



Overt Narcissism and its Impact on Interpersonal Relationships of Young Adults

Noreen Fatima*, Syeda Urooj Naqvi**, Laiba Israr***, Ayesha Aziz, PhD****, Naveed Ahmed Khan*****

*Sr. Lecturer, Department of Professional Psychology, Bahria University Lahore Campus

**BS Psychology, Department of Professional Psychology, Bahria University Lahore Campus

***BS Psychology, Department of Professional Psychology, Bahria University Lahore Campus

****Assistant Professor, Department of Professional Psychology, Bahria University Lahore Campus

*****Sr. Lecturer, Department of Professional Psychology, Bahria University Lahore Campus

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ABSTRACT

The current research examined the relationship between overt narcissism and interpersonal relationship among young adults. A correlational research design was employed to assess the relationship among studied variable. Grandiose Narcissism Scale and Relationship questionnaire scale was used to collect responses from participants. A sample of N= 200 participants of age range 18-24 (M=21.6, SD =1.25) was selected through purposive sampling from Government and private universities. Grandiose Narcissism Scale and Relationship questionnaire scale was employed to assess overt narcissism and interpersonal relationship respectively. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant positive relationship between overt narcissism and interpersonal relationship among young adults. It also hypothesized that there was a significant gender difference in overt narcissism and interpersonal relationships among young adults. The data was analyzed through SPSS (Version 20). Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages was run for demographic variables. The Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed to assess the relationship between overt narcissism and interpersonal relationships. Independent T-Test used to administer gender differences. The result showed that there is no significant relationship between overt narcissism and interpersonal relationships of young adults. Moreover, it showed that females are more prone to overt narcissism as compared to males. The results are discussed in the light of literature.



Introduction

Overt Narcissism is identified as someone with an inflated sense of self-worth, self-obsession, feelings of grandiosity, and extreme need to be praised and recognized. Researchers have highlighted that even though there could be many individuals with narcissistic traits, out of them, up to 5% meet the diagnostic criteria for personality disorder (Caligor et. al, 2015). They also feel challenged when someone do not agree with them or hurt their self-esteem. This conduct lead toward aggressive tendencies as well if they are being admired or their expectations are not fulfilled.

Overt narcissistic tendencies lead toward high pseudo self-esteem which put them in total denial of their weaknesses. However these individuals have been titled as demanding, aggressive, dominant, arrogant which can be one of the major signs from the diagnostic criteria of Narcissistic Personality Disorder in DSM

5-TR. There are many individuals who might possess the traits of a narcissistic personality but might not pass the criteria for Narcissistic Personality Disorder based on the DSM-V (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). It is characterized as individuals who are full of themselves and have a higher sense of grandiosity exhibitionism to keep them as the center of any social structure especially among the younger generation. In this age of fantasy and luxury, many young adults are easily prone to mental illnesses and narcissism is one of them (Schie et al., 2020). A sense of entitlement over everyone that makes them a little less liked by those around them (Symington & Grotstein, 2018).

Earlier research has concluded that overt narcissism results in weaker and poorer functioning in the individuals over a longer period and it most affects the interpersonal functioning. Overt narcissism is the form of narcissism that is explained as narcissistic grandiosity in terms of pathological narcissism. It involved the individuals who experience deep feelings of grandiose and superiority in relation to their needs and wants and always feel the threat for feeling inferior in front of any individual near them (Pierro, & Fanti, 2021). A young adult's behavior within their interpersonal relationships depends on the view they have of their own selves is often highlighted in their interpersonal relationships. People who have overt narcissistic personality traits believe themselves to be superior thus, affecting their interpersonal relationships throughout their lives (Wright et. al, 2017).

Interpersonal relationships include all forms of relationship, both intimate and other. Relationships with parents, partners, friends, siblings, etc. Interpersonal relationships among young adults are quite more complicated dwelling into intimacy and isolation that in adults based on their age. Young adults are often considered to be more on the emotional side of the spectrum compared to adults and that is why their emotions play an important role in developing their interpersonal relationships (Dolgoval et al., 2017).

Individuals who experience overt narcissism often fail to maintain relationships. A study by Day et al., (2021) revealed that individuals with high narcissistic grandiosity i.e. overt narcissism were reported to have high dramatic traits connected to narcissistic, histrionic, and antisocial disorders and were found to have domineering and vindictive stand in maintaining interpersonal relationships. The research showed that because individuals with overt narcissism could not acknowledge the partner's side and fail to maintain a balance between their relationships, they fail to maintain one for a longer time. (Amadi, 2015). Moreover, the feelings of grandiosity experienced by individuals with overt narcissism leads towards experiencing behaviors such as inability to concentrate or build relationships for a longer time. This study was conducted to fill the gap in the research innovation as previous researches focused on impact of narcissism on self-constructs or relationship with parenting.

Objective

The objectives of the study were

- To identify the relationship between overt narcissism and interpersonal relationship among young adults.
- To examine the gender differences in overt narcissism and interpersonal relationship among young adults

Hypotheses

Following were the hypotheses of our study:

H1: There will be a relationship between overt narcissism and interpersonal relationships among young adults.

H2: There will be a gender difference on the variable of overt narcissism and interpersonal relationships among young adults

Methodology

Research Design

Correlational research design was used for this research.

Participants

A Sample size was N= 200 with age range of 18 -24 (M=21.6, SD =1.25). Purposive sampling was used to collect data from government and private universities. Only those participants will be included who are from intact families and living together. Individuals with any other diagnosed mental health issue or diagnosed personality disorder will be excluded.

Measures

The research aims at collecting the demographic information of each participant using a survey form demographic information includes: name, age, gender, education, institution, family systems, siblings, birth order. Further to collect responses in regard to the research variable, the study used the following two measures to collect data.

Grandiose Narcissism Scale

The research aims at using the Grandiose Narcissism Scale (Foster et. Al, 2015) to collect data to sort out participants featuring characteristics of overt narcissism. The scale is a 33-item questionnaire and showcase high reliability of 0.91 in Cronbach Alpha (Foster et. Al, 2015). It scales reflects seven subgroups that each could be analyzed to identify different traits of grandiose narcissism. These subscales include authority, self-sufficiency, superiority, vanity, exhibitionism, entitlement, and exploitability. All these categories are directly linked towards overt narcissism and will help the research develop a deeper understanding of what experiences do the individuals we have for our research had have.

Relationship Scale Questionnaire

To assess the interpersonal relationships of the participants, the research used the relationship scale questionnaire. The scale comprises of 30 statements and each participant will be asked to rate the statement on a scale of 1 to 5 (Griffin, & Bartholomew, 1994). This scale uses a combination of statements drawn from the attachment measure (Hazan & Shavers,1987), relationship questionnaire (Griffin & Bartholomew, 1991), and attachment scale (Collins & Reeds, 1990). The reliability of the relationship scale questionnaire is found in the range of 0.74-0.88 in Cronbach Alpha (Pehrabad et al., 2015).

Ethical Consideration

After getting approval of the Ethical Review Committee of the university, the research took consent from each participant to use their data to analyze the results. The confidentiality of each participant was maintained and their identity has remained anonymous throughout the research to keep their privacy intact.

Results

Table 1

Main Demographic Variables of Young Adults (n = 200)

Variable	f	%	Variable	f	%
Age (years)			Family System		
18	4	2.0%	Nuclear	127	63.5%
19	7	3.5%	Joint	73	36.5%
20	21	10.5%	Birth Order		
21	48	24.0%	1	56	28.0%
22	70	35.0%	2	89	44.5%
23	41	20.5%	3	41	20.5%
24	9	4.5%	4	11	5.5%
Gender			5	2	1.0%
Male	100	50%	6	1	0.5%
Female	100	50%	Institution		
Education			Private	100	50%
Inter	1	0.5%	Government	100	50%
Graduate	169	84.5%			
Postgraduate	30	15.0%			

f=frequency, % = Percentage

The mean age of the participants as 21.6. Most of the sample were graduate (84.5 %). The large number of our sample were from Nuclear families (63.5 %). Moreover 44.5 % of the participants were from birth order 2 category.

Table 2

Psychometric Properties of psychological Instruments (n=200)

Scales	<i>a</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Range
GNS	.849	140.69	22.14	151
RSQ	.789	90.18	14.81	77

a= Cronbach alpha, *M*= Mean, *SD*= Standard Deviation, GNS= Grandiose Narcissism Scale, RSQ= Relationship Scale Questionnaire.

Psychometric properties of psychological test concluded that good reliability. The reliability tests of both the scales which entails the Cronbach Alpha as 0.849 for the Grandiose Narcissism scale and 0.789 for the Relationship Scale Questionnaire.

Table 3

Pearson Product Moment Correlation among Overt Narcissism and Interpersonal Relationship (2-tailed)

Variables	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2
Overt Narcissism	200	140.69	22.14		0.078
Interpersonal Relationship	200	90.18	14.81	0.078	

N= sample size, *M*= Mean, *SD*= Standard Deviation

Results concluded that there will be no statistical significant relationship exist between the overt narcissism and interpersonal relationship among the young adults.

Table 4

Gender Difference in Overt Narcissism and Interpersonal Relationship

Variables	<i>Male</i>				<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Cohen's <i>d</i>
	<i>Female</i>		<i>Male</i>				
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
Overt Narcissism	145.31	24.66	136.07	18.27	-3.010	.001*	21.70
Interpersonal Relationship	90.56	16.25	89.81	13.28	-.357	.361	14.84

M= mean, *SD*= standard deviation, *t*= test statistic, *p*= significance value. (**p*<.05)

Independent sample t Test gender difference on two variables i.e., overt narcissism and interpersonal relationships among young adults. The results showed that there is no significant gender difference in the ability of young adults to maintain their interpersonal relationships. However, the data showcased a significant gender difference between male and female on overt narcissism. According to the results, overt narcissism were found more in females (*M*=145.31, *SD*= 24.6) than males (*M*=136.07, *SD*= 18.27).

Discussion

The research was focused to study the relationship between overt narcissism and the ability to maintain interpersonal relationships in young adults. The results of the study concluded that there is no significant relationship between overt narcissism and interpersonal relationship among young adults. Most researches conducted in western culture indicated different results in development of personality and its manifestation due to different cultural values, beliefs. Cultural background also depicts the quality of interpersonal relationships. It has also been found that collectivistic culture influence the personality and its effects on conflicts of interpersonal relationship (Church, 2016). The results also shows that females have more narcissistic traits than males. Despite the previous researches shows that males tend to have more overt narcissism than females. But all these researches conducted in United States or western countries (Grijalva et al., 2014). More researches needs to be conducted in the context of Pakistan culture to see the cross culture differences in development of personality traits such as overt narcissism and its manifestation. According to Social Investment theory personality traits are influenced by cultural values, shared belief and environmental factors (Bleidorn et al., 2013).

Conclusion

The findings for young adults' relationship styles, in conclusion, confirmed the notion that overt narcissism will have an impact on interpersonal interactions with the limitations of geographical boundaries. Cross cultural differences exist in personality development in collectivistic culture as compare to individualistic culture. This study has set the mark that personality development is associated with cultural context. Findings of western studies cannot be generalized in Pakistani culture with respect to personality.

Limitations and Recommendations

The present study is limited to see the overall effects of narcissism. Future studies may focused on the detailed prevalence of narcissistic traits in Pakistani society and impact of culture on its development. Moreover, overt narcissism could also be studied in comparison to overt narcissism and its impact on interpersonal relationships.

Implications

The present study sets a mark that cultural upbringing can influence the approach towards interpersonal relationships. This research contributes to the existing research data on personality development and its impact in society at large. This study will also help the mental health professionals to understand the dynamics of cultural context.

Contribution of Authors

Noreen Fatima Conceptualization, Methodology, Writing- Reviewing & Editing, Supervision

Syeda Urooj Naqvi Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing

Laiba Israr Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing

Naveed Ahmed Khan Methodology, Writing – Reviewing & Editing

Ayesha Aziz Methodology, Writing – Reviewing & Editing

Conflict of Interest

There is no conflict of interest declared by authors

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Data Availability Statement

The datasets of the current study are not available publicly due to ethical reasons but are available from the corresponding author [N.F.] upon the reasonable request.

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