

The Relationship Between Traits of Dark Triad and Aggression among Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

The present study examines the significant relationship between traits of the dark triad and aggression among young adults, along with comparing the degree of aggression among males and females. Data was collected using the Survey method. The sample comprises 200 participants (Male- 100, Female- 100) from the Delhi NCR region. Regression analysis, One-way ANOVA, and independent t-test were used to statistically analyze the collected data and obtain results. The findings reflect that a significant relationship exists between the variables, here, dark triad components and aggression, but no noteworthy difference was noted in the degree of aggression among males and females.

Keywords: *Dark Triad, Aggression, Young Adults*

People inherently differ from one another and respond in various ways even in situations that appear to be identical. Each person has a distinct set of personality features that determine and direct their behavior. However, a person's personality can be used to anticipate their behavior. As a result, personality tests are becoming more and more common in education, business, and even health. Interviews and self-report questionnaires have been the standard methods for assessing personality. These metrics are based on human behavior and are susceptible to biases influenced by the environment, subjectivity, and culture.

The "Dark Triad" is a collective term for narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy, three undesirable personality qualities. The idea was developed in 2002 by scholars Delroy L. Paulhus and Kevin M. Williams.

The phrase "narcissism" derives its beginnings in the Greek legend of Narcissus, an avid hunter who died when he went head over heels with his own self-absorbed reflection in a body of freshwater. Narcissistic individuals are often self-centered, arrogant, boisterous, deficient in empathy, and overly susceptible to condemnation.

Machiavellianism, the name is derived from Niccolo Machiavelli, a well-known Italian diplomat, and statesman from the 16th century. He gained prominence when his novel "The

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Prince," published in 1513, was perceived as endorsing the shady practices of diplomacy's guile and deception. Duplicity, manipulation, self-interest, and a lack of both feeling and morality are characteristics of Machiavellianism.

Lack of empathy or remorse, antisocial behavior, and being manipulative and volatile are all characteristics of psychopathy. Like many other diseases, psychopathy has a range. Psychopaths frequently exhibit features such as shallow affect (limited emotional reactions), inflated sense of self-worth, compulsive lying, manipulation, lack of regret or shame, lack of empathy, behavioral issues in childhood, and impulsivity.

Aggression is a broad category of actions that can injure the self, other people, or inanimate things in the surroundings physically as well as psychologically. Aggressive actions include: (i) Aggressive behavior includes physical activities like punching, kicking, pounding, and slashing a different individual. Collateral destruction can occasionally be a manifestation of physical aggression.; (ii) Verbal entails yelling, labeling nicknames, as well as making fun of them; (iii) Relational, resulting in seeking to sabotage another person's relationships. It might entail disseminating lies and making up data on other individuals; (iv) When a human is being ignored at a social event or receives unintended praise, this is considered passive aggression. Passive-aggressive behavior typically involves the purpose of enabling premeditation to develop rather than aggressively injuring a person.

The main rationale of this study is to advance knowledge in the field of personality (dark traits) and aggression research, to examine prior findings, and to assist in finding a strategy for advancing understanding of the factors affecting aggression and how it is influenced by dark traits. The second step is to comprehend the impact of the factors- in this case, dark traits- and to use this knowledge in other contexts. to enable researchers to develop strategies for assisting people in understanding the impact personality has on our aggressiveness and behaviors. To succeed in this world and to make the most of the resources we are entitled to, in my opinion, investigating other angles and growing in openness are crucial.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A handful of research which have been done on a topic similar or close to the topic of the present study including the following:

Bryan, et al. (2023) investigated the association between anger and aggression in athletes and the Dark Triad through a Multi-sample cross-sectional design. 224 athletes (MAGE = 23.85) made up Sample 1 and 98 coach-athlete pairs (MAGE = 18.15 for athletes and 34.84 for coaches) made up Sample 2. Aspects of the Dark Triad were connected to rage and aggressiveness in both populations. Overall, the results show that the Dark Triad and anger and aggression have personal and interpersonal linkages, and they also demonstrate the possibility that athlete emotions may be influenced by the darker sides of both athlete and coach personalities.

Florin, et al (2021) investigated the link between hostility among sports students and the Dark Triad of personality. 168 students from Craiova's Department of Health Sciences, Athletics, spanning from eighteen to thirty years, including seventy-four males and ninety-four females, indulged in the investigation. Of these, one hundred engaged in solo athletic activities, and sixty-eight in collaborative activities. The instruments used comprised the Aggression Questionnaire and The Dirty Dozen: A Simple Assessment for the Darkness Triangle. Women scored higher than males in verbal aggressiveness, rage, and hostility, but

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not in physical aggression, according to the data, which also demonstrated that there were gender disparities in the types of aggression.

Yalin and Cancan (2020) observed the links between the Dark Triad and aggressive behaviors, as well as the relationships between various aggressive behaviors. 87 quantitative studies, 90 independent samples, and 41,273 people became a part of the meta-analysis following the screening and grading of the literature. Narcissism's relationship with aggressive behaviors was considerably weaker than that of the other two dark personalities in the Dark Triad, and there was a highly positive relationship between the Dark Triad and aggressive behaviors. Different factors affected the relationships: (1) Machiavellian subjects were plausibly occupied in indirect aggression, interim Psychopathic subjects were betrothed in aggression that is physically stimulated; (2) the relationship between aggression and the Dark Triad was significantly stronger in Southeast Asia than in North America, and the relationship was significantly stronger in North America than in West.

Ball, et al. (2018) tested the influence of driving rage, general aggression, impulsivity, and perceptions of malicious driving intent with the role of Dark Triad traits as potential factors in self-reported aggressive driving. N = 168 people from the general public completed a battery of online surveys. Past literature related to violence that is physically induced apropos, psychopathy, and additionally an "advanced inhibited" part of anger drivers were all found to be significant predictors of aggressive driving behaviors, accounting for 50.8% of the variance. The remaining factors had no bearing. All measurements fit into a single model, according to a structural equation model. These findings point to a tendency to physically exhibit hostility, aggravation at having one's ambitions thwarted, and a callous, impulsive temperament that may predispose one to violent driving behaviors.

Barlett (2016) assessed the Dark Triad qualities' antecedents as well as their predictive power for aggression. 599 participants, ranging in age from 18 to 83, performed the measurements. The following findings provide evidence in favor of the conceptual framework: (a) the age of the individual was related to developing adulthood facets; (b) all of the DT predicted aggression; (c) multiple growing dimensions forecasted different DT features. Results purported that validated adult developmental routes to aggression that were theoretically derived. The important growing people characteristics that served as mediators were found to be feeling in-between, negativity, and identity exploration(s). The Dark Triad characteristics serve as a significant prelude to aggressive behavior overall.

METHODOLOGY

To study and analyze the relationship between traits of the dark triad of an individual and the level of aggression.

Objectives

- To study the relationship between the traits of the dark triad and the level of aggression among young adults.
- To study the difference between the level of aggression of males and females.

Hypothesis

- There will be a significant relationship existing between Narcissism and the level of aggression among young adults.
- There will be a significant relationship existing between Machiavellianism and the level of aggression among young adults.

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- There will be a significant relationship existing between Psychopathy and the level of aggression among young adults.
- There will be a significant difference between the level of aggression of males and females.

Sample

A sample of 200 young adults was taken, wherein 100 were males and 100 were females. The age of the individuals ranged between 20-29 years.

Variables

- Independent Variable- Dark triad personality traits
- Dependent Variable- Aggression

Tool Used

Delroy Paulhus and Daniel Jones created The Short Dark Triad in 2011. It consists of 27 items, separately graded from 1 (Strongly disagree) to 5 (Strongly agree) on a rating system based on Likert ratings. Scale Dimensions: Machiavellianism, Narcissism, Psychopathy.

The Aggression Questionnaire was created in 1992 by Mark Perry and Arnold H. Buss. 29 items total, scored from 1 (Strongly uncharacteristic of me) to 5 (Strongly characteristic of me) on a Likert scale of 5-point. Components of the Scale- Physical aggression, Verbal aggression, Anger, Hostility.

Administration

This scale may be used to assess both individuals and organizations. The examiner should read instructions aloud while participants read them silently with him after getting to know the subject well. The subjects are instructed to check one choice for each item as their response.

Scoring

Short Dark Triad is a five-point scale with five choices for each item along the lines of the Likert scale. These five options are scored using a scale of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, going from highest to lowest. It is necessary to transform the acquired scores into Z-scores.

The aggression questionnaire produces four basic scales. Since It is a five-point scale with five choices for each issue along the lines of the Likert scale. These five options are scored using a scale of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 from highest to lowest. Items 7 and 18 are reverse-scored.

Procedure

A survey was used to conduct the investigation. A three-part survey was given to the participants; the first part entails demographic information, the second part included 27 items of a Short Dark triad on a 5-point Likert scale inquiring 3 dark traits, and the third part of the survey, participants were asked to indicate on a 5 point continuum how uncharacteristic or characteristic of them were 29 statements.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the research was to investigate and analyze the relationship between an individual's dark triad attributes and their degree of aggression.

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Personality is defined as, “the dynamic organization within the individual. of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristic behavior. and thought.” And human aggression is defined as any maneuver taken with the specific (immediate) intent to harm another person. The perpetrator must additionally think that their conduct will be detrimental to the person being targeted thus ensuring the victim has the incentive to cease it.

The objectives include:

- To study the relationship between the traits of the dark triad and the level of aggression among young adults.
- To study the difference between the level of aggression of males and females.

Following are the results obtained after statistically analyzing the collected data:

Multiple Regression Analysis was the method used to assess the correlation betwixt the dark triad personality traits and the level of aggression among young adults. The dependent variable (Aggression) was regressed upon predicting variables (Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy). Aggression is substantially predicted by the independent variables:

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Aggression	80.1150	16.69056	200
Narcissism	3.0870	.47025	200
Machiavellianism	3.2485	.58576	200
Psychopathy	2.1160	.52614	200

Table 1 depicts the Descriptive Statistics of the absolute data listing Mean, Standard deviation values for each of the measures for a sample of 200 participants.

Table 2: Correlations

		Aggression	Narcissism	Machiavellianism	Psychopathy
Pearson Correlation	Aggression	1.000	.046	.313	.530
	Narcissism	.046	1.000	.301	.229
	Machiavellianism	.313	.301	1.000	.395
	Psychopathy	.530	.229	.395	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Aggression	.	.259	<.001	<.001
	Narcissism	.259	.	.000	.001
	Machiavellianism	.000	.000	.	.000
	Psychopathy	.000	.001	.000	.
N	Aggression	200	200	200	200
	Narcissism	200	200	200	200
	Machiavellianism	200	200	200	200
	Psychopathy	200	200	200	200

Table 2 represents The Correlations Table which allows us to test our presumptions: It should be noticed that there is no multicollinearity between the predictor values since the correlation between the predictor variables is less than .7. Additionally, the correlation value between the predictor factors and the dependent variable for Machiavellianism and Psychopathy with Aggression is greater than .3, as shown by the values of .313 and .530,

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respectively, which indicates a correlation, whereas the value for Narcissism is .046 and indicates no link with aggressiveness.

Table 3: Variables Entered/Removed^a

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1.	Psychopathy, Narcissism, Machiavellianism ^b	.	Enter

a. *Dependent Variable: Aggression*

b. *All requested variables were entered.*

Table 3 outlines the Included and Removed variables mentioning the Dependent variable as Aggression and Predictors (Independent variables) as Dark triad personality traits- Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change	Statistics	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1			
1.	.552 ^a	.305	.294	14.02491	.305	28.612	3	198	<.001	

a. *Predictors (Constant), Psychopathy, Narcissism, Machiavellianism*

Table 4: The Model summary delineates The Adjusted R²= .294 depicting that the model explains 29.4% of the variance in aggressiveness. Coefficients were further assessed to ascertain the influence of each of the traits (Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy) on the criterion variable (Aggression). The results reveal that Narcissism doesn't have a significant relationship with aggression (B= -.113, t= -1.797, p= .074); Machiavellianism and aggression are significantly correlated (B= .151, t= 2.259, p= .025); Psychopathy and aggression are significantly correlated (B= .496, t= 7.586, p < .001).

Table 5: ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1.	Regression	16883.542	3	5627.847	28.612	<.001 ^b
	Residual	5729.128	196	196.698		
	Total	7151.710	199			

a. *Dependent Variable: Aggression*

b. *Predictors: (Constant), Psychopathy, Narcissism, Machiavellianism*

In Table 5 which is the ANOVA table, When the degree of freedom of higher mean squared variance and degree of freedom of low mean squared variance was checked for each of the dimensions of aggression, we got 2 values, Our calculated F ratio (28.612), is far more than the table value at 0.05 level (2.66) and 0.01 level (3.91) and p < .001.

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Table 6: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence	Interb	Collinearit	Statistic
							Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Tolerance	VIF
1.	Constant	45.273	7.698		5.881	<.001	30.091	60.455		
	Narcissism	-4.015	2.235	-.113	-1.797	.074	-8.422	.392	.895	1.117
	Machiavellianism	4.294	1.901	.151	2.259	.025	.545	8.043	.797	1.255
	Psychopathy	15.731	2.074	.496	7.586	<.001	11.641	19.821	.830	1.205

a. Dependent Variable: Aggression

Table 6 presents the coefficients of each of the predictors (dark triad personality traits- Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy) when regressed upon dependent variables.

Table 7: Hypotheses 1, 2, 3 results

Hypothesis	Regression Weights	B	t	p-value	Results
H1	N → A	-.113	-1.797	.074	Rejected
H2	M → A	.151	2.259	.024	Supported
H3	P → A	.496	7.586	<.001	Supported
Adjusted R Square	.294				
F (3,196)	28.612				

Note. * $p < .05$. N: Narcissism, M: Machiavelliansim, P: Psychopathy, A: Aggression.

Hence, Table 7 illustrates the Hypotheses results for the first, second, and third hypotheses. H1= The Null Hypothesis is accepted, purporting that no significant relationship is noted between Narcissism and aggression, thus H1 is rejected.

H2= The Null Hypothesis is rejected, the corollary being that a significant relationship exists between Machiavellianism and aggression, thus H2 is accepted.

H3= The Null Hypothesis is rejected, signifying that there is a significant relationship exists between Psychopathy and aggression, thus H3 is accepted.

Independent T-test of aggression among Males and Females

Table 8: Group Statistics

	Color	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Aggression	Male	100	79.9300	16.63467	1.66347
	Female	100	80.3000	16.82801	1.68280

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Table 11: ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Verbal	Between Groups	41.405	1	41.405	3.133	.078
	Within Groups	2616.470	198	13.214		
	Total	2657.875	199			
Anger	Between Groups	88.445	1	88.445	3.558	.061
	Within Groups	4921.710	198	24.857		
	Total	5010.155	199			
Hostility	Between Groups	60.500	1	60.500	1.628	.204
	Within Groups	7359.320	198	37.168		
	Total	7419.820	199			
Physical	Between Groups	66.125	1	66.125	1.526	.218
	Within Groups	8581.270	198	43.340		
	Total	8647.395	199			

Tables 10 and 11 include Descriptives of the data and One-way ANOVA which was used to study the significance of the difference between means and understand whether a significant difference exists between males and females based on their degree of aggression over four dimensions (Verbal Aggression, Anger, Hostility, and Physical Aggression). When the degree of freedom of higher mean squared variance and degree of freedom of low mean squared variance was checked for each of the dimensions of aggression, we got 2 values. For Verbal Aggression, Our calculated F ratio (3.133), is less than the table value at 0.05 level (3.90) and 0.01 level (6.81). Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted, denoting that no significant contrast exists between the degree of verbal aggression of males and females. For Anger, Our calculated F ratio (3.558), is less than the table value at 0.05 level (3.90) and 0.01 level (6.81). Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted, which alludes no significant contrast exists between the degree of the anger of males and females. For Hostility, Our calculated F ratio (1.628), is less than the table value at 0.05 level (3.90) and 0.01 level (6.81). Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted, attesting that no significant difference exists between the degree of hostility of males and females. For Physical Aggression, Our calculated F ratio (1.526), is less than the table value at 0.05 level (3.90) and 0.01 level (6.81). Hence, the Null Hypothesis is accepted, which insinuates that no significant difference exists between the degree of physical aggression of males and females. This concludes that no significant difference between the level of aggression of males and females, thus, Hypothesis 4 is Rejected.

CONCLUSION

The four sub-traits of physical aggressiveness, verbal aggression, rage, and hostility are all examples of aggression and may be used to characterize it. In society, it is quite widespread. War, terrorism, and assassination are examples of how aggression presents itself. According to the general aggression model (GAM), individual and environmental variables set off psychological, emotional, and cognitive pathways that lead to violent behavior.

The current study examined the relationship between dark triad personality characteristics and aggressiveness along with the degree of aggression difference between males and females. The findings revealed that there was no association between narcissism and violence, but there was a positive correlation between Machiavellianism and aggression as well as between psychopathy and aggression.

The outcomes demonstrate that dark triad traits sway the degree of aggression in people; the degree of aggression among young adults and the features of the dark triad are significantly

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correlated. No noteworthy contrast exists between the degree of aggression of males and females dependent on their particular dark triad personality traits, in any case, at a general level, males were found to have a more prominent and more elevated level of physical and verbal aggression and females reported higher degree of anger and hostility. Overall, women are noticed to be slightly more aggressive than males.

The study of human aggression has led to the development of several conceptual justifications. In certain situations, these theories can elaborate violence well, but they are not universal. “The general aggression model is a thorough, bio-social-cognitive, developmental approach to comprehending aggression that incorporates the most useful components of numerous domain-specific theories of aggression and takes into account a wide range of factors that affect it.” “Numerous topics have been investigated, including intimate partner violence between intimate partners, violence among groups, the impact of temperature and media violence, male-on-male aggressiveness in sexual competitiveness, the violence brought on by suicide, the impacts of change in climate, and personality disorders with an aggressive or violent component.” Creating interventions against aggressiveness has also been done using it.

It may be particularly significant to study aggression for personality research since it draws attention to the potential transformational impact. Researchers and society at large should be worried about the prevalence of violence in contemporary civilizations if every incident of being acts as a learning experiment. However, there is also cause for enthusiasm given the good potential for personality growth.

Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

The observational outcomes, as clarified in the exposition, were seen with respect to specific restrictions. The relationship between dark triad traits and aggression was essentially positive, showing that personality traits can be contemplated so as to consider the degree of aggression among people. Be that as it may, no huge distinction between the degree of aggression of males and females was studied. This could be on the grounds that the examination was directed at a little sample (N=200; Males=100 and Females=100). A bigger sample size would be increasingly appropriate to set up the genuineness of the consequences of the examination.

Future research can concentrate on understanding the effect of personality on different behavioral reactions of people. Besides, social contrasts can likewise be mulled over as a variable for future research.

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Conflict of Interest

I have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

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