

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

PREDICTIVE RELATIONSHIP OF NARCISSISM AND PSYCHOPATHY WITH RELATIONAL AGGRESSION MODERATED BY AGE AMONG ADOLESCENTS

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Background: Relational aggression stresses on the application of one's link to interfere the someone else relationships. Narcissism is manifest by heavenliness, a feeling of being advantaged, and a nonappearance of compassion while psychopathy is a personality issue that is about reduced regret, debilitated sympathy, and critical reserved behaviours. Present study was designed to assess the predictive relationship of narcissism and psychopathy with relational aggression among adolescents moderated by age. **Methods:** Cross-sectional correlational research design was implied. Study was conducted at department of Psychology University of Gujrat from August 10th 2017 to 5th January 2018. 612 students from diverse academic institute of Gujrat, with age range 12–19 year were selected. Urdu version of dark triad personality scale short version was used to assess narcissism and psychopathy while diverse adolescent relational aggression scale, Urdu version was used to gauge relational aggression. **Results:** Multiple regression analysis was carried out to find out the combined effect of narcissism and psychopathy on relational aggression among adolescent students. Findings revealed significant predictive relation among the variables ($p < 0.01$). Result further indicated that one unit in narcissism will increase the relational aggression by .333 unit ($\beta = .333$) while on unit increase in psychopathy will increase the relational aggression by .374 unit ($\beta = .374$). Furthermore, results support the moderating effect of age in the relation among narcissism, psychopathy and relational aggression ($p < 0.01$). **Conclusion:** Narcissism and psychopathy have predictive relationship with relational aggression moreover age play moderating role in afore said association.

Keywords: Narcissism; Psychopathy; Aggression; Adolescent; Regression analysis

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a transitory period and very tough phase to circumnavigate through. Adolescence is a critical link between childhood and adulthood. During this phase youth achieve their sexual maturity, suffered companionship and affiliation problems, bearing family changing aspects, decreasing educational inspiration, lowering of self-esteem, and bullying victimization.¹

Fundamentally, relational aggression stresses on the application of one's link to interfere the someone else relationships. Normally, aforesaid is the root of mental and emotional damage which is taken as damaging in extreme way in comparison to bodily damage.² In all terms, social animosity harm others by obliterating or dangers to pulverize the connections by influencing their associations in gathering, kinship, or inclusion in groups. Amid the teenage period social components turn out to be very essential. Social animosity with young people is particularly noteworthy as they are confronting a transient age.³ Relational aggression is attaining more importance. Moreover, it is considered to have hazardous consequences for both sufferers as well as

attackers. Relational aggression exists both in boys and girls.⁴

There are some personalities which are more prone to indulge in aggressive conduct irrespective of whether circumstances were aggravating or not, people with these negative patterns of personality are aversive but still live in the normal stream of life. According to literature review this negative personality patterns may cause the undesirable behaviours such as aggression.⁵ The aversive effects of oppression are well recognized, not merely in the form of the psychological damage that is imposed upon sufferers, but also in the form of the maladjustment of youth who indulge in maltreatment. So, adolescence that is socially nervous are easy targets for relational aggression as they are less probable to hit back. Frequent victimization to relational aggression makes more adverse the condition of anxious individuals.⁶ Narcissism and psychopathy are two of such personality features. Narcissism is manifest by heavenliness, a feeling of being advantaged, and a nonappearance of compassion.⁷ Extraordinary self-embellishment is the image of narcissism, which involves an exaggerated perspective of an individual, creative impulses of

being a controller, feeling of accomplishment and gratefulness, and a desire for the underwriting of this self-esteem thinks being strengthened by others.⁸ Psychopathy, another gloomy part of personality, which is fundamentally a personality issue that is about reduced regret, debilitated sympathy, and critical reserved behaviours.⁹ Besides, psychopathy is a person's nonattendance of stress for different people and societal observing components, impulsivity, and a nonappearance of regret when their exercises harm someone else.⁸

Among adolescent narcissistic indignation is specifically connected with relational aggression.^{10,11} Furthermore narcissism was specifically connected with evident hostility, and relational aggression.¹² Another research turned out with the findings that narcissism was connected with physical hostility just as the social animosity.¹³ Psychopathy likewise shows a positive connection with relational aggression.¹⁴ Psychopathy protrudingly affects how individuals legitimize their tricky behaviours. It was discovered that psychopathy and narcissism act as powerful mental forerunners to beguiling practices.¹⁴

Age plays a vital role in human life. Individual's necessity, obligation and demand of society get change as a person grown up. Researches has been carried out to find out the link of age and the variables under study. Carter and Douglass¹⁵ found out a link among narcissism, age and loneliness. Furthermore, a study endorsed the notion that life sequence of psychopathic qualities is because of variations related with age.¹⁶ Besides an association amid relationally aggressive conduct and age was observed.¹⁷ Present research hypothesize that narcissism and psychopathy would be significant predictors of relational aggression among adolescents. Literature review further suggested this predictive relationship would be moderated by age.

Teenage, in particular, signifies a period when lasting behaviours are formed, the corridors of chance or threat arise, and when the upcoming life path begins to take shape.¹⁸ Adolescence is hence a vigorous phase through which the true strategies and interventions in the educational, social, and financial areas can defend youngsters against threats, and turn the courses of their lives to a harmless and fruitful path of development. So, it is most desirable to give attention to the personality, and behaviour of this population. The present study aimed at measuring the relationship of narcissism and psychopathy with relational aggression among adolescents and moderated effect of age on this predictive relationship. There is a dire need to study these variables as they are very important with reference to adolescents who are future of every society.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Method and material applied in present investigation were examined and approved by the Advanced Studies and Research Board (ASRB), University of Gujrat, Pakistan. Adolescent students were chosen randomly from diverse academic institutes and informed about the purpose of research, its significance and voluntary basis of the research. Ethical considerations were employed during all steps of research.

Cross sectional correlational research design was implied in the current study. Study was conducted at different educational institutes (middle & high schools and colleges) of District Gujrat Pakistan from August 10th 2017 to 5th January 2018.

Target population was adolescents studying in educational institutes from age 12–19 years (Mean=15.27, SD=2.18). Individual below 12 years and above 19 years were excluded. Adolescent students with any physical and mental disability were not included in the sample as well. The multistage random sampling technique was employed in the present study for selection of a good representative sample. Sample size was 612 adolescent students. The multistage random sampling technique was employed. Sample selection was carried out in three stages. At first stage, 26 institutes were selected randomly by lottery method with equal allocation. Now these were considered sub-populations, and at second stage respondent were selected randomly from respective institutes. In the next stage sections were selected randomly from all classes by lottery method. From each selected section attendance list was obtained by teacher. According to that list students were selected systematically by even odd method. The random sampling technique was used as the sampling frame was available.

List of private and public, middle and high schools was obtained by district education office Gujrat. Figures of students in public sector were obtained by district education office while students studying in private sector were estimated at the rate of 12 percent of public sector according to the instructions of district education office. The sample size was calculated by applying the Yamane formula at .05 level.

After being selected, scales of study were given to students to be filled in by the researcher at their respective educational institute (school or college).

Narcissism and Psychopathy subscales of Dark triad scale-short (D3-Short), developed by Paulhus¹⁹ and adopted by Gul-E-Sehar and Fatimah²⁰ in Urdu language was utilized to gauge narcissism and psychopathy. Each sub-scale includes 9 items

each with alpha reliabilities .77, and .80 for narcissism, and psychopathy separately.

Horton²¹ developed scale which was translated later in Urdu²², diverse adolescent relational aggression scale, was used to assess relational aggression. Reliability for scale is .78, and the split half reliability is .7.

RESULTS

Out of 612 respondents 366 (59.8%) were girls and 246(40%) were boys. Age range was 12-19 years (Mean=15.27 years, SD=2.18 years). 340 adolescent students (55%) were living in joint family system while 272(44%) were living in nuclear family system.

One hundred and twenty (19.6%) respondents' monthly family income was less than Rs.15000 (Pakistani rupee) 214(34.96%) was 15000–35000 and above 35000 were 268 (43.7%) while 10 respondents (1.6%) did not know the family monthly income.

The results of multiple regression analysis showed significant model fit ($p<.001$). The p-values indicated both narcissism and psychopathy are significant positive predictors of relational aggression. Finding revealed that one-unit increase in narcissism will increase the relational aggression by .333 ($\beta=.333$) units while on unit increase in

psychopathy will increase the relational aggression by .374 ($\beta=.374$) units.

Result of multiple linear regression described above uncovered that both narcissisms and psychopathy are noteworthy indicator of relational aggression in teenagers. Both collectively account for .28% fluctuation in the relational aggression while individually they are explaining 18.9% and 26.5% variance.

Furthermore, Linear regression analysis was used to examine moderation effect of age on relations between narcissism and psychopathy. To test whether age moderated narcissism and psychopathy relation with relational aggression, regression models including a narcissism psychopathy and their interaction as predictors and relational aggression as the outcome where split file method was used to examine associations between relational aggression and narcissism, psychopathy in separate subsamples stratified by age

Results reported in table 3 support the moderating effect of age in the relation to narcissism, psychopathy and relational aggression in adolescent students ($p<.001$). Narcissism and psychopathy explain 28.1% ($R^2=.281$) variance in early adolescents, in middle adolescents it explains 44.9% ($R^2=.449$) variance while in late adolescents it explains 31.9% ($R^2=.319$) variance.

Table-1: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis of Narcissism and Psychopathy as Predictor of Relational aggression in Adolescents (n=612)

| Variables | R | R ² | F | p |
|--|------|----------------|--------|------|
| Narcissism, Psychopathy with relational Aggression | .530 | .281 | 51.108 | .000 |

Table-2: Coefficients of Multiple linear regression of Narcissism and Psychopathy as predictor of relational aggression in adolescent students (N=612)

| | B | SE | β | t | p |
|-------------|-------|------|---------|-------|------|
| Constant | 1.376 | .158 | | 8.697 | .000 |
| Narcissism | .214 | .034 | .333 | 6.318 | .000 |
| Psychopathy | .225 | .032 | .374 | 7.083 | .000 |

Table-3: Summary of moderation analysis of Narcissism and Psychopathy as predictor of relational aggression moderated by age in adolescent (n=612)

| Variables | R | R ² | F | p |
|--|------|----------------|--------|------|
| Early Adolescents (12–14 years) n=265 (43%) | .530 | .281 | 51.108 | .000 |
| Middle Adolescents (15–16 years) n=129 (21%) | .670 | .449 | 51.322 | .000 |
| Late Adolescents n=218 (35.6%) (17–19 years) | .565 | .319 | 50.423 | .000 |

Table-4: Coefficients of moderation analysis of Narcissism and Psychopathy as predictor of relational aggression moderated by age in adolescents (n=612)

| | | B | SE | β | t | p |
|----------------------------------|-------------|------|------|---------|-------|------|
| Early Adolescents (12–14 years) | Narcissism | .214 | .034 | .333 | 6.318 | .000 |
| | Psychopathy | .225 | .032 | .374 | 7.083 | .000 |
| Middle Adolescents (15–16 years) | Narcissism | .190 | .049 | .276 | 3.846 | .000 |
| | Psychopathy | .300 | .042 | .512 | 7.139 | .000 |
| Late Adolescents (17–19 years) | Narcissism | .233 | .050 | .280 | 4.670 | .000 |
| | Psychopathy | .254 | .038 | .402 | 6.697 | .000 |

DISCUSSION

According to the findings of present research narcissism and psychopathy are significant predictor of relational aggression, moreover this relationship is moderated by age.

Narcissism is a significant positive predictor of relational aggression; this notion is in accordance with previous studies. Studies had disclosed that narcissism was directly connected to relational aggression.¹¹ Similarly, a different investigation carried out in Japan on school graduates uncovered that narcissistic wrath is directly connected with relational aggression.¹² Moreover, it has been exposed by different investigators that narcissism was straightforwardly connected with relational aggression and obvious hostility.¹³ Another study examining the links between narcissism and hostility among youngsters endorsed the same findings.²³ Likewise, in a comparative study narcissists displayed more aggression and they initiated aggressive behaviour at higher levels than their low narcissists counterparts. According to Caffarel²⁴ narcissism distinctively and meaningfully forecast relational aggression and social aggression as well.

Narcissistic people who are distinguished by superlative perception of their identity, incline to wish others' consideration and they are oversensitive to others' appraisals. When individuals of this type are unable to achieve the wanted attention and being adversely assessed they get involved in conducts like relational aggression. They secure themselves from the notions of feeling being mediocre and disfavour by building outside ascriptions for their frustrations, which prompts the assumptions of animosity and disturbance towards different people. In similar way boastful feeling of personality is unmistakably misrepresented, which is moreover exceedingly powerless to undesirable behaviours. Narcissist are constantly stressed and endeavour to maintain their overstated confidence by a range of individual and social strategies. Besides, self-love is viewed as a separation amid a lifeless feeling of insufficiency and a cognizant vibe of being superior. Besides, narcissists are very egotistical individuals. They are so chiefly ingested on their personal desires and stresses that they give little thought to the troubles of others.

In youth time socially hostile practices are very normal. Relational harassing incorporates a lack of control, during which kids persecutes who is unfit to proficiently safeguard his or her own self. Zimmer-Gembeck *et al*²⁵ expressed that aberrant viciousness reaches the statures in the time of adolescence, because of progressive signs (i.e., the development of higher verbal abilities, social mindfulness) rehearsed

in this age. In nutshell, narcissists are exceptionally determined to persevere through their personal and others insight of about their selves as more noteworthy creatures. They display self-advancement and are arranged to envision about vast ability and control.

Current research has specified that psychopathy is also significant positive predictor of relational aggression among adolescent students. Findings of past investigates are in accordance with the current examination that psychopathy is noteworthy indicator variable for relational aggression.²⁶ Moreover, an examination on women underwrite the affirmative connection between psychopathic qualities and relational aggression.²⁷ Further, explicit personality attributes natural in psychopathy can add to anticipate recurrence of social hostility.²⁸ In a similar line an investigation led on Canadian adolescents uncovered that psychopathy anticipated tormenting all through immaturity.²⁹

Another objective of the current investigation was to find out the moderation effect of age on the link amid narcissism and psychopathy, findings has revealed that age has a moderation effect in the afore mentioned link. Predictive relationship of narcissism and psychopathy with relational aggression is stronger in middle adolescence as compared to early and late adolescence. Previous researches also support the difference in reference to age in narcissism³⁰ and psychopathy³¹.

CONCLUSION

the aversive aspects of personality like narcissism and psychopathy play an important role to indulge in hostile conduct such as relational aggression. Further age is also a contributor of undesirable behaviour.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

SR: Conceptualization and study design. ZB: Data collection, data interpretation. IA, IN: Data analysis, proof reading.

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