

Abstract

This study was to examine the relationship between implicit power motive, responsibility, inhibition and leadership competence. It was supposed that the pattern of high power motive, high responsibility and high inhibition would positively correlated with high level of leadership competence. Eighty ethnic Chinese adults living in Hong Kong participated in this study. Implicit power motive, responsibility sense and inhibition level were measured in Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) and leadership competence was measured with Leadership Skills Inventory (LSI) which was a 125-item Likert scale. Results showed that the correlation between power motive and leadership competence was marginally significant. A three-way interaction of power motive, responsibility and inhibition was found. After further investigating the three-way interaction, the pattern of low power motive, high responsibility sense and high inhibition level was found positively correlated with high level of leadership competence. The results suggested that power motive generally had a positive effect on leadership, and responsibility and inhibition did not play a role on leadership when power motive was high. Yet, when power motive was low, responsibility and inhibition could compensate the low power motive and had a positive effect on leadership. This finding could possibly be explained by the emphasis on responsibility and moral standard in Chinese leadership style.