

THE RELATION BETWEEN DARK TRIAD TRAITS AND PSYCHOLOGICAL MORBIDITY AMONG EMERGING ADULTS

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ABSTRACT

Ever since the Dark Triad of personality which includes Machiavellianism, Narcissism and Psychopathy, was published there has been a rapidly expanding literature that explains and studies the behaviours and attitudes that are associated with this cluster of dark personalities. The Dark Triad is a personality framework that consists of three socially aversive or negative traits- Narcissism is the tendency to seek admiration and special treatment. Machiavellianism refers to the willingness to manipulate others for one's own benefit or purposes. Psychopathy is characterised by callous, insensitive, impulsive behaviour lacking empathy or remorse. Although these traits are prevalent in non-clinical populations, they do place individuals at risk for maladjustment, including psychopathology. The presence of high levels of the dark personality traits can result in maladjustments among individuals while there are some who may also benefit from it. Besides, understanding of how dark traits are implicated in psychopathology is still limited. This study aims to explore the relation between Dark traits of personality and Psychological morbidity among emerging adults. The sample, 102 males in the age group of 18 to 25 years, completed the Short Dark Test (SD3) and the general Health Questionnaire (GHQ). The results were discussed in this paper.

Keywords: The Dark Triad, Psychological Morbidity, Narcissism, Machiavellianism, Psychopath.

INTRODUCTION

Broad Overview

Ever since the Dark Triad of personality which includes Machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy, was published there has been a rapidly expanding literature that explains and

studies the behaviours and attitudes that are associated with this cluster of dark personalities (Kavanagh et. al.)

Personality is the dynamic organisation within an individual of those psychophysical systems that determine a person's unique adjustment to the environment. Various definitions of personality suggest that personality refers to that part of the individual that is most representative of the individual. This is because it not only differentiates the individual from others but also because it is what he or she is. However, an important implication of this is that in the final analysis personality consists of what is the most typical and deeply characteristic of the person.

The Dark Triad is a personality framework that consists of three socially aversive or negative traits- narcissism, machiavellianism and psychopathy.

Narcissism is the tendency to seek admiration and special treatment. Raskin et. al described narcissism as a strategy for managing self-esteem via grandiosity. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-IV-TR; American Psychiatric Association, 2000) lists a grandiose sense of self-importance as the primary element of narcissism.

Psychopathy is characterised by callous, insensitive, impulsive behaviour lacking empathy or remorse. Central characteristic elements include high impulsivity and thrill-seeking along with low empathy and low anxiety.

Machiavellianism refers to the willingness to manipulate others for one's own benefit or purposes. Christie and Geis (1970) identified those high in Machiavellianism as those with a lack of interpersonal affect in interpersonal relationships, concern with conventional morality, gross psychopathology, and low ideological commitment (McHoskey et al., 1998). Individuals high in Machiavellianism plan ahead, build alliances, and do their best to maintain a positive reputation (Jones & Paulhus, 2014).

These three traits have been found to overlap in characteristics, thus their distinctiveness can be clarified when studied together (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). Paulhus and Williams (2002) coined the term Dark Triad to encourage researchers to study the three traits in tandem for this reason.

Specific curdate-offs have not been identified in the literature; rather, individuals report levels of the traits along a continuum, with some reporting lower or higher levels. Men have been found to report higher levels of the Dark Triad traits (Paulhus & Wiliams, 2002). These differences in the traits among men and women could be attributed certain to biological processes, as men may have a tendency to engage in certain behaviours more so than women, such as risk-taking

behaviours. Besides gender differences may also be a result of social processes, as women may engage in certain behaviour more than men, such as focusing on one's admiration by others due to social norms of the importance of appearance of women.

General Health

The World Health Organization describes mental health as a state of well-being in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with normal stressors of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community. It is thus a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.

There are six components of health

1. Physical
2. Social
3. Environmental
4. Emotional
5. Spiritual
6. Intellectual/ Mental

Physical health: It refers to the way our body functions. This includes eating right, exercising regularly and being at one's recommended body weight. Thus, it includes all aspects of our physical self, including being free of disease and sickness.

Social Health: it refers to the quality of one's relationships with family, friends, peers, colleagues and other social groups that one may be a part of.

Environmental Health: it refers to the quality of air, water, food and land around us, and all the other aspects of our physical environment.

Spiritual Health: it includes maintaining harmonious relations with other living beings around us. It also includes having a spiritual direction and purpose in life. This includes living according to our morals, ethics and values.

Mental Health: it is defined as the state of well-being in which every individual realises her or his own potential, can cope with normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make valuable contributions to their own community.

The personality of an individual can influence all aspects of a person's life which can include their behaviours, social interactions and unique adjustments to the environment as well. The 'Dark' traits of personality as described previously has certain distinctive features as manifested by certain behaviours of individuals who possess moderate to high levels of those traits. These unique ways of behaving, coping and responding to various life situations can affect the mental health of the individuals, in ways that could be undesirable or even desirable for some individuals. This could possibly also result in the risk of developing certain psychiatric disorders.

Dark traits are also present in non-clinical populations to some extent. Although extreme forms of the Dark Triad traits may be found among some individuals, varying and often lower degrees of these traits are found amongst everyone in the population, and can even result in a social advantage (Jakobwitz & Egan, 2006). The presence of high levels of the dark personality traits can result in maladjustments among individuals while there are some who may also benefit from it. The intensity of these traits varies in every individual. Individuals who are found to have high levels of these dark traits are often perceived as braggarts, cheaters, manipulators, sadists, trolls, bullies, or downright aggressors (Paulhus, 2014). They also strive for social dominance and may also exploit others for their own gains and purposes but they do so for various many reasons. As a result, they could place individuals at risk for maladjustment, including psychopathology. The study of how dark traits are implicated in psychopathology and may help to explain the processes involved in psychological maladjustment (Thomaes et.al.,2017). This study will focus on the relation between dark traits of personality and Psychological Morbidity among emerging adults.

Background/Premise of the study

Fifteen years ago, scholars first called for a unified approach to explore the most prominent socially aversive features of human nature, often termed the Dark Triad. Among the socially aversive personalities cited in Kowalski (2001), three have attracted the most empirical attention: Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Paulhus and Williams (2002) coined the term Dark Triad (Jones & Paulhus,2014) which included these three traits. The Dark Triad traits have often been found to be associated with behaviours and qualities that may contribute to impaired social relationship functioning including aggressive tendencies (Jones & Paulhus, 2010). These personality traits are present in all individuals at least to some extent. That is, separately, these traits can be seen on a continuum in an individual. Having high

levels of these traits can put the individual at risk of developing various maladaptive behaviours or even psychopathology. This study aims to explore the relation between Dark traits of personality and Psychological morbidity among emerging adults.

Statement of the Research Problem

Relation between the dark triad personality traits and Psychological Morbidity among emerging adults.

Rationale for the study

Although these traits are prevalent in non-clinical populations, they do place individuals at risk for maladjustment, including psychopathology. Besides, understanding of how dark traits are implicated in psychopathology is still limited. There is a dearth of published studies exploring the effect of Machiavellianism and narcissistic personality traits on the general health of individuals. This study can contribute to filling the research gap to some extent.

Significance & Scope of the Present Study

Individuals characterised by the Dark Triad traits may view another's misfortune more favourably as it positions them closer to achieving their own goals. Although extreme forms of the Dark Triad traits may be found among some individuals, varying and often lower degrees of these traits are found amongst everyone in the population, and can even result in a social advantage (Jakobwitz & Egan, 2006). Specific cut-offs have not been identified in the literature; rather, individuals report levels of the traits along a continuum, with some reporting lower or higher levels. Men have been found to report higher levels of the Dark Triad traits (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). These differences may be due to biological processes, as men may have a tendency to engage in certain behaviours more so than women, such as risk-taking behaviours. Hence it is important to know whether the presence of Dark Triad personality traits can put the individual at risk for psychiatric disorders. Further, if found that the presence of dark triad traits in an individual could be a determining factor for the individual to develop psychiatric disorders then interventions can be provided at the right time.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Non-experimental correlational research design

Variables

Variables 1. Dark Triad Traits- (narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy.)

Variables 2. General Health

Operational Definitions

Dark Triad Traits

This is a popular term that was coined in 2002 by Paulhus and Williams. Dark Triad refers to three unusually negative personality traits. Traits be considered “dark” when they are linked with interpersonal difficulties across a variety of contexts even when only modest levels of these features are present (Thomaes et.al.,2017).

Psychopathy: It is characterised by two key components- deficits in affect and deficits in self-control. The self-control deficit has remained central to criminal as well as non-criminal conceptualizations of psychopathy. (Jones & Paulhus,2013).

Narcissism: narcissism can be defined by a clash between a grandiose identity and underlying insecurity (Jones & Paulhus,2013).

Machiavellianism: It is characterised by a cynical worldview, lack of morality, and manipulateness (Jones & Paulhus,2013). Machiavellianism is a personality trait characterised by emotional detachment and tendency to manipulate others to achieve one's own goal (Bratek et.al.,2015).

General health: According to the World Health Organization, health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well being, not just the absence of disease.

Emerging adults: It is a critical developmental stage that is marked by greater independence and exploration but also feelings of instability and uncertainty (Arnett, 2004). Emerging adulthood is proposed as a new conception of development for the period from the late teens through the twenties, with a focus on ages 18-25 (Arnett, 2000).

Sample

Sample Description

A sample may be defined as a small proportion of the population that is selected for observation and analysis for the purpose of the study (Best & Kahn, 2006). The sample for this study will include emerging young adult males in the age- group of 18 to 25 years of age.

Sampling Size

A sample of 100 emerging adult males residing in India are included.

Sampling Method

The research used Purposive sampling technique in which the elements of the sample were purposefully selected on the basis of the set inclusion and exclusion criteria. The idea behind purposive sampling is to concentrate on people with particular characteristics who will better be able to assist with the relevant research. The goal of purposive sampling is to sample participants in such a way that the sample is relevant to the research question that is being asked. Thus, as the name suggests, purposive sampling is done with a particular purpose in mind. Such a sampling method can be very useful for situations where one needs to reach a targeted sample quickly.

Inclusion criteria

Males in the age group of 18-25 years residing in urban areas were selected for the study.

Exclusion Criteria

- Females
- mentally and physically challenged
- Working Population

Tools for Data Collection

Socio Demographic Sheet Name, age, gender, area of living.

Questionnaire/Scale/any other tools

1. Short Dark Triad (SD3). by Jones & Paulhus, 2014.- it is a 27-item scale designed to measure the dark traits of personality. It consists of three 9 item sub-scales. Responses are collected on 5-point Likert-type scales ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Reliability -Internal Consistency- The subscales showed Cronbach alpha coefficients ranging

from .70 to .80 in cross-validation samples (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). Two-week test-retest reliability coefficients ranged from .77 to .84 as reported by Paulhus and Jones, 2011.

2. General health Questionnaire (28 items). The 28-item version (GHQ-28) was developed by Goldberg in 1978 as a screening tool to detect those who are likely to have or be at risk of developing a psychiatric disorder (Sterling, 2011). The test-retest reliability has been reported to be 0.78 to 0.90 (Robinson & Prince, 1982). Inter-rater reliability was found to be $\alpha = .90$ (Failde & Ramos, 2000). The 28 items in the scale are chosen and grouped under the four subscales of

1. Anxiety and insomnia
2. Social dysfunction
3. Depression
4. Somatic symptoms

It is a self-administered questionnaire which focuses on two major areas:

- Inability to carry out normal functions
- Appearance of new and distressing phenomenon

This tool is mainly used to detect psychiatric distress related to general medical illness. Respondents indicate if their current state differs from their usual state, thereby assessing change in characteristics of the individual with regard to their general health.

Procedure for Data Collections

For the purpose of this study, individuals meeting the inclusion and exclusion criteria were selected. The tests were administered through google forms. These individuals were then briefed about the nature and purpose of the study and were assured that their identity and responses would be kept confidential and would only be used for research purposes. The researcher also informed the participants that they had the liberty to ask questions for clarifications and could withdraw from participating in the study at any point, without any prejudice. Only after the consent to collect data from them was given, the sociodemographic sheet, the short dark triad test (SD3), and the general health questionnaire were administered. The participants were asked to be honest while giving the responses and not to skip any item or statement.

After the completion of data collection, the responses were scored, analysed and discussed.

Procedure for Data Analysis

Data analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Pearson product moment correlation will be used to analyse the obtained data. It is a measure of the strength and direction of association that exists between two variables measured on at least an interval scale.

Ethical Considerations

Conducting any research on human participants, it is required to follow standardised and well-established rules to the fullest. This is done in order to ensure and maintain genuineness and authenticity in the research. A research which is considered unethical, is not reliable or valid and cannot be generalised to the larger population.

For this purpose, Informed consent was obtained from the participants before proceeding with the scales. Data was collected only after briefing the participants about the aim and purpose of the study, informing them their right to withdraw from the study at any point, and the procedures that would be involved. From the researcher's part, confidentiality of names of the participants and results was maintained. Moreover, participants were informed that they will be free to withdraw from the study at any point of time. It ensured that physical or mental harm of any kind was not to be caused to the participants.

Hypothesis Implied

- There is a relation between narcissism and Psychological Morbidity among emerging adults.
- There is a relation between psychopathy and psychological morbidity among emerging adults.
- There is a relation between Machiavellianism and psychological morbidity among emerging adults.

Literature Review

- Lang A., Birkas B., Martin L., Kallai J. in 2017 investigated the relation between Schizotypal Traits and the Dark Triad from an Ecological Perspective on a Nonclinical Sample. Results indicated that Machiavellianism was positively associated with restricted emotional and social life. Narcissism was negatively associated with interpersonal problems.

Psychopathy was positively associated with distorted perceptions/ cognitions and disorganisation.

- Monaghan C., Bizumic B., Sellbom M., In 2016, Monaghan, Bizumic and Sellbom conducted a study which aimed to investigate associations between Machiavellianism and psychopathology from a multidimensional perspective. Results indicated that individuals can strongly endorse Machavellian tactics without necessarily holding Machyvellian views.
- Birkas B., Martin L., Kallai J., Lang A., in 2016 investigated the relationship between anxiety sensitivity and dark triad personality traits. 184 Hungarian undergraduate students completed the Short Dark Triad (SD3) and Anxiety Sensitivity Index (ASI). They found that each dark triad trait was uniquely related to different dimensions of anxiety sensitivity according to their different manipulative tactics and interpersonal behaviour. Their results implied that dark personalities might experience effects of anxiety as aversive or threatening as far as they interfere with their exploitative tactics.
- Birkás B., Gács B., Csathó A., in 2015 conducted a study which aimed at examining the association between Dark Triad personalities and coping strategies. Machiavellianism and psychopathy were negatively associated with task-oriented coping and positively with the emotional oriented coping process suggesting a more emotional reaction to stress. In contrast, narcissism was found to be associated with task oriented and emotionally controlled coping. This study implies that, it is plausible to suggest that different personality traits may urge individuals to use different interpersonal behavioural strategies, which come with their own costs and benefits related to the physiological and psychological health of the individual.
- Previous research has demonstrated that people who are callous are more likely to be interpersonally aggressive. Jones D., and Neria A. in 2015 extend this finding to research on the “Dark Triad” traits, which all share a common core of callousness and manipulation. Results indicated that a common Dark Triad factor (i.e., callousness and manipulation) predicted a common aggression factor. However, the individual Dark Triad traits uniquely predicted different facets of aggression. Psychopathy positively predicted physical aggression, narcissism negatively predicted hostility, and Machiavellianism positively predicted hostility. Taken together, the findings shed light on the unique elements of the Dark Triad and their ability to predict unique forms of dispositional aggression.
- Nagler U., Reiter K., Furtner M., Rauthmann J., in 2014 examined whether socio-emotional

intelligence. (SEI) is associated with emotional manipulation of others when used by dark personalities. Results indicated that there was a positive relation between SEI scales and narcissism, while Machiavellianism showed mainly negative relations, and psychopathy showed mixed findings. Second, the relation between emotional control and emotional manipulation was moderated by psychopathy and narcissism. Machiavellianism showed no such effects. These findings suggest that narcissism and psychopathy may be taken as an indication that some dark personalities may reap benefits from EI skills in manipulating others.

- Willemsen J., Vanhuele S., Verhaeghe P., in 2011 investigated the relationship between psychopathy and lifetime experiences of depression. Their results indicated that the PCL-R scores, and the interpersonal, affective and lifestyle facets of the PCL-R, were inversely associated with depression scores. The researchers concluded that psychopathy does influence the way depression is experienced.
- Baughman H. M., Dearing S., Giammarco E., Vernon P., in 2011 examined bullying styles in relation to the Dark Triad. Psychopathy was the most strongly related to bullying, followed by Machiavellianism, and narcissism. The findings of the current study suggest that bullying in adulthood may be different than in childhood. Therefore, further studies could profitably investigate the nature of adult bullying, beyond workplace harassment and design other measures of direct and indirect bullying for use with adults.
- Petrides K. V., Vernon P. A., Schermer J. A., L. V. Veselka in 2011 presented the first behavioural genetic investigation of the relationship between trait emotional intelligence and the dark traits of Narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy. 214 participants completed Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQuePetrides, 2009), MACH-IV, Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI), and Self-Report Psychopathy Scale (SRP-III-R12). The results of this study provided clear support for all the hypotheses proposed by the researchers. Specifically, global trait EI was positively related to narcissism and negatively related to Machiavellianism and psychopathy.
- Chabrol H., Leeuwan N., Rodgers R., Sejourne N., in 2009 studied the Contributions of psychopathic, narcissistic, Machiavellian, and sadistic personality traits to juvenile delinquency. Participants were 615 high-school students who completed self-report questionnaires. Psychopathic and sadistic traits were independent predictors of delinquent behaviours in boys only. These findings suggest the importance of studying the role of sadistic traits in juvenile delinquency.

- Tritt et. Al. in 2009 assessed the relation between narcissistic personality and depressive temperament. Their results showed that narcissistic vulnerability is positively related to anxious, cyclothymic, and asthenic, in addition to depressive temperaments. They also conducted Hierarchical regression analyses that showed that depressive and anxious temperaments are separately and uniquely related to narcissistic vulnerability.
- Beech A., in 2006 attempted to link empirical literature to the theoretical background of the concept of psychopathy and the impact that this has had on the development of treatment and intervention procedures for psychopathic offenders. The article primarily focused on Hare's Psychopathy Checklist–Revised (PCL-R). The relationship between psychopathy and different types of crime is also discussed.
- Paulhus D.L., Williams K.M. in 2002 attempted to evaluate the contention that in normal samples, the Dark Triad personality traits which includes narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy, are one and the same. The researchers concluded that the Dark Triad of personalities, as currently measured, are overlapping but distinct constructs. They found that narcissism showed small positive associations with cognitive ability. The tendency for those scoring high on dark personality traits to show relatively higher levels of non-verbal IQ is intriguing.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Data analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20. Pearson product moment correlation will be used to analyse the obtained data. It is a measure of the strength and direction of association that exists between two variables measured on at least an interval scale.

In the current research the sample consisted of 102 participants, non-working, unmarried males in the age group of 18- 25 years.

General Descriptives

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics for GHQ score

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
GHQ_score	102	24.19	14.395	1.129	.239	1.232	.474
Valid (listwise)	N 102						

In the table 4.1 Descriptive statistics of the Criterion variable is shown. The total number of respondents were (N=102). The mean of GHQ score is 24.19; Standard Deviation is 14.395; Skewness is 1.129 and Kurtosis is 1.232. the values are identified between the range of -1.96 to +1.96, hence the distribution is normal.

Table 4.2 Descriptives for Narcissism Scores

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Narcissism	102	27.25	4.845	.005	.239	.016	.474
	102						

In table 4.2 descriptive statistics for the Narcissism scores is shown. The total number of participants were n=102. The mean of the Narcissism score is 27.25 and standard deviation is 4.845. The skewness is 0.055 and kurtosis is 0.16. The values are identified between the range of -1.96 to +1.96, hence the distribution is normal.

Table 4.3 Descriptives for Psychopathy Scores

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Psychopathy	102	25.35	4.698	.439	.239	2.348	.474
Valid (listwise)	N 102						

In table 4.3 descriptive statistics for the Psychopathy scores is shown. The total number of participants were n=102. The mean of the Psychopathy score is 25.35 and standard deviation is 4.698. The skewness is 0.439 and kurtosis is 2.345. The kurtosis value is not identified between the range of -1.96 to +1.96, hence the distribution is not normal.

Table 4.4 Descriptives for Machiavellianism scores

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Machiavellianism	102	31.27	4.791	-.572	.239	1.320	.474
Valid N (listwise)	102						

In table 4.4 descriptive statistics for Machiavellianism is shown. The total number of participants were n=102. The mean of the Machiavellianism score is 31.27 and standard deviation is 4.791. The skewness is 0.055 and kurtosis is 0.16. The values are identified between the range of -1.96 to +1.96, hence the distribution is normal.

Hypothesis 1: There is a significant relationship between narcissism and psychological morbidity among emerging adults.

Table 4.5 Pearson Product Moment Correlation Test- Narcissism and GHQ score

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2 tailed)
GHQ Score	24.19	14.395	102	-0.199*	.045
Narcissism	27.25	4.845			

*correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 Tailed)

For this research sample (n=102) the GHQ score (M= 24.19) and Narcissism scores (M=27.25, SD=4.845) are negatively correlated, r= -0.199, indicating a low correlation, p=0.45 and is significant at 0.05 level.

Therefore $p < 0.05$, hence the alternate hypothesis is retained. Hence there is a relation between narcissism and psychological morbidity among emerging adults.

Hypothesis2. There is a significant relationship between psychopathy and Psychological Morbidity among emerging adults.

Table 4.6 Pearson product moment correlation test- Machiavellianism and GHQ Score

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2 tailed)
GHQ Score	24.19	14.395	102	0.231*	.019
Psychopathy	25.35	4.698			

*correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

For this research sample, (n=102), the GHQ (M= 24.19, SD=14.395) and Psychopathy scores (M=25.32, SD=4.698) of the participants is positively correlated, $r = 0.231$, indicating a low correlation and significance level $p=0.19$, and is significant at 0.05 level.

Therefore, $p < 0.05$, hence the alternate hypothesis is retained. Hence, there is a relation between psychopathy and general health among emerging adults.

Hypothesis 3. There is a significant relationship between Machiavellianism and psychological Morbidity among emerging adults,

Table 4.7 Pearson product moment correlation test- Psychopathy and GHQ Score

Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (2 tailed)
GHQ Score	24.19	14.395	102	.108	.281
Machiavellianism	31.27	4.791			

For this research sample, (n=102), the GHQ (M=24.19, SD=14.395) and Machiavellianism scores (M=31.27, SD=4.791) of the participants are positively correlated, $r=0.108$, indicating low correlation and $p=0.281$ but is not significant at 0.05 level.

Therefore, $p > 0.05$, hence, the alternate hypothesis is rejected and null hypothesis is retained. Hence, there is no relation between Machiavellianism and psychological morbidity among emerging adults.

Significant Findings

The first hypothesis states that ‘There is a relation between narcissism and Psychological Morbidity among emerging adults.’ The results obtained from the Pearson Correlation shows that there is a significant negative correlation between Narcissism and Psychological Morbidity

among the participants in the sample. This means that higher the scores on the dimension of Narcissism, lower would be the GHQ scores. In a study by Vernon et. al. the global trait EI was positively related to narcissism. They presented first behavioural genetic investigation of the relationships between trait emotional intelligence (trait EI or trait emotional self-efficacy) and the Dark Triad traits of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. It is now well established that trait EI is conducive to mental health and inversely related to psychopathology (Ali et al., 2009; Malterer et al., 2008; Williams et al., 2010). Such findings by previous studies: that emotional intelligence is conducive to mental health and in previous narcissism and EI have been found to have a positive correlation, provide explanations for the significant negative relation between Narcissism and Psychological Morbidity.

The second hypothesis states that ‘There is a relation between psychopathy and Psychological Morbidity among emerging adults.’ The results obtained from the Pearson Correlation shows that there is a significant positive relation between Psychopathy and Psychological Morbidity. This means that the higher the scores are on the dimension if Psychopathy the higher are the scores on the GHQ. This finding can also be explained with the findings of the research done by Vernon et. al. where they found a negative correlation between Emotional Intelligence and psychopathy.

The third hypothesis states that ‘There is a relation between Machiavellianism and psychological Morbidity among emerging adults.’ The results obtained from the Pearson correlation shows that there is a low positive correlation between Machiavellianism and Psychological morbidity among emerging adults. It was found to be not significant.

Implications Of The Study

The results of this study have important implications to understand how certain personality traits in an individual can possibly predispose them to develop certain disorders. It also gives an insight or awareness on the detrimental aspects of personality. Further, based on such findings early interventions can be provided to those who need them.

The research was done on emerging adults and the profile of scores obtained throws light on the generation of young adults who are exposed to technology/ electronics and gaming. Besides this, rate of depressive and anxiety disorders is also on the rise especially among this particular population. Thus, such results give us a better understanding with regard to screening and then subsequent development of interventions.

Moreover, with regard to screening in organisations, there are certain positions for which these traits on a mild level would be good for the productivity of the organisation as well as there may be certain positions for which these traits would be detrimental. Thus, personality profiling on the basis of this framework could also help with person-job fit and hiring a candidate best fit for the job.

CONCLUSION

Limitations of the study

The major limitation of the present study was that only male participants were selected, this resulted in a restricted understanding of the gender differences with regard to the relationship between the two variables. Another limitation of the study was that the sample was not restricted or categorized according to the occupation or area of study of the participants. The field of study chosen by the participants could influence the GHQ scores of the participants. Moreover, since this study was conducted in 2021, during the lockdown period, only online questionnaires could be used to collect data. Data collected only through online medium could have an effect on sampling and scores.

Scope for further research

Despite the limitations drawn in this study, it still paves the way for further research. A larger sample size would be one of the ways in which the relationship of the triads with morbidity can be explored. Besides this, the present study only consisted of males in the age group of 18-25 years, further research can be done by taking a comparative gender study into account considering other age groups as well. Future exploratory research can also be carried out using more comprehensive scales for measuring both morbidity and the Dark Triad Personality traits.

The current research aimed to study the relationship between the dark triad traits of personality and Psychological Morbidity among emerging adults. The three hypotheses of the study were: There is a relation between narcissism and Psychological Morbidity among emerging adults, there is a relation between psychopathy and psychological morbidity among emerging adults, there is no relation between Machiavellianism and psychological morbidity among emerging adults.

Results of the data analysis showed that there is a significant negative correlation between narcissism and Psychological Morbidity, there is a significant positive correlation between

Psychopathy and Psychological Morbidity, and no significant correlation between Machiavellianism and Psychological Morbidity.

Many past researches have associated the dark triad traits with maladjustments and even the risk of developing clinically disorders. Hence, the results of this research does to some extent, contribute to such findings.

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