



Relationship Between Dark Triad Personality And Aggression Among Cyclic And Acyclic Sports

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ABSTRACT

The Dark Triad consists of three personality traits: Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy, which have been linked to various negative behaviors and outcomes in interpersonal relationships and organizational settings. This study aims to investigate how the Dark Triads influence on aggression between cyclic and acyclic sports players. The sample consisted of 400 athletes (200 from each sport discipline) who competed in inter-collegiate tournaments organized by Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India, during the academic year 2022-23. The participants were assessed for the Dark Triad and aggression using two scales: the Jones and Paulhus (2013) dark trait version, which measured the dark qualities, and the Makarowski Sports Aggression Scale (2021), which measured their aggression. To find out the significant difference was assessed using the Pearson correlation. The level of $p < .05$ was considered significant. Machiavellianism and psychopathy were the most significant variables contributing to the first canonical root in the dark personality set. Additionally, accomplishment and reputation at work are valued. In the dark personality set, narcissism and psychopathy were associated with the second canonical root. While creativity and accomplishment were inversely connected with machiavellianism and psychopathy, narcissism was favorably related to aggression.

Keywords: Dark Triad, Aggression, Cyclic sports and Acyclic sports.

Introduction

Emotions play an important role in the experience of sport because of their influence on performance, motivation, and wellbeing (McCarthy, 2011). Research shows that an athlete's personality characteristics affect how they experience both positive emotions (e.g., happiness) and negative emotions (e.g., anger) during sports participation (Laborde et al., 2020). This emotional response, particularly regarding aggression, likely impacts performance differently in cyclic sports versus acyclic sports (Maxwell, 2004).

In the present study, our aim is to examine the role of a particular suite of personality traits that are relevant to athletes the Dark Triad (DT; machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy) in the experience of aggression in sport.

Dark Traits

The DT (Paulhus & Williams, 2002) is a collection of three related but separate personality traits: machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy, all of which exhibit self-serving and interpersonally cold, calculating behavior (Furnham, Richards, and Paulhus, 2013). Machiavellianism is characterized by an individual's inclination to behave and think strategically, often using manipulation and cold calculation to achieve their goals. Narcissism is defined by grandiosity, entitlement, domination, and a belief of one's own superiority and uniqueness. Finally, psychopathy is defined by impulsive, thrill-seeking behavior and a lack of empathy for others (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Persons strong in Machiavellianism prefer to think carefully about their next move; persons high in narcissism tend to operate in a way primarily driven by self-interest; (Jones & Paulhus, 2011); and those high in psychopathy are likely to act largely on impulse, whether this may be effective or not.

Aggression

Aggression in sports is defined as any purposeful behavior that violates the official rules of conduct and is intended at an opponent, official, teammate, or spectator who is driven to avoid such behavior (Maxwell, 2004). Aggression refers to any deliberate action taken with the intent to cause harm to someone who is actively trying to avoid such harm (Baron & Richardson, 1994). In the realm of sports, aggression can manifest in various forms, including verbal abuse, physical altercations, and even hostile non-verbal behaviour. While some aggression can be seen as a normal part of competition often termed "instrumental aggression," which aims to achieve a goal other form, such as "hostile aggression," are primarily focused on inflicting harm and are considered detrimental to the spirit of sport (Bredemeier & Shields, 1986). Aggression in sports can be both functional (aimed at achieving competitive goals within the rules) and dysfunctional (intended to harm opponents). The relationship between dark traits and aggression may differ significantly between cyclic and acyclic sports.

Relationship between dark triad and aggression

The link between the Dark Triad (DT) and hostility has been shown. Jones and Neria (2015) investigated the DT's multivariate effects on various aspects of aggression (e.g., physical, verbal, anger, and hostility) and discovered that Machiavellianism was positively related to hostility (trait anger), whereas psychopathy was positively related to physical aggression (trait aggression). Individuals with greater levels of Machiavellianism may use violent intimidation to achieve a mental edge through manipulation (Jonason & Webster, 2010). Individuals with high levels of psychopathy, on the other hand, act on their proclivity for unrestrained and violent behaviour (Figueredo et al., 2015). Although all aspects of the DT are favorably associated to physically violent bullying behaviour in adults had the strongest association with psychopathy (Baughman, Dearing, Giammarco, and Vernon, 2012). According to research, narcissism is a two-part concept that includes both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (Kjaervik & Bushman, 2021). According to meta-analytic research, both grandiose and susceptible narcissism are substantially connected to aggressiveness and its subcomponents (indirect, direct, displacement, physical, and verbal). Narcissists are more likely to become aggressive when provoked (Kjaervik & Bushman, 2021).

Statement of the problem

The present study aim was to investigate the influence of Dark Triads on Aggression between cyclic and acyclic sports.

Methodology

To achieve the purpose of the study 400 athletes (200 from each sport discipline) cyclic and acyclic who competed in inter-collegiate tournaments organized by Manonmaniam Sundaranar University in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu, India, during the academic year 2022-23. The age ranged between 21-26. All the subjects were informed about the nature of the study and their consent was obtained to co-operate. A correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between the variables in the collected data. Statistical significance was established at the $p < 0.05$ level.

Tool used

The short Dark Triad (SD3; Jones & Paulhus, 2013)

The SD3 is a 27-item measure of Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. Participants respond to 9 items for each component on a 5- point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Items Machiavellianism assess (e.g., "most people can be manipulated."), Narcissism (e.g., "I know that I am special because everyone keeps telling me so."), and Psychopathy (e.g., "people who mess with me always regret it"). Research by Vaughan and colleagues (2019) confirmed that the measurement scale demonstrated both consistency and accuracy when tested with groups of athletes.

The Sports Aggression Questionnaire (Makarowski, 2021)

Aggression of the cyclic and acyclic sports was examined with the help of Sports Aggression Questionnaire given by Makarowski (2021). The scale had 15-item this questionnaire may be utilized in both individual and group research. Respondents rate their replies on a five-point Likert scale, with Definitely not (1 point); Probably not (2 points), Hard to say (3 points), Rather yes (4 points), and Definitely yes (5 points). The Go-ahead subscale items are 1, 4, 7, 10, and 13; the Foul play subscale items are 2, 5, 8, 11, and 14; and the Assertiveness scale items are 3, 6, 9, 12, and 15. Scores for each subscale are determined by adding points from individual item responses. The lowest score is 15; the maximum score is 75. There are no reverse-scored items.

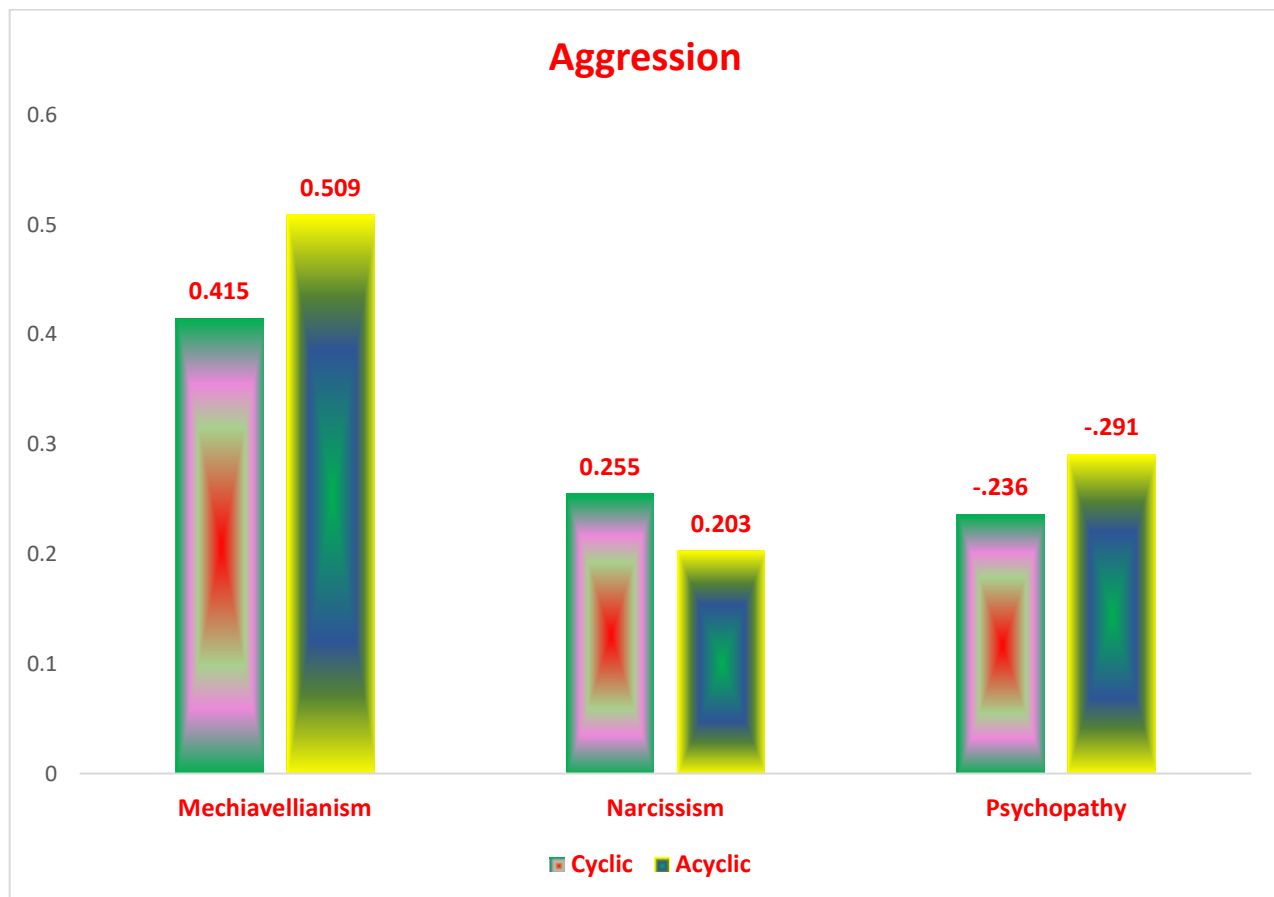
Analysis and Interpretation of Data

The table presents the correlation coefficients between four variables: Machiavellianism, Narcissism, Psychopathy and Aggression. Each cell in the table represents the Pearson correlation coefficient between two variables, along with the corresponding p-value.

Group	Criterion Variable	Machiavellianism	Narcissism	Psychopathy
Cyclic	Pearson Correlation	.415**	.255**	-.236**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.002
Acyclic	Pearson Correlation	.509**	.203**	-.291**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.003

The table compares the relationship between aggression and three key personality traits p-value Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy, among athletes participating in cyclic and acyclic sports. The p-values obtained from the analysis reveal notable differences between the two groups of players. For cyclic sports players, the p-values for Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy were .415, .255, and -.236, respectively. In comparison, acyclic sports players exhibited p-values of .509 for Machiavellianism, .203 for Narcissism, and -.291 for Psychopathy. These values indicate varying levels of association between aggression and the selected personality traits, with none of the p-values for either group falling below the conventional threshold of significance ($p < 0.05$) for individual traits. The analysis suggests that all three personality traits have a correlation with aggression.

The figure illustrates the p-value relationships between aggression and three personality traits for cyclic and acyclic sports players.



Discussion on Findings

- The results indicate a relationship between Machiavellianism and aggression among cyclic and acyclic sports players. Cyclic sports players exhibited a low relationship with aggression compared to acyclic sports players, (Rauthmann and Will 2011)
- The results indicate a relationship between narcissism and aggression among cyclic and acyclic sports players. Acyclic sports players exhibited a low relationship with aggression compared to cyclic sports players, (Bushman and Baumeister 2000)
- The results indicate a relationship between Psychopathy and aggression among cyclic and acyclic sports players. Acyclic sports players exhibited a low relationship with aggression compared to cyclic sports players, (McHugh, et al. 2017),

Conclusion:

- Acyclic sports player with high level of Machiavellianism tend to exhibit more aggression attitudes than cyclic sports players. Therefore, the Machiavellian personality traits acyclic sports players' character is more aggressive than cyclic sports players.
- Cyclic sports players with higher levels of narcissism tend to display more aggressive behaviors than acyclic sports players. Therefore, the narcissistic traits in cyclic sports players are associated with greater aggression compared to their acyclic counterparts.
- Cyclic sports players with higher levels of psychopathy tend to display more aggressive behaviors than acyclic sports players. Therefore, the psychopathic traits in cyclic sports players are associated with greater aggression compared to their acyclic counterparts.

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