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Investigating Power Motivation in Law Enforcement Aspirants: A Study of Pakistani University Students using Human Figure Drawing Technique

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ABSTRACT

This study assess the power motivation through Human Figure Drawing of candidates appeared for selection in Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) of Pakistan. The study adopted a cross-sectional study design. The study was conducted at different colleges and universities of Karachi, Sindh from October 2023 till March 2024. The participants were 200 young adults ranging from age 17 to 28 that is the age range of average college / university student. The participants include 85% intermediate students, 15% graduate/ postgraduate students. Considerable number of candidates appeared for role in LEAs were found to have power motivation (68.5%). The findings suggest that the candidates for LEAs exhibit aggressive tendencies, an authoritarian attitude, and power motivation. However, further research employing advanced research techniques, such as longitudinal studies or experimental designs, are needed to explore these traits in greater depth to elucidate their implications for recruitment, training, and organizational culture of LEAs.

Introduction

There is research evidence suggesting that the Human Figure Drawing Test (HFDT) can provide insights into various facets of personality, including emotional stability, self-esteem, cognitive functioning, interpersonal relationships, and creativity Körner, R., & Schütz, A. (2023). There is limited research specifically examining the relationship between power motivation and HFD. Most of the research on the HFD has focused on its use in assessing personality traits and emotional

states, rather than specific motivational constructs such as power motivation (R. Körner and A. Schütz,2.23).

Considering a lack of evidence that directly correlates HFDT interpretations and power motivation, here we quote variables of aggression and authoritarian attitude and their relationship with power motivation. Alongside, indicators of aggression and authoritarian attitude are outlined. Research findings from two separate researchers shed light on the relationship between aggression and power motivation. Körner & Schütz (2023) explored the influence of power motivation on aggression tendencies and found that individuals with high power motivation are more likely to exhibit aggressive behavior. This study suggested that the need for power enhances aggressive trends, as people may fall back to assertive and dominating attitudes to accomplish their goals. Moreover, Ornstein (2021) studied correlation between power motivation and aggression with regards to self-esteem. He stated that the people who have high self and high-power motivation will likely show aggressive attitude when in comparison with the people who do not have such high levels of high-power motivation. This shows that power motivation aggregates the impact of high self-esteem on aggressive attitudes. Collectively, these findings hint a positive correlation between power motivation and aggression, where people are motivated by the need for power motivation, they may have more persuasion towards aggressive tendencies while following their goals. Pointers of aggression on HFD also include the existence of violent imagery, such as figures involved in physical disputes (Koppitz, 1968). Furthermore, drawings show destruction and damage to the environment. The objects inside the picture also suggest latent aggression and weak impulse control (Machover, 1949). Piercing, bony lines in the drawing instead of flat and smooth can convey an idea of aggression and resentment (Goodenough, 1926). Additionally, when dark and bold colors are used, especially in those areas which are related to aggression, it may indicate aggressive predisposition (Hammer, 1958). Overall, the drawings of people who have high aggression display figures that show hostility, violence and weak impulse control, it also exhibits latent aggressive temperament. The research shows correlation between motivation and aggression, that's why it is important to look for power motivation in people who made drawings which contain aggressive tendencies.

Moreover, Machover (1949) noted that drawings showing minimal interaction or cooperation between figures, with one figure dictating the actions of others, reflect an authoritarian orientation (Machover, 1949). Overall, the drawings of an individual with an authoritarian attitude are expected to convey a sense of dominance, control, and hierarchy, reflecting their inclination towards imposing their will on others. Correlating the findings of the above research that related power motivation with authoritarian attitude, it is noteworthy to look for power motivation in subjects who's drawings contain authoritarian features.

Overall, there is limited research specifically examining the indication of power motivation on the HFDT, but there is some evidence to suggest that the power motivation indicated on HFDT i.e. through indication of aggression and authoritarian attitude and their relationship with power motivation as established above.

Human Figure Drawing

The Human Figure Drawing Test (HFD) is a projective psychological assessment tool that originated in the early 20th century, developed by Florence Goodenough in 1926 and refined by Elizabeth Koppitz in 1968. In this test people are asked to draw a human figure, usually a man and a woman, to be analyzed on a predetermined criterion. HFD is based upon the idea that drawings

of human figures produced by the individual's provides insight into their personality characteristics, emotional conditions and cognitive abilities.

HFD has long been used in different frameworks, including clinical psychology, educational psychology and forensic psychology. It is thought to be a valued tool for the assessment of personality traits and emotional conditions and used to be important to classify cognitive impairment. However, it is significant to know that this HFD is a projective test and assessment of the HFD remains subjective to the experience and knowledge of the psychologist. It is suggested that it should be used along with the other personality assessment tools and clinical observations/ investigations to understand an individual's psychological capabilities (Antonaskis et al., 2004).

Power Motivation

Power motivation is a vital variable in psychological as well as psychometric studies which has attained substantial importance from psychologists/ Human scientists because of its impact on individuals' behaviors and social attitudes. Research has shown that the people with high power motivation are likely to arise as leaders and can be perceived as an effective leader by society and colleagues (Galinsky et al, 2003). Considering the role of power motivation in leadership can be helpful to develop leadership programs and be helpful to the organizations to nurture future leaders.

Research suggests that the HFD usually provides insight into multiple facets of personality including emotional stability, cognitive abilities, self-esteem, interpersonal relations, while there is limited research which specifically explains the relationship between HFD and power motivation. Research largely focused on the use of HFD in assessment of the personality traits and emotional states, instead of motivational construct like power motivation (Antonakis et al., 2004).

Review of Literature

Power motivation influences the person's tactics regarding decision making potentially, it can lead them more towards self-interest and less towards collective decision-making processes. Learning how power motivation affects decision making provides a basis to understanding how these factors influence a person's or groups decision making procedure (Guinote et al., 2002).

All those individuals who have high motivation are prone to use intimidating and manipulating strategies to influence others. To understand the role of power motivation in social settings, can explain the subtilities of power within a social setting or in an organization (Fast et al., 2009).

Powe motivation helps to develop social dynamics in a group, it also affects the way how individuals interact with others. Assimilating the effects of power motivation on a group helps to improve performance abilities of a team when working in collaboration (Winter & Stewart, 1977).

Power motivation also influences different features of organizational behavior, comprising employee motivation, job satisfaction and culture of the organization. It also explains the role of power motivation to develop policies in organizational culture to improve the well-being and efficiency of the employee (McClelland. 1961).

Power motivation has a vital variable in psychology which plays an important role in shaping individuals' behaviors and social features. Studying power motivation also provides us with valued insight into leadership efficiency, decision making, social impact and behaviors in an organization,

which eventually contribute to having better visibility of human behaviors and tactics to improve the outcomes (Guinote et al., 2002).

HFD has been discussed in different studies over a period, which explained its efficacy as an instrument for assessment of different features of personality. Few studies along with their findings are mentioned here.

Koppitz (1968) examined the correlation between HFD and emotional stability. She explained that individuals who made figures with overstated structures or who did not draw some body parts were more inclined to have weak impulse control. This shows that HFD provides good insight into an individual's emotional stability.

In an another by Hammer (1995) investigated the association between HFD and self-esteem. He revealed that all those who drew human figures meticulously along with minute details and bright colors had higher self-esteem than the people who drew vice versa. Resultantly it shows that HFD gives insight into one's self-esteem as well.

In a study published in 1994 by Naglieri and Pfeiffer (1994), it is concluded that individuals who did not draw hands and feet were inclined to have lower cognitive functioning ability. Thus, it proves that HFD also provides insight into an individual's cognitive functioning.

Overall, the above-mentioned studies propose that HFD proves to be an effective instrument for assessment of different facets of personality, including emotional stability, self-esteem, cognitive functioning, interpersonal relationship and creativity. Nevertheless, it is crucial to note that despite being a projective test, interpretation of HFD remains subjective and to the judgment of the psychologist. It should always be used in combination with other assessment tools and clinical notes to have a wide range of understanding of individual's psychological issues.

Figures drawn with exaggerated features or expressions of power, such as stern facial expressions or clenched fists, may further illustrate the individual's authoritarian disposition (Buck, 1948). Moreover, Machover (1949) noted that drawings showing minimal interaction or cooperation between figures, with one figure dictating the actions of others, reflect an authoritarian orientation (Machover, 1949). Overall, the drawings of an individual with an authoritarian attitude are expected to convey a sense of dominance, control, and hierarchy, reflecting their inclination towards imposing their will on others. Correlating the findings of the above research that related power motivation with authoritarian attitude, it is noteworthy to look for power motivation in subjects who's drawings contain authoritarian features.

Overall, while there is limited research specifically examining the indication of power motivation on the HFDT, there is some evidence to suggest that power motivation maybe indicated on HFDT i.e. through indication of aggression and authoritarian attitude and relationship with power motivation as established above.

Significance of Study

There is a significant lack of information regarding this topic in Pakistan. The selection of effective members for the LEAs is crucial, as they play a critical role in the safety and security of the nation. Power motivation is a key attribute for leadership success, and the HFD test offers a unique, non-verbal assessment tool to gauge this trait. By investigating the power motivation of aspirants to join LEAs through HFD, this research aims to contribute to the development of a more

effective selection process, enhancing the leadership quality and operational effectiveness of the LEAs of Pakistan. The findings will provide valuable insights for human resource management, leadership development, and psychological assessment in high-stakes professions.

Objectives of Study

To investigate the assessment of power motivation through HFD which is a projective psychological test used to assess various aspects of an individual's personality, including motivation.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis of this study is that the HFD test will be a significant predictor of aggression and authoritarianism among LEA aspirants with concomitant power-motivation.

Methodology

Participants and Procedure

The participants were 200 young adults ranging from age 17 to 28, that is the age range of average college/ university students. The participants include all those students who have applied for selection in Law Enforcement Agencies for any role and rank and were rejected or failed the induction testing procedure, sample consists of 85% intermediate students, 15% graduate/ postgraduate students. All the participants for the research were Pakistani and lived in the different vicinities of Karachi, Sindh. Majority of the participants (75%) are of age, ranging from 17-22.

The sample selected comprised of young adults, who were assessed within one year of their rejection/ failure to join LEAs. The participants were approached based on convenient sampling techniques. All the candidates who failed to join LEAs due to any reason were included in the study. The subjects were provided paper and pencil, and test instructions were given, for example, “draw a whole figure, not a stick figure.” Consent was taken from the participants before data collection. The sample size for this study was large enough that appropriate analysis can be run on it to gather accurate findings, reliability of the test can remain intact.

Measurements

The study employed measures.

a) Draw a Person Test, a Screening Procedure for Emotional Disturbance.
b) Interview

Draw a Person Test: Screening Procedure for Emotional Disturbance (DAP: SPED)

The data collected with the help of projective techniques of Human Figure Drawing Test. The Human Figure Drawing Test has evolved over many years of clinical use. The original Draw-A-Person test (DAP) was created by Florence Goodenough 1926 and later modified by Dale B. Harris. It remains in use as the prominent human figure drawing measure applicable across the life span. For this study, draw a Person Test: Screening Procedure for Emotional Disturbance (DAP: SPED) was used. The DAP-SPED scoring system is based on the frequency of items in a human figure drawing associated with emotional problems occurring in nonclinical versus clinical populations (Naglieri et al., 1991). The items include the figure’s dimensions, placement on the

page, and content (e.g., transparencies, restarts, erasures, characteristics, etc.). The test's internal consistency, as reported in the test manual, was .76 (ages 6–8), .77 (ages 9–12), and .71 (ages 13–30), and the interrater reliability was .91. Studies have shown DAP: SPED validity in differentiating adolescents with emotional or behavioral disorders from control group (Naglieri & Pfeiffer, 1992) and special education students from regular education peers (McNeish & Naglieri, 1993). DAP: SPED scores were found to be particularly effective at measuring internalized behavioral disturbance, as compared to externalizing behavioral disturbance, in individuals, receiving outpatient or residential treatment (Matto, 2002). Furthermore, DAP: SPED scores successfully differentiated delinquent adolescents who were placed in educational correctional settings for behavioral problems from matched control group (N = 154; d value = 1.6; Matavich,1998). These validation studies show promising results regarding the DAP: SPED's predictive ability of emotional and behavioral disturbance which is particularly valid for given study.

Interview

A structured interview was also conducted to verify the findings of the DAP test which also helped to determine the insight of the aspirants about their own emotional issues.

Results

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of study variables (n=200)

Variable group	***N***	***F***
Aggression	62	31%
Authoritarian attitude	75	37.5%
No Emotional Issues	63	31.5%
Power motivation	200	100%

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of the sample groups (n=200)

Sample Groups	***N***	***F***	***Mean***	***SD***
1st Group	62	31%	51.3	98.9
2nd Group	75	37.5%		
3rd Group	63	31.5%		
	200	100%		

The following results were drawn from the data obtained in the shape of mean standard scores, SD, and qualitative interpretations. Among the three groups low to moderately severe levels of emotional disturbance prevail as the mean standard scores varied from 51.3 to 98.9. DAP drawings of significant number of individuals i.e. n = 62 / 200 (31%), classified as group one, revealed indicators of aggression. DAP drawings of significant number of individuals i.e. n = 75 / 200 (37.5%), classified as group two, revealed indicators of authoritarian attitude. Self-DAP drawings of significant number of individuals i.e. n = 63 / 200 (31.5%), classified as group three, revealed no indicators of aggression and authoritarian attitude. The presence of aggression and authoritarian attitude in 68.5% of subjects indicates presence of power motivation in the same number of

candidates as correlations established above. Hence, DAP was employed for assessment of aggression, authoritarian attitude, and power motivation. Many candidates who appeared to have a role in LEAs were found to have shown aggression (31%), authoritarian attitude (37.5%) and power motivation (68.5%).

Discussions

The findings of the study suggested that aspiring applicants in LEAs displayed significant tendencies towards aggression, authoritarian attitude and power motivation. During initial analysis and qualitative data, it was revealed that the noteworthy proportion of the participants showed characteristics revealing these attributes. This is in line with previous research of Kuzmenko, (2009) and korner & Schutz. (2003) indicates that people inclined towards military profession often display assertive and dominant personality traits.

The occurrence of aggression among aspiring LEAs personnel highlights the significance of understanding and addressing this aspect within military recruitment and training processes. While a specific level of assertiveness is essential for military roles, excessive aggression may lead to negative results such as conflict acceleration misconduct. Therefore, approaches for managing and channeling aggression practically should be contemplated in LEAs training programs.

Moreover, the presence of an authoritarian attitude among aspirants for Law Enforcement Agencies roles raises questions about leadership styles and organizational culture within military institutions. While some degree of hierarchy and discipline is essential in military settings, excessive authoritarianism may hinder innovation, collaboration, and adaptability. Future research should explore the impact of authoritarian leadership on unit cohesion, morale, and overall effectiveness within military contexts.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the Human Figure Drawing test be used to assess power motivation among candidates applying in the Law Enforcement Agencies of Pakistan, acknowledging both its positive and negative aspects. Candidates with high positive power motivation (e.g., desire for impact, leadership, and achievement) should be prioritized for leadership roles, while those with high negative power motivation (e.g., desire for control, dominance, and manipulation) should be flagged for further evaluation and potential leadership development programs to mitigate potential negative effects. Training initiatives should focus on cultivating adaptive power motivation, emphasizing ethical leadership, and promoting a culture of accountability and transparency. Additionally, the HFD test should be used in conjunction with other assessments to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of candidates' leadership potential.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the current study provides valuable insights into the psychological profiles of individuals seeking roles in the armed forces. The findings suggest that aspirants for military positions often exhibit aggressive tendencies, an authoritarian attitude, and power motivation. However, further research employing advanced research techniques, such as longitudinal studies or experimental designs, is needed to explore these traits in greater depth and elucidate their implications for military recruitment, training, and organizational culture. By gaining a deeper understanding of the psychological characteristics of military personnel, military institutions can

better tailor their recruitment processes and leadership development programs to foster a cohesive, effective, and resilient force capable of meeting the challenges of modern warfare.

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