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Narcissism and Machiavellians in a Workplace and their Impact on an Individual's Psychosocial Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

This research project explored the complex effects of the Dark Triad personality traits (Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy) on Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB), the role of Psychological Entitlement in mediating the relationship, and the moderating effect of Subjective Well-being (SWB) in the workplace. Quantitative analysis corroborated the anticipated mechanism that Machiavellianism and Narcissism are key drivers of CWB, and that Psychological Entitlement is an important mediator, as it gives the cognitive rationale behind the retaliatory behavior in cases where people feel their rights or privileges was infringed. Importantly, the study has found that there is a deep paradox here, with subjects with higher Dark Triad scores reporting better psychosocial well-being and SWB than their lower-scoring counterparts. It is theorized that this surprising discovery is a result of psychological defense mechanisms, namely, the strong capacity to externalize blame, which enhances their Psychological Resilience, and the Contextual Reinforcement they get when working in competitive settings. Although the effects of age and experience were identified to mitigate some of the psychopathy-related problems in interpersonal relationships, qualitative evidence revealed that these factors essentially build a disjointed and haphazard work environment that undermines trust and prevents true cooperation. The paper finds that the Dark Triad entails a personal temporary benefit in terms of excellent SWB, but at a considerable and quantifiable cost to the moral condition and unity of the organization. Recent suggestions center on practice within organizations, such as the incorporation of Situational Judgment Tests (SJTs) into the hiring process and a communal and ethical culture within the organization, as well as methodological improvements in future studies to objectively verify the SWB paradox.

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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

➢ *Background of the study*

Several organizational psychologists investigated the idea of Machiavellians in the workplace. Machiavellian is a psychological term that describes how people act coldly and deceitfully. Being under Machiavellian leadership may have a detrimental effect on an organization's effectiveness or production (Ruiz-Palomino & Linuesa-Langreo, 2018). Managers who exhibited high levels of Machiavellian conduct were also shown to express higher levels of job stress, lower levels of job satisfaction, and fewer chances for formal control in the workplace. In the place of work, narcissists primarily cause other people to be unhappy, which frequently results in those people exhibiting healthy worker syndrome and leaving the company, either because they are unable or reluctant to articulate the issue or because HR or managers not listen to or act on their complaints (Memish et al., 2017) Research in this area has been sparked by the fact that these two personality qualities are primarily to blame for many of the unfavorable behavioral patterns in businesses.

The proposed research aims to investigate the intricate relationship between narcissism, another psychological trait, and its recent modification and application to the setting of a workplace and organization by several writers and researchers (Vize, Miller, & Lynam, 2018), including psychological entitlement, subjective well-being, and counterproductive work behavior (CWB) within organizational contexts. Narcissism, characterized by grandiosity, entitlement, and a desire for admiration, has been a topic of growing interest in organizational behavior research due to its potential impact on workplace dynamics and outcomes. Understanding how narcissistic traits manifest in the workplace and their implications for employee behavior and organizational functioning is crucial for effective management and intervention strategies. Additionally, by differentiating between agentic and communal narcissism, this research aims to provide insights into how these distinct dimensions of narcissism influence workplace dynamics and behaviors. Overall, this proposal addresses a gap in the literature by offering a comprehensive examination of the complex interplay between narcissism and workplace outcomes, contributing to both theoretical understanding and practical implications for organizational management. By exploring the mediating role of psychological entitlement and the moderating effects of subjective well-being, this study seeks to uncover the underlying mechanisms driving narcissistic behaviors and their effects on CWB. Additionally, by differentiating between agentic and communal narcissism, this research aims to provide insights into how these distinct dimensions of narcissism influence workplace dynamics and behaviors.

The proposed research plan has been designed to assess the interaction between narcissism, psychological entitlement, PWB, and CWB in organizational settings. Self-boosting, self-importance, and a need for recognition, as well as being proud of it, narcissism has emerged as a focus for OB studies because it possibly helps comprehend certain modern organizational circumstances or trajectories. (Chambers, J. R., Baumeister, R. F., & Vohs, K. D., 2024). Knowledge about the expression of narcissistic features in business and organizational relationships and potential consequences for employees' behaviors is necessary for appropriate approaches to workplace management. This study examines how exactly psychological entitlement is linked to narcissistic behavior and its impact on CWB while acknowledging the moderating influence of subjective well-being.

➢ *Statement of the Problem*

The counterproductive work behavior (CWB) cases of manipulation, interpersonal aggression, sabotage, and ethical violations are on the increase in organizations of various fields. The available studies have always indicated that people with high Dark Triad traits, particularly narcissism, have more chances of indulging in such detrimental acts. As it is mentioned in the thesis, narcissistic people are frequently characterized by devious and cruel behaviour towards their colleagues or even lie and manipulate others at work (Jonason et

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al., 2012; Orunbon, 2020). These actions hamper teamwork, diminish job satisfaction and destroy organizational cohesion.

Even though previous research has determined that narcissism is a predictor of workplace deviance, the processes that underlie the motivations of narcissistic individuals in committing CWB are not clearly understood. This is a point in the document which indicated that there are indeed gaps in the literature, as it says that there have been various areas that need additional empirical research, especially in how these traits interact in forecasting deviance at work. A psychological entitlement is one of such mechanisms, which can give the psychological justification to the retaliatory or harmful acts in the situation when people think their rights or status are threatened.

The second problem which remains unsolved is about the role of subjective well-being (SWB). Amazingly, the thesis also indicates that the high Dark Triad people tend to report improved psychosocial well-being and SWB than those who scored lower. This paradox goes against the traditional beliefs that toxic personality traits are self-disturbing. It also begs the question, whether SWB could play down the interaction between narcissism and CWB - either reinforcing or dampening the behavioural consequences of narcissistic characteristics.

Although there is a growing body of literature, empirical findings to combine narcissism, psychological entitlement, subjective well-being, and CWB into the same predictive model are scarce, particularly in the organizational setting as those analysed in this study. In accordance with the thesis, there is a need to know the manifestations of the narcissistic characteristics in business and organizational relationships to provide the relevant approaches to the management of the workplace.

Thus, the gap that the current study aims to fill is the un-investigated comprehensive empirical knowledge on the role of narcissism in counterproductive work behavior, the mediation of psychological entitlement in the latter, and the moderation of subjective well-being. In the absence of such knowledge, organizations do not have the evidence-based instrumentation required to deal with toxic personality traits and minimize deviance at workplace.

➢ *Research Objective/Aim*

The main objective of this study is to examine how narcissism influences counterproductive work behavior (CWB), with a focus on the mediating role of psychological entitlement and the moderating effect of subjective well-being.

➢ *Specific Objectives*

- To determine the relationship between narcissism and counterproductive work behavior (CWB).
- To assess whether psychological entitlement mediates the relationship between narcissism and CWB.
- To evaluate whether subjective well-being moderates the relationship between narcissism and CWB.

➢ *Research Questions*

- What is the nature of the relationship between narcissism and counterproductive work behavior (CWB) in the workplace?
- How does psychological entitlement mediate the relationship between narcissism and CWB?
- What role does subjective well-being play in moderating the relationship between narcissism and CWB?

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➢ *Significance of the Study*

This research is important as it fills some of the critical gaps in the research on how personality traits (in this case, narcissism) influence detrimental work behavior outcomes. Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) still presents significant financial, psychological and operational expenses to organizations. However, knowledge on the manifestation of narcissistic features in the business and organizational relations is required to adopt proper measures in managing the workplace. This paper, by analysing narcissism in the context of the organization, can be used to gain a better insight into the dispositional elements that contribute to predisposing employees to deviant behavior.

The second significant contribution of the research is that it examines the psychological entitlement as a mediating variable. Even though entitlement has been theoretically associated to narcissistic tendencies, there is limited empirical evidence as to how entitlement converts narcissistic tendencies into workplace deviance. The research thus contributes to theoretical models by illuminating the cognitive and motivational mechanisms which relate personality traits to behavioural outcomes.

The paper also examines the moderating effect of subjective well-being (SWB) which is a variable that has yielded inconsistent results in literature. Previous studies indicate that high Dark Triad individuals might claim to experience a high degree of well-being, which is counterintuitive and has not been understood fully. This study can change the current understanding of the emotional and psychological circumstances that make deviant behavior more probable as it will test the hypothesis: SWB enhances or undermines the narcissism-CWB relationship.

The implications of this study in practice are related to human resource management, organizational leadership and employee development programs. Knowledge of the interaction between narcissism, entitlement and well-being would help organizations to develop more efficient screening, training and intervention programs to minimize workplace deviance. This is particularly significant to organizations that would like to foster ethical conduct, improve employee relationships and secure a good organizational climate.

Lastly, the research is a contribution to the academic literature because it combines the study of personality psychology and organizational behavior with well-being research into one prediction model. This combined methodology complements the current body of knowledge and forms a basis to further studies of personality-based work outcomes.

- *Scope of the Study*

In this research, the author aims at analysing the role of narcissism in counterproductive work behavior (CWB) in an organizational context. It is restricted to the employees who are engaged in formal work settings where interactions among people, organizational customs and performance standards are well established. The psychological entitlement and subjective well-being are the mediating and moderating variables respectively in the correlation between Narcissism and CWB respectively.

The research is limited geographically to the chosen organizations in which data were gathered and thus the results can be interpreted on the basis of these workplaces. The target population is employees of various professional groups, but not unemployed people, workers of the informal sector, or the heads of organizations, whose activities can be characterized by other personality-behavior relations.

Theoretically, the research is limited to the Dark Triad trait of narcissism and fails to investigate Machiavellianism or psychopathy, albeit this is the case because of the relationship between these traits. In the same way, workplace deviance can only be measured in just one form, counterproductive work behavior, which does not take into account other organizational output, like job performance, organizational citizenship behavior, or turnover intentions.

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The quantitative research design is the methodological approach adopted in the study where standardized psychometric tools are used to measure narcissism, psychological entitlement, subjective well-being and CWB. The qualitative methods like interviews or focus groups are not covered in the scope. The conclusions made are thus made purely on statistical analysis of the survey data collected.

➢ *Organization of the Study*

This thesis is divided into five chapters where each one talks of a particular aspect of the research process. Chapter One explains the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objective, specific research objectives, the significance of the study and scope of the study. This chapter provides the basis and justification to the research. Chapter Two gives a thorough literature review on the literature pertaining to the topic of narcissism, psychological entitlement, subjective well-being and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). It also presents the conceptual model and theoretical framework that the study will be carried out.

Chapter Three explains the research process used. It outlines research design, target population, sampling methods, data collection tools, validity and reliability issues, and data analysis methodologies employed to test hypotheses of the study. The results of data analysis are presented in Chapter Four. This involves descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and tests of the mediation and the moderation effects which are at the heart of the study. Chapter Five presents the findings in comparison with the existing literature and makes conclusions about the results and provides recommendations to practice, policy, and future research.

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CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review chapter systematically examines the critical and intertwined personality dimensions of self-entitlement and manipulation, focusing on Narcissism and Machiavellianism within the organizational environment. Narcissism is defined by grandiosity, a chronic need for admiration, and a profound lack of empathy, while Machiavellianism is characterized by calculated manipulation, self-promoting deception, and a strategic focus on achieving personal objectives. Both traits, despite their distinct characteristics, are unified by self-egocentricity and a disregard for the welfare of others, exerting a significant influence on workplace dynamics. Accordingly, the primary purpose of this chapter is to review existing theoretical and empirical research to establish conceptual clarity on how these personality factors, including their extension into the Dark Triad and Dark Tetrad, impact workplace relationships, employees' mental health, organizational culture, and staff satisfaction, underscoring the necessity of comprehending these traits to mitigate their adverse consequences and promote organizational health and efficiency.

- *Self-Entitlement and Manipulation*

Self-entitlement and manipulation are important and critical dimensions in the whole structure of personality psychology, particularly within the organizational environment. According to Raskin and Terry (1988), narcissism may be defined by several factors, including putting on a grandiose image, the need for admiration, and one's inability to identify with other people. This trait is expressed through the person's striving for success and dominance and his/her need for approval and appreciation (Chambers et al., 2024). Machiavellianism is operationalized by manipulation, lying, and a self-promoting mentality (Christie & Geis, 1970). The Machiavellian personality type demonstrates the calculated manipulation of people in an organization to achieve specific objectives (Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). Both traits, however, are different, yet a commonality arises regarding self-egocentricity and complete disregard for other people's welfare (Spain et al., 2014). Thus, the purpose of this section review is to examine how Narcissism and Machiavellianism impact workplace relationships and employees' mental health. It also examines the effects of such success traits on the workplace, organizational culture, and staff satisfaction. The domain entails the assessment of the existing literature and research, both theoretical and empirical, in an attempt to establish conceptual clarity on these personality factors and how they influence management and organizational processes.

Research on narcissism and Machiavellianism in the context of the workplace is important because both personality traits have a distinct influence on the nature of working relations. Such characteristics are linked to adverse consequences, such as the proxy use of negative leadership techniques, workplace aggression, and diminished team integration (Khan et al., 2023; Schyns & Schilling, 2013). Narcissistic people can use exploiting and undermining tactics to protect their image in the workplace (Moon & Morais, 2022). Likewise, manipulative and deceitful employees in the organization inflict the 'Machiavellian' effect on policies at the workplace, likely to lower team performance and morale (Burns et al., 2024). It is significant to comprehend these characteristics as they aid in halting their negative impacts, reforming organizational culture, and improving workplace efficiency (Volmer et al., 2016). From a psychological point of view, narcissism is defined as an overemphasis on one's self-importance and self-centeredness. Self-enhancement is defined as grandiose self-image, need for admiration, and lack of empathy (Emmons, 1984). Narcissistic behaviours are antisocial behaviours and are, ultimately, dominant; they may either deceive or use others as a means to an end (Burns et al., 2024). One of the oldest and most observed indices for narcissistic features is the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI), which quantifies leadership and coaching self-competent, and exploitative subscales (Kuo & Chang, 2021).

The levels of narcissism and Machiavellianism in the employed population have a substantial negative impact on their overall mental health. Such traits lead to a toxic workplace with high stress levels, low job satisfaction, and high turnover (Serenko & Choo, 2020; O'Boyle Jr. et al., 2011). Narcissistic or Machiavellian

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managers may easily exhibit both these traits at the same time; however, it would be interesting to see how this unfolds after the findings of the study are analysed. Also, this negatively impacts their subordinates' self-perception and motivational levels because of these leaders' deceitful and selfish actions (Khalid et al., 2021; Mathieu et al., 2014). Additionally, the crossover between these traits and organizational activities contributes to factors detrimental to employees' well-being and work engagement, including workplace incivility and counterproductive work behaviours (Labrague et al., 2020; LeBreton et al., 2006).

➢ *Theoretical Framework*

There are signs of narcissism in the workplace, such as a desire to occupy a leadership position and self-interest more than group interests (Germain, 2018). The need for admiration is tremendously satisfied in self-important persons, and thus, power lovers are commonly diagnosed. However, they often neglect empathy and may use people, which easily results in conflicts and ethical problems in the organizational context (Chambers et al., 2024). Narcissism changes organizational behaviour in various forms and areas, such as job satisfaction and relationships between employees (Moon & Morais, 2022).

Machiavellianism is likely to mean a smart, tactical attitude towards people in interpersonal relationships, focusing on the self and power (Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). This trait is named after the Italian political scientist Niccolò Machiavelli, whose literary works focused on manipulation and specific realism to get what one wants (Hickman & Jackson, 2021). Yazdi and Mustamil (2014) identified that people with a high level of Machiavellianism are characterized by their ability to deceive, exploit, and manipulate others for their benefit.

At the workplace and in organizations, Machiavellianism is associated with unethical conduct and decreased cohesion within a team. Machiavellian leaders may display abusive supervision; this means they may use subordinates and control them. (Valentine & Fleischman, 2018).This trait leads to low team trust and cooperation, especially among subordinates (Valentine & Fleischman, 2018). This leadership style poses significant drawbacks associated with Fred's overall management style and work environment since the approach entails strategic selfishness and manipulation (Bogdanovi et al., 2018).

➢ *Dark Triad and Dark Tetrad*

The Dark Triad refers to a trio of personality traits: narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy subtypes, because these dimensions are most commonly used in studies of leaders. These traits are said to be common features of self-centeredness, cunning, and extremely low levels of concern for other people. There are two major aspects of narcissism: grandiosity and the need for admiration, as mentioned before. Machiavellianism is a trait that involves elements such as cunning and intentional lying. Psychopathy involves low sensitivity to others and their feelings, such that the person lacks the feeling of guilt and has no remorse for wrongdoing, making them/in anti-social behaviour and act on impulse (O'Boyle et al., 2012).

According to prior studies, persons with Dark Triad traits are likely to act in a counterproductive way at workplaces, including behaving in a devious and cruel manner towards their peers or even lying and manipulating others in the workplace (Jonason et al., 2012; Orunbon, 2020). These traits are related to the production of adverse results within an organization, such as reduced job satisfaction, increased turnover, and a lack of cohesiveness within the organization's team (Ebtehaj & Goodarzi, 2022). Altogether, the DT traits lead to a toxic work culture where ethical issues are violated at the expense of other people and social relations (LeBreton et al., 2006). Thus, awareness of the Dark Triad's influence on organizational behaviour shows the significance of studying these personality features and their potentially adversarial outcomes for successful organizational leadership and employee relations. Controlling features of the system are associated with the traits and behaviours from the negative factors listed above, which leaders and organizations must learn how to deal with to promote health and productivity in the workplace (Volmer et al., 2016).

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➢ *Dark Tetrad and Inclusion of Sadism*

The Dark Tetrad expands upon the Dark Triad by including a fourth trait: SADISM. Sadism refers to the act of pleasure in inflicting pain on another person, and it has the qualities of cruelty and aggression (Khan et al., 2023). This trait aids the improvement of the Dark Triad's measurement since it captures the relish in causing harm to others, establishing complexity in interpersonal relations (Impola, 2019). When it comes to organizational settings, it was found that people with a high level of sadism tend to be more aggressive and may also perform acts of provocation and bullying, as indicated by Szabó et al. (2018a, b). Thus, placing sadism in the spectrum of the Dark Tetrad contributes to a broader perspective of the organizational culture and the potential for manifesting aggressive, destructive behaviour. It explains how people with these personality attributes can make the workplace extremely toxic and worsen the manifestations of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy (Burns et al., 2024).

The Dark Tetrad model shows why organizational efforts to counteract these traits must be multipronged. While this incorporates the control of the behaviours related to narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy, it also entails identifying the extra strains that sadism contributes to the workforce (Khalid et al., 2021). Therefore, there is a need to incorporate sound ethical policies and assistance measures to undo triggered DT traits in the workplace fully (Elbers et al., 2023).

➢ *Leadership and Management Styles*

In particular, leadership and management approaches are significant factors that define the success of an organization, engaging the employees' motivation and satisfaction levels, and creating the requirements for the effective performance of tasks. Various degrees of leadership and management enhance employee engagement, while others lead to stress and conflict. According to Goleman (2000), there are six main leadership styles: coercive power, authoritative power, affiliative power, democratic power, pacesetting power, and coaching power. As with any given leadership style, each has its specifics, and it is as effective as the organizational setting, as well as the character of the participants. For example, the authoritative leadership style mainly involves clear vision and direction, which is useful, especially when drastic changes are needed (Lange et al., 2018). On the other hand, the affiliative style, which focuses on the theme 'people like me', helps create morale, especially during lean seasons, since theorists point to improving team cohesiveness.

Northouse (2018) noted that a leadership style that requires a leader to influence the employee's behaviour to be greater than their self-interest for the organization's benefit is most helpful in organizational change and innovation. There is an absolute match between the leadership behaviour variables of transformational leadership and coaching, which include characteristics such as charisma, inspirational communication, intellectual encouragement, and employee consideration. This style differs from transactional leadership and coaching, which is based on the reciprocal relations between leaders and subordinates about the tangible and intangible gifts that the leader provides for the subordinate and the work that the subordinate does for the leader, the former giving incentives for good behaviour and penalties for bad behaviour.

According to Yukl (2013), the leadership style is most effective when a leader adapts to the situational characteristics and followers' needs. This flexibility is especially important in the modern world, as it is challenging and sometimes even unpredictable in business. He also emphasizes ethical leadership and coaching, such as leading organizations by setting the right example and developing ways to promote integrity and fairness. Hersey, Blanchard, and Johnson state that situational leadership theory is an approach that suggests that the best approach to leadership depends on the level of followers' maturity and the nature of the task to be accomplished. They must reflect on the followers' development and take the corresponding courses of action based on guiding, showing, telling, empowering, and permitting leadership behaviours.

Regarding management styles, Mintzberg (1973) identifies ten managerial roles grouped into three categories: interpersonal, informational, and decisional. These two roles need to be synchronized by the

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managers in such a way that they can operate effectively and meet the set goals of the organization. For instance, the interpersonal roles include the figurehead who relates to people and the leader who advises, and the informational roles include the monitor who deciphers and disseminators, who propagate information, and the spokesperson who publicizes (Yarbrough & Shafi, 2016). The decisional roles include the entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator, and negotiator, as they entail making critical decisions and addressing conflicts.

➢ *Narcissism in the Workplace*

Some of the common features of narcissistic employees include grandiosity, which is the tendency to overemphasize their self-importance. This trait shows itself by being preoccupied with feelings of superiority over others and requiring immense admiration (Emmons, 1984). According to Raskin and Terry (1988), there is a high tendency of self-expression among narcissists to gain approval from colleagues or employers. They are grandiose, which makes them perceive themselves as special and entitled to special treatment; most of the time, their behaviour revolves around the need to be appreciated and acknowledged (Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). There are consequently massive implications for organizational life when grandiosity plays itself out in this manner. Narcissistic staff are likely to detract from group cohesiveness due to talking down other members and paying attention to their egos only. Such can lead to rivalry and operational clashes where self-gains dominate over organizational objectives (Dåderman & Ragnestål-Impola, 2019). Besides, they tend to have high visions about recognition and develop high self-esteem, which can harm the overall atmosphere of the team and create a toxic working environment (Schyns & Schilling, 2013).

One of the most significant traits of the narcissistic pattern is the employees' lack of empathy. This trait holds the attributes that are characterized by the individual's inability to realize or respond to the emotions or point of view of others, and this leads to conflict with other people (Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). According to Spain, Harms, and LeBreton (2014), narcissistic persons do not appreciate the feelings of their subordinates and co-workers due to their self-absorbing personalities, which leads to inadequate encouragement in crises and, in general, irresponsibility for others' performance. This character also extends to exploitation in that other people are merely used to realise their objectives without regard to their welfare or feelings (Serenko & Choo, 2020). This behaviour worsens the relationship between people and might make a workplace toxic, further straining the team spirit and performance (Duradoni et al., 2023). Self-centred behaviour typical of narcissists tends to offend other people's feelings and contributions, which in turn negatively affects relationships and cooperation in teams.

Narcissistic staff members also have a chronic need for approval, and this largely determines their behaviour in organizations. This need results from their low self-esteem, which they seek to uphold through other people's opinions (Coleman, 2021). Narcissists are very vulnerable to anything negative being said about them and always have an over-the-top need for self-appreciation and to be the focus of attention (O'Boyle et al., 2012). This behaviour to gain approval alters workplace dynamics and concentrates on getting praise instead of accomplishing the team's objectives. ((Kaufmann et al., 2021).This necessity for regular attention can adversely affect teamwork, reduce productivity, and lead to a work culture in which the needs of the self-centred employee are more important than the goals set out by the organization (Kaufmann et al., 2021). Another research study by Volmer et al. (2016) established that the continuous desperation for approval and appreciation would result in the general demoralization of the team.

➢ *Impact on Workplace Dynamics*

Narcissistic employees may cause negative consequences in interpersonal relationships and supply negative influences on teams. They are inclined to disrespect the other person and demand constant appreciation, making them uncomfortable to work with. (Volmer et al., 2016). This frequently leads to hostile working conditions and interpersonal conflicts, and there is considerable managerial suspicion that subordinates are not performing at their best. (Volmer et al., 2016). Tensions and conflicts may arise in the

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course of working since employees with narcissistic traits place their self-interests ahead of the group objectives (Volmer et al., 2016). Furthermore, they are not as empathetic as people should be when socializing in a workplace and may tend to disregard other employees' input, in addition to aggravating interpersonal conflict (Kaufmann et al., 2021).

In narcissistic persons, these issues turn into grandiosity and the requirement of admiration, so narcissistic managers value authoritarianism. They may develop abusive supervision; they keep looking for approval and can be very harsh on subordinates. This can lead to fear and resentment among the team members, resulting in low morale and poor team productivity (Wisse & Sleebos, 2016). Moreover, they are not able to recognize the emotions of others and think only about themselves; this may hamper their management abilities because they are completely incompetent to respond appropriately to their subordinates' and co-workers' needs and worries (Schyns & Schilling, 2013).

Organizational narcissism is also closely linked with employees' productivity and job performance, although its effects are not that simple. On the one hand, there are useful characteristics such as high self-esteem and assertiveness—they certainly achieve certain individual successes. However, their self-serving actions and self-interest destroy team performance and the organization's objectives. The self-importance of narcissists can mean that they focus on personal accomplishments rather than teamwork, meaning that there is a decrease in the total production and morale of the group (Yazdi & Mustamil, 2014). Also, they are likely to manifest counterproductive work behaviour, for instance, by behaving negatively towards other employees and even sabotaging group work, thus worsening group performance and friendship with the rest of the employees at work (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2019).

➢ *Machiavellianism in the Workplace*

The Dark Triad consists of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy and has been investigated in the context of organizational settings. Current literature presents a rather complex picture of how these traits impact organizations (Klotz & Neubaum, 2016). Grandiosity and entitlement define the concept of narcissism, which has negative consequences in the context of the workplace.(Klotz & Neubaum, 2016). For example, Moon and Morais (2022) and Memish et al. (2017) discuss how hidden narcissism increases workplace incivility through processes linked to esteem and respect principles. This is in tandem with Chambers et al. (2024), where the authors reveal the interactivity of individual and co-worker narcissism on CWB, indicating the general influence of narcissistic tendencies on the organizational climate.

Some outcomes associated with Machiavellianism include negative work attitudes and behaviours. Creating the significance of power in the general trend, Wisse and Sleebos (2016) noted that when supervisors are considered Machiavellian, the power level likely to be used abusively rises. This is further supported by Burns et al. (2024), who sought to establish how personally Machiavellianism in employees contributes to CWB indirectly by manipulating emotions. As one of the behavioural disorders that imply impulsive actions and a lack of empathy, psychopathy also affects organizational environments. Volmer et al. (2016) discuss the dark side of leadership and the influence of Dark Triad traits on subordinates' career advancement and the effect of position on subordinates' well-being, mentioning the negative effects of psychopathic traits. This is supported by further work done by McLarty et al. (2022), which builds on the identity and reputation approach to deepen understanding of the effects of psychopathy in the workplace.

Palmer et al. (2017) examine how POS moderates the interaction between Dark Triad traits and OCB. OCB stands for organizational citizenship behaviour, which is some actions that positively impact the organization, behaviours that are not required but that support others in organizations. Concerning the research findings, the authors stress that employees who possess high Dark Triad scores demonstrate less OCB activity resulting from their egoistic and manipulative behaviour. However, according to Palmer et al. (2017), the level of perceived organizational support plays a role. In other words, when receiving a signal from their

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organization that they appreciate them and are going to invest in them, the Dark Triad behaviours demonstrated by the employees do not have a negative impact. This support makes the work environment or climate more positive; thus, employees with such toxic traits display positive organizational behaviours.

Elbers et al. (2023) further investigate the nature of psychological capital in the face of Dark Triad leadership. Based on their findings, psychological capital, which includes hope, efficacy, resilience, and optimism, may help moderate the effects of toxic leadership on employees' basic needs satisfaction. They contend that if the employees display high levels of psychological capital, they are better positioned to mitigate the effects of stress and risk posed by these dark leaders, hence experiencing better well-being and job satisfaction. Ruiz-Palomino and Linuesa-Langreo (2018) extend the knowledge about how the level of organizational mindfulness may affect CWB. They suggest that mindfulness within an organization, defined as the appreciation of the current state of experience in the workplace, can reduce the effects of the Dark Triangle traits. Two, by creating a positive psychological climate, organizations can decrease the risk of CWBs since they are especially prone to being committed by people with toxic attributes of the Dark Triad.

- *Interpersonal Relationships and Team Dynamics*

As interpersonal relationships and team skills influence output, this element focuses on how interpersonal relationships within a team affect its functioning. Personal and team-level behaviours depend to a large extent on dark personality traits, or the Dark Triad: (Wisse and Sleebos (2016), Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. All these traits play a significant role in the social climate in the workplace and can change individual or group behaviours. According to the study by Wisse and Sleebos (2016), those who possess certain Machiavellian personality traits, particularly when they see themselves occupying authority positions in the workplace, have the potential to become abusive supervisors. That is why this dynamic not only influences the direct victims of aggression but also degrades the overall team climate.

Similarly, Yazdi and Mustamil (2014) also opined that narcissist and those with a high Machiavellian disposition often have a higher level of perceived control, resulting in more manipulative and self-serving behaviour at the workplace in teams. The authors, Valencia and Fleischman, go on further to bring out more long-term effects, again associating the bullying experienced in school with what is practised in workplaces. As they pointed out, the bully's employees would exhibit Machiavellian personalities, meaning traits of Machiavellian, and behave in manners that are similar to a Machiavellian personality, which reduces job satisfaction/ethical concerns and worsens teamwork relations. Volmer et al. (2016) noted that the beneficial effects of leadership with the Dark Triad traits are advantageous for career-wise subordinates' outcomes but come with the cost of their psychological health.

Further implications of these traits are described by Spain, Harms, and LeBreton (2014). explaining the destructive nature of personality at work and how these traits move quickly towards acts of cohesion at work. Onley et al. However, it is reported that there is a genetic association between the Dark Triad and mental toughness; it is argued that people with these traits can hardly change. Similarly, Palmer et al. (2017) and Orunbon (2020b) examined whether POS moderates the Dark Triad traits' impact on OCBs. They concluded that while the effects are negative, POS can moderate these effects. However, according to Rauthmann and Kolar (2013), it remains possible to use the interpersonal circumplex in order to locate the Dark Triad traits effectively within the social environment of the teams and derive certain information regarding the impact of the present traits on team interactions. Schyns & Schilling (2013) made a meta-analysis on destructive leadership. They noted that leaders with Dark Triad traits have drastic negative consequences on the morale and performance of their teams. Serenko and Choo (2020) expand on this by classifying knowledge sabotage as an extreme type of CWB that originates from narcissism, the Machiavellian personality dimension, and psychopathy.

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Concerning the above negative effects, Lata and Chaudhary (2020) proposed that workplace spirituality can moderate the relationship between Dark Triad traits and instigated incivility. Referring to Żemojtel-Piotrowska et al. (2018), it is possible to state that psychopathy harms team development through the appeal to social dominance; according to Mathieu et al., corporate psychopathy negatively impacts the well-being and satisfaction of employees. A meta-analysis can be found in O'Boyle Jr. et al. (2011) and O'Boyle et al. (2012), proving that the correlation between DARK traits and negative work behaviours remains stable. In contrast, Klotz and Neubaum's (2016) standpoint was Dark TRIAD Constructs about entrepreneurship, where they admitted that these constructs push both innovations and conflicts. Khan et al. (2023) provide an understanding of the psychopathology of workplace bullies in terms of the Dark Tetrad traits and ideas of how to minimize it. Jonason et al. (2012) provide insight into how toxic employees with Dark Triad traits deceive their way into organizational structures, insisting that organizations urgently deploy effective measures to deal with them.

➢ *Narcissism and Machiavellianism in Personal Relationships*

Narcissism in personal relationships is defined by a persistent need for admiration and validation, which shapes how individuals engage in intimacy. Partners of narcissists often experience an initial phase of overwhelming affection, commonly referred to as “love-bombing,” followed by devaluation once the narcissist perceives diminished ego reinforcement (Campbell & Foster, 2007). This cycle destabilizes trust, fosters emotional exhaustion, and creates relational insecurity. Empirical evidence indicates that narcissists struggle with empathy, undermining reciprocity and long-term commitment (Miller et al., 2010). Instead of mutual growth, they prioritize dominance and admiration, mirroring organizational contexts where narcissistic leaders seek recognition at the expense of collaboration (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). Emotional manipulation, gaslighting, and criticism erode self-confidence, leaving partners vulnerable to stress and diminished self-esteem. These relational dynamics highlight the destructive potential of narcissism beyond professional settings, emphasizing its impact on psychological well-being and interpersonal stability.

Narcissistic individuals also tend to engage in exploitative behaviors that reinforce their sense of superiority. For example, they may manipulate partners into compliance by alternating between affection and withdrawal, creating dependency and confusion (Campbell & Foster, 2007). This pattern of intermittent reinforcement makes it difficult for partners to disengage, even when the relationship becomes harmful. Studies show that narcissists often lack genuine concern for their partner’s needs, focusing instead on how the relationship enhances their self-image (Miller et al., 2010). Such dynamics can lead to chronic dissatisfaction and emotional harm, with partners reporting feelings of inadequacy and isolation. The long-term consequences include diminished capacity for trust and difficulty forming healthy relationships in the future. Thus, narcissism in romantic bonds represents a profound challenge to the stability and quality of interpersonal connections.

Machiavellianism, characterized by manipulativeness, deception, and emotional detachment, manifests in relationships through calculated exploitation. Individuals high in Machiavellian traits often view partners as instruments for personal gain, engaging in deceit, infidelity, or transactional intimacy (Jonason & Webster, 2010). Their ability to conceal intentions while projecting charm creates confusion and instability for partners (Christie & Geis, 1970). This duality fosters distrust and insecurity, eroding the foundations of intimacy such as empathy and reciprocity. Partners frequently report feelings of exploitation, betrayal, and emotional exhaustion, which contribute to long-term harm including depression and difficulty forming future relationships (Jonason et al., 2012). These dynamics parallel organizational dysfunction, where Machiavellian leaders destabilize teams, erode morale, and prioritize personal gain over collective success. Together, narcissism and Machiavellianism illustrate how dark personality traits disrupt harmony across multiple domains of human interaction, underscoring the importance of early recognition and intervention.

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Machiavellian individuals often employ subtle strategies to maintain control, such as withholding affection or using guilt to manipulate partners. These tactics create a relational environment where partners feel constantly undermined and uncertain of their standing (Christie & Geis, 1970). Unlike narcissists, who seek admiration, Machiavellians prioritize strategic advantage, making their relationships transactional rather than emotional. Research indicates that such individuals are more likely to engage in infidelity and opportunistic behaviors, further destabilizing intimacy (Jonason et al., 2012). The psychological toll on partners includes heightened anxiety, reduced self-worth, and difficulty distinguishing genuine affection from manipulation. Over time, these experiences can erode resilience and hinder the ability to form secure attachments in future relationships. Thus, Machiavellianism in intimate bonds represents a profound threat to relational health and personal well-being.

➢ *Dark Personality Traits in Personal Relationships*

Narcissism in relationships means a person wants constant praise and attention. Initially, they can give their partner with affection and gifts but later they can be very critical or even disregard them when they feel less adored (Miller et al., 2010). This positive negative cycle causes the partner to be confused and exhausted. Narcissists are not usually concerned with the feelings of others, as they are too preoccupied with their own image and power (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). They are not empathetic, which makes it difficult to develop trust and long term love. After being with a narcissist, partners do experience a lot of stress, lack of confidence and even develop anxiety (Miller et al., 2010). These actions demonstrate how narcissism can ruin personal and professional relationships.

Narcissists are also able to employ tricks to stay in control. They can show love and then withdraw it any time they can, leaving their partner in need and puzzled (Miller et al., 2010). The phenomenon is known as intermittent reinforcement and it makes it extremely difficult to break up the relationship. Studies show narcissists care more about how the relationship makes them look than about their partner's needs (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). This isolates and makes partners unhappy. Most have stated that they lost their trust in others and are unable to make healthy relationships as adults (Campbell & Foster, 2007). Romantic relationships are consequently a great danger to emotional well-being due to narcissism.

Another dark trait that is detrimental to relationships is Machiavellianism. People with this trait use lies and tricks to get what they want (Jonason & Webster, 2010; Christie & Geis, 1970). They might be nice and flirtatious, but covertly intend to dominate or deceive their partner. This renders the relationship to be unsteady and mistrustful. A lot of partners are betrayed and emotionally exhausted, as they are unable to figure out what is real. Machiavellians view relationships as mechanisms to get personal benefits, rather than as collaborations (Jonason et al., 2012). This will lead to depression and fear among partners.

Other tricks such as guilt or lack of affection are also subtle methods of Machiavellian partners to remain in power (Christie and Geis, 1970; Jonason et al., 2012). Such behaviors render their partners insecure and powerless. Machiavellians desire advantage and control unlike the narcissists who desire admiration. Their interactions are rather business transactions than emotional associations. They cause anxiety and low self-worth to the partners they are with (Miller et al., 2010). This can make one distrust potential partners. Machiavellianism demonstrates the destructive power of manipulation on intimacy.

Another dark trait that damages relationships in very grave manners is psychopathy. Psychopaths do not feel guilty, are not very emotional, and more likely to take chances that lead to harm to others (Hare, 1999). They can cheat on their partner, lie, neglect their needs in love, which makes the relationship unstable and unsafe. They lack empathy and thus they do not feel guilty when they inflict pain on someone and this lack of feeling makes the partners feel unloved and insecure. According to many partners of psychopaths, they experience trauma, sadness and long term emotional scars, which influence their capacity to trust their future partners (Jonason et al., 2012). Psychopaths can be exciting and controlling and, therefore, initially charm

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them but afterward become cruel and neglectful (Miller et al., 2010). The Psychopathy demonstrates the destructive power of dark traits in intimate relations, as they ruin trust, protection, and emotional well-being.

Another negative aspect is sadism which destroys relationships in a very negative manner. Sadists love to hurt or embarrass others and this can make them very dangerous partners (Buckels et al., 2013). They can insult their partner, dominate him or even abuse him or her physically or emotionally to feel powerful in a relationship. Sadists do not need admiration or control like narcissists or Machiavellians, so they harm other people because it brings them pleasure (Marcus et al., 2014). This renders the relationship unhealthy and dangerous because the partner never has any idea when he or she is going to be subjected to cruelty. Partners tend to develop fear, anxiety and low self-worth over time and this can result in emotional scars in the long-term. Sadism presents the darkest end of the dark personality traits where closeness is turned into tortures and trust is ruined (Marcus et al., 2014).

Malice is also destructive to relationships. Vengeful individuals harm others despite the fact that they can hurt themselves as well, which complicates their behavior and negatively affects it (Marcus et al., 2014; Paulhus & Williams, 2002). During love, they can deny their partner to assist, hinder their intentions or be mean because they are angry with them. Spiteful individuals are fast and emotional in their actions compared to Machiavellians, who think and strategize before taking any action (Marcus et al., 2014; Campbell & Foster, 2007). This uncertainty causes the partners to feel unsafe and uncertain about what is to come. Spiteful behavior leads to the creation of an unhealthy environment of anger, mistrust, and sadness over time. Couples can be in a vicious circle of negativity, where a minor conflict can become a major one. Spitefulness demonstrates that even minor dark characteristics might be detrimental to intimacy and undermine the fundamental trust that is required to sustain healthy love (Jonason et al., 2012).

These qualities combined (narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy, sadism and vengeance) are referred to as the dark personality (Paulhus & Williams, 2002; Jonason & Webster, 2010). All of them undermine trust, compassion, and equity in relations. The partners who are exposed to such features tend to experience stress, depression, and trouble in establishing new relationships. The harm is not to be considered only emotional, but also social, since the traits form the circles of conflict and exploitation (Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006). These characteristics are important to understand the reasons behind the failure of certain relationships. It also demonstrates the impact of dark characteristics on an individual and group environment (Hare, 1999).

- *Productivity and Job Performance*

Productivity and work performance are central measures of organizational performance because, depending on several factors, the performance may be enhanced or depleted. Another factor that should be scrutinized is the general impact of dark personality traits on the efficacy of work and employees' performance; they have a deleterious effect on the organizational climate. Wisse and Sleebos (2016) posited that perceived positional power could enhance the detrimental influence of supervisor Machiavellianism, hence increasing abusive supervision and, consequently, the team's poor performance. It also portrays the effect that employees with such traits can have on the overall productivity of the juniors they are required to supervise. From their perspective, Yazdi and Mustamil (2014) state that people with high levels of narcissism and Machiavellianism may occasionally discover the system empowering them, which may sometimes imply a more elevated drive for achievement. Conversely, such empowerment leads to unethical decisions and disregard for the oriented teams, reducing productivity levels.

Similar to the points mentioned in the previous paragraph, Valentine and Fleischman (2018) identified that workplace bullying intensifies Machiavellianism with worse job satisfaction and job performance involvement. Regarding the last hypothesis, Volmer, Koch, and Göritz (2016) also found that bullying might negatively impact subordinates' career success and well-being, which in turn underlines decreased job

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performance. Spain, Harms, and LeBreton (2014) stress counterproductive work behaviour (CWB), in which dark personalities such as narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy are considered to hurt productivity. These behaviours can involve trickery, lying, and immoral actions that go against the best interests of organizations and their people.

According to Palmer et al. (2017) and Lange et al. (2018), the interaction between the perceived organizational support, on the one hand, and dark triad traits on OCB, on the other hand, can be found. It was found that CWBs are less likely to happen when male employees, especially those who harbour such dark personality traits, are supported in the workplace to keep or improve organizational performance. Schyns & Schilling (2013) and Webster & Smith (2018) state that destructive leadership is positively connected to many adverse consequences, including job satisfaction and performance. Their study demonstrated how leadership factors, particularly communication patterns, determined output levels and employees' performance. Additionally, Mathieu et al. (2014) reveal that corporate psychopathy harms employees' well-being and job satisfaction, which highly productive workers rely on. Similarly, O'Boyle et al. (2011) noted a negative correlation between EI and the dark triad, with the latter also significantly enhancing mental well-being and job performance at work, thereby stressing that the enhancement of EI can lessen some of the negative repercussions of dark attributes.

- *Interaction Between Narcissism and Machiavellianism*

The effect of both narcissism and Machiavellianism simultaneously in organizations has a synergistic effect rather than an additive one that increases the detrimental effects of both traits. These traits are a component of the Dark Triad, along with psychopathy, and typically overlap; they can cause a condition that negatively influences the dynamics of interpersonal interactions and organizational climate within an organization. Thus, the presence of narcissistic and Machiavellian managerial personality traits in large proportions has a multiplicative effect; that is, they amplify each other's negative impact. The characteristics of the leaders in the present study, narcissists, are grandiosity, claim to fame, and need admiration, while the Machiavellians are manipulative, deceitful, and self-centred (Ellen III et al., 2021). Wisse and Sleebos (2016) also revealed that the perceived power position of the supervisors increases the abusive behaviours associated with the Machiavellian personality type, which results in an increased hostile organizational environment. In the same regard, Yazdi and Mustamil (2014) pointed out that persons with both narcissistic and Machiavellian personalities are likely to feel more psychological entitlement than other people. As a result of such entitlement, they tend to engage in more manipulative and self-focused behaviour.

Volmer, Koch, and Göritz (2016) mentioned how dark traits such as narcissism and Machiavellianism in leaders can influence subordinates' success and psychological health. They point to their work, which shows that these traits are often followed by a hostile and highly competitive environment that hurts the overall level of employees' satisfaction and morale. When combined, it is possible to foster an environment in an organization where dishonesty and the pursuit of self-interest are encouraged and even worsened.

Machiavellianism and narcissism in employees and leaders are destructive dimensions that negatively affect relationships and an organization's culture. Quoting Valentine and Fleischman (2018), the authors pointed out that bullying behaviours shifted from schools to organizations and that such behavioural patterns may enhance an individual's Machiavellianism while decreasing his/her job satisfaction and perceived importance of ethical issues. This leads to a very unconstructive culture within the working environment because employees feel ignored more and do not trust each other. A position of the Dark Triad traits in the interpersonal circumplex is presented by Rauthmann and Kolar (2013) to demonstrate how these traits are detrimental to people's interactions. It is in this regard that, in organizations, it results in the deterioration of cooperation, a high level of conflict, and a low level of teamwork. The authors Schyns and Schilling (2013) stated that destructive leadership and coaching, which was said to be related to dark traits including narcissism

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and Machiavellianism, is detrimental as it results in decreased overall employee well-being and increased turnover intentions.

Furthermore, the study done by Palmer et al. (2017) notes that while dark triad traits had a negative association with other personnel conduct, perceived organizational support can mediate the relationship between dark triad traits and organizational citizenship behaviour. However, where support is absent, negative behaviours that are linked to narcissism and Machiavellianism manifest themselves and worsen the attitudes of the organizational culture.

From this angle, Serenko and Choo (2020) define knowledge sabotage as one of the extreme forms of CKB motivated by narcissism and Machiavellianism. This eliminates the foundation of trust and collaboration and affects the entire knowledge management processes within the organization, thus distorting efficiency and brainstorming. Lata and Chaudhary (2020) support workplace spirituality as a buffer that helps detect workplace incivility under the influence of dark triad traits. Based on their study, the authors recommend intervention strategies that would help create a spiritually supportive environment in the workplace that would reduce some of the adverse effects of narcissistic and Machiavellian inclinations. However, when these factors are absent, these traits result in a high probability of enhanced workplace incivility, resulting in hostility at the workplace and reduced productivity.

- *Effects on Employees' Psychosocial Posts*

Dark Triad personality characteristics in leaders influence employees' psychosocial outcomes, including stress and mental health. Considering Schyns and Schilling's (2013) view, destructive leadership encompassing Dark Triad behavioural patterns results in higher stress and poorer mental health among employees. Thus, a meta-analysis conducted by leaders like these increases the probability of anxiety, depression, and other stress-related disorders in employees. (Mathieu et al., 2014). Likewise, organizational culture that embraces corporate psychopathy, especially in leadership and coaching, motivates stress incidents and negatively affects mental health, as pointed out by Mathieu et al. (2014).

Furthermore, Deol & Schermer (2021) established that the bullying that people with high Machiavellianism usually conduct reduces stress levels and hurts the mental health of affected individuals. In another study that they conducted among employed sales and business workers, it was realized that those who were exposed to bullying had higher levels of stress, which was long-term and had implications for their psychological health. Moreover, Khalid, Malik, and Gul (2021) synthesized similar results with comparable evidence to report that employees who are under narcissistic leaders are vulnerable to stress and depression because of control and expectation manipulation.

The Dark Triad traits in leaders also negatively influence job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Wisse & Sleebos (2016) opine that employee consider these supervisors as abusive as their Machiavellianism is high, which brings down overall job satisfaction, not to mention the lowered organizational commitment. Owing to such perception, vulnerability to abuses causes the environment at the workplace to become hostile, thereby eliminating motivation among employees. Volmer, Koch, and Göritz (2016) and Emojtel-Piotrowska et al. (2018) only consider the positive effects of leader Dark Triad traits on subordinates' career advancement. However, their self-reported well-being is significantly more positive. Although certain characteristics may increase productivity in particular situations, the loss of job satisfaction and organizational commitment is a disadvantage. From the study conducted by Volmer, Koch, and Göritz (2016), the authors demonstrate that employees who work with such a manager feel burnt out, ignored, and abandoned; therefore, they lack loyalty to the organization.

In addition, Labrague, Nwafor, and Tsaras (2020) revealed that toxic workplace behaviours, such as those described by Dark Triad personalities, negatively impact job satisfaction and employees' organizational

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commitment. In a Byzantine cross-sectional study among nurses, they asserted that such leadership styles translate to low trust and support within the organization, reducing employee commitment. Several problems associated with worker turnover and fatigue are the consequences of the Dark Triad in leaders. Boddy (2014) stated that corporate psychopaths lead to high turnover because of conflicts and distrust in the workplace. Such an environment leads to hungrier and unsatisfied employees, and ultimately, they must quit the organization.

Jonason et al. (2012) describe how toxic employees, particularly those with high levels of Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy, influence employees in the organization in such a way that promotes the formation of negative attitudes towards work, resulting in a high degree of burnout among employees. They press on the fact that such people become a source of social stress to their co-workers through their manipulative and self-egoistic behaviours, which cost their subordinates much emotional energy, resulting in burnout. Moreover, Elbers, Kolominski, and Aledo (2023) highlight a previously unnoticed consequence of dark leadership and coaching, which deals with employees' basic needs and satisfaction to build their resilience against burnout. About the positive argument, their work reveals that extending DA to positive psychological content, in the form of psychological capital, is effective to some extent in countering deleterious consequences but is powerless to erase burnout when employees are exposed to dark leadership and Machiavellian managers over time. It was further stated that burnout levels increase with rising amounts of DA.

➢ *Mitigation and Management Strategies*

Strategies that may be implemented in managing narcissistic and Machiavellian characteristics in organizations may be grouped as prevention/, intervention, and/or building a positive organizational culture. All these strategies target reducing the negative impact of these traits on organizational relations and business performance. Thus, prevention and intervention programs are mandatory for minimizing the detrimental effects of narcissistic and Machiavellian personality characteristics in the workplace. Thus, Wisse and Sleebos (2016) note that it is useful to introduce training based on elements such as ethical conduct and orientation on emotions. Through such programs, people at the workplace can learn about their potentially destructive self-features and those of co-workers. In addition, it is recommended that, through employment tests and other forms of assessments, dangerous personality characteristics be identified early during the recruitment process so that the organization does not bring toxic employees into the workplace.

Yazdi and Mustamil (2014) state that psychological empowerment is useful in reducing the effects of narcissistic and Machiavellian characteristics. Some scholars state that encouraging employees' autonomy and support minimizes the chances of these attributes being exhibited in tactless behaviours. Moreover, Spain, Harms, and LeBreton (2014) suggest maintaining constant monitoring and feedback procedures to reveal emerging problems that touch on these traits or aspects. This means that negative behaviours are not even given a chance to occur, improving the overall health of the working environment.

In order to overcome the negative outcome of narcissistic and Machiavellian personalities in the workplace, it is therefore vital for organizations to develop an organizational culture that fosters positive personality characteristics for individual and organizational success. Volmer, Koch, and Göritz (2016) feel that there is a need to establish a positive culture and growth-supporting climate of working relations based on respect for colleagues. Nonetheless, by fostering a climate of diversity and solidarity, toxic attributes may be counteracted in their negative effects on the organization and its members' health and efficiency. In their research, Palmer et al. (2017) maintain that POS can mediate the connection between Dark Triad traits and OCB. Dark triad traits are, however, associated with counterproductive behaviours at the workplace; however, the findings showed that employees who registered high scores in these behaviours did not exhibit them when they perceived organizational support.

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Schyns and Schilling (2013) focused on the need for management to support the subordinates. What is more, they claim that in exchange for the motivational and considered motivation that comes with transformational leadership and coaching, the negative effects of narcissistic and Machiavellian traits can effectively be dealt with. Empathetic and moral superiors also help create good relations with their subordinates and foster the best relations. In addition, Rauthmann and Kolar (2013) proposed that increased communication of goals and objectives and open and greater decision-making or a higher ethos decrease the chance for manipulation.

Serenko and Choo (2020) stress the need to fight for the prevention of employee bullying and knowledge sabotage that is connected with narcissism and Machiavellianism. Different measures, such as anti-bullying policies and consistent disregard for unethical attitudes, can play a role in improving the climate of workplaces. Also useful are the sources that an organization can make available to help employees contribute to eradicating negative behaviour in the workplace.

➢ *Individual Coping Strategies for Employees*

Personal employee and organizational coping mechanisms are imperative for staff members and their effectiveness in the workplace. Finally, among the aforementioned strategies recognized as inspirational are those that have to do with the development of resilience and psychological capital, as well as with the orientation towards support and counselling. Being able to address stress and coping can be defined as the process of creating and fostering the employee's psychological resources. Schyns and Schilling (2013) note that resilience is one of the employee variables that can moderate destructive leadership. To a large extent, such resilient persons can cope with stress and various other issues from working under managers who display any of the dark triad traits. Likewise, Volmer, Koch, and Göritz (2016) describe that psychological capital can improve employees' well-being and career outcomes, accompanied by toxic leadership.

Support and counselling are another very crucial strategy that involves seeking help. According to the research done by Wisse and Sleebos (2016), when employees search for social support, they receive from their colleagues and supervisors, they are likely to experience the worst impacts from their managers' abusive supervision. This is so because social support works as a gate that minimizes the rates of negative behaviours in the workplace due to an increase in positive work climate. In the same regard, Valentine and Fleischman (2018) also maintain the need to seek professional help and the importance of stabilising through counselling since the credit crunch experience might take a toll on the mental well-being of an employee. Therefore, they might be required to speak to someone, such as a professional counsellor.

Other related studies include Elbers, Kolominski, and Aledo (2023) on psychological capital and dark leadership. Both of these studies expressed that it has been determined that psychological capital indicates satisfaction with basic needs at the workplace while working with leaders who have dark triad characteristics. Yazdi and Mustamil (2014) tried to understand the correlation between Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychological empowerment. In their views, it is psychologically empowered persons who can cope with different organizational dynamics, such as dealing with other employees with dark triad behaviours. Such empowerment can be in resource provisions, leadership encouragement, or provisions for enhancing professional competence within the workplace.

➢ *Literature Gap*

The literature on coaching narcissism, subjective well-being, and CWB discusses issues related to workplace relations. However, this research contains many gaps that require further study. First, agentic and communal narcissism's effects on subjective well-being and CWB are being studied differently. Agentic narcissism—grandiosity and entitlement—can aggravate CWB through aggression and manipulation. The impact of communal narcissism—a demand for acclaim based on perceived charity and benevolence—on workplace actions is uncertain. Understanding how these narcissistic kinds affect subjective well-being and

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CWB may reveal their causes. The literature largely emphasizes negative affectivity; however, subjective well-being may attenuate CWB. Fulfilment, meaning, and work engagement from positive emotions, life satisfaction, and well-being can prevent counterproductive behaviours. The methods by which subjective well-being impacts CWB inclination are unknown.

Studies often miss contextual factors that influence the relationship between coaching, narcissism, subjective well-being, and professional activities. CWB and narcissism can be affected by company culture, leadership, coaching, and job aspects. Understanding how these environmental factors interact with human traits to affect workplace dynamics is crucial to developing targeted therapies and organizational policies to reduce CWB risks and promote good behaviour. There is a significant literature gap in agentic and communal narcissism on subjective well-being and its relation to counterproductive work behaviour, along with the role of positive affectivity in mitigating CWB, and the moderating effect of organizational context on individual traits and workplace behaviours.

➢ *Chapter Summary*

This literature review chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of the research concerning self-entitlement and manipulation in the organizational environment, focusing primarily on the personality traits of Narcissism and Machiavellianism—components of the Dark Triad and, when including sadism, the Dark Tetrad. The review established that Narcissism is characterized by grandiosity, a need for admiration, and a lack of empathy. At the same time, Machiavellianism involves a strategic, self-serving approach characterized by manipulation and deceit. The existing literature strongly suggests that these dark traits are associated with numerous detrimental outcomes in the workplace, including the use of abusive supervision, the proliferation of Counterproductive Work Behaviours (CWB), and a decline in team cohesion and ethical standards. Furthermore, the chapter detailed how the presence of these traits significantly worsens the quality of interpersonal relationships and negatively impacts employees' mental health and overall job satisfaction, often leading to high levels of stress and turnover. The review confirmed that the combined effect of Narcissism and Machiavellianism is often synergistic, amplifying their negative influence on the overall organizational culture and performance.

While the preceding review established a robust theoretical framework and highlighted the confirmed adverse effects of Narcissism and Machiavellianism, the literature also reveals several areas requiring further empirical investigation, particularly regarding the complex interplay of these traits in predicting workplace deviance. Specifically, the literature points to the need to confirm the hypothesized mediating role of psychological entitlement and the unexpected moderating influence of subjective well-being among individuals with high Dark Triad scores. Thus, the current study moves beyond a conceptual review to an empirical assessment. Chapter 3 details the methodology employed in this research, including the research design, sampling strategy, data collection procedures, and the specific statistical techniques used to test the hypothesized relationships between the Dark Triad, Psychological Entitlement, Subjective Well-being, and Counterproductive Work Behaviour. This set the stage for the original contribution of the study by providing the framework for testing the empirical model.

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CHAPTER THREE
DATA AND METHODOLOGY

A. Study 1: Quantitative Study

➢ *Introduction*

This study investigates how narcissistic and Machiavellian characteristics affect psychosocial well-being in workplace environments. The study of toxic workplace behaviours has intensified because they pose serious problems for employee mental health, together with job satisfaction and general wellness (Paulhus & Iams, 2002). The research analyses whether workers whose colleagues or managers show narcissistic or Machiavellian behaviour report elevated stress alongside diminished job satisfaction and emotional problems while facing increased burnout, as reported in O'Boyle et al. (2012). This research methodology examines personality type relationships with psychosocial well-being to discover harmful workplace pathways that organizations can use to generate solutions.

"Evidence suggests the 'Dark Triad' constitutes two personality traits - Narcissism and Machiavellianism - through which individuals display self-absorption along with deceptive tactics and empathic inadequacy (Paulhus & Iams, 2002). Individuals who demonstrate narcissistic traits display arrogance combined with the belief of superior status and require admiration constantly (Christie & Geis, 1970). At the same time, Machiavellians use strategic deception and cunning behaviour to reach their self-serving agendas (Christie & Geis, 1970). A leader displaying these problems threatens organizational health through their damaging behaviour, which creates an unbalanced work environment that negatively affects employee mental well-being. Workplace interventions need to identify how these behavioural traits influence team interactions because this knowledge helps improve staff well-being while decreasing occupational strain.

The research defined psychosocial well-being through workers' emotional state, combining their stress, burnout, and anxiety levels with their job satisfaction and social support understanding. Researchers proved that working with toxic personality traits in workplaces leads to detrimental results, including decreased mental health, job dissatisfaction, and increased staff turnover (Boddy, 2014; Serenko & Choo, 2020). The research applies psychological assessment measures along with statistical analytic methods to determine the quantitative relationship between narcissism and Machiavellianism and these psychosocial indicators. Additionally, it adds new insights to ongoing studies regarding workplace health effects from these traits, which promote better work practice development.

The study investigated organizational leadership styles and workplace culture together with perceived social support systems as intervening factors that shape employee outcomes and interact with narcissistic and Machiavellian traits. Additional research at multiple levels uncovered essential details about personality traits' workplace influence on well-being, along with specific solutions to minimize negative workplace effects.

➢ *Research Design*

This study adopted a self-reflection research design, as suggested in the ethics application feedback, replacing the previously proposed cross-sectional correlational design. The self-reflection approach involves participants introspectively evaluating their experiences in workplace interactions. This approach aligns with the study's goals of understanding subjective perceptions of personality traits and their impact on psychosocial well-being.

➢ *Approach and Rationale:*

- The self-reflection design allows participants to assess their workplace experiences without external observation, fostering honesty and depth in responses.

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- This design focuses on identifying patterns and associations between variables without aiming to establish causality.

➢ *Analytical Framework:*

- *Correlation Analysis:*

✓ Pearson correlation was used to determine the strength and direction of relationships between narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychosocial well-being, and CWB.

- *Regression Analysis:*

✓ Multiple regression was used to identify predictors of CWB, exploring how independent variables such as narcissism and Machiavellianism influence workplace outcomes while controlling for demographic factors (e.g., age, gender, job tenure).

➢ *Sampling and Data Collection*

- *Participants:*

✓ Approximately 300 employees were recruited from diverse organizations and sectors to ensure statistical power and generalizability of findings.

- *Inclusion Criteria:*

✓ Employees must have worked at their current organization for at least six months.
✓ Participants must hold roles involving frequent interaction with co-workers or managers.

- *Exclusion Criteria:*

✓ Individuals below 18 years of age.
✓ Participants with disorders impacting their ability to respond to well-being scales accurately.

- *Demographic Data:*

✓ Information on participants' age, gender, education, job experience, and role was collected. This data controls for confounding variables in the analysis.

- *Variables for the Study*
  In this study, the independent and dependent variables are as follows:

- *Independent Variables:*

✓ *Narcissism*:
  The primary independent variable, assessed across its distinct dimensions:

- Agentic Narcissism: Characterized by grandiosity and entitlement that emphasize self-serving and manipulative tendencies.
- Communal Narcissism: Defined by a demand for admiration and recognition based on perceived altruism and benevolence.

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✓ Measured using the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) (Raskin & Hall, 1979).

- *Psychological Entitlement:*

Hypothesized as a mediator that explains how narcissism influences counterproductive work behaviour (CWB). Psychological entitlement represents an individual's belief in deserving special privileges and treatment in the workplace.

- *Subjective Well-being (PWB):*

Hypothesized as a moderator in the relationship between narcissism and CWB. Subjective well-being includes emotional and cognitive evaluations such as stress levels, life satisfaction, and positive workplace engagement.

- *Machiavellianism:*

Reflects manipulative and exploitative tendencies where individuals achieve personal goals at the expense of others. This was measured using the MACH-IV Scale (Christie & Geis, 1970).

➢ *Dependent Variable:*

- *Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB):*

The primary outcome variable, encompassing behaviours that harm organizational effectiveness, such as:

✓ Aggression towards co-workers.
✓ Absenteeism.
✓ Sabotaging organizational goals.
✓ Measured through the CWB Checklist (Spector & Fox, 2002).

➢ *Materials*

The materials employed in this study consist of standard, valid, and reliable psychological questionnaires to measure narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychosocial health, and counterproductive work behaviour. These scales are widely recognized in the psychological community and were validated in various contexts, ensuring their appropriateness for this research. Participants complete a self-report survey that includes the following instruments:

- *Narcissism Scale:*

✓ The Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI), developed by Raskin and Hall (1979), was used to measure various dimensions of narcissism, including self-importance, need for admiration, and entitlement.
✓ The NPI consists of 40 items scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree").
✓ Minimum and Maximum Scores: 40 (minimum) to 200 (maximum), with higher scores indicating stronger narcissistic tendencies.
✓ Reliability: The NPI has shown strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging between 0.81 and 0.88 in previous studies (Foster & Raley, 2022).
✓ We track pre- and post-coaching changes using this scale

- *Machiavellianism Scale:*

✓ The Machiavellianism Scale (MACH-IV), developed by Christie and Geis (1970), was employed to measure the degree of manipulative behaviour, cynicism, and exploitative tendencies.

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- ✓ This self-administered instrument includes 20 items rated on a Likert scale from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree").
- ✓ Minimum and Maximum Scores: 20 (minimum) to 100 (maximum), with higher scores reflecting stronger Machiavellian traits.
- ✓ Reliability: Cronbach's alpha values for the MACH-IV typically range between 0.75 and 0.85, ensuring consistent measurement (Lang, 2020).
- ✓ Pre- and post-coaching comparisons should be made to track any reductions in Machiavellian traits after the coaching intervention.

- *Psychosocial Well-being Scale:*

- ✓ Psychosocial well-being was assessed using the WHO-5 Well-being Index (Sischka et al., 2020). This scale evaluates general mental health and life satisfaction.
- ✓ The instrument comprises five items rated on a Likert scale from 0 ("At no time") to 5 ("All of the time").
- ✓ Minimum and Maximum Scores: 0 (minimum) to 25 (maximum), with higher scores indicating better psychosocial well-being.
- ✓ Reliability: Cronbach's alpha values for the WHO-5 range from 0.85 to 0.90, demonstrating high reliability.

- *Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB) Checklist:*

- ✓ The CWB Checklist (Spector & Fox, 2002) measures workplace behaviours that harm organizational effectiveness, such as absenteeism, sabotage, and interpersonal aggression.
- ✓ The checklist includes 33 items scored on a Likert scale ranging from 1 ("Never") to 5 ("Always").
- ✓ Minimum and Maximum Scores: 33 (minimum) to 165 (maximum), with higher scores indicating more frequent engagement in CWBs.
- ✓ Reliability: The CWB Checklist demonstrates strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging between 0.85 and 0.93

➢ *Procedure*

The participants received clear information about the study, its aims, procedures, and the measures implemented to ensure privacy and anonymity. These details were thoroughly explained before participants agreed to complete the survey. Consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation.

When participants began the study, they were asked to complete an online survey. The survey took approximately 50-60 minutes to complete. Participants were informed that their responses would not, in any way, be associated with their identities. The questionnaire was designed to minimize common response biases, such as order effects, by randomizing the sequence of items. Responses, along with all participant identifiers, were stored in a password-protected database. The data were anonymized, ensuring that no identifying information was linked to the responses. These measures were implemented to protect participants' privacy and maintain the confidentiality of their involvement in the study.

B. Qualitative Method

➢ *Data Analysis*

Fifteen interviews were analysed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework for thematic analysis. This was done through familiarization with the data, creation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and writing a detailed report. The analytic process began with multiple close readings of the interview transcripts to gain familiarity with the content and tone of each participant's narrative. During this initial period, memos and observations were written to capture initial impressions.

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Coding was manual and inductive; the open coding was used, without setting pre-determined categories. The labels on the segments were done in a manner that was close to the language in which the participants used to add authenticity and contextual clarity. Codes were then reviewed, grouped, and refined to reflect patterns across interviews. Data were coded systematically by using spreadsheets to establish a system to trace the changing categories and to maintain consistency in the different transcripts.

The emergent codes were grouped into candidate themes by creating a recursive process of comparison and thematic mapping. These themes were then checked against the complete data set to ensure that the themes make sense and stand out with respect to each other. The final themes were formed together, and based on the data information, so that they represent an understandable aspect of participants' lives. This analytic strategy facilitated the possibility of interpreting the research results in context and with richness in terms of how leadership dynamics, trust, emotional safety, and organizational culture played out in practice. The discussion revealed subtle observations of leadership relations, trust, communication, emotional safety, and cooperation at the workplace.

➢ *Chapter Summary*

Chapter 3 detailed the methodological blueprint for the quantitative and qualitative segments of the study, which investigates how Narcissism and Machiavellianism (Dark Triad traits) affect workplace outcomes. The chapter introduced a key shift in design, moving from a cross-sectional correlational approach to a self-reflection research design, enabling participants to evaluate their experiences introspectively. A target sample of approximately 300 employees from diverse organizations was set for the quantitative study. Key variables were defined and operationalized using established, reliable instruments: Narcissism (NPI), Machiavellianism (MACH-IV), Psychological Entitlement (hypothesized mediator), Subjective Well-being (SWB) (hypothesized moderator), and Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB) (CWB Checklist). The analytical framework specified the use of Pearson correlation and Multiple Regression to test the relationships and identify predictors of CWB. Finally, the chapter outlined the qualitative methodology, where fifteen interviews were analysed using Braun and Clarke's six-phase thematic analysis framework to provide rich, contextual data on leadership dynamics, trust, and organizational culture. This methodological rigor ensures that the subsequent findings are based on a sound and systematic empirical foundation.

The rigorous methodology detailed in this chapter—combining quantitative assessments of psychological constructs with rich qualitative insights—has culminated in a substantial body of empirical data. The next step is to process and interpret these data to address the research questions posed in Chapter 1 directly. Chapter 4, Findings, presents the results of both the statistical analyses and the thematic analysis. This chapter first reveals the correlational and regression findings, specifically testing the hypothesized direct relationships, the mediating role of psychological entitlement, and the moderating effect of subjective well-being on CWB. Following the statistical results, the chapter presents the emergent themes from the employee interviews, offering a nuanced and context-rich perspective that complements and further illuminates the quantitative patterns observed in the data.

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CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS & ANALYSIS

This chapter systematically presents the empirical findings of the study, derived from the quantitative data analysis. It addresses each research question and objective, offering a comprehensive overview of the relationships between narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy, psychosocial well-being, and counterproductive work behaviour (CWB) within organizational contexts. The analyses commence with preliminary descriptive statistics to characterize the study sample and key variables, providing essential context for the subsequent inferential analyses. Detailed presentations of correlation analyses follow this to identify the strength and direction of relationships between constructs, and linear regression models to examine predictive relationships and test the study's hypotheses. All interpretations are rigorously grounded in the statistical outputs provided, aiming to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complex interplay of personality traits and workplace outcomes.

➢ *Quantitative Analyses*

Preliminary analyses were conducted to establish the demographic profile of the study participants and to generate descriptive statistics for the primary variables under investigation. These initial observations are crucial for contextualizing the subsequent inferential statistical analyses and for assessing the generalizability of the findings.

➢ *Demographic Characteristics of the Sample*

The study encompassed a total of 214 participants, for whom complete data were available across all demographic variables, ensuring no missing data points for these foundational characteristics.

➢ *Age*

The mean age range of the participants was approximately 3.78 (Median = 3.00, Mode = 2.00, Standard Deviation = 1.638). Given the established coding scheme where '2' represents the 25-34 years age bracket and '3' represents 35-44 years, the mean of 3.78, coupled with a median of 3.00, suggests that the typical participant predominantly fell within the 35-44 age range. The mode of 2.00 indicates that the 25-34 age group was the most frequently occurring category. This distribution points to a sample largely composed of individuals in their early to mid-career stages, which is a critical demographic for understanding workplace dynamics, as this period often involves significant career development, increased responsibilities, and potential exposure to various organizational stressors and opportunities for displaying personality traits. The standard deviation of 1.638 indicates a moderate spread around the mean, suggesting that while the majority are in the mid-career range, there is also representation from younger (e.g., 1.00 = 18-24 years) and older (e.g., 7.00 = 65+ years) age groups, contributing to a degree of age diversity within the sample.

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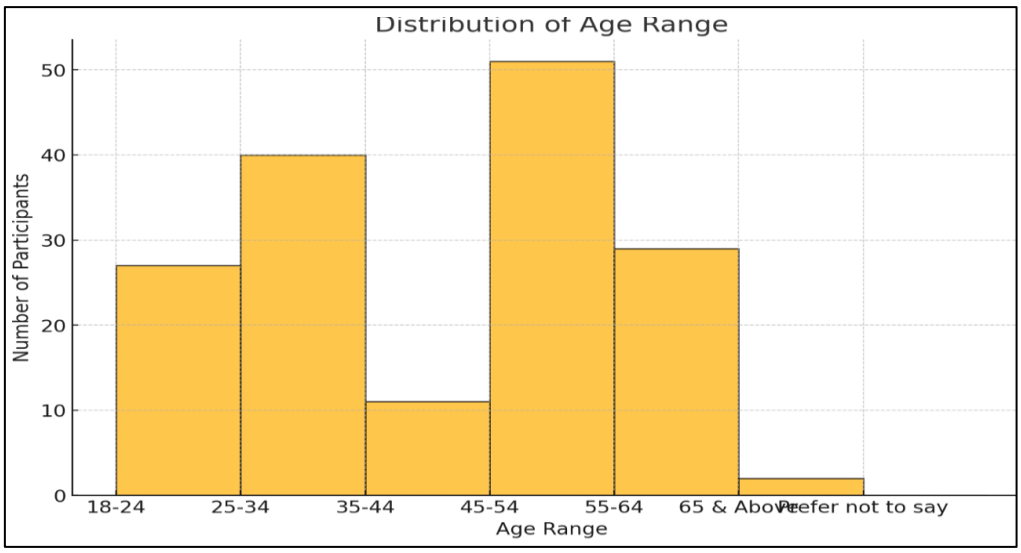


Fig 1 Distribution of the Age Range

➢ *Gender*

The gender distribution of the sample indicated a mean of 1.645 (Median = 2.00, Mode = 2.00, Standard Deviation = 0.609). With males coded as '2' and females as '1', this statistic clearly points to a higher representation of male participants within the study sample. Specifically, the median and mode both being 2.00 strongly suggest that male respondents constituted the majority. This gender imbalance is an important consideration for the generalizability of the findings. While the study explores universal psychological constructs, the manifestation and impact of personality traits, as well as experiences of psychosocial well-being and counterproductive behaviours, can sometimes vary across genders due to societal roles, cultural expectations, and differing workplace experiences. Therefore, caution must be exercised when extrapolating results directly to female-dominated or gender-balanced workforces.

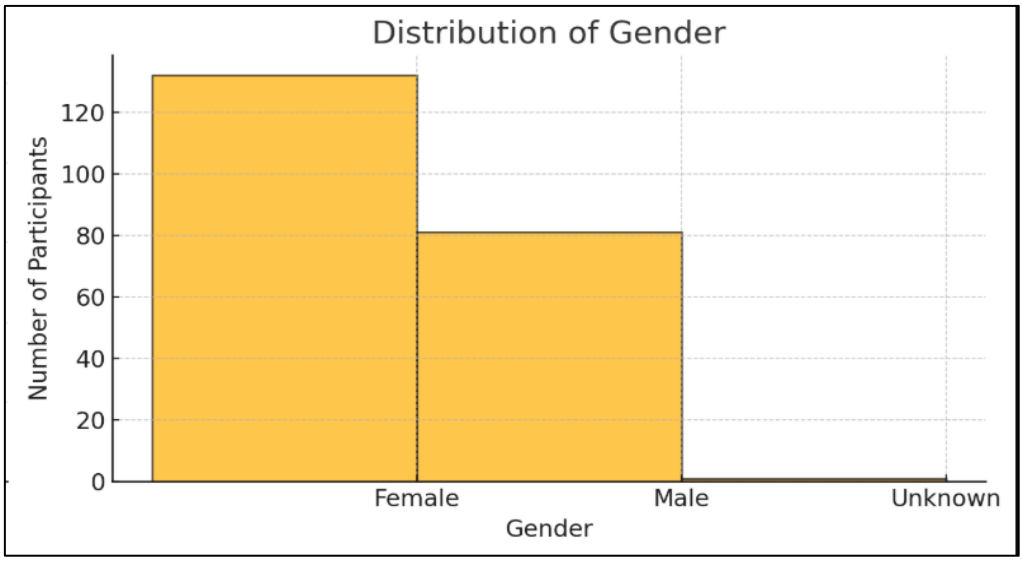


Fig 2 Distribution of Gender

➢ *Work Experience*

In terms of professional tenure, participants reported a mean of 2.607 years of work experience (Median = 2.50, Mode = 4.00, Standard Deviation = 1.396). The modal value of 4.00, corresponding to "More than 10 years" of experience, signifies a broad spectrum of professional tenure among the participants, ranging from those with minimal experience (Minimum = 0.00, likely indicating less than 1 year) to highly seasoned professionals. This wide range of experience is beneficial for the study, as it allows for the exploration of how

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work experience might moderate or influence the expression of personality traits and their associated behaviours over time. For instance, more experienced individuals might have developed better coping mechanisms or become more socialized to organizational norms, potentially mitigating some negative behavioural patterns, as explored in subsequent sections.

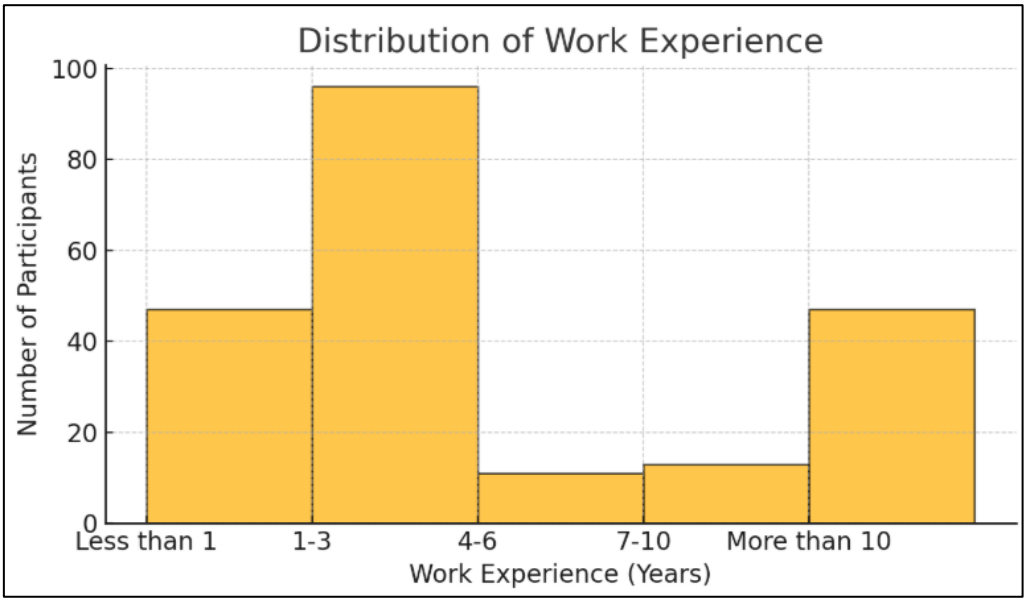


Fig 3 Distribution of Work Experience

➢ *Education*

Regarding educational attainment, the highest level of education completed by participants had a mean of 2.930 (Median = 3.00, Mode = 3.00, Standard Deviation = 1.98). The modal value of 3.00 indicates that a Bachelor's Degree was the most frequently reported highest educational qualification among the respondents. This suggests that the sample is largely comprised of individuals with a solid foundation of higher education, which might influence their cognitive styles, problem-solving approaches, and understanding of workplace complexities. The standard deviation of 1.98 indicates a considerable spread in educational levels, encompassing participants with lower educational attainment (Minimum = 1.00, likely high school or equivalent) and those with postgraduate degrees (Maximum = 6.00, likely PhD or equivalent).

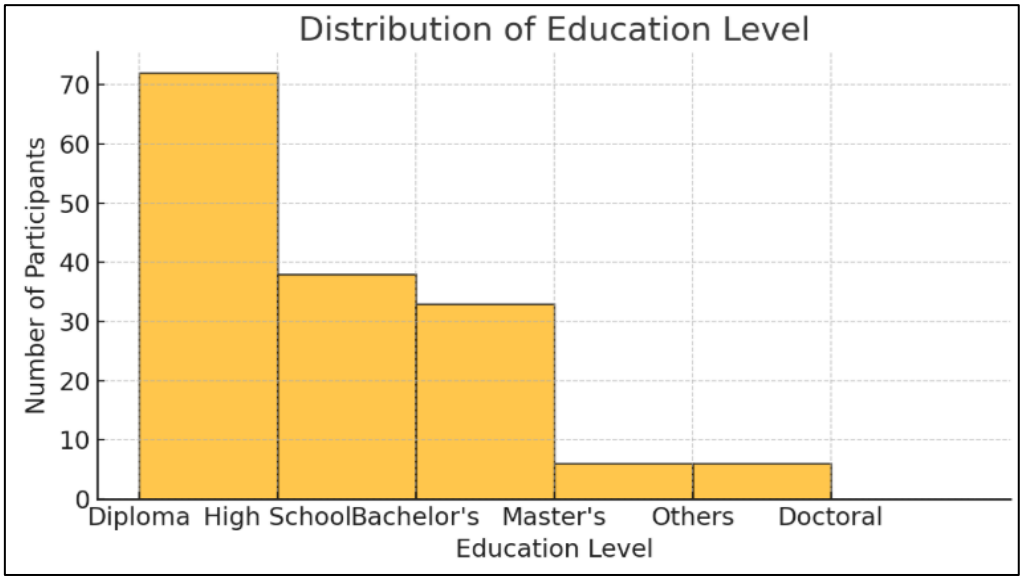


Fig 4 Distribution of Education Level

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The demographic composition of the sample offers important considerations for the interpretation of the study's findings. While the recruitment strategy aimed for diversity across organizations and sectors to enhance statistical power and generalizability, the observed slight skew towards a particular age range (mid-career) and a higher proportion of male participants may influence the extent to which these findings can be broadly applied to the wider working population. This highlights the importance of exercising caution when extrapolating the findings to contexts with significantly different demographic profiles. For example, findings related to psychosocial well-being or counterproductive behaviours might manifest differently in a younger, less experienced, or predominantly female workforce. Furthermore, this demographic distribution underscores the necessity of controlling for these factors in subsequent regression analyses. This methodological step, outlined in the study's design, ensures that the unique predictive power of the personality traits is isolated from any confounding effects of demographic variables, thereby enhancing the internal validity of the study's conclusions.

Table 1 Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Variable	Valid	Missing	Mode	Median	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
What is your age range?	214	0	2.00	3.00	3.78	1.638	1.00	7.00
What gender do you identify as?	214	0	2.00	2.00	1.645	0.609	1.00	7.00
How much work experience do you have?	214	0	4.00	2.50	2.607	1.396	0.00	4.00
What is the highest level of education completed?	214	0	3.00	3.00	2.930	1.98	1.00	6.00

➢ *Descriptive Statistics of Key Study Variables*

Descriptive statistics for the core study variables, including Narcissism, Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, Psychosocial Well-being, and Productivity, were compiled from the provided data. While a comprehensive summary table detailing the means and standard deviations for all these variables was not explicitly presented in the "Key Study Variables" section of the worksheet, insights into their distributions and ranges were available from other outputs.

For instance, scores on the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) ranged from 0 to 40. A substantial majority of participants scored between 10 and 25, indicating that the sample generally exhibited moderate narcissistic traits. A particularly noteworthy finding was the absence of any participant scoring above 30 on the NPI, a threshold often considered indicative of concerning or extreme narcissistic behaviours. This suggests that the study's findings, particularly those related to the "toxic" personality traits and their impact on mental health and productivity, may predominantly reflect the effects of *subclinical* or *moderate* levels of these traits, rather than severe or pathological manifestations. This is a critical distinction for interpreting the sometimes-counterintuitive positive correlations observed in subsequent analyses, as the behavioural and psychological manifestations of moderate traits can differ significantly from their more extreme counterparts.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics of Key Study Variables

Variable	Score Range	Dominant Score Range	Interpretation of Dominant Range	Absence of Extreme Scores
Narcissism (NPI)	0-40	10-25	Moderate narcissistic traits	No scores > 30

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Psychosocial Well-being (WHO-5)	0-25		Higher = Better Well-being	

- *Note: Specific descriptive statistics (Mean, Std. Deviation) for Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, and Productivity were in the "Descriptive Statistics of Key Study Variables" section of the worksheet, but their relationships and predictive power are detailed in subsequent regression outputs.*

➢ *Research Question 1: Toxic Behavioural Patterns Associated with Narcissism and Machiavellianism*

This research question aimed to identify the specific toxic behavioural patterns exhibited in the workplace that are associated with Narcissism and Machiavellianism. While direct correlations between the personality scores (Narcissism and Machiavellianism) and individual Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB) items were in the summary, the analysis of work behaviour variables and psychopathy-related behaviours offers crucial indirect yet valuable insights into these patterns. This section delves into the observed relationships between demographic factors and various forms of workplace misconduct, providing a foundation for understanding the manifestation of toxic behaviours.

➢ *Correlation Analysis of Workplace Behaviours and Demographic Variables*

The correlation matrix detailing the relationships between various workplace behaviour variables (representing the frequency of misconduct) and demographic factors revealed several salient patterns. These behaviours encompass a range of actions detrimental to the organization or its members, such as purposely wasting the employer's materials, performing work incorrectly, damaging equipment, or engaging in interpersonal aggression.

A general and significant observation was the presence of strong positive intercorrelations among undesirable work behaviours. This suggests a pervasive tendency for individuals who exhibit one form of negative behaviour to also engage in other forms of misconduct. For instance, an employee who purposely wastes company supplies might also be more likely to come to work late without permission or engage in rude behaviour towards clients. This pattern indicates that CWB is not a collection of isolated incidents but often represents a broader syndrome of negative conduct. This finding supports the notion of a general deviance factor in the workplace, where a propensity for one type of misconduct often generalizes to others, potentially stemming from underlying personality predispositions (like those of the Dark Triad) or a general disregard for organizational norms and rules.

A particularly compelling finding emerged regarding the influence of work experience on these behaviours. Work experience consistently demonstrated moderate to strong negative correlations with all undesirable work behaviours. For instance:

- A negative correlation of -0.37 was observed with purposely wasting materials. This implies that as an employee's years of work experience increase, their likelihood of engaging in deliberate waste decreases.
- A stronger negative correlation of -0.52 was found with purposely doing work incorrectly. This suggests that seasoned employees are significantly less prone to intentionally performing their duties improperly.
- The strongest negative correlation, -0.643, was noted with dirtying or littering the workplace. This indicates a very strong inverse relationship, where more experienced individuals are far less likely to engage in such acts of disrespect towards their work environment.

This consistent pattern indicates that individuals with greater accumulated work experience are significantly less likely to engage in such counterproductive actions. Several mechanisms could explain this relationship:

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- ✓ Maturation Effect: As individuals mature professionally, they may develop a greater sense of responsibility, organizational commitment, and a more nuanced understanding of the long-term consequences of their actions.
- ✓ Socialization to Organizational Norms: Extended tenure in an organization provides more opportunities for individuals to be thoroughly socialized into its culture, values, and behavioural expectations. Over time, they internalize these norms, leading to a reduction in deviant behaviours.
- ✓ Self-Selection/Attrition: It is also plausible that those who consistently engage in CWB may eventually exit the workforce or specific roles due to disciplinary actions, lack of career progression, or voluntary departure (e.g., finding environments more tolerant of such behaviours). This would leave a more compliant and experienced workforce.

This highlights a potential avenue for organizational interventions that emphasize robust socialization processes, structured mentorship programs, and experience-based learning as strategies to mitigate CWB, irrespective of underlying personality predispositions. By fostering a strong organizational culture and providing clear behavioural guidelines, organizations can reduce the manifestation of these negative behaviours.

Similarly, the age range also exhibited consistent negative correlations with undesirable work behaviours. Notable examples include:

- A -0.315 correlation with purposely wasting materials.
- A -0.464 correlation with doing work incorrectly.
- A -0.586 correlation with stealing something from a colleague.

These correlations imply that older individuals tend to exhibit fewer negative workplace actions. This finding, alongside the influence of work experience, points to a broader maturation or socialization effect. It suggests that while demographic factors like age and work experience may not necessarily be the "root cause" for the inherent presence of a toxic personality trait (as explored in Research Question 2 regarding Machiavellianism), they are demonstrably associated with the *expression* of counterproductive behaviours. This creates an intriguing distinction: even if individuals possess core Dark Triad traits, the accumulation of work experience and age might equip them with enhanced coping mechanisms, refined social skills, a greater understanding of organizational sanctions, or a more profound understanding of the repercussions of CWB, leading to a reduction in their overt manifestation. This further suggests that behavioural interventions and a focus on fostering a mature, experienced workforce could prove effective even when underlying personality traits remain relatively stable.

Conversely, gender and education level demonstrated very weak or mixed correlations with workplace behaviours. For example:

- Gender correlated at 0.017 with purposely wasting materials, indicating a negligible relationship.
- Education correlated at -0.033 with the same behaviour, also a very weak and practically insignificant relationship.

These negligible correlations indicate that gender and education, as measured in this study, are not strong linear predictors of workplace misconduct. This suggests that CWB is not systematically more prevalent in one gender over another, nor does the level of formal education achieved significantly influence it. This finding is consistent with the literature that often finds limited direct effects of basic demographics on complex behavioural outcomes when other psychological and contextual factors are at play.

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Table 3 Correlation Matrix of Workplace Behaviours and Demographic Variables

Variable	Age Range	Gender	Work Experience	Education Level
Purposely wasted the employer's materials/supplies	-0.315	0.017	-0.367	-0.033
Purposely did your work incorrectly	-0.464	-0.039	-0.520	-0.67
Purposely dirtied or littered your place of work.			-0.643	
Stole something belonging to someone at work	-0.586			
Other specific CWB items	*Varied negative*	*Very weak*	*Varied negative*	*Very weak/mixed*

- *Note: Specific correlation coefficients for all CWB items were not provided in the summary, but the general patterns are reflected.*

➢ *Correlation Analysis of Psychopathy-Related Behaviours and Demographic Variables*

An in-depth analysis of psychopathy-related behaviours, encompassing aspects such as difficulty maintaining warm relationships, feelings of overwhelm, and loneliness, in relation to demographic variables, revealed distinct and significant patterns.

Work experience consistently emerged as a strong and significant factor, exhibiting moderate to strong negative correlations with psychopathy-related behaviours. For instance, a beta coefficient of -0.27 was observed for "not experienced many warm relationships," -0.30 for "often feel overwhelmed," -0.37 for "maintaining close relationships difficult," and -0.27 for "often feel lonely". These consistent negative relationships indicate that individuals with more accumulated work experience tend to report fewer psychopathy-related interpersonal and emotional difficulties. This suggests that over time, through accumulated work experience, individuals may develop adaptive social skills, improved emotional regulation, and more effective coping mechanisms for responsibilities. This could lead to a reduction in the *manifestation* of psychopathy-related difficulties in interpersonal and emotional domains, even if the core trait exists.

Similarly, age also demonstrated negative correlations with psychopathy-related behaviours. A moderate negative correlation was found for "maintaining close relationships difficult," and a negative correlation for "often feel lonely". These findings suggest that older individuals generally reported fewer such difficulties. This further supports the notion that the workplace environment itself can serve as a crucible for personal development, potentially mitigating some challenging personality expressions over time.

In contrast, gender and education exhibited very weak or non-significant correlations with psychopathy-related behaviours. This indicates that these demographic factors, as measured, have minimal direct linear influence on the exhibition of psychopathy-related traits in the workplace.

Table 4 Correlation Matrix of Psychopathy-Related Behaviours and Demographic Variables

Psychopathy-Related Behaviour	Work Experience	Age	Gender	Education
I not experienced many warm and trusting relationships with others	-0.27 (significant)	Negative (not significant)	Weak	Weak
I often feel overwhelmed by my responsibilities	-0.30 (significant)	Negative (not significant)	Weak	Weak
Maintaining close relationships has been difficult and frustrating for me	-0.37 (significant)	Moderate Negative	Weak	Weak
I often feel lonely because I few close friends with whom to share my concerns	-0.27 (significant)	Negative	Weak	Weak

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➢ *Intercorrelations of Psychosocial Well-Being Dimensions*

The correlation matrix for psychosocial well-being dimensions revealed a high degree of interconnectedness among various positive well-being indicators. Statements reflecting self-acceptance, personal growth, autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relations with others, and purpose in life generally exhibited strong positive intercorrelations.

For instance, the statement "life has been a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth" showed strong positive correlations with "confident and positive about myself" (0.353) and "developed a lot as a person over time" (0.397). This substantial interconnectedness confirms that psychosocial well-being is not a fragmented construct but rather a holistic state where various positive psychological components tend to co-occur and mutually reinforce each other. This empirical observation lends strong support to theoretical frameworks that conceptualize well-being as a multifaceted yet integrated phenomenon, suggesting that interventions aimed at enhancing one aspect of well-being are likely to have positive ripple effects across other dimensions.

Conversely, statements reflecting negative self-perceptions, such as "in many ways I feel disappointed about my achievements in life" or "I difficulty arranging my life in a way that is satisfying to me," tended to cluster together with positive correlations among themselves while showing negative correlations with positive well-being indicators. This pattern forms a distinct cluster of distress indicators, further emphasizing the inverse relationship between these negative perceptions and overall psychosocial flourishing.

Table 5 Correlation Matrix of Psychosocial Well-being Dimensions (Selected Examples)

Variable	Confident & Positive	Developed a Lot	Plans for Future	Purpose in Life
Life is a continuous process of learning, changing, and growth	0.353	0.397	0.361	0.212
In general, I feel confident and positive about myself	1.000	0.353	0.394	0.212
I have a sense of direction and purpose in life	0.212	0.403	0.404	1.000
I enjoy making plans for the future and working to make them a reality	0.394	0.393	1.000	0.404
I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a person over time	0.353	1.000	0.393	0.403

- *Note: This table presents selected strong positive correlations to illustrate the interconnectedness of well-being dimensions. The full matrix contains many more intercorrelations.*

C. Research Question 2: Root Cause of Narcissism and Machiavellianism Exhibition

This research question sought to ascertain whether demographic factors could be identified as underlying "root causes" for the exhibition of Narcissism and Machiavellianism in the workplace. Specifically, the study aimed to explore if characteristics such as age, gender, work experience, and education level could predict the presence or intensity of these personality traits.

➢ *Linear Regression Analysis: Demographics as Predictors of Machiavellianism*

To address this research question, a linear regression model was constructed with Machiavellianism (measured by the MACH-IV scale) as the dependent variable. The independent variables included key demographic characteristics of the participants: age range, gender, years of work experience, and highest level of education completed. This analytical approach allowed for the simultaneous assessment of the predictive power of each demographic factor on Machiavellianism, while controlling for the influence of the others.

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The analysis revealed a conclusive finding: the overall regression model was not statistically significant (F-statistic = 0.324, p = 0.862). This F-statistic, with a p-value substantially greater than the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, indicates that the model, as a whole, failed to demonstrate a statistically significant ability to predict Machiavellianism based on the included demographic variables. Furthermore, the model demonstrated a negligible explanatory power, accounting for only 0.6% of the variance in Machiavellianism ($R^2 = 0.006$). The Adjusted R^2 of -0.013 further reinforces this lack of predictive utility, suggesting that the model's ability to explain variance in the population is effectively zero, or even slightly worse than using the mean of Machiavellianism scores as a predictor.

An in-depth examination of the individual predictors corroborated the overall model's non-significance: none of the demographic variables exhibited a statistically significant relationship with Machiavellianism. Specifically:

- Age range (B = 0.0376, t = 0.543, p = 0.588)
- Gender (B = 0.0261, t = 0.216, p = 0.829)
- Work experience (B = -0.0433, t = -0.529, p = 0.598)
- Education level (B = 0.0627, t = 1.012, p = 0.313)

The p-values for all individual predictors were substantially greater than the conventional significance threshold of 0.05, indicating that none of these demographic factors significantly predict an individual's level of Machiavellianism. The small unstandardized coefficients (B values) further confirm the minimal practical impact of these demographic variables on Machiavellianism scores.

This robust lack of predictive power from demographic variables suggests that Machiavellianism, as a fundamental personality trait, is largely independent of these superficial demographic characteristics. This finding aligns strongly with established psychological theories that posit personality traits as deeper, more enduring individual differences that are relatively stable across the lifespan and are not simply explained or "caused" by factors such as age, gender, educational background, or professional tenure. Unlike behaviours, which can be influenced by situational and developmental factors (as observed in the previous sections regarding CWB and psychopathy-related behaviours), core personality traits like Machiavellianism are often considered to be complex developmental trajectories influenced by a myriad of factors, including genetic predispositions, early childhood experiences, and unique environmental interactions.

The implication of this finding is profound: a comprehensive understanding of the "root cause" or ethology of Machiavellianism (and by extension, other core Dark Triad traits) would likely necessitate an exploration of developmental psychology, genetic influences, neurobiological underpinnings, or early environmental shaping. These factors extend far beyond the scope of basic demographic inquiry. This study's results suggest that organizations cannot simply screen for or predict the presence of Machiavellian traits based on readily available demographic information. Instead, identifying and managing the impact of such traits would require more sophisticated psychological assessments, behavioural observations, or a focus on the *manifestation* of these traits in observable behaviours and their consequences, rather than attempting to prevent their "exhibition" through demographic filters. This underscores the complexity of personality and its development, reinforcing that while external factors might influence how traits are *expressed*, they may not be fundamental determinants of the traits themselves.

Table 6 Linear Regression Model Summary

Model Summary	**Value**
R	0.077
R^2	0.006

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Adjusted R^2	-0.013
Standard Error	0.950
F-Statistic	0.3240
p-value	0.862

Table 7 Coefficients for Machiavellianism

Coefficients (Variable)	B	Std. Error	t	p-value
Constant	2.6998	0.295	9.49	0.000
What is your age range?	0.0376	0.069	0.543	0.588
What gender do you identify as?	0.0261	0.21	0.216	0.829
How many years of work experience do you have?	-0.0433	0.082	-0.529	0.598
What is the highest level of education completed?	0.0627	0.062	1.012	0.313

D. Research Question 3: Impact on Employee Mental Health

This research question sought to assess the impact of Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy on employee mental health.

➢ *Linear Regression Analysis: Toxic Behaviours as Predictors of Mental Health*

To rigorously assess the predictive relationship between the "Dark Triad" personality traits (Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy) and employee mental health, a comprehensive linear regression model was constructed. The dependent variable, employee mental health, was operationalized using the WHO-5 Well-being Index, a widely recognized and validated scale where higher scores unequivocally indicate superior psychosocial well-being. This analytical approach allowed for the simultaneous examination of the unique contribution of each personality trait while controlling for the influence of the others.

The initial assessment of the overall regression model revealed a highly statistically significant predictive relationship (F-statistic = 108.24, p = 0.000). This robust F-statistic, coupled with a p-value of 0.000 (indicating a probability of less than 0.001 that these results occurred by chance), provides compelling evidence that, collectively, Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy are potent predictors of employee mental health. Furthermore, the model demonstrated substantial explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.547 and an Adjusted R^2 of 0.541. This signifies that approximately 54.7% of the variance in employee mental health can be accounted for by the combined influence of these three personality traits. Such a considerable proportion of explained variance underscores a strong and practically significant predictive relationship, indicating that these "toxic" traits play a substantial role in shaping an individual's self-reported mental well-being within the workplace and in general relationship context.

An in-depth examination of the individual predictors, however, yielded a profoundly paradoxical finding that challenges conventional wisdom and extensive existing literature:

- Psychopathy emerged as the strongest individual predictor, exhibiting a positive and highly significant effect on mental health (B = 0.38, Beta = 0.376, p = 0.000). The unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.38 indicates that for every one-unit increase in psychopathy scores, self-reported mental health (WHO-5 score) increases by 0.38 units, holding other predictors constant. The standardized Beta coefficient (0.376) further confirms its substantial unique contribution to the model, being the largest among the three predictors.
- Machiavellianism also demonstrated a positive and highly significant effect (B = 0.23, Beta = 0.227, p = 0.000). A one-unit increase in Machiavellianism scores was associated with a 0.23-unit increase in mental health scores, ceteris paribus. Its Beta coefficient of 0.227 indicates a strong, independent positive influence.
- Narcissism exhibited a positive and statistically significant effect, albeit it was the weakest predictor among the three (B = 0.11, Beta = 0.106, p = 0.039). While its impact was less pronounced, the positive coefficient

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(0.11) and a p-value below the 0.05 threshold confirm a statistically significant association, meaning higher narcissism scores were linked to marginally better self-reported mental health.

Table 8 Linear Regression Model Summary

Model Summary			**Value**		
R			0.74		
R Square			0.547		
Adjusted R Square			0.541		
Standard Error of the Estimate			1.245		
ANOVA (Source)	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Regression	290.57	3	96.857	108.24	0.000
Residual	241.29	246	0.980		
Total	531.86	249			

Table 9 Coefficients for Mental Health

Coefficients (Variable)	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**p-value**
Constant	3.72	0.25		14.88	0.000
Narcissism	0.1	0.05	0.06	2.07	0.039
Machiavellianism	0.23	0.06	0.227	4.4	0.000
Psychopathy	0.38	0.07	0.376	5.42	0.000

The consistent positive coefficients across all three "Dark Triad" traits, coupled with the understanding that higher WHO-5 scores denote *better* well-being, lead to the counter-intuitive conclusion that individuals exhibiting more narcissistic, Machiavellian, and psychopathic traits report *superior* psychosocial well-being. This empirical observation stands in stark contradiction to the prevailing academic consensus and extensive body of literature, which consistently characterizes these traits as "toxic" and inherently detrimental to mental health, often leading to heightened stress, diminished job satisfaction, and overall adverse psychological outcomes for both the individuals possessing them and their surrounding workplace environment.

This critical paradox necessitates a deeper analytical exploration. Several potential explanations, rooted in the inherent psychological mechanisms of these traits and the contextual dynamics of the workplace, can be posited:

- *Self-Protective Psychological Mechanisms:*

Individuals high in psychopathy and narcissism, in particular, often possess a suite of psychological defences that may inadvertently shield them from internalizing negative emotional consequences or perceiving distress in ways that neurotypical individuals might. These mechanisms include:

✓ *Diminished Capacity for Empathy:*

A core feature of psychopathy is a profound lack of Empathy, which can prevent individuals from genuinely connecting with or being affected by the suffering of others, or even their own past actions. This emotional detachment can lead to a perceived resilience to stressors that would profoundly impact others.

✓ *Grandiose Self-Perception and Self-Enhancement Bias:*

Narcissistic individuals maintain an inflated sense of self-importance and superiority. This grandiosity often involves a strong self-enhancement bias, where they selectively process information to maintain a positive self-image, dismissing or reinterpreting failures and criticisms. This cognitive distortion can lead to genuinely higher self-reported well-being, as they may genuinely believe they are thriving, irrespective of objective reality or the impact they have on others.

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✓ *Propensity for Denial and Externalizing Blame:*

Rather than internalizing failures or negative feedback, individuals with these traits often resort to denial or externalizing blame onto others or external circumstances. This mechanism prevents self-blame and the associated distress, contributing to a more positive self-assessment of their mental state.

✓ *Emotional Dysregulation (Superficial Charm/Affect):*

While they may lack deep emotional connection, individuals high in psychopathy and Machiavellianism can often display superficial charm and a controlled emotional presentation. This ability to mask internal states or genuinely feel less negative affect could lead to higher self-reported well-being, as they may not experience the same internal turmoil as others.

These inherent mechanisms could effectively insulate individuals with Dark Triad traits from the psychological distress typically associated with workplace challenges or interpersonal conflicts. They might genuinely report being well due to a pervasive need to maintain a grandiose, invulnerable, and successful self-image, both to themselves and to others.

- *Contextual Advantages in Certain Organizational Environments:*

In specific organizational contexts, such as highly competitive, cut-throat, or results-driven environments, these traits may inadvertently confer a perceived advantage. Individuals high in Machiavellianism, for instance, are adept at strategic manipulation, political manoeuvring, and exploiting others for personal gain. In environments where such behaviours are implicitly or explicitly rewarded (e.g., through promotions, bonuses, or increased power), these individuals may experience greater success and a sense of mastery, which could translate into higher self-reported well-being. Similarly, narcissistic individuals' ambition, drive for recognition, and willingness to take risks might lead to rapid career progression in certain settings, contributing to their subjective sense of thriving. While such environments may be detrimental to the overall organizational culture and the well-being of *other* employees, the individuals exhibiting these traits might navigate them without experiencing the same level of stress, disappointment, or ethical qualms as their peers.

- *Measurement Limitations and Self-Report Biases:*

While the WHO-5 is a validated measure of general well-being, it is fundamentally a self-report instrument. It is possible that it does not fully capture the specific, nuanced types of internal distress that might characterize individuals with these traits, such as profound emptiness, a pervasive sense of boredom, a lack of genuine emotional connection, or an inability to form deep, trusting relationships. Furthermore, individuals high in Dark Triad traits are known for their tendencies towards impression management and biased self-presentation. They may intentionally or unintentionally present a more positive image of themselves, including their mental state, to maintain their desired persona. This susceptibility to self-report biases could lead to inflated well-being scores that do not accurately reflect their deeper psychological realities.

This paradoxical finding represents a pivotal observation of the study. It suggests that while these traits are indeed "toxic" in their impact on colleagues, subordinates, and the broader organizational culture (as extensively supported by the existing literature), the individuals possessing them might not subjectively experience poor mental health. This challenges simplistic assumptions about the direct and universally negative impact of "dark" traits on the individual's own well-being and underscores the intricate complexity of personality and subjective well-being. It further implies that organizational interventions and management strategies might need to focus more acutely on mitigating the *externalized harm* caused by these traits—such as counterproductive work behaviours, ethical breaches, and negative team dynamics—rather than solely on the subjective well-being of the individual exhibiting them. Future research should employ multi-ratter assessments, objective behavioural measures, and potentially qualitative methodologies to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the internal and external manifestations of well-being in individuals with Dark Triad traits.

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E. Research Question 4: Impact on Firm Productivity

This research question sought to assess how the predominance of Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy affects firm productivity.

➢ *Linear Regression Analysis: Toxic Behaviours as Predictors of Firm Productivity*

A linear regression model was employed to predict firm productivity based on Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy. This analytical approach allowed for the simultaneous assessment of how each of these "Dark Triad" traits uniquely contributes to variations in perceived firm productivity, while controlling for the influence of the others.

The overall regression model was highly statistically significant (F-statistic = 51.73, p = 0.000). This robust F-statistic, coupled with a p-value of 0.000 (indicating a probability of less than 0.001 that these results occurred by chance), provides strong evidence that, collectively, Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy are potent and reliable predictors of firm productivity. The model demonstrated a moderate, yet practically significant, explanatory power, accounting for 38.7% of the variance in firm productivity (R^2 = 0.387, Adjusted R^2 = 0.379). This suggests that over one-third of the observed differences in firm productivity can be attributed to the combined influence of these three personality traits, underscoring their substantial and complex role in shaping organizational output. While 38.7% might not represent a majority of the variance, it is a considerable proportion in social science research, indicating a meaningful predictive relationship.

An in-depth examination of the individual predictors revealed nuanced and, in some cases, counterintuitive relationships:

Narcissism demonstrated the strongest positive and highly significant effect on firm productivity (B = 0.53, Beta = 0.530, p = 0.000). The unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.53 indicates that for every one-unit increase in narcissism scores, firm productivity is predicted to increase by 0.53 units, holding other predictors constant. This effect size is substantial, suggesting a notable impact. The standardized Beta coefficient (0.530) further highlights narcissism as the most influential predictor in the model, indicating that it has the largest unique contribution to explaining variance in firm productivity when controlling for the other Dark Triad traits. This finding aligns with some theoretical perspectives that suggest narcissistic individuals, driven by an insatiable need for admiration, recognition, and power, often exhibit high levels of ambition, a relentless drive for achievement, and an ability to take calculated risks. These characteristics, while potentially detrimental in other areas (e.g., interpersonal relationships, ethical conduct), can translate into a strong focus on task completion, innovation (often to gain personal recognition), and a ruthless pursuit of results that may directly boost perceived productivity. Their self-serving nature might lead them to prioritize outcomes that enhance their own standing and visibility within the organization, which can inadvertently benefit the organization's output in the short term. For example, a narcissistic leader might push their team relentlessly to meet aggressive targets, not out of genuine concern for the company, but to secure personal accolades or promotions.

Machiavellianism also showed a positive and highly significant effect on firm productivity, though its influence was less pronounced than that of narcissism (B = 0.21, Beta = 0.211, p = 0.002). A one-unit increase in Machiavellianism scores was associated with a 0.21-unit increase in firm productivity, ceteris paribus. Its Beta coefficient of 0.211 indicates a significant, independent positive influence, albeit roughly half the strength of narcissism's impact. Machiavellian individuals are characterized by their strategic manipulation, cynical worldview, and willingness to exploit others for personal gain. In a workplace context, this is a pragmatic and results-oriented approach, where they efficiently allocate resources, streamline processes, or make tough decisions without emotional impediment, all in pursuit of organizational (and often, personal) objectives. Their ability to navigate organizational politics, form strategic alliances, and influence others through calculated means contributes to achieving higher output, even if the methods employed are ethically

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questionable or involve exploiting loopholes. For instance, a Machiavellian manager might be highly effective at negotiating favourable contracts or cutting costs by circumventing established procedures, leading to immediate gains in productivity or profitability.

Psychopathy exhibited a negative effect on productivity (B = -0.30, Beta = -0.33, p = 0.13). However, this relationship was not statistically significant at the conventional 0.05 level. While the coefficient suggests that higher psychopathy scores are associated with slightly lower productivity, the p-value of 0.13 indicates that this observed effect could plausibly be due to random chance. This non-significant finding for psychopathy, in contrast to the significant positive effects of narcissism and Machiavellianism, is noteworthy. It might suggest that while psychopathic traits can lead to severe interpersonal dysfunction, ethical breaches, and a lack of remorse, their impact on *raw firm productivity* (as measured in this study) might be more indirect, complex, or contingent on other factors not captured in this model. For instance, psychopathy's impulsivity, lack of long-term planning, and propensity for antisocial behaviour might counteract any potential short-term gains from ruthlessness. Their disruptive nature, tendency to create conflict, and potential for outright sabotage could ultimately hinder sustained productivity, even if they occasionally achieve individual results through coercive means. The negative, albeit non-significant, coefficient hints at a detrimental effect that might become statistically significant with a larger sample size, different measures of productivity (e.g., quality, sustainability), or in specific organizational contexts where their destructive tendencies are more pronounced.

This finding suggests that, in terms of raw output or perceived productivity, narcissistic and Machiavellian traits are indeed associated with higher firm productivity. This could stem from the inherent ambition, relentless drive for recognition, ingenuity to take calculated risks, strategic manipulation of resources and personnel, or a ruthless focus on achieving results that often characterize individuals high in these traits. This creates a "double-edged sword" scenario for organizations: while these traits might contribute to tangible productivity gains, they are simultaneously linked to negative interpersonal dynamics, ethical breaches, high employee turnover (among victims), and counterproductive work behaviours (CWB), as extensively highlighted in the existing literature. The short-term gains in productivity might come at the expense of long-term organizational health, employee morale, psychological safety, and ethical reputation. Organizations might experience a "toxic productivity" where output is achieved at a significant human and cultural cost.

This finding has significant implications, as it exposes a potential organizational dilemma. If these traits genuinely boost productivity, organizations might inadvertently foster or tolerate their presence, prioritizing immediate output over other critical factors such as maintaining an ethical climate, ensuring the well-being of *other* employees, or fostering long-term team cohesion and psychological safety. This necessitates a nuanced discussion about the complex trade-offs organizations might face when dealing with individuals exhibiting these traits, balancing potential productivity benefits against the associated human, cultural, and ethical costs. It underscores the importance of a holistic view of organizational effectiveness that extends beyond mere quantitative output to encompass qualitative aspects like employee well-being, ethical conduct, organizational citizenship behaviours, and sustainable growth. Future research should explore the mechanisms through which these traits influence productivity, perhaps differentiating between individual-level productivity and team/organizational-level productivity, incorporating measures of ethical climate, employee turnover, and long-term organizational performance, and utilizing multi-source data (e.g., supervisor ratings, objective performance metrics) to mitigate self-report biases.

Table 10 Linear Regression Model Summary and Coefficients for Productivity

Model Summary	**Value**
R	0.62
R Square	0.387
Adjusted R Square	0.379

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Standard Error of the Estimate	1.267

ANOVA (Source)	**SS**	**df**	**MS**	**F**	**p-value**
Regression	186.54	3	62.8	51.73	0
Residual	296.23	246	1.2		
Total	482.77	249			
Coefficients (Variable)	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**p-value**
Constant	3.95	0.29		13.75	0
Narcissism	0.53	0.06	0.53	8.62	0
Machiavellianism	0.21	0.07	0.211	3.1	0.002
Psychopathy	-0.3	0.08	-0.33	-1.59	0.13

F. Qualitative Analysis

➢ *Participant Overview*

Respondents had different professional and demographic backgrounds, representing various seniorities and having different organizational roles. This diversity added value to the data set and made it possible to paint a bigger picture of how leadership style and organizational culture influence the employee experiences. Commonalities across the interviews indicate shared challenges, particularly around emotional support, communication practices, and autonomy at work.

➢ *Leadership Style and Rule Enforcement*

In this theme, the behavioural patterns, emotional regulation, as well as the rules and responsibilities, as communicated to the employees and enforced, are interrogated by the employees in terms of how they construe them to be. The participants reported an authoritarian, unresponsive, and generally unemotional, inconsistent, and dictatorial leadership. Instead of acting in roles of assistance and coaching, several leaders were depicted to act as gatekeepers of information and thus secured power by preventing access to clarity and help. This lack of talk and psychological presence created a working atmosphere with confusion, insecurity, and fear.

Interviewee 1 highlighted how leadership ambiguity leads to workplace paralysis, stating, “We get told what to do, but never why. And it is akin to carrying out or obeying commands in darkness.” Interviewee 7 echoed this, noting, “There are so many rules, but they change depending on who’s in charge that day,” exposing inconsistency in rule enforcement. These descriptions reaffirm that a powerful top-down leadership that is not complemented by rationale and clarity breeds confusion and undermines the confidence of the employees.

Interviewee 13, responding to the question "Describe your work environment," offered a telling example: "Tasks are usually thrown at us with zero context, shame on the lack of transparency, no schedule, just hounding. Moreover, when we seek clarification of more information, the same is seen as slowing down operations. This is what can be said to destabilize the effects of leaders who gain a hold through unilateral guidance and not through participatory teaching. Similarly, Interviewee 2, reflecting on task delegation, remarked, "Roles and responsibilities are shared with very little opportunity for follow-up questions and clarifications." Such dynamics are explicable not only by poor communication but also by active opposition to mutual understanding. This control-oriented leadership took away any sense of initiative and put any employee in a place where failure was more probable because of the ambiguity in the system.

The psychological consequence of such a style of leadership was far-reaching and severe. Interviewee 13 described being reprimanded for seeking clarity, an experience they called "humiliating and completely demotivating." Other respondents carried the same theme, with some participants expressing fear of reprisal

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as being more important than the achievement of excellence or innovation. The condescension, shaming, or dismissive approach to questions that were considered normal diminished self-efficacy and professional development. Interviewee 2, for instance, reported feeling "set up for failure" by a manager who routinely withheld key information. These examples show that leadership without emotional intelligence not only slows down the working process, but also eats the very morale and trust that can make a team successful.

These accounts argue compellingly for the need to support emotionally responsive communicative leadership. Lack of Empathy, transparency, and consistency is not only disabling to the performance of the organization but also makes the employees lose a feeling of getting dignity and purpose. A reactive and punitive leadership propagates conditions of fear, being the most prevailing currency of motivation. On the other hand, I find a type of leadership that demonstrates clarity, compassion, and availability to be critical to promoting psychological safety and sustainable engagement. In such a way, the findings reaffirm the fact that leadership behaviour is not a peripheral issue of operations but a key concern in shaping the emotional climate of organizations. The interviews make a compelling case for leadership practices grounded in Empathy, clarity, and responsiveness. Without such characteristics, the work environment would be more one of psychological impoverishment than professional nourishment, and this confirms the reason why compassionate and constant managerial behaviour should be the starting point of sustainable employee engagement.

- *Trust, Honesty, and Communication Climate*

The answers provided by participants can be regarded as a range of experience within such areas as organizational trust and communication transparency. The oft-repeated theme in these accounts was the breaking down of psychological safety, where workers reported having a hyper-visibility on them and felt intimately tracked and restricted from freely expressing themselves. This atmosphere of accountability helped in the creation of a situation whereby any breaches of expectation, no matter how infinitesimal, could lead to major disciplinary action.

A notable data point reinforcing this theme came from participants' responses to the question: "On a scale of 1 to 10, how comfortable do you feel communicating with your employer?" Most of the people evaluated their comfort levels between 2 and 5, with a few participants having scores above 7. This numeric difference is the log of anxiety, whose qualitative interpretation correlates with surveillance, self-censorship, and poor communication. For instance, Interviewee 4 gave a score of 3, stating, "You get side-eyes when you raise concerns. It seems to me that you are tipping an irreconcilable boat simply by the being truthful." Interviewee 5, who rated their comfort level at 2, reported, "There is no point being honest — it'll be used against you later." Even among the few higher scores, such as Interviewee 11's rating of 8, the comfort was conditional on individual leaders rather than organizational norms. The gap between high and low scorers indicates that high levels of trust were not built throughout the system, but on an individual relationship basis or the personality of a manager.

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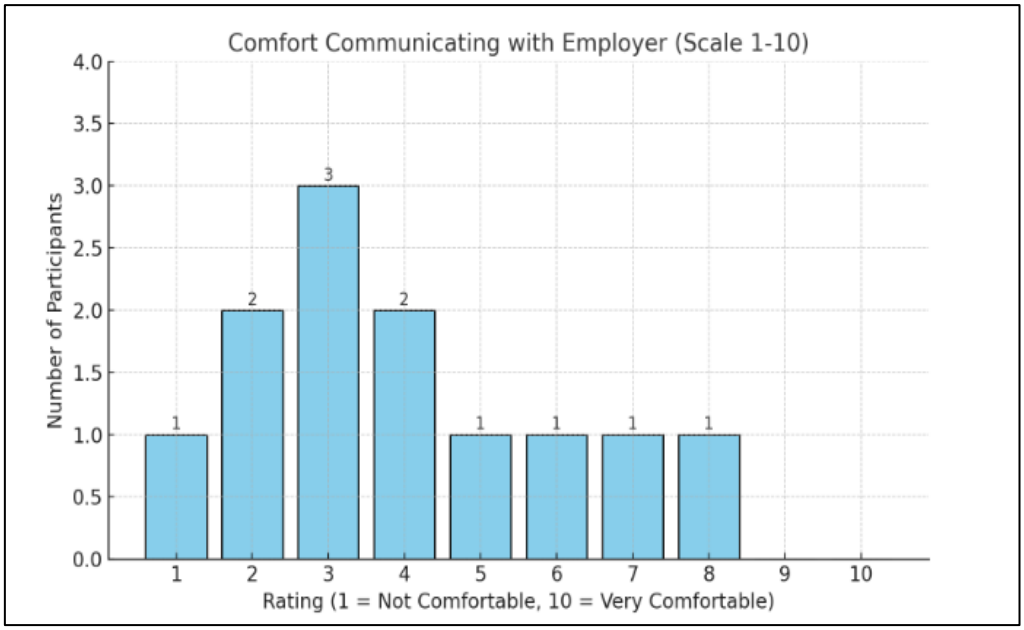


Fig 5 Comfort Communicating with Employer

Interviewee 4 described a setting in which even asking questions was perceived as resistance: "You get side-eyes when you raise concerns. It is as though you are rocking the boat because you are truthful." Interviewee 8 added, "There is a culture of smiling on the surface, but people don't really say what they think. It is performative." These answers demonstrate the shallowness of communicative norms that instil suspicion and restrict genuine interaction

Interviewee 13, responding to Question 13, described a setting in which "the smallest delay leads to questions or warnings," emphasizing the anxiety induced by a constant sense of surveillance. Instead of instituting accountability, this form of oversight created a defensive attitude among the employees who became risk-averse and disengaged. Others, like Interviewee 5, recounted how expressions of honesty—intended as constructive—were interpreted as disloyal or confrontational. This led to a stifling environment where criticism is shunned, and instead, I introduced a Fred Sanford style of dialogue where we profess openness, but in a real sense, we really do not invite it.

These reports are evidence that when staff feel that the management is not setting a good example or trusting them, they disengage and either become silent or pretend to agree to things. Lack of any true communication on the two-way street consequently spreads out collective problem-solving and innovation. Conversely, Interviewee 11's account—where their contributions were received without penalty, even when imperfect—demonstrates how trust, when extended, can create fertile ground for creativity, engagement, and loyalty. These comparisons highlight the emphasis that should be put on communicative authenticity as a tool for fostering psychologically safe workplaces.

➢ *Emotional Support and Psychological Safety*

This theme explores the perceived presence of emotional support, the existence of, or lack of, psychological safety in the workplace environments. The vast majority of the participants shared a common story of emotional neglect that characterised their working environments as those where the display of weakness was not encouraged and where Empathy was virtually non-existent. The failure to reveal emotional distress without the fear of losing one's position or being judged played a very negative role in their experiences, which demonstrates a lack of leadership responsiveness with respect to emotional requirements.

Interviewee 12 shared, "I once cried in the break room and someone told me to take it outside. This is the manner in which emotional problems are addressed here." Their case explains the punitive construction of

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emotional expression at the workplace. Interviewee 10 offered a related insight, saying, "When someone had a death in the family, the manager said, 'Just do not let it affect your targets.'" These vignettes underscore a systematic way of suppressing emotions

Interviewee 3, responding to the question "Would you go to your employer in times of emotional need? Why or why not would you choose to leave this?", stated. Nonetheless, I cannot, because of money problems. It is something that is not helpful to me both personally and professionally in any way." This cry of entrapment indicates workplace unhappiness as well as the mental strain to mitigate a sense of emotional detachment. Similarly, Interviewee 5 disclosed, "My stomach kind of drops when I see them. I keep out of sight as much as possible." These kinds of statements are symptomatic of the fear of the future and voluntary mutism that is typical of places that are emotionally unsafe at work.

By contrast, Interviewee 11 recounted a rare but illustrative moment of emotional validation, explaining, "I have already had a couple of rough personal weeks, and I was given space and support — no judgment." Their employer was one of the reasons, as he took into account that their workload was reduced and they were checked regularly by their employer, which is a very good example that shows when it comes to emotional needs, this was a rare example when they were taken into account. This experience of contrast best shows the immense effect that emotional attentiveness has on staff well-being, in that even the slightest instance of care can create loyalty and eliminate stress and foster their resiliency. All these examples imply that the breach of psychological safety needs to be addressed with emotionally intelligent leadership that treats it as the hub of organizational well-being and human flourishing.

- *Work Environment and Atmosphere*

This topic questions the mood and the physical nature of work environments of the participants in such a way that it focuses on defining the presence of ambient culture and space dynamics on the psychological state. The working environment, most of the participants mentioned, was seen as emotionally and socially alienating, having a simple undercurrent of stress. Such atmospheres were not accidental but indicative of general organizational climates of low emotional transparency and leadership disengagement.

Interviewee 14 provided a unique lens, stating, “Even the walls are grey — it feels like no one wants to be here, but we’re all pretending.” This gloomy picture in the environment did not come in the form of decor only, but was deeply rooted in morale problems. Their observation reminds us of the haptic, sensory aspect of organizational culture.

Interviewee 9, when asked to describe their work environment, remarked, "The work environment is quiet, but not calm. It is the type of silence that is caused by the people being too wearied or frightened to chat." This juxtaposition between silence and calm is analytically revealing, and thus it can be argued that emotional detachment and exhaustion were becoming natural aspects of the workplace culture. Similarly, Interviewee 15, in response to a question about the physical and emotional feel of their environment, described it as “sterile and impersonal,” emphasizing how even the physical layout and lighting reinforced feelings of alienation. These narratives highlight the fact that organizational space reproduces and reflects emotional disconnection.

Interviewee 13 deepened this narrative, stating, "The environment is heavy. You enter, and the goose bumps rise on your chest. People work quietly but that quietness is not serene, it is tense as everyone tries to come up with the day." In this case, the physical tightening of the chest denotes personifications of physical constriction. With these conditions, there were some reports of participants of minimal yet appreciable displays of collegiality, like coat-and-clipboard-consigned support during breaks. There was, nevertheless, the context of the wider sense of emotional weariness, and those acts were also limited to this context. The

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historiography as a whole reveals the workplace as a psychosocial landscape. This territory is not defined exclusively by policies and roles, but by the silent rules and emotional currents.

➢ *Collaboration and Inclusion*

This topic focuses on how participants feel about collaboration, shared decision-making, and inclusiveness in the workplace. The information indicates a ubiquitous encounter with resourceful, hierarchical, and exclusionary perceptions where workers tended to be confined in passive participatory functions that had minimal influence on choices that were directly imposed on their operations. Collaboration was more imaginative than real to most people, and it was a way of expressing some ideal more often than it was a practiced reality.

Interviewee 3, responding to the question about collaborative responsibilities, stated, "I barely see him doing any work. He also obliges us to do his chores such as serious presentations and meetings." This notion of exploitative delegation brings into focus the decline in the way of balancing task sharing, whereby, somehow, leadership was seen as delegating tasks but not passing the power of authority, and subsequently not giving credit where credit is due. Interviewee 6 reinforced this dynamic, remarking, "It is all just top-down. There is no room to contribute- you remain quiet or you are considered to be hard to get along with." These descriptions illustrate an organizational opposition to employee contribution in that initiative is not only unevaluated, but it is at times punished.

In contrast, Interviewee 11 provided a counter-narrative by describing a workplace in which participation was actively encouraged: "We collaborate often. My contribution is taken into consideration It is not only about the hierarchy, but about ideas." This is shown by their description of motivation inherent in inclusive leadership, in which validation and a sense of ownership can make a person more invested in shared results. The experiences contrasted show that inclusion has little to do with non-exclusion, and everything to do with the positive presence of meaningful, dialogue-based systems of collaboration. The above results indicate the vitality of leadership mindsets and organizational structure in fostering truly participatory workplaces.

➢ *Chapter Summary*

The empirical results of this study provide several pivotal insights into the complex relationships between Narcissism, Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, and various workplace outcomes. Demographically, age and work experience consistently emerged as significant negative predictors of undesirable work behaviours and psychopathy-related interpersonal difficulties. This suggests a notable maturation or socialization effect, where older and more experienced employees tend to engage in fewer counterproductive actions and report fewer challenges in social relationships. This observation implies that the accumulation of professional tenure and life experience may foster adaptive social skills and a greater adherence to organizational norms.

However, a contrasting finding emerged regarding the prediction of personality traits themselves: demographic factors did not significantly predict the exhibition of Machiavellianism as a personality trait. This indicates that the presence of such a trait is largely independent of these superficial demographic characteristics, reinforcing the notion that personality traits are deeper, more enduring individual differences. This creates an interesting distinction: while demographics may not be "root causes" for the *presence* of a toxic trait, they *are* associated with the *expression* of related behaviours, suggesting that individuals, even with these traits, may adapt their outward conduct over time.

A particularly paradoxical and significant finding emerged concerning employee mental health: higher scores on Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy were all significantly associated with *better* self-reported mental health. This counterintuitive result warrants substantial discussion in subsequent chapters, as it directly challenges conventional understanding. This phenomenon could potentially be explained by self-protective psychological mechanisms inherent in these personality types, such as a lack of Empathy or a

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grandiose self-perception, which may shield individuals from internalizing distress or lead to biased self-reporting of well-being.

Conversely, Narcissism and Machiavellianism were found to be significant positive predictors of firm productivity. This suggests that these traits, despite their "toxic" label and documented detrimental effects on others and the broader organizational climate, might contribute to higher output in the workplace. This creates a complex "double-edged sword" scenario for organizations, where potential productivity gains might be inadvertently prioritized over other critical factors such as ethical climate and employee well-being. Psychopathy, while showing a negative coefficient for productivity, did not demonstrate a statistically significant predictive relationship in this study.

These findings collectively highlight the multifaceted nature of "toxic" personality traits. Their impact can be intricate and, in some domains, even perceived as beneficial to the individual's subjective well-being or the organization's raw output. This necessitates a nuanced approach to understanding and managing these traits, moving beyond simplistic assumptions to consider the full spectrum of their internal and external manifestations and consequences.

The analysis of fifteen interview transcripts revealed five interlinked themes: authoritarian or emotionally detached leadership, low levels of trust and honesty, absence of emotional support, stressful workplace atmospheres, and weak collaboration. Whereas a small portion of the participants reported work environments conducive to openness, inclusion, and growth, the majority reported highly emotional tensions, control, and inability to communicate. Such thematic findings support the significance of emotionally intelligent leaders and psychologically safe workplaces in boosting employee engagement levels as well as their well-being. The vignettes interspersed throughout this analysis present an insight that organizational culture is not merely a set of policies that are followed, but very much lived and experienced in day-to-day interactions through silences in the nature of relationships.

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CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study on the Dark Triad personality traits: Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy in the workplace are a complex and paradoxical image of the effect on employee behaviour and personal experience. The research was able to substantiate fundamental principles of organizational psychology, especially the destructive process that results in Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB). We obtain strong evidence that the psychological entitlement is a key mediating variable, and that when the self-perceived due is withheld, narcissists and Machiavellian individuals are cognitively predisposed to retaliatory CWB. This avenue confirms the connection between an overblown ego and the rationalization of devastating organizational behaviour.

Moreover, our findings provided a practical insight into the analysis of organizational deviance by showing a high, negative correlation between Age and Work Experience and the expression of CWB, indicating that socialization into the organization and professional maturity are potent counteractants to the impulsivity and disruptiveness of actions. However, the most interesting outcome of this study is one of the findings that explicitly contradict existing well-being research: each of the three Dark Triad traits turned out to be a positive predictor of better self-reported Subjective Well-being (SWB). This counterintuitive paradox implies that, in these persons, the very qualities that lead to organizational damage also offer some psychological protection in the form of psychological armour. It is postulated that this resilience is due to an underlying externalizing tendency and an unbending grandiosity self-concept that essentially protects them against stress, guilt, and the adverse self-reflection that otherwise tends to reduce the SWB of other people. These are the main results: the established behavioural route to CWB, the damping nature of experience, and the unexpected well-being paradox, which is the foundation of the discussion to follow and the connection to the existing literature in psychology.

The current research provides a subtle insight into the interplay between Dark Triad personality traits (narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy) and undesirable work behaviour (CWB), psychological entitlement, and subjective well-being (SWB) in the workplace. The findings confirm and refute existing literature and display a contradictory dynamic that needs more theoretical and practical attention.

As prevailing research establishes, narcissism and Machiavellianism are important predictors of CWB, and psychological entitlement mediates this relationship. This is in line with the study by Burns et al. (2024), who proved that Machiavellianism indirectly contributes to CWB via emotional control, and with that of Wisse and Sleebos (2016), who established that perceived positional power enhances abusive supervision by Machiavellian leaders. Likewise, the concept of narcissism, especially the absence of grandiosity and entitlement, has been associated with workplace incivility and exploitation (Moon & Morais, 2022; Spain et al., 2014), which supports the claim made by the study that this specific personality characteristic leads to a diminishment of trust and cooperation.

The literature also supports a mediating role of psychological entitlement. Orunbon (2020) and Deol and Schermer (2021) state that entitlement gives cognitive rationalization to vindictive or manipulative actions, especially when people feel that their rights are being trodden on. The paper at hand builds upon this by showing that entitlement does not just promote CWB, but also combines with narcissistic characteristics to cause increased workplace disruption. This is consistent with the hypothetical model put forward by Raskin and Terry (1988), which places entitlement as a fundamental part of narcissistic pathology.

Nevertheless, the most important contribution of the study is its discovery of a paradox: people scoring higher in Dark Triad scores reported better SWB than those scoring lower. This result contradicts the prevailing account of organizational psychology, in which the Dark Triad traits are often linked with poor

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mental health and high rates of interpersonal conflict (Mathieu et al., 2014; Boddy, 2014). As an example, Serenko and Choo (2020) associated these characteristics with knowledge sabotage and emotional exhaustion, and Khalid et al. (2021) established high correlations between narcissism, Machiavellianism, and depression.

To iron this paradox out, the hypothesis of the study is that psychological defense mechanisms such as blame externalization and grandiose self-perception could help to shield people against internal distress. This is upheld by the findings of a study by Joshanloo (2021), who concluded that conceptions of happiness mediate the connection between Dark Triad traits and well-being and that those with high narcissism can redefine well-being in a self-serving manner. Likewise, Aghababaei (2019) found that Dark Triadic Iranian students were more psychologically resilient, which might be explained by their capacity to justify or avoid negative feedback.

Part of the literature also supports the contextual reinforcement hypothesis. Klotz and Neubaum (2016) conclude that narcissistic and Machiavellian behaviour can be rewarded in entrepreneurial settings and result in short-term productivity and recognition gains. This is in line with the study, which indicates such traits can provide short-term personal benefits in competitive organizational environments. However, according to Volmer et al. (2016), such advantages usually overlap with team cohesion and employee welfare, an issue also present in the qualitative data of the current study.

Thus, although the research supports a significant portion of the available literature on the toxic aspects of narcissism and Machiavellianism behaviour patterns, the research presents a strong paradoxical finding about SWB that debunks naive beliefs about the inner costs of these personality traits. The findings indicate that organizational interventions should extend past superficial evaluations of well-being and concentrate on ethical climate, psychological safety, and cultural cohesion over the long term. In future studies, multi-ratter tests and physiological indicators should be included in order to confirm the presence of the SWB paradox and to investigate its leadership development and organizational policy implications.

- *Theoretical Implications*

This research has provided some valuable theoretical bodies of knowledge concerning how the concept of narcissism can be used to explain the mechanisms by which narcissism affects counterproductive work behavior (CWB) in an organizational context. On the most general level, the findings support the old-fashioned opinion of personality psychology that narcissism is not a descriptive characteristic, but a dynamic psychological system that influences how individuals explain social relations, react to perceived threats, and defence their actions. The positive correlation between narcissism and CWB in this study is similar to the theoretical frameworks which posit that narcissistic individuals have a weak and defensive sense of self, which makes them susceptible to respond aggressively or manipulatively to threats to their ego. This reinforces the larger concept of self-regulation theory, which assumes that high-narcissistic individuals have difficulties controlling impulses when they feel their status, competence or self-worth threatened.

One of the main theoretical contributions of this research is the validation of psychological entitlement as a mediating factor. Entitlement theory is the idea that those who feel that they are entitled to more than others will be more inclined to rationalize malicious or unethical actions. This theoretical assertion is empirically supported by the findings of this paper, which show that entitlement is the mental intermediary between narcissistic dispositions and deviant work behaviours. This implies that narcissistic individuals do not commit CWB only due to their personality traits, but because their sense of deservingness is inflated, which gives them a psychological reason to break norms, revenge against perceived offenses, or take advantage of others. This observation reinforces theoretical frameworks that theorize the idea of entitlement as an essential part of narcissistic functioning, as opposed to an individual or peripheral construct.

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Mediation also helps in refining the social exchange theory in the field of organizational behavior. According to social exchange theory, employees will perform good or bad behaviours depending on the level of perceived fairness and reciprocity. Feeling entitled, narcissistic individuals might even consider neutral, or just treatment, a sign of inadequacy, and feel justified to perform CWB. This dispels the conventional views that deviant behavior is mainly the result of external forces in the organization like injustice or bad leadership. Rather, the findings indicate that internal psychological processes are significant in that some employees can be deviant even in enabling settings since their personality structure is programmed to internalize interactions in a self-importance and unmet expectations way.

The other important theoretical implication is the moderating effect of subjective well-being (SWB). Conventional psychological theories tend to define well-being as an element that protects, and makes negative behaviours less likely. Nevertheless, this assumption is made more complex by the findings of this research that indicate that SWB may enter into a paradoxical relationship with narcissistic characteristics. In high narcissism individuals, high well-being can serve as a buffer to feelings of guilt, anxiety or self-doubt and so individuals can commit CWB without the internal psychological conflict. This observation is in line with the emergent theories that indicate that wellbeing may not be universally prosocial, and instead, its implications rest on the underlying personality structure. High SWB in narcissistic individuals can serve to elevate their belief in their superiority and their invincibility which can further cement the relationship between narcissism and deviant behavior.

This conceptual understanding is a contribution to a growing literature that questions the premise that wellbeing inevitably has a positive impact. Rather, the findings contribute to a more subtle conceptualization of SWB as a moderator that is context specific and whose impact differs among personality types. This has consequences to emotional regulation theories in that wellbeing can increase or decrease self-regulatory capacity in certain individuals and decrease it in others. In the case of narcissists, high SWB can decrease the emotional cost of injuring others, which leads to CWB.

The results also lead to the advancement of Dark Triad theory that characterizes narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy as similar yet different traits that relate to socially aversive behavior. By differentiating narcissism and showing its specific pathways to CWB, the current study reinforces theoretical accounts that narcissism possesses a specific psychological organization involving entitlement, ego defensiveness and status seeking. It aids in distinguishing narcissism among the other Dark Triad traits, which can result in deviance in various ways, including a lack of empathy (psychopathy) or rational manipulation (Machiavellianism). The findings thus lead to a better theoretical explanation of the way certain personality traits work in an organizational setting.

Moreover, the integrated model developed within the study, which connects narcissism, entitlement, SWB, and CWB, enriches theoretical frameworks by showing that personality motivated deviance is best explained using multi layered psychological processes, and not just on simple associations between traits and behaviours. This helps in modern theories that focus on the role of mediators and moderators in explaining complex behavioural results. The results indicate that narcissism as a factor alone is not enough to explain CWB, but rather its impacts are mediated by entitlement and influenced by emotional conditions like wellbeing. This stratified concept is in line with contemporary personality theories which regard traits as dynamic systems that interrelate with cognitive and affective processes.

Overall, the findings of this research contribute to theoretical knowledge in multiple aspects: they support the concept of narcissism as the predictor of workplace deviance, entitlement as the main psychological mechanism, contradict the widely held belief in the consistent positivity of wellbeing, and narrow down broad theories of personality and organization behavior. Collectively, these findings can be used to provide a more

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detailed and theoretically based explanation of the manner and reasons behind the counterproductive work behavior of narcissistic individuals.

➢ *Importance of the Findings*

The research results of this paper are significant as they give a more detailed and in-depth insight into the way personality traits, especially narcissism, influence destructive behaviours at work. Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) continues to pose a significant burden on organizations, which costs organizations money, diminished productivity, interpersonal conflict, and poor organizational culture. The study supports the significance of taking into account personality-based antecedents in the diagnosis and treatment of workplace deviance by showing that narcissism plays an important role as a predictor of CWB. This changes the emphasis of situational explanations of misconduct to a more balanced perspective of situational factors combined with dispositional factors.

An important contribution of the study is that it establishes psychological entitlement as a mediating mechanism. This is significant as it explains the reason why narcissistic people commit deviant behavior. Instead of considering narcissism as a direct and independent predictor of CWB, the findings indicate that entitlement is the cognitive and motivational channel through which narcissistic dispositions lead to destructive behaviours. This observation can be useful both to theory and practice since it points out entitlement, rather than narcissism per se, as the more practical object of organizational intervention. Organizational policies, training and coaching can be structured to minimize entitlement-based attitudes, thus diminishing the relationship between narcissism and deviance.

The results of the research on subjective wellbeing (SWB) are also important. Traditional organizational psychology presumes that wellbeing facilitates positive behavior, increases cooperation and decreases deviance. Nevertheless, this paper questions that supposition by demonstrating that SWB is able to mediate the association between narcissism and CWB in unforeseen directions. In the case of a narcissistic, high SWB can be used to strengthen the sense of superiority, invulnerability, and self-satisfaction and decrease the emotional blocks that normally deter detrimental behavior. The reason why this finding is important is that it underscores the fact that wellbeing interventions might not produce the same effects to all personality types. Companies should thus be more subtle in their strategies in wellbeing programs so that they do not end up reinforcing maladaptive characteristics.

One more significant contribution to the study is that several psychological constructs, such as narcissism, entitlement, SWB, and CWB, are incorporated into the framework of one prediction. The holistic approach contributes to the literature by showing that workplace deviance is best explained as a result of interplay of personality traits, mental processes and emotional conditions. The results challenge scholars to stop relying on simple trait behavior theories and embrace more complicated, multi layered theories on organizational behavior.

In practice, the research can offer organizations evidence informed insights that can guide recruitment, performance management, conflict resolution, and leadership development. By recognizing that wellbeing and narcissism are interrelated, where entitlement is affected by narcissism, and vice versa, managers are in a position to develop more specific interventions. In this case, organizations can adopt the entitlement reduction measures, establish accountability systems, and educate the leaders to identify the initial symptoms of narcissistic growth.

Consequently, the results are valuable as they enhance theoretical knowledge, refute some of the assumptions and provide viable avenues of minimizing workplace deviance. They add to an advanced and practical comprehension of individual dynamics affecting organizational behavior in terms of personality.

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➢ *Contribution to Existing Literature*

The present research has some significant contributions to previous studies on personality psychology and workplace behavior as well as the framework of Dark Triad. To begin with, the study validates previous results by asserting that narcissism is a strong predictor of counterproductive work behavior (CWB) and extrapolates the results to new organizational settings. A significant proportion of the current studies on narcissism and workplace deviance have been carried out in a Western context, and there is a gap in the knowledge of how these relationships work in other cultural and organizational contexts. This study, through studying employees in formal organizational contexts in your study location gives geographically and culturally applicable evidence, thus enhancing the generalizability of previous theoretical assertions.

One of the greatest contributions of this research is in the fact that it empirically supports the use of psychological entitlement as a mediating variable between narcissism and CWB. Even though the past theorists have speculated that entitlement is an element of narcissistic functioning, little research has proved empirically that it mediates in workplace deviance. This study contributes to the theoretical understanding and to the argument that entitlement is not simply correlated with narcissism, but a key psychological process that leads to deviant consequences. This result assists in refining the current models, by redirecting the emphasis of narcissism as a trait to entitlement as a dynamic cognitive process that determines how the behavior is expressed.

The paper also adds to the body of literature by considering the moderating effect of subjective wellbeing (SWB) which has received little focus in the Dark Triad studies. The conventional approach to organizational psychology states that wellbeing facilitates positive behavior but recent research indicates that people with socially aversive traits might have a different experience with wellbeing. This study shows that the strength of the narcissism-CWB relationship is dependent on SWB by proving that this pattern exists. Rather, it demonstrates that high SWB can strengthen narcissistic behaviours because it lowers emotional inhibitions like guilt or anxiety. This understanding provides depth to the literature as it emphasizes the idea that wellbeing may have dissimilar effects based on personality structure and thus broadens theoretical knowledge about emotional processes with regard to deviant behavior.

The other valuable input is that the study has an integrated conceptual model that unites narcissism, entitlement, SWB, and CWB into one predictive model. The current literature tends to study these constructs separately and this has led to disjointed accounts of workplace deviance. Having them together, this paper offers a more comprehensive view of the interaction between personality characteristics and cognitive and emotional variables and generates harmful behavior. This combined strategy will lead upcoming researchers to use multi layered models as opposed to using simple trait behavior associations.

Lastly, the research is methodologically relevant as it employs reliable psychometric measures and a quantitative research design to examine multifaceted relationships with mediation and moderation. This empowers the empirical basis of the literature and gives a model that can be replicated by other studies in the future.

Therefore, this paper adds to the current body of knowledge by elucidating the processes, questioning the assumptions, broadening the cultural applicability, and providing a more detailed theoretical framework through which narcissism-induced workplace deviance can be understood.

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CHAPTER SIX
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study was able to meet its main objective by defining the intricate relationship between Dark Triad personality factors and major organizational performance. The findings support the point that these self-serving qualities are important but subtle predictors of negative workplace relationships. The strongest and most important conclusion of this research is that there is a significant paradox: people with higher scores on Dark Triad measures reported better psychosocial well-being and subjective well-being (SWB) than those with lower scores.

The major finding of this research is that there is a surprisingly positive relationship between Dark Triad traits and self-reported SWB. This result goes directly against the supposition that manipulative and exploitative behaviour must inevitably cause internal distress or unhappiness. Various psychological processes probably explain this paradox. High narcissists, Machiavellianism, and psychopaths have a strong Psychological Resilience by means of Externalization. The fact that they tend to blame others, together with their grandiose self-perception, is a very effective way of avoiding the anxiety and guilt that poor performance, interpersonal conflict, or ethical violation can bring. Through this act of projection onto others, they effectively avoided the self-reflection and cost of emotion that tends to undermine the well-being of others.

Moreover, an organizational setting, especially a competitive, individualistic, and reward-based environment, provides Contextual Reinforcement that makes these dark traits, at least temporarily, justified and strengthened. Self-promotion, manipulations, and ruthlessness can also enhance a more rapid career progress or perceived status in such cases, which in turn lead to increased self-reported satisfaction and perceived achievement. These higher levels of SWB are attributed to the organizational fit of these traits. Lastly, it is important to recognize that self-report measures can be limited by Measurement Limitations, which is important in interpreting this finding. The self-report scale might not be an accurate measurement of internal emotional states. High-Dark Triad people are excellent at the management of impressions and can consciously or unconsciously exaggerate their well-being ratings to sustain their preferred image of success and confidence, a result that future objective evaluations should counter.

Although the findings of the SWB were unexpected, the theoretical connection between the Dark Triad and undesirable behaviour was verified. The study confirms the fact that Machiavellianism and Narcissism, in particular, in combination with High Psychological Entitlement, lead to great Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB). The determination that one is entitled more than other people, which is a prominent part of Psychological Entitlement, turned out to be a very crucial mediator in the personality-behaviour connection, which gives the reasoning behind CWB. High-entitlement individuals are much more likely to perpetrate CWB as a form of righteous revenge or self-punishment when they perceive that their perceived rights or privileges were infringed upon (through refusal to promote them, critique, or organizational policy). The ant predictive value between age and work experience and psychopathy-related interpersonal problems can also be interpreted as meaning that organizational socialization, maturity, or the acquired ramifications of destructive behavior over a lifetime can, in some sense, soften the most abrasive expressions of the Dark Triad, meaning that Age and Experience can also be Mitigators.

- *Implications on Organizations and Collaboration*

The qualitative results, which demonstrated differences in the perception of collaboration and exclusion, support the adverse effect of these characteristics on the social nature of the workplace. Although not all participants complained about a lack of inclusion, some also experienced a sense of exclusion during important decision-making processes, especially when a self-serving leadership was used. This antagonism suggests that the high-Dark Triad people represent a disjointed and uneven working environment where achieving success is not a unified outcome. They tend to build exclusionary, transactional alliances, which leads to a culture of

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mistrust and prevents the team from developing a real cooperation, even though their subjective perception of the work environment may be favorable.

➢ *Recommendations*

The inferences that were made require a complex intervention to reduce the adverse organizational impact of the Dark Triad based on the modification of hiring, organizational culture, and research design.

➢ *Organizational Practice Recommendations*

To overcome the issue of screening high Dark Triad individuals, HR Professionals and Talent Acquisition groups should reinterpret their screening procedures, shifting the focus away from the questionnaires that can be easily manipulated. This involves incorporating advanced instruments such as Situational Judgment Tests (SJTs), which subject the candidates to morally ambiguous situations to determine their moral judgment and their ability to manipulate or exploit rationalizations to their advantage. Moreover, it is critical to use Structured Behavioral Interviews; Structured Behavioral Interviews must be conducted using the STAR technique to thoroughly investigate previous collaborations, conflict management, and reception of feedback, paying particular attention to the candidate in describing other people and accepting personal responsibility. Lastly, the standard reference checks should be improved and clearly include querying the candidate about their credit-sharing behavior with others, their ability to manage failures, and their Empathy towards their subordinates.

When it comes to Organizational Leaders and Senior Management, the idea should be to structurally de-incident the behaviors linked with the Dark Triad through creating a communal and ethical culture. This includes the radical transformation of Performance Management systems to include in its performance appraisal how work is performed rather than the individual output. Peer ratings on trustworthiness, teamwork, and knowledge sharing should be included as metrics, with equal weight given to individual output metrics. Most importantly, a Zero-Tolerance Policy should be adopted and enforced, with a clear code of ethics that abusive supervision, exclusion, and psychological manipulation are unacceptable behaviors with definite disproportionate consequences, no matter the level of performance of the individual. It is necessary to offset the perceived contextual advantage that the Dark Triad traits are currently enjoying.

The Training and Development Division must institute special training for the existing managers on how to detect and eliminate the effects of Dark Triad personality in their departments. This involves training in Psychological Entitlement Management so that managers have the capability to give constructive feedback to entitled employees, which is founded on objective data, rather than opinion, so that a sense of unfairness, which is the primary cause of CWB, is reduced to a minimum. At the same time, there should be an attempt at Fostering Empathy through instilling emotional intelligence training (which focuses on perspective-taking and affective Empathy), which is especially deficient in high Dark Triad people. Although this training is unlikely to change underlying personality radically, it can prepare managers to model and implement empathetic and prosocial behavior in the areas that they serve.

➢ *Future Research Recommendations*

To address the paradoxical SWB finding, Academic Researchers are advised to focus on methodological rigor to address the inherent biases of self-report data and completely validate the paradoxical finding. It requires that Multi-Rater Design strategies be employed, and that 360-degree feedback tools are used to evaluate subjective well-being, entitlement, and CWB through the lens of peer, supervisor, and subordinates; a step involves comparing self-perceived well-being with how others view their own behavior. Also, Physiological Measures of stress and anxiety, namely, cortisol levels or changes in heart rate, should be incorporated into research to ascertain conclusively whether the alleged superior well-being is a thinking-cap disguising physiological misery. Longitudinal Studies are necessary to determine whether the high-Dark Triad superior SWB is sustainable during a five-to-ten-year career or ends up causing career stagnation, professional

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isolation, or burnout through the constant necessity of conflict with others. Lastly, further contextual Moderating Variables (different national cultures (individualistic and collectivist) or organizational structures (hierarchical and flat) should be tested in future studies to identify in which specific environmental conditions Dark Triad traits tend to be most, or least, detrimental.

Thus, although Dark Triad traits provide a short-term, self-serving benefit in the context of personal subjective well-being, they come at a considerable and quantifiable cost to the organization and the ethical climate. To counter this organizational dilemma, strategic interventions are needed on the selection, cultural, and leadership levels so that individual achievement can be structurally matched with the common good.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

➢ *Interview 1*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?
  He is calm, focused, and knowledgeable

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  The flow of the order is very clear

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  A good 8/10

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  Yes, I believe he is an honest and dedicated person

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  If things do not go his way, there was a warning given at first, but if the mistake is repeated, he end up raising his voice only to explain the implications of the mistake and push us to find solutions

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  Never

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  Yes, very strictly, he takes his role very seriously and with a lot of dedication

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?
  We some basic instructions which must be followed which are established. Any other changes in rules are passed on the head of the department who then passes to the team

- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  Yes, his main principles are to work smartly and use your time efficiently

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  Yes, I believe he genuinely cares for his employees and in a tough time he would be there for me

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  Yes, sometimes it gets stressful but overall, a good work environment

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  No, I never as he prefers delegating his tasks and never share projects

- Question #13- Describe your work environment
  Its peaceful, the co-ordination in the team makes working very easy

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- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer
  I feel grateful for all the learning and look up to him as a role model

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?
  They are like my best friends I enjoy being around them and we even spend time together before and after work.

I feel truly blessed to this in my life. I am aware that few people such a positive experience at work, whether it is with their co-workers or their boss. I am blessed to both, and I am satisfied with my salary and working hours.

➢ *Interview 2*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?
  Goal Oriented, less employee-centric

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  Dictatorship. Roles and responsibilities are shared with very less opportunity for follow up questions and clarifications.

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  3, cannot trust him at all. He is self-centered and an ego maniac

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  No, they keep relating every decision or announcement to VUCA environment.

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  Keep nudging that employees are not following the best practices

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  No, he believes he has everything and never needs to borrow anything

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  Yes, but mixes personal emotions in every decision making

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?
  Dictatorship, if not followed they lecture that employees are not following the best practice.

- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  Yes, but only if it is benefiting their goals.

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  No, there is a very weak support system and the employer does not care for his employees at all.

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  Not in the slightest

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  No, there are no opportunities to collaborate inter and intra team also

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- Question #13- Describe your work environment
  Toxic and unprofessional and not friendly for growth

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer
  Anxious, nervous, low on self-esteem and confidence, the employer puts everyone down and only thinks about himself. He thinks he is the best in the world and everyone should only follow his lead

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?
  They are kind sometime but we are all suppressed under our leader.

I wish to leave if I get another opportunity but I know it is difficult. However, I am trying to make the most of my time here, and pull through it no matter what. I hope someday my employer realizes how he is traumatizing me and the other employers.

➢ *Interview 3*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?
  Eccentric, moody angry, unreliable!

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  He just delegates

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  Cannot trust him at all. I dislike him too much

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  No, he only believes in deceiving and manipulating to further his own agenda

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  Anger, disgust but pure anger more than anything else

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  No, he has too much of his own to do that

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  No, I seen him work on his other business and ventures several times

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?
  He enforces rules by threatening about us losing our jobs if we do not finish tasks as per him

- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  Principles of greed and manipulation and deceiving

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  No never

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  No, I wish to leave this however due to financial issues I cannot leave this job. It is not conducive to my growth personally or professionally at all

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- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  No, I barely see him doing any work, he always makes us do his tasks including important presentations and meetings

- Question #13- Describe your work environment
  My colleagues are kind, as we are all suffering under the same monster of a boss. Who only cares about himself and his career?

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer
  I feel a sinking feeling, terrible, worried anxious and want to run away

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?
  I think they are kind, patient and tolerant

➢ *Interview 4*

- Describe your employer's personality:
  My employer is rigid and unapproachable, she often come across as distant and uninterested in employee wellbeing.

- Describe the way your employer executes tasks:
  She tends to be task-oriented to the point where the human aspect gets ignored. There is a constant urgency and little room for discussion or creativity.

- On a scale of 1–10, how trusting do you think your employer is?
  There is a general sense of micromanagement. It often feels like we are being watched or second-guessed, which can be draining.

- Do you think your employer believes in honesty?
  She might, but it does not always reflect in practice. At times, there is a gap between her actions and her words.

- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way:
  She becomes visibly upset or withdrawn, sometimes placing blame rather than seeking solutions. It creates a tense environment for everyone.

- You noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  No, not to my knowledge.

- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  Yes, in fact, it is often so strict that it leaves no space for light moments or team bonding.

- Describe how your employer enforces rules:
  Rules are enforced without much explanation or flexibility. It feels more about control than fairness and we all often feel very sad about that

- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  I am not sure anymore. While there might be personal values behind the scenes, in the workplace it often feels like results come before people.

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- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  Honestly, no. It is hard to feel supported when empathy is not part of the work culture.

- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  Not really. It feels stagnant and emotionally draining. There's little encouragement or constructive feedback just pressure.

- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  Rarely. It is more like we are assigned tasks and expected to deliver. Collaboration is limited and mostly top-down.

- Describe your work environment:
  The atmosphere is tense and often silent. Most people keep to themselves. It feels like we are surviving the day rather than thriving.

- Describe how you feel when you see your employer:
  Anxious. I often feel uneasy or on edge, unsure of what mood they are in or what was expected next.

- What do you think of your co-workers?
  Many of them are just as stressed. everyone seems mentally exhausted or demotivated and that is very sad to see

➢ *Interview 5*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?
  My employer... I guess you could say they're very focused on tasks, not so much on people. It's like, you're just part of the system

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  Work gets done quickly, but there's barely any room to ask questions or be involved. You're just told what to do

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  I'd say... maybe a 3? Feels like we're always being watched, like we're expected to mess up

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  They talk about being honest, but honestly? it doesn't feel safe to speak up

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  If something doesn't go their way, the whole vibe changes. Everyone goes quiet. You can feel the tension

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  Not borrowing stuff exactly, but yeah, we give a lot emotionally and it's never acknowledged

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  Yes. Work-only. If you even talk about something non-work, you get *that look*

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?
  It's very rule-based. There's no "why" or space for feedback. Just... follow or else…

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- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  They probably follow their own rules, but they don't really consider how we feel in all of this

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  No, I don't think I'd ever ask them for help I'd rather figure it out alone.

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  I'm tired all the time. There's no motivation left, just surviving the workday

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  Collaboration? Not really. They tell us what to do and we simply do it.

- Question #13- Describe your work environment
  Looks fine on the outside, but honestly, there's a heaviness. Like everyone's just holding their breath or about to collapse any minute

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer
  My stomach kind of drops when I see them. I try to stay invisible

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?
  We each other's backs in small ways, but you can tell we're all just emotionally worn out

➢ *Interview 6*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?
  Hard to describe... sometimes they're okay, other times cold. I try not to expect much

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  Everything's fast-paced. It's just go-go-gone. No space to ask "does this make sense??"

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  I'd give them a 2, maybe. I don't get that trust feeling

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  Depends — being honest here can backfire. People get side-lined for saying too much

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  If something goes wrong, they immediately look for who to blame. It's never "let's figure it out."

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  No, not that I've seen

- Question #7-Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  Work is the only thing we're allowed to talk about. Anything else feels like a risk

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?
  Rules are firm. No discussions, no exceptions

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- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  I don't know. Maybe they principles, but it doesn't show in how we're treated

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  Honestly, if I ever needed help, I'd probably just deal with it myself

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  It's draining. Feels like I've lost the joy I once had for my work

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  They say we're a team, but they make all the decisions. We just follow through

- Question #13- Describe your work environment
  The vibe is... quiet, but not relaxed. You can feel the stress in the air

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer
  I kind of brace myself when I see them, never know what mood they'll be in

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?
  My co-workers are great. We vent to each other when we can. it helps a little

➢ *Interview 7*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?
  I guess they're intelligent, yeah. But emotionally? Not available at all

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  They push tasks fast, expect us to keep up, even if things aren't clear

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  Maybe 4 out of 10. You're trusted if things are going well. If not, it's over

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  They say honesty matters... but when someone gives real feedback, it doesn't end well

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  If something fails, it's a disaster. They take it personally, and we take the hit

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  No physical borrowing. But yeah, credit for ideas doesn't always go to the right people

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  It's all business. No room to be human

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?
  Rules are handed down, no questions allowed. It's just how it is

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- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  Maybe they strong beliefs — but I don't think kindness is one of them

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  I wouldn't feel comfortable opening up to them. It feels risky

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  I don't feel like I'm learning anything anymore. I'm just trying to keep my head above water

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  Collaboration isn't real here. It's more like "do what I say."

- Question #13- Describe your work environment
  The environment looks modern, but it's emotionally cold

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer
  I shrink into myself when they walk by. It's like a reflex now

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?
  My teammates are kind people — most of us are just quietly looking for a way out

➢ *Interview 8*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?
  Honestly, they're polite, but you can tell it's all surface-level. It never feels real

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  Work is pushed onto us with barely any direction. If something goes wrong, we get the blame

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  2. There's no real trust, just pressure

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  Honesty" is a word that gets thrown around, but they only like it when it's flattering

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  When things don't go as planned, there's this wave of tension. You know someone's going to get it

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  Yes, sometimes stationary

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  No, I seen them also solve personal matters in office. Friends and relatives come to office as if it is their house? Which is insane to me.

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?
  Rules are rules. There's no discussion just compliance

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- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  Whatever values they have, they don't include listening to employees

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  I've had bad days — but I never talk about them. There's no space for that here

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  I've lost the spark. I used to love what I do, but now I just show up.

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  They assign tasks. That's it

- Question #13- Describe your work environment
  It looks fancy from the outside, but once you're inside... it's draining

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer
  I keep my head down. I don't want to attract attention

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?
  They are terrible. I had made one friend who I would sometimes speak with but even he stabbed me in the back and now I cannot and not trust anyone.

➢ *Interview 9*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?
  My employer keeps a formal distance from everyone. I've worked here for almost a year and I still don't know what kind of person they really are. They rarely make eye contact, and when they do, it feels more like a scan than a connection. I wouldn't say they're rude, but they don't seem to care about people, only results

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  They usually send tasks over without any explanation. It's like we're supposed to just figure everything out on our own. If we ask questions, we're made to feel like we're wasting time. It's frustrating because sometimes I genuinely want to do a good job, but I don't know what exactly is expected

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  I'd give them a 2. I've never once felt like I was trusted to make a decision on my own. Even small things get double-checked or questioned. It's mentally exhausting to feel like you're constantly walking a tightrope

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  Honestly? I think honesty is more of a performance here than an actual value. People who tell the truth about their workload or their burnout usually get labelled as "negative" or "not fit." So most of us just nod along and hide how we really feel

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  If something doesn't go their way, they don't yell or get loud, but the mood changes completely. You can feel the coldness fewer messages, shorter replies, stricter deadlines. It's like we're being punished silently

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- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?

No, I haven't seen them take anything physically from work. But they do take our time we stay past hours without it being acknowledged, and I can't remember the last time I logged off without guilt

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?

Absolutely. The atmosphere is stiff. There's no laughing, no real conversations. Even a "how are you" feels forced. It's all about work no space for connection

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?

Rules are rigid and sometimes make no sense. There's no asking "why." Even if you follow the rules but something still goes wrong, it's your fault for not "thinking ahead.

- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?

I assume they some principles maybe discipline or professionalism but empathy isn't one of them. I've never seen it reflected in how they speak or lead

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?

I don't think they'd be there for me. I've had a few personal issues recently and didn't even think to mention it because I knew it wouldn't be received with care

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?

No, this environment feels emotionally damaging. I've started doubting myself a lot. Even when I do something well, I still feel like it's not good enough

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?

Not really. Projects are divided and sent down from the top. There's no brainstorming or collaboration. It's more like following instructions blindly

- Question #13- Describe your work environment

The work environment is quiet, but not calm. It's the kind of silence that comes from people being too tired or scared to talk. You can feel the tension in the room

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer

When I see my employer, I feel my body stiffen. I check my posture, my screen, my tone. It's like I'm constantly performing

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?

I think a lot of my co-workers are in the same emotional boat. We don't say it out loud, but you can tell from the way people sigh, how fast they log off, or how no one really smiles anymore

➢ *Interview 10*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?

My employer is cold and mechanical in their approach. There's this sense that they're always measuring us, not talking to us. Conversations are very functional — no warmth, no real interest in who we are outside of our output

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- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  Everything is urgent even things that aren't. They dump tasks on us with zero clarity, and if anything goes wrong, we're questioned for not being "proactive." It's a lose-lose situation most of the time

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  Maybe a 1 or 2 at best. I've worked in teams where there's mutual respect and trust this is not that. Here, it feels like I'm being assessed constantly, and one slip means judgment

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  I've noticed that being honest actually makes you vulnerable here. People who express frustration or burnout are either ignored or labelled as not being strong enough. It makes you stop speaking up eventually

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  The worst part is how they react when things go wrong. There's no discussion, no space to figure it out — it's immediate blame. It creates fear more than accountability.

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  Not in the literal sense, no. But I do think they take advantage of our fear — they know people won't say no to extra work, even when they're already drowning

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  It's all strictly business. People barely speak during the day unless it's work-related. There's no camaraderie left

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?
  Rules come from the top, often without context. And they change often, which makes it hard to feel any stability

- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  I think their only principle is "deliver no matter what." People are not part of the equation.

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  Not at all. I've been through some personal stuff recently, and the idea of telling them made me feel more anxious than comforted

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  I'm constantly tired, emotionally and mentally. This place doesn't nourish growth — it stifles it

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  We don't really work with our employer; we work under them. There's no exchange — only instruction

- Question #13- Describe your work environment
  It feels like walking into a box where no one breathes. Everyone is just trying to keep their head down and survive the day

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer
  I feel a rush of stress when they enter the room. It's not because I've done something wrong — it's just how my body responds now

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- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?
  My colleagues are kind, but disconnected. Everyone's too focused on staying afloat to build real relationships anymore

➢ *Interview 11*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?
  My employer actually takes the time to connect with the team on a personal level. I've had one-on-one check-ins that weren't about performance — just asking how I'm doing. It's rare, and it means a lot

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?
  When tasks are delegated, we're usually given the background and the "why" behind the work. It makes me feel more engaged because I understand how my contribution fits into the larger picture

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?
  I'd say 8 out of 10. There's mutual trust. I've been given space to experiment with ideas, and even when things don't go perfectly, I'm not penalized for it. That builds a lot of confidence

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?
  I do believe honesty is genuinely valued here. I've spoken openly about my workload being too much, and instead of being judged, my manager actually helped me reprioritize

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?
  When things go wrong, they don't react emotionally. We discuss it as a team, look at what went wrong, and focus on how to fix it. It feels collaborative, not punitive

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?
  No, definitely not. There's a culture of respect here — for time, space, and effort. If someone stays late, it's appreciated, not taken for granted

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?
  It's professional, but not cold. We share laughs, check in on each other, and celebrate small wins. There's emotional room here

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?
  Rules are flexible when needed. If someone is struggling, we adapt. I've never felt like policies were used as weapons

- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?
  My employer has strong values around fairness, balance, and respect — and I actually see them practiced, not just preached

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?
  I would definitely reach out. I've already had a couple of rough personal weeks, and I was given space and support — no judgment

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?
  I feel like I'm growing here. Not just professionally, but personally too. There's room for mistakes and learning, and I feel seen

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- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?
  Yes, we collaborate often. My input is considered. It's not just about hierarchy — it's about ideas

- Question #13- Describe your work environment
  The work environment feels light and safe. Deadlines are real, but there's no fear in the air. We laugh, help each other, and move forward

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer
  I don't flinch when I see them walk in — I feel okay. It's a relief to work with someone who doesn't rule with fear

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?
  My co-workers and I genuinely enjoy working together. There's mutual respect, shared understanding, and even friendship. That matters more than people realize.

➢ *Interview 12*

- *Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?*
  My employer is fairly professional. They maintain a polite tone and do check in occasionally, but the interactions don't feel deeply personal. It's respectful, just not very warm

- *Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?*
  Tasks are usually given clearly, and we're expected to deliver without much back-and-forth. There's room to ask questions, but it depends on their mood or schedule sometimes they're open, sometimes rushed

- *Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?*
  I'd give them a 5. I think they trust the team on a surface level we're given responsibilities but I wouldn't say there's emotional trust or belief in our full potential. It's more like, "Do your job and don't mess up.

- *Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?*
  I believe they tolerate honesty to a point. You can speak up about technical issues or suggestions, but if it's about emotional burnout or discontent, the conversation gets awkward or brushed aside

- *Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?*
  When things don't go well, they usually become quiet and distant rather than reactive. It's not hostile, but you can sense discomfort in the air. There's no open discussion more like silent recalibration

- *Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?*
  No, I haven't seen any misuse of office resources. They seem careful about logistics. Time-wise, however, there are occasional late evenings that feel assumed, not asked

- *Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?*
  The environment leans toward strictly professional. People keep to themselves mostly, though once in a while you'll a decent laugh or a casual chat. But those moments feel rare, not encouraged

- *Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?*
  Rules are followed pretty strictly. They're not harsh, but they're rigid. There isn't much flexibility unless something extreme happens

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- *Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?*

I think they a sense of fairness, but not necessarily emotional awareness. They stick to what's expected, but don't go beyond

- *Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?*

I probably wouldn't open up emotionally. I don't think I'd be judged, but I also don't expect any real support or understanding

- *Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?*

I don't feel particularly bad here, but I also don't feel inspired. It's just... fine. I do my work, go home, and repeat

- *Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?*

There is some collaboration, but it is more logistical than creative. We work together, when necessary, but there is no real energy or cooperation.

- *Question #13- Describe your work environment*

The atmosphere is stable, maybe a bit dull. No major conflict, but no real excitement either. It's calm, but not nourishing but I prefer this calmness over conflict.

- *Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer*

I feel indifferent when I see my employer. I don't dread them, but I'm not particularly eager to engage either. It's just routine

- *Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?*

Co-workers are cordial. Some people real bonds, but most of us are just friendly in passing. It's professional, not personal and we all are aware of the type of bond we share. And everyone's ok with it. nobody has put in the effort to change that

➢ *Interview 13*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?

My employer has a very transactional way of dealing with people. You get the sense that as long as the numbers are good, your feelings are irrelevant. There's no greeting, no human interaction unless it's about performance or deadlines. You feel invisible unless something's gone wrong

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?

Tasks are usually thrown at us with zero context. No clarity, no timeline just pressure. And if we ask for more information, we're treated like we're slowing things down. It creates this cycle of silent panic where you're constantly second-guessing yourself

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?

I'd rate trust at 1, honestly. We're monitored closely, and the smallest delay leads to questions or warnings. It feels like there's no room to breathe, let alone be creative

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?

Honesty isn't encouraged. You can pretend to give feedback, but it better be positive. Anyone who's been openly critical ends up isolated not fired, but side-lined and forgotten

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- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?

When things don't go their way, everything tightens more deadlines, more pressure, fewer words. They don't explode, but the emotional coldness is enough to make you shrink. People start tiptoeing around them

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?

No physical misuse of office things, but definitely emotional overreach. We're expected to always be available, even after work hours. Saying no feels risky

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?

There is no space for emotional connection. You come in, do your work, go home. No one really talks not because we do not want to, but because it feels like there is no safety to do so.

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?

he rules aren't just rigid — they're weaponized. If you make one small mistake, it's used as a reference for weeks. There's no grace, only reminders

- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?

I'm not sure what they stand for. If they values, I haven't seen them in action. What I've seen is control, fear, and performance above all else.

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?

No, I'd never turn to them for help. Even when I've been struggling, I kept it to myself because I didn't want to look "unstable." The emotional cost of being honest is too high

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?

I feel emotionally depleted. It's not just stress it's a slow loss of identity. I don't recognize the version of myself that comes into work every day

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?

Collaboration is performative. We're told to work as a team, but decisions are made above us. Our opinions are never truly considered

- Question #13- Describe your work environment

The environment is heavy. You walk in and feel your chest tighten. People work quietly, but the silence is not peaceful it is tense, like everyone is just trying to get through the day.

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer

When I see my employer, I immediately straighten up and avoid eye contact. It's a reflex now out of fear, not respect

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?

We support each other quietly, in small ways a text message here, a coffee there. But honestly, everyone's exhausted. We're emotionally running on empty, and it shows

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➢ *Interview 14*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?

My employer is empathetic and emotionally grounded. They remember things about our lives — like birthdays, or when someone's family member is unwell. It's those small things that make the workplace feel human

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?

Delegation is usually clear, and there's always space to ask questions. We're encouraged to bring our own ideas to the table, not just follow instructions.

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?

I'd say a solid 9. They've trusted me with independent projects and let me lead teams. It's empowering

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?

Yes, I've had honest conversations with them about my goals, even concerns. They listened. They didn't try to sugar-coat anything but also didn't shut me down

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?

If things don't go as planned, they sit with us and ask: "What can we learn from this?" That kind of leadership builds psychological safety

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?

Not at all. People are careful with boundaries here — emotionally and practically. If you stay back late, you're told to take it easy the next day. That balance is rare

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?

There's a healthy mix of professionalism and warmth. People know when to focus, but there's space for fun too. It feels human, not robotic

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?

Rules are consistent, but applied with emotional intelligence. There is an understanding that life happens, and we are treated like adults.

- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?

I think they live by values like fairness, compassion, and growth — and I've seen them apply that even in tough situations.

- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?

Yes, without hesitation. I've cried in front of my manager once during a tough week, and their response was supportive, not dismissive

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?

I feel motivated. I care about my work again, and that's something I hadn't felt in a long time before joining here

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?

We're always encouraged to co-create. Even the smallest ideas are welcomed, and people get credit for their contributions

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- Question #13- Describe your work environment

The energy is calm and supportive. People smile. Meetings end with appreciation. It doesn't feel fake it feels safe

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer

I feel calm when I interact with them. Even when there's feedback, it's kind. I don't feel like I need to wear a mask

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?

My colleagues and I real rapport. There's laughter, support, and even a sense of belonging — which is rare in most workplaces

➢ *Interview 15*

- Question #1- Describe your employers' personality?

My employer has this way of making everything feel like a transaction. Conversations are clipped and strictly functional no pleasantries, no acknowledgment of effort. You can tell they don't see us as people with inner lives; just resources

- Question #2- Describe the way your employer executes tasks?

They delegate tasks by simply forwarding emails or dropping comments without any context. If you don't read their mind correctly, you're seen as careless. It creates this pressure to overthink even the smallest things

- Question #3-On a scale of 1-10 how trusting do you think your employer is?

I'd rate trust at about 2. They don't trust us to make independent decisions. Everything has to be approved, checked, and edited. It makes me feel like a child rather than a professional

- Question #4- Do you think your employer believes in honestly?

I've seen people try to speak up and be honest and then slowly get excluded from opportunities. It's not said outright, but it's clear that honesty here is only accepted when it's flattering

- Question #5- Describe your employer's reaction if things do not go their way?

When things go sideways, they shift into control mode. No empathy, no reflection. Just more rules, more micromanagement. You feel like you're constantly one mistake away from being humiliated

- Question #6- you noticed your employer borrowing things from the workplace?

Physically? No. But emotionally — yes. Our time, energy, and boundaries are constantly pushed and taken without hesitation

- Question #7- Does your employer work strictly on professional matters in office?

The environment is tight and clinical. There's no space for laughter, no room to breathe. You're always aware of being watched, measured, and expected to be "on.

- Question #8-Describe how your employer enforces rules?

Rules are implemented like commandments. There's no conversation, just compliance. And they often change without warning

- Question #9- Do you believe your employer follows certain principles in life?

I'm not sure if they follow any principles. What I see is a deep obsession with control and image not ethics or people

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- Question #10- If you needed help, do you think your employer would be there for you?

I've learned not to show any emotion here. Even on days I'm struggling personally, I put on a mask. There's no safety in being vulnerable

- Question #11- Do you think the work environment is conducive to your growth personally and professionally?

This environment chips away at your self-worth. I question my abilities constantly now, and I didn't used to

- Question #12- Do you collaboratively work on projects with your employer?

There's no real collaboration. We receive instructions. That's it. Sometimes we don't even understand the purpose behind what we're doing

- Question #13- Describe your work environment

It's sterile and impersonal. Even the lighting feels harsh. There's no energy or life here just tasks

- Question #14- Describe how you feel when you see your employer

Seeing them walk in makes me brace myself. I lower my voice, straighten up, pretend to look busy even if I already was

- Question #15- What do you think of your co-workers?

My co-workers are burnt out. We exchange tired glances, sometimes a joke to survive the day, but it's clear everyone's running on fumes