



The Impact of Leader's Dark Triad Personality Traits on Employee Career Growth

"An Empirical Study on Mansoura University Employees"

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By

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The Impact of Leader's Dark Triad Personality Traits on Employee Career Growth: An Empirical Study on Mansoura University Employees

Salma El-Naggar; Dr. Mohammed Soliman and Dr. Ahmed Elsetouhi

Abstract:

This study aims to investigate the impact of leader's dark triad personality traits on employee career growth of Mansoura University employees. A questionnaire was used to collect data from 400 employees in Mansoura University. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis using Smart PLS Version 3 was employed to show the causal relationships between study variables. The findings of the current study revealed that leader's dark triad personality traits have a significant negative impact on employee career growth of Mansoura University employees. Moreover, the study findings showed that the dimensions of leader's dark triad personality traits named machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy have a significant negative effect on employee career growth.

Keywords: (leader's dark triad personality traits, employee career growth, university employees).

1-Introduction

Psychology, human resources, sociology, and organizational behavior are among the domains where career discussions can be addressed (Adamson et al., 1998). Employees are a company's most valuable asset; they play a vital part in the success of the company that should not be overlooked (Dialoke, et al., 2017). Employee career growth opportunities, according to Woods and De Menezes (1998), not only help to shape employees' attitudes and improve organizational performance, but also motivate employees to go above and beyond in their assigned tasks, leaving them with no desire to leave the organization.

Three socially aversive personality types—those that show a propensity to strongly arouse hatred or disinterest in others—have garnered the most empirical interest: Narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism (Paulhus and Williams, 2002). Leaders, like everyone else, can have dark personality traits, and the behavioral patterns they express in response to these traits might have negative consequences (Başar, 2020). Many unproductive job practices are displayed by dark leaders. Apart from that, they strive to attain their goals and ambitions regardless of the organization's interests (Rauthmann, 2012).

Prior studies linked employee career growth with variables like employee turnover intentions (Nouri and Parker, 2013), organizational commitment (Weng et al., 2010), job satisfaction (Ashraf, 2019). But this study focuses on clarifying the impact of leader's dark triad personality traits on employee career growth.

An exploratory study is performed to determine the research problem. The researcher asked 16 employees in Mansoura University. The responses of the sample indicated the following phenomena:

- 87.5% of the respondents are dissatisfied with the current salary compared to the number of tasks and responsibilities they have to take on.
- 56.25% of the respondents stated that they do not receive feedback from their leaders to enrich their performance.
- 75% of the respondent's experience lack of promotion opportunities, which in return hinders career goal progress.

Therefore, the research problem is the lack of career growth opportunities for Mansoura University employees, which may be due to the leadership style followed. Hence, the question that arises in this study is as follows:

What is the impact of leader's dark triad personality traits on employee career growth?

Therefore, the present study's objective is to investigate the direct impact of leader's dark triad personality traits on employee career growth.

2. Literature Review:

2.1) Leader's Dark Triad Personality Traits

According to Paulhus and William (2002), the dark triad, or psychological attributes that describe people who have a predisposition to be unpleasant, selfish, and cynical in their interpersonal connections. The dark triad refers to machiavellianism, psychopathy, and narcissism as three interconnected constructs (Paulhus and Williams, 2002).

Machiavellianism refers to the manipulation of people without regard to moral reasons (Becker and Dan O'Hair, 2007). Narcissism is characterized by an inflated sense of self and a feeling of entitlement. As a result, people with high levels of this attribute exhibit behavior that exaggerates their strengths and are resistant to criticism (O'Boyle et al., 2012). Psychopathy is linked to a high level of criminal activity, risky behavior, institutional troubles, impulsivity, and a poor response to treatment (Knight, 2016).

2.1) Employee Career Growth

A career is defined by Arthur (2008) as a person's lifetime sequence of work experiences. This study divides employee career growth into two groups of dimensions according to (Weer, 2006). The first dimension is structural advancement which refers to the potential that an individual may be granted the opportunity to develop hierarchically within the existing organization (Weer, 2006). Structural advancement includes promotion speed and remuneration

growth (Weng and McElroy, 2012). The second dimension is content advancement which includes career goal progress and professional ability development. Challenging experiences promote development by allowing employees to learn and function as an incentive for learning (McCauley et al., 1994).

According to researchers, when employees believe they have prospects for career growth within the business, they are more likely to reciprocate these good behaviors within the firm, resulting in desirable organizational outcomes such as organizational commitment (Nouri and Parker, 2013).

3) Hypotheses Development

Leader's dark triad personality traits and employee career growth

People's impressions of a leader and the organization are likely to be impacted by how they are treated by that leader (Marron and Cunniff, 2014). It is critical for higher education leaders to avoid demonstrating abusive behaviors at work and to invest time and money in training to help them change their negative attitudes and behaviors (Mahlangu, 2020). The "big five" are a group of personality qualities that are conceptualized as five major, relatively separate regions of individual differences. Extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness are the five domains (Chung, 2017). Overall, agreeableness and conscientiousness have been found to be inversely connected with Machiavellianism, while neuroticism has been found to be positively correlated (Paulhus et al., 2001).

It is argued that a supervisor's dark triad traits can be a major cause of abusive supervision, leading to subordinate burnout and counterproductive behavior (Tahir, et al., 2020). When followers believe their leaders are machiavellian, they are much more inclined to experience psychological stress, and despair at work, which also causes negative follower behaviors like cynicism, low job satisfaction, low commitment, and silence (Dahling, et al., 2009).

According to Grijalva and Newman (2015), some features of narcissism were stronger predictors of counterproductive job conduct than others. Corporate psychopaths create a work environment marked by stress, fear, and work overload, as well as a poor level of employee satisfaction, higher degrees of disengagement, and organizational constraints than needed (Boddy, 2010).

Individuals are more sensitive to negative aspects than positive ones, and therefore negative contexts have a greater impact on individual attitudes and behaviors (Baumeister et al., 2001). Employees may experience ineffective job behavior, lower job performance, greater stress levels, and decreased job satisfaction as a result of the leader's dark triad personality traits (Wisse and Sleebos, 2016).

If employees consider their present employer's options do not fit with their desired professional goals, they will shift jobs (Weng and McElroy, 2012). Individuals are much more pleased when they believe they are productive and effective in their jobs, and this perception is dependent on the opportunities afforded by the organizations to which they belong (Hall, 1971).

Therefore, the study suggests the following hypothesis:

H1: leader's dark triad personality traits have a significant negative impact on employee career growth.

This hypothesis is divided into three sub-hypotheses:

H1.a: Machiavellian leader has a significant negative effect on employee career growth.

H1.b: narcissistic leader has a significant negative effect on employee career growth.

H1.c: psychopathic leader has a significant negative effect on employee career growth.

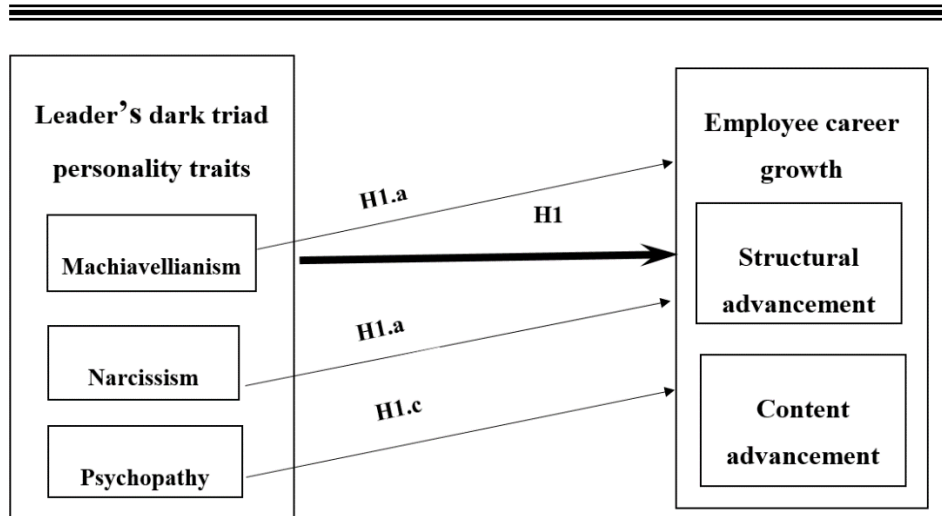


Figure (1)
Conceptual Framework

Prepared by the researchers according to the literature review.

4) Research Method

The study used a deductive approach and a quantitative research method, with a questionnaire as the data collection instrument (Elbaz et al., 2020).

4.1) Population and sampling

The population of this study is Mansoura University employees. The researchers collected data through questionnaire that was directed to 450 employees, the researchers collected 400 questionnaires with a response rate of 88.88%. 400 questionnaires were statistically valid and free of missing data.

4.2) Variables Measurement:

Leader's dark triad personality traits are measured by 18 items from two scales; the dark triad dirty dozen (DTDD) developed by (Jonason and Webster, 2010) and the short dark triad (SD3) developed by (Jones and Paulhus, 2014).

4.3) Data analysis:

Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis using Smart PLS Version 3 was employed in this study to test the hypothesized causal relationships.

4.3.1) Measurement model:

The purpose of this section is to assess the quality of the instruments (factor loadings, internal consistency, and discriminant validity) (Fornell and Lacker, 1981; Elbeltagi et al., 2013). Individual reliability, construct reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity are all assessed using a measurement model to determine the necessary level of internal consistency. As shown in table (1), all construct’s AVEs are greater than 0.5 meaning that the AVEs are adequate and each latent variable explains on average more than 50 percent of the variance of its indicators. M6 and PS1 are omitted due to the small value of loading.

Table (1): Loading, Cronbach’s Alpha (α), Composite reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Construct	Items	Loading	CR	Alpha	AVE
Machiavellianism	M1	0.918	0.943	0.925	0.771
	M2	0.907			
	M3	0.859			
	M4	0.937			
	M5	0.731			
	M6	0.524			
Narcissism	N1	0.893	0.921	0.897	0.661
	N2	0.842			
	N3	0.817			
	N4	0.834			
	N5	0.733			
	N6	0.748			
Psychopathy	PSY1	0.903	0.941	0.921	0.761
	PSY2	0.832			
	PSY3	0.888			
	PSY4	0.921			
	PSY5	0.811			
	PSY6	0.903			
Career goal progress	CGP1	0.827	0.933	0.904	0.777
	CGP2	0.899			
	CGP3	0.894			

Construct	Items	Loading	CR	Alpha	AVE
Professional ability development	CGP4	0.903			
	PAD1	0.89	0.948	0.927	0.821
	PAD2	0.931			
	PAD3	0.882			
Promotion speed	PAD4	0.92			
	PS1	0.578	0.841	0.752	0.573
	PS2	0.852			
	PS3	0.765			
Remuneration growth	PS4	0.806			
	RG1	0.605	0.858	0.671	0.751
	RG2	0.836			
	RG3	0.863			

Table (2) shows that the square root of the average variance extracted for each of the focal constructs is greater than the variance shared with the remaining constructs (Henseler et al.,2009), This is consistent with the study of Elsetouhi et al. (2018). Therefore, the measures endorsed in this study were valid and internally consistent.

Table (2): Construct Correlation and Square Roots of AVE

	CGP	M	N	PAD	PS	PSY	RG
CGP	0.882						
MACH	0.431	0.828					
NARC	0.437	0.726	0.814				
PAD	0.795	0.384	0.464	0.906			
PS	0.31	0.187	0.195	0.279	0.751		
PSYC	0.582	0.687	0.629	0.608	0.092	0.838	
RG	0.316	0.302	0.237	0.258	0.673	0.137	0.757

Notes: CGP: Career goal progress; MACH: Machiavellianism; NARC: Narcissism; PSYC: Psychopathy; PAD: Professional ability development; PS: Promotion speed; RG: Remuneration growth

4.2) Structural model and hypothesis testing

Structural model assessment is the second step in evaluating the PLS-SEM results which covers the relationships among the hypothesized constructs. The results show that leader's dark triad personality traits (machiavellianism,

narcissism and psychopathy) had a significant negative impact on employee career growth of Mansoura University employees as mentioned in Table 3 (the path coefficient), and the effect size of leader’s dark triad personality traits on employee career growth was $f^2= 0.4$. Thus, the research hypothesis and sub-hypotheses were accepted.

Table (3): The Path Coefficient

Hypothesis & Relation	Std Beta	Std Error	t-value	P-value	Percentile 95% confidence interval	Significance	Decision
H1 LDT→ ECG	-0.513	0.041	12.495	0.000	[-0.594; -0.461]	Significant	Supported
H1a MACH → ECG	-0.661	0.062	10.655	0.000	[-0.561; -0.561]	Significant	Supported
H1b NARC → ECG	-0.679	0.049	13.922	0.000	[-0.76; -0.6]	Significant	Supported
H1c PSYC → ECG	-0.807	0.046	17.366	0.000	[-0.877; -0.726]	Significant	Supported

Notes: LDT: LDT: Leader’s dark triad personality traits; ECG: Employee career growth; MACH: Machiavellianism; NARC: Narcissism; PSYC: Psychopathy

5) Discussion

In the context of employees in Mansoura, this study investigated the impact of leader’s dark triad personality traits (machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy) on employee career growth. . The study adopted the deductive approach, and the quantitative research method, the data collection instrument utilized in the study was the questionnaire. The researcher tested the measurement model goodness of fit and validity and reliability where the measurement model showed an acceptable level of validity and reliability. Further, the structural model was developed and research hypothesis were tested, the results showed that the research hypothesis and sub-hypotheses were accepted. The findings of this study stated that that leader’s dark triad personality traits (machiavellianism,

narcissism and psychopathy) have a significant negative impact on employee career growth of Mansoura University employees.

This is consistent with many previous studies related to this point, for example, Green and Ayalan (2017) stated that People leave jobs for a variety of reasons, including disliking their employer, not seeing prospects for advancement or career progress, or being offered a better position (and frequently more compensation); these reasons have been consistent for years.

Additionally, according to Jones (2014), People with high dark triad traits in supervisory positions have the ability to cause significant damage, malfeasance, immoral and unsafe decision-making, and lower involvement in corporate social responsibility).

The findings of this study are consistent with one carried out by Mathieu et al. (2016), which was held on a total of 97 employees from a nonprofit organization, filled out questionnaires about their abusive supervision style, corporate psychopathy traits, job satisfaction, and intention to leave the organization. Corporate psychopathy had a negative correlation with employee work satisfaction and a positive and significant correlation with abusive supervision and the intention to quit.

5.1) Theoretical and practical implications

The study contributes to the body of knowledge of the existing literature of leader's dark triad personality traits, employee Career growth. This study's findings revealed evidence for these reciprocal workplace relationships between leaders and their employees, as the study revealed that leader's dark triad personality traits have a significant negative effect on employee career growth.

Furthermore, this study provides significant recommendations. For leaders in educational organizations concerning how to improve the quality of workplace relationships through enhancing opportunities for career development and growth for their employees. As career growth is linked to commitment, leaders at Mansoura would be advised to consider employees career goals and to make them view university goals as incorporating a great deal of employees' learning, motivation and experiences.

It is critical to have basic procedures in place to prevent toxicity in the organizations of which we are a part, such as feedback systems, because the lack of efficient monitoring or assessment methods in organizations forces employees into silence, which fosters the generation of toxic leaders(Çoban, 2022).Offering a variety of courses available to help employees deal with work challenges, such as conflict management courses would be a great investment in Mansoura University employees, as it would in return yield much better performance. Mullins (2007), points out that training provides more opportunities for career progression because it may boost competence levels of individuals and the organisation.

Leaders should not be hesitant to support non-academic staff's career development by providing ample opportunities for self-development, advancement, and structured learning; funding career development programmes; and providing incentives to those who pursue career development, such as promotion upon completion (Dialoke, et al., 2017).

In terms of organizational implications, these findings highlight the necessity of leader selection process. Personality tests are used by a wide range of enterprises for hiring, promoting, and developing employees (Grover, 2018).

5.2) Limitations and future Research

Although the current study has valuable theoretical and practical consequences, it also has some drawbacks that should be considered.

First, the current study used a questionnaire to evaluate the research hypotheses, which provided cross-sectional data, meaning that no indicators of changes in the research variables over time were provided. As a result, longitudinal research may be beneficial in the future.

Second, due to time and cost constraints, the current study only used a sample of Mansoura University employees. As a result, the study suggests that future studies should use a bigger sample size.

Finally, the study draws on a sample of one of the Egyptian universities (a developing country). As a result, future research may rely on universities in developed countries, with the results compared to the current study.

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تأثير السمات الشخصية الثلاثية المظلمة للقائد على النمو الوظيفي للموظف
"دراسة تطبيقية على موظفي جامعة المنصورة"

سلمى سامي النجار؛ د. محمد جلال سليمان؛ د. أحمد محمد السطوحى

ملخص البحث:

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلى التحقق من تأثير سمات الشخصية الثلاثية المظلمة للقائد على النمو الوظيفي لموظفي جامعة المنصورة. تم استخدام استمارة استبيان لجمع البيانات من ٤٠٠ موظف في جامعة المنصورة. تم استخدام Smart PLS 3 لإظهار العلاقات السببية بين متغيرات الدراسة. كشفت نتائج الدراسة الحالية أن سمات الشخصية الثلاثية المظلمة للقائد لها تأثير سلبي كبير على النمو الوظيفي لموظفي جامعة المنصورة. بالإضافة إلى ذلك، أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن أبعاد السمات الشخصية الثلاثية المظلمة للقائد (المكافيلية، النرجسية والسيكوباتية) لها تأثير سلبي كبير على النمو الوظيفي للموظف.

الكلمات الرئيسية: سمات الشخصية الثلاثية المظلمة للقائد، النمو الوظيفي، موظفي الجامعة