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MANIFEST NEED SATISFACTION IN MALE AND FEMALE COUNSELLORS

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Abstract

The present study examines the manifest needs of achievement, dominance, autonomy, and affiliation of counsellors. Results indicate that there are similarities in male and female counsellors regarding achievement, dominance, and autonomy and that there is a consistent trend for male counsellors to have higher needs for affiliation than do female counsellors on the job. Years of teaching and counselling experience appear not to influence manifest needs on the job. Affiliation needs, however, show a marginally significant increase with years of teaching experience. Experience related to counselling also affects the need for affiliation, affiliation needs increasing as related experience increases. The data are discussed in terms of developing counsellor training programs, of employing strategies for enhancing the counsellor's well-being on the job, and, hence, of improving the delivery of counselling services.

Résumé

Cette étude porte sur les besoins de réussite, de dominance, d'autonomie et d'affiliation manifestés par les conseillers. Les résultats font ressortir des similarités entre les conseillers de genre masculin et féminin en ce qui concerne la réussite, la dominance et l'autonomie. Par ailleurs, au travail, les conseillers masculins ont fortement tendance à avoir des besoins d'affiliation plus grands que ceux de leurs collègues de sexe féminin. Les années d'expérience dans l'enseignement et en counselling ne semblent pas influencer les besoins manifestes au travail. Toutefois, les besoins d'affiliation augmentent légèrement au gré des années d'expérience en enseignement. L'expérience en counselling est en relation étroite avec l'augmentation des besoins d'affiliation. Les résultats obtenus sont analysés dans l'optique 1) de l'élaboration de programmes de formation des conseillers, 2) du recours à des stratégies susceptibles de promouvoir le bien-être des conseillers en exercice et, conséquemment, 3) de l'amélioration de la qualité des services offerts en counselling.

Counsellor educators have long been investigating and proposing methods and procedures that would help them understand

the general personality characteristics and motivational needs, a key subset of personality, of counsellors in their work setting. Many researchers (Warnath & Shelton, 1976; Tiedeman, 1979; Edelwich & Brodsky, 1980) have explored a particularly pervasive work-related phenomenon, "burn-out," a phenom-

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enon which counsellors appear to experience when their jobs are not satisfying their motivational and personality needs. Warnath and Shelton (1976) assert that graduate training in counselling is not positive for most students, that the counsellor's overwhelming feeling of powerlessness on the job stems from the gap between ideals engendered in graduate school and "harsh" reality, and that the work setting is best defined as "employee under stress," a situation where the manifestation of needs like dominance and autonomy becomes almost pathological. Tiedeman (1979) both criticizes and elaborates the Warnath and Shelton (1976) views, suggesting that the essential career problem of counsellors "rests in both the situation and the counsellor". Exactly why many counsellors feel unfulfilled in their work (Garte & Rosenblum, 1978) may be better understood in terms of the specific motivational needs and qualities that counsellors manifest and have fulfilled in the work situation.

The importance of needs as a subset of general personality has, of course, a rich role in the history of psychology, and, as early as 1938, Murray postulated that motivation is a function of the power of various needs at any given time. Although he recognized the importance of physiological needs, Murray focussed on a group of "psychogenic" needs which related both to performance on a task (i.e. "achievement" – the need to do difficult tasks quickly and accurately) and to the interpersonal relationships established during the performance of the task (i.e. "dominance" – the need to influence or control others; "affiliation" – the need to form friendships and cooperative groups; "autonomy" – the need to strive for independence and to resist coercion). A later suggestion by Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) that needs are determinants, along with work itself, of both job attitudes and job satisfaction, makes need expression in the job situation fundamental to the concept of psychological well-being. The challenge that faces counsellor educators is, at least, to clarify those manifest needs that counsellors possess and to assist counsellors to shape those qualities in themselves and elements in their work setting that would help them fulfill their manifest needs. It may assist an understanding of situationally and individually based problems in the counselling process.

Enhancing an understanding of the expression of personality characteristics on the

job is the work of Holland (1973), who developed a theory of vocational choice which relates personality types, needs, and work interests to explain behavior in the work setting. Preferred activities, interests, values and needs combine to create a personality type that exhibits certain behavioral qualities on the job.

Clarifying the manifest needs of counsellors-in-training and counsellors-on-the-job may enhance the understanding of the counsellor's personality characteristics and provide insight into the types of activities requisite for professional development, job satisfaction, and individual well-being. Disparities between training and job realities, feelings of powerlessness on the job, and strategies for coping rather than copping out may well be founded upon and framed within need fulfillment on the job. With this background in mind, the present study was undertaken to explore the potential relationship between the manifest needs of achievement, autonomy, affiliation, and dominance that counsellors express in the work setting.

Method

Subjects

The subjects were 15 male and 14 female school counsellors who either were taking or had recently taken a course in career counselling offered at the University of Victoria. All volunteered to participate in the study without receiving credit for course requirements.

Instrument

To address specific job-related needs, Steers and Braunstein (1976) developed the Manifest Needs Questionnaire (MNQ) to measure achievement, affiliation, autonomy, and dominance needs in current work settings. The findings demonstrate a relationship between the four need sub-scales and a number of work attitudes, job performance, organizational attachments, attendance, organizational hierarchy, and leadership attributes all of which are consistent with current themes of job attitudes, work performance, and behavioral performance. Both standard validation and reliability measures obtain satisfactory internal and external consistency, making the MNQ a potentially useful tool in understanding general personality and specific need expression on the job.

Harvey, Ruhland, and Ruffner (1979) extended the validity of the MNQ scale to a college population, the results indicating a positive relationship between achievement and academic performance (GPA) for engineering students of both sexes. Harvey and France (1982) evaluated the validity of the MNQ in a study focussing on working nurses and nursing students. The data corroborate other researches by showing consistent interrelationships in the need sub-scales and a positive relationship between achievement needs and GPA. Generally it appears that achievement sub-scales are valid for anticipated as well as for current work settings and that the interrelationships among the sub-scales may be utilized to enhance the understanding both of needs manifested in the work setting and of needs anticipated to be satisfied in the work setting. The MNQ, thus, offers much potential as a sampling tool in vocational counselling, student selection, and work design.

Materials and Procedure

The assessment form, the MNQ, consisted of 20 written statements directed at four distinct areas of needs (i.e., Statement One read: "I do my best work when my job assignments are fairly difficult," and Statement Two read: "When I have a choice, I try to work in a group instead of by myself.") A seven-point Likert-type scale was provided for each item with "always" and "never" as the poles for each continuum. All subjects were asked to complete the MNQ and to provide information regarding their sex, years of teaching and counselling experience, years of experience related to counselling, current job position, and membership in professional counselling organizations.

Results

Correlations were calculated to measure interrelationships between sub-scale scores, and one-way analyses of variance were used to assess relationships between sub-scale scores and sex, years of teaching experience, years of counselling experience, years of related counselling experience, and membership in professional organizations.

Table 1 illustrates the interrelationships of the sub-scales of manifest achievement, autonomy, dominance, and affiliation needs. The results indicate significant positive relationships between autonomy and achievement and between dominance and achieve-

Table 1
Correlations of Sub-scales or Manifest Needs in Both Male and Female Counsellors^a

	Achievement	Affiliation	Autonomy
Achievement			
Affiliation	-.12		
Autonomy	.45*	-.07	
Dominance	.36**	-.34	.10

^a*n* = 20 **p* < .01 ***p* < .05

ment for the total sample. Comparing the responses in the four sub-scales by the male counsellors with the responses by the female counsellors (see Table 2) reveals no significant differences in manifest achievement, autonomy, and dominance needs; there was, however, a trend ($.05 < p < .10$) for the male counsellors to rate manifest affiliation needs ($\bar{x} = 3.32$) higher than did the female counsellors ($\bar{x} = 3.11$).

Table 2
Comparisons of Mean Sub-Scale Ratings of Male and Female Counsellors

NEEDS		GROUP	
		Male ^a	Female ^b
Achievement	<i>M</i>	2.61	2.43
	<i>SD</i>	.49	.50
Affiliation	<i>M</i>	3.32*	3.11*
	<i>SD</i>	.42	.27
Autonomy	<i>M</i>	3.01	3.17
	<i>SD</i>	.61	.62
Dominance	<i>M</i>	2.83	2.74
	<i>SD</i>	.52	.47

^a*n* = 15 ^b*n* = 14 * $.05 < p < .10$

There are no significant relationships between sub-scale scores and years of either counselling or teaching experience. There was, however, a trend for affiliation needs to

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increase with years of teaching experience for the overall sample (3.10 to 3.22 to 3.40 in groups with less than 3, 4 – 9, and more than 10 years teaching experience). Comparing sub-scale scores and years of experience related to counselling revealed significant differences in affiliation and dominance needs. Counsellors with 1 – 4 years of related experience rated affiliation needs significantly lower, $F(2,26) = 4.07$, $g = .05$, than did counsellors either with zero years of related experience or with more than five years related experience (2.93 versus 3.30 and 3.22, respectively). As well, counsellors with more than five years related experience rated dominance needs significantly lower, $F(2,26) = 5.54$, $p < .001$, than did counsellors with zero or 1 to 4 years of related experience (2.49 versus 2.95 and 3.10, respectively). There are no significant positive relationships between membership in a professional organization and manifest achievement, dominance, and autonomy needs, but counsellors in professional organizations (such as the British Columbia Counsellor's Association) rated affiliation needs marginally but nonsignificantly higher ($.05 < p < .10$) than did counsellors not in a professional counselling group (3.27 versus 2.96, respectively).

Discussion

The data, which should be considered a part of an initial and ongoing investigation of the manifest needs of counsellors expressed on the job, both suggest some interesting theoretical and pragmatic implications and extend the utility of the MNQ in several ways. The findings indicate strong similarities between male and female counsellors regarding the manifest needs of achievement, dominance, and autonomy and a consistent trend for male counsellors to have higher needs for affiliation than do female counsellors on the job. For both male and female counsellors, autonomy and dominance needs were positively correlated with manifest achievement needs on the job, and there was a trend for dominance to be inversely related to affiliation. Overall, neither years of teaching experience nor years of counselling experience appear to influence manifest needs expression on the job (counter-intuitively!) although, interestingly, manifest affiliation needs show a marginally significant increase with years of teaching experience. Experience related to counselling, however, obtains differences in both manifest dominance and affiliation needs. Counsellors with no related experience (zero years) and counsellors

with a fairly rich related background (more than five years of related experience, which is usually teaching) have higher manifest affiliation needs than do those with moderate (1 to 4 years) levels of related experience. As well, those counsellors with the most related experience have the lowest dominance needs. Membership in a professional organization shows no overall manifest need differences, but there was, curiously, a consistent but nonsignificant difference in that counsellors belonging to a professional group express higher manifest affiliation needs than do counsellors not belonging to a professional group ("Birds of a feather...!"). Exactly what the preliminary data mean will be addressed later.

A postexperimental comparison of the data on counsellors' manifest needs with data from previous studies revealed some interesting results. Across all sub-scales of the MNQ, employed nurses attempting to fulfill the entrance requirements for the Baccalaureate of Science in Nursing program (B.Sc.N.) at the University of Victoria (Harvey & France, 1982) had higher needs manifestation and satisfaction in work setting than did the counsellors. The difference between the nurses and counsellors regarding manifest achievement needs (4.04 vs 2.52, respectively) was particularly glaring, a difference attributable, perhaps, to the fact that the nurses, although employed and satisfying some achievement needs on the job, were attempting to enter another area of work-related achievement, a program that demands the meeting of particularly rigorous experiential, recent academic, and professional performance criteria. A study by Harvey and France (1982) showed a significant relationship between the manifest needs of employed nurses and the *anticipated* manifest needs of B.Sc. Nursing students, and indicated that the achievement needs of both nursing groups predicted GPA. Comparing the anticipated needs of the B.Sc.N. students with manifest needs for counsellors yielded the same difference as did the comparison of the manifest needs of counsellors and employed nurses. It appears that, as measured by the MNQ, nurses have especially higher manifest needs than do counsellors.

The theoretical and pragmatic implications of the results are many, hinting at several interpretations of the needs facet of the counsellor's personality and well-being as expressed on the job. It is fairly clear that the manifest needs of counsellors differ considerably from

those expressed by nursing students and employed nurses, although both areas are considered to be populated by professionals whose work is characterized by achievement, helping, succoring, and responsibility behaviors. It is not immediately obvious why the counsellors' overall manifest needs and, especially, achievement needs are so low. What is achievement for the counsellor becomes an important question! Whether or not the primary purpose of counselling employment is to engage in counselling or to enhance the development of the individual (counsellor and/or client) is being hotly debated (Tiedeman, 1979). The primary purpose of counselling remains elusive, and, not unreasonably, it may be that achievement on the job is, at least, equally elusive. And, although the definition of the "process" of nursing remains abstruse, achievements and general needs by nurses on the job or achievements that nurses expect to have satisfied on the job are apparently obvious. But why are the manifest needs counsellors express on the job so low? It could be that, as Garte and Rosenblum (1978) have suggested, few counsellors feel fulfilled on the job and that most counsellors would choose to engage in leisure time activities, given the chance! Interestingly, the more that needs for autonomy are satisfied on the job, the more the achievement needs are satisfied.

The focus of the study, however, is with the counsellors, and there are some tentative inferences which may be drawn from the data. Although males may have more manifestations of affiliation needs on the job, both male and female counsellors show similar manifestations of achievement, autonomy, and dominance needs on the job. The needs, also, appear to be quite stable over time, whether it is teaching time or counselling time. The trend that affiliation needs increase with teaching time and the robust effects of related experience on affiliation needs are worth brief consideration. The current and almost tyrannical preoccupation with "burn-out" in teachers and counsellors may be, albeit waggishly, related to increased affiliation needs in that "misery loves company" and the more the misery, the more the need for the diffusing qualities of increased company. That counsellors in the work setting ultimately experience sensations of powerlessness and futility concomitant with feelings of alienation, apathy, and frustration has become both predictable and, shockingly, nearly axiomatic. The "discovery" by Garte

and Rosenblum, (1978) "that counsellors were not satisfying some very basic needs through their work" (p. 158) is generally supported by the current findings. The satisfaction of work-related achievement needs remains elusive for the counsellor, and achievement needs are apparently not being satisfied or manifested in substantial form in the work setting. Affiliation needs, however, are relatively high; it may be one area of personality and needs where professional life is fulfilling and where work affords the potential for personal enrichment.

The study, of course, is a preliminary one, and, because of the nature of the selection process and the rather small number of subjects, any generalizing must be undertaken with caution and extreme care. Further researches are being conducted to broaden the data base, to measure exactly how manifest needs dovetail with other personality characteristics expressed in the work setting, to relate manifest needs to both job satisfaction and job facet satisfaction measures (Zenisek & Rowney, 1980), and to puzzle out those positive aspects of the work setting which can be defined, nurtured, and developed. The available and current data may be utilized, however, if one assumes that the counsellor's needs and the job itself are determinants of job satisfaction and that they interweave to modulate personal well-being. Graduate training programs and work activities can be constructed in a fashion consonant with the qualities and motivational needs of the individual counsellor. It is a fact (Warnath & Shelton, 1976) that young counsellors deliver most of the direct services, that counsellors with more than 10 years of professional experience engage primarily in administrative functions and teaching, and that involvement in individual counselling guarantees neither status nor fiscal success. It is mandatory, thus, that both educational and work programs be designed to enhance the satisfaction and well-being of counsellors, to allow the expression of specific qualities and measurable needs, and to maximize attachment and loyalty to the profession. Improving job satisfaction and fulfillment will, hopefully, improve both the counsellor and the service delivered by the counsellor. In this regard, it is recommended that the suggestions of Warnath and Shelton (1976) be reviewed in order to assist the combatting of "burn-out" and the maintenance and enhancement of job satisfaction. It is the goal of the researchers to address these extant problems and to offer in later articles some

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specific, direct approaches to an understanding of the "gestalten" of the counsellor's personality script and its expression in the work setting.

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