

Impacts of Narcissism on Interpersonal Relationship and Leadership Effectiveness Among Corporate Employees

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Abstract

This dissertation investigates the relationship between narcissism, interpersonal relationships, and leadership effectiveness among corporate employees, addressing gaps in understanding how narcissistic traits influence workplace dynamics and leadership outcomes. The study aimed to examine whether higher levels of narcissism correlate with poorer interpersonal relationships, negatively predict leadership effectiveness, and influence leadership styles, while also exploring the moderating roles of emotional dysregulation and cultural context. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. The survey was conducted on 100 participants (50 males and 50 females) aged 24–35, working in corporate settings. Key findings revealed that narcissism significantly correlates with lower-quality interpersonal relationships and weakly predicts reduced leadership effectiveness with interpersonal relationships partially mediating this effect. Narcissistic leaders exhibited higher transactional behaviors (e.g., rewards/punishments) and lower transformational behaviors (e.g., inspiration), while emotional dysregulation amplified interpersonal conflicts. Surprisingly, cultural context did not significantly influence perceptions of narcissistic leadership effectiveness. The study concludes that while narcissism harms relationships and transformational leadership, it offers situational advantages in transactional contexts. Emotional regulation emerged as a critical buffer against narcissism's negative effects. These findings have practical implications for leadership development programs, suggesting targeted interventions to improve emotional regulation and contextual deployment of narcissistic leaders. Future research should explore additional predictors (e.g., organizational culture, follower resilience) and conduct longitudinal studies to deepen understanding of narcissistic leadership dynamics.

KEYWORDS: Narcissism, Leadership Effectiveness, Interpersonal Relationships, Emotional Dysregulation, Transactional Leadership, Transformational Leadership

I. INTRODUCTION

This research investigates the intricate relationship between narcissism, interpersonal relationship quality, and leadership effectiveness among corporate employees. Narcissism, marked by grandiosity, a constant need for admiration, and limited empathy, plays a dual role within organizational leadership. While moderate narcissistic traits may facilitate confidence and resilience, excessive narcissism often deteriorates interpersonal bonds and long-term leadership effectiveness.

Using a mixed-method, cross-sectional approach, the study surveyed 100 corporate employees aged between 24 to 35 years. The research aimed to analyze how narcissism correlates with leadership outcomes, how interpersonal relationships mediate this effect, and whether emotional dysregulation and cultural factors modify these dynamics.

This work addresses a critical gap in leadership psychology, highlighting the need for a nuanced understanding of narcissism's influence in professional environments.

II. MAJOR FINDINGS AND ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

The research produced the following significant findings:

1. **Negative Correlation Between Narcissism and Interpersonal Relationships:** Higher levels of narcissism were associated with poorer interpersonal relationships at the workplace, characterized by reduced trust, increased conflict, and weakened collaboration.
2. **Weak Negative Prediction of Leadership Effectiveness:** Narcissism marginally reduced leadership effectiveness, with interpersonal relationship quality partially mediating this relationship. Stronger relationships proved essential for leadership sustainability.
3. **Leadership Style Preferences:** Narcissistic leaders demonstrated greater reliance on transactional leadership behaviors—emphasizing rewards and punishments—while displaying lower transformational leadership traits such as inspiration and vision-building.
4. **Role of Emotional Dysregulation:** Emotional instability significantly amplified the negative interpersonal consequences of narcissistic traits, escalating workplace conflicts.
5. **Cultural Context:** Contrary to expectations, cultural differences did not significantly influence perceptions of narcissistic leadership effectiveness, suggesting a potential globalization of leadership expectations.

Organizational Implications:

- Leadership development programs must integrate emotional regulation training for high-narcissism individuals.
- Narcissistic leaders should be strategically placed in high-pressure, short-term projects rather than roles requiring long-term team cohesion.
- Implementing robust feedback and interpersonal skill development frameworks can mitigate narcissism's adverse effects on workplace environments.

III. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The study concludes that narcissism acts as a dual-edged sword in leadership contexts. While providing decisiveness and strategic risk-taking abilities, unchecked narcissistic traits erode interpersonal trust and diminish leadership effectiveness over time.

Future research should focus on:

- Conducting longitudinal studies to observe the evolving impact of narcissistic leadership.
- Examining organizational culture and employee resilience as potential moderating variables.
- Employing qualitative methodologies to gain deeper insights into the leader-follower dynamic influenced by narcissism.

Addressing narcissism's nuanced role in leadership is essential for organizations seeking sustainable success through ethical, emotionally intelligent leadership development strategies.

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