

Do You Think This is About You? Moral Disengagement, Self-Awareness, and Emotional Intelligence in Narcissism

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Abstract:

This study investigates the relationship between moral disengagement, self-awareness, and emotional intelligence in narcissism. Results were mixed, with some hypotheses supported, some not, and some partially supported. As generally hypothesized, self-awareness and moral disengagement are linked to both grandiose and vulnerable narcissism. Implications of the results and suggestions for further research are discussed.

Introduction:

Narcissism:

- Personality traits: grandiosity, arrogance, manipulation, lack of empathy.
- 2 types: grandiose, vulnerable.
- Goal: attaining perfection, grandiosity vs. inferiority.

Self-Awareness:

- Understanding oneself.
- 4 types: unconsciousness, consciousness, self-awareness, meta self-awareness.

Emotional Intelligence (EI):

- Regulating emotions of oneself and others.
- Dark Triad research.

Moral Disengagement:

- Cognitive tactics: used to “turn off” morals.
- 4 loci: target behavior, agent’s moral responsibility, behavior’s detrimental effects, victim.

Method/Materials:

Participants:

- $N = 111$ participants
- 45 men, 66 women
- Age: $M = 20.5$

Procedure

- 20 min. spaghetti tower activity
- Informed Consent
- Online Questionnaires
- Debriefing

Grandiose Narcissism Scale (GNS)

- 35 items, 6-point Likert-type scale

Situational Self-Awareness Scale

- 9 items, 7-point Likert-type scale

Moral Disengagement Measure

- 8 items, 7-point Likert-type scale

Hypersensitivity Narcissism Scale (HSNS)

- 10 items, 4-point Likert-type scale

Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire—Short Form (TEIQue-SF)

- 30 items, 7-point Likert-type scale

Informer Narcissism

Social Relations Model

- Round-robin design, 4 participants per group
- Completed 4 times for the Social Relations Model
- 9 items, 5-point Likert-type scale

Hypotheses/Results/Discussion:

1. There will be a negative relationship among grandiose narcissism and self-awareness, and a positive relationship among grandiose narcissism and moral disengagement.

- Multiple regression: $F(2,108) = 10.16, p < .001, R^2 = .16$. Partially supported.
- Moral disengagement AND self-awareness predict grandiose narcissism. Mixed results from other research.

2. Scores on vulnerable narcissism will be positively related to scores on self-awareness and moral disengagement.

- Multiple regression: $F(2,108) = 4.89, p < .009, R^2 = .08$. Supported.
- Moral disengagement and self-awareness predict vulnerable narcissism. In concordance with the little research available.

3. As scores on moral disengagement go up, so will scores on emotional intelligence.

- Pearson product-moment correlation: $r(111) = .10, p = .307$. Not supported.
- Moral disengagement is not related to emotional intelligence. Contrary to previous research.

4. Men will have higher narcissism scores than will women.

- Independent samples t test: Not supported.
 - Men: $M = 2.95, SD = .49$
 - Women: $M = 2.73, SD = .48$
 - $t(103) = 2.27, p = .025, 95\% CI [.41, .03]$
- Men are not more narcissistic than women are. Sexist assumptions in previous research.

5. Scores on both vulnerable narcissism and grandiose narcissism will be positively related to scores on emotional intelligence.

- 2 Pearson product-moment correlations: Partially supported.
 - $r(111) = .09, p = .331$
 - $r(111) = .36, p < .001$
- Vulnerable narcissism and emotional intelligence are not related. Grandiose narcissism and emotional intelligence are positively related. Little research has been done on the differences in types of narcissism and EI.

6. Scores on emotional intelligence will be positively related to scores on self-awareness.

- Pearson product-moment correlation: $r(111) = .24, p = .012$. Supported.
- Emotional intelligence and self-awareness are related. Congruent with previous research.

7. Scores on moral disengagement will be positively related to scores on self-awareness.

- Pearson product-moment correlation: $r(111) = .14, p = .151$. Not supported.
- Moral disengagement is not related to self-awareness. Slightly contrary to previous research.

Limitations/Implications:

- Low internal reliability of emotional intelligence scale ($\alpha = .36$). Improper scoring.
- Narcissists rating themselves high on EI.
- Moral disengagement best tested in decision-making process.
- Social Relations Model unable to be utilized.
- Homogeneous religious background: 95.5% of participants from Christian background.
- Narcissists are not aware of their moral disengagement.
- Narcissism’s effect on relationships.

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