the workplace to feel a sense of achievement rather than seeking leadership positions to exercise power.

Another relevant issue is that of validity. Maslow's theory has often been criticized for lacking validity in its empirical evidence since it has supported by qualitative studies. To overcome the problem of measuring needs and motivation qualitatively, Saeednia (2011) conducted a study to develop a questionnaire that could measure basic needs satisfaction in children. With the help of interviews of a sample of children and their parents, the researchers developed the Basic Needs Satisfaction Scale (BNSS) which is a quantitative measure of Maslow's needs in children. This scale was then piloted on a large group of children and it was found to have a reliability of 0.83 suggesting that it is a highly valid tool for measurement of needs. On the other hand, McClelland's theory is still most popularly subject to measurement of needs using projective methods like the TAT (Thematic Apperception Test). Such measures are not very valid because they involve subjective interpretation of stories narrated by participants in response to the ambiguous stimuli shown, to discover which of McClelland's needs are dominant in the respondent.

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Yet another relevant issue is that of cultural differences. Maslow's theory has been criticized for focusing heavily on individual needs since it has been developed in the individualistic, Western society. For example, in Western society self-actualisation is considered to be fulfilled when one has achieved one's own best potential. However, in the non-Western society like Asian, collectivist societies, self actualisation can mean fulfilling what is best for one's family, kin or the larger society. Maslow himself later revised his hierarchy to include the need of transcendence at the top-most level, to suggest that doing something for the society beyond oneself, can infact be the highest need to be satisfied in human motivation. Even McClelland's theory has been developed in the West which is why it is also focused on individual needs for affiliation, achievement and power. To take an example from this theory, in the West it might be a useful motivator to pursue one's personal achievements such as promotions and better pay packages; but in collectivist cultures, it might be more useful to motivate employees through collective achievements like reserving job positions for one's family or achieving as bonus, holiday packages or other perks for their family, etc.

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