

The Effect of Narcissism on Mental Well-Being in Middle Aged People

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In today's world of technology people are becoming more self-centered rather being others' oriented, which leads to narcissism and consequently end up with broken relationships. Nowadays, this is a major problem in our society. The present study was designed to address the narcissism effect on mental well being. Sixty middle ages participants were administered Narcissistic Personality Inventory and mental well-being questionnaire along with a demographic information sheet. On the basis of narcissism inventory score, they were classified in two categories. Results revealed a significant effect of narcissism on mental well being. It is observed that high narcissistic people have high levels of mental well-being in comparison to low narcissistic people. It was also found that significant differences exist in narcissism score and its seven component namely authority, self-sufficiency, superiority, vanity, entitlement, exhibitionism and exploitations.

Keywords: Narcissism, mental well-being, middle age people

Excessive self love is known as narcissism. It is a personality trait that involves an activity that is done for pleasure. Narcissistic personality is described as dramatic emotional behavior which is similar to anti social personality. People with narcissistic personality believe that they are better than others, fantasizing about power, success and attractiveness exaggerating their achievement or talents. This term was first introduced in psychology with the psychoanalytic theory of Sigmund Freud in "On Narcissism" (1914) who wrote that narcissism personality comes from failure to differentiate self from external objects in very young babies or mental disorder case. There are various views about narcissism. According to American Psychological Association (2013) clinical narcissism reflects a pervasive pattern of grandiose as a self focus and self-importance while Morf & Rhodewalt (1993) states that excessive self focus on one self is a matter of subclinical narcissism and it is a sustained effort

to maintain a grandiose self view. Raskin, Novacek, & Hogan (1991) report that narcissism is a kind of high self esteem. However, Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, (2002) suggests that it is an unrealistic positive view about oneself. Recently, Sedikides, Rudich, Gregg, Kumashiro and Rusbult (2004) have given the evidence that self esteem and narcissism are positively correlated. Self esteem functions as a mediator of narcissism and psychological health. DSM-5 describes it as narcissistic personality disorder described characterized by people who possess exaggerated sense of self-importance, they expect to recognize themselves as superior without any achievement, exaggerations of talents and achievements, being preoccupied fantasies about brilliance, success, power, beauty, belief that they can be understood by the people with equal specialty, requirement of constant admiration, sense of entitlement, expectation to be favored and compliance without any question, tendency to take

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advantage of others without recognizing the feelings of others, envious nature, haughty and arrogant behavior. Narcissistic personality disorder may also include features like having confidence but it's not the same as it crosses the border of healthy confidence. You put yourself on a pedestal and value yourself more than others.

Various studies have supported the fact that high narcissistic people are psychologically unhealthy. Bogart, Benotsch and Palovic (2004), for example, found that normal narcissistic people act as they are in psychological problems and reports emotional high and low. Kernis (2001) has shown that these individuals have unstable self-esteem, and are highly dependent on their social interactions. Narcissism is also found to be related to jealous and fearful of closeness (Rhodewalt and Morf 1998), aggressiveness (Stuck and Sporer 2002), to threatening feedback that may have implicit self conception of which they are ashamed (Tracey and Robins 2003). Orth&Veciano (2015) states that the concept of self esteem and narcissism share some clear overlap and both are involve in positive self evaluation as well as inflated and unrealistic positive (Campbell and Foster 2007). Baumeister and Voh (2001) argued that narcissistic people are addicted to self esteem and display high entitlement- a global tendency towards feelings of superiority and deservingness (Bosson et al 2008). Another side of self view is that high self esteem is more realistic (Murk 2013). Kernis (2003), Mruk (2013) indicated that high self-esteem is associated with interpersonal problems entitlement or superiority. They argued that high self-esteem is not dependent to others to regulate their self views. Morf, Weir and Devidoh (2000) compared with low and high narcissist people and found that high narcissist people relish direct competition against others.

Most of the studies reviewed above have been conducted on children, young adults and patients in context of narcissism, psychological well-being and health related issues. None of the

studies were done on middle age people who have got maximum life achievements, settled with personal goals and matured with life experiences. Thus, the present study was planned to address the effect of narcissism on psychological well being in middle age people. The specific objectives of the study were as followed:

- To examine the effect of narcissism on mental well-being of middle age participants.

- To explore the relationship between the dimensions of narcissism and mental well-being among middle age participants.

Method

Participants: Participants of this study were 60 middle aged (age range 40-55 years) male and female. All the respondents were well versed in both the languages.

Measures and Procedure:

Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin and Hall, 1979): It consists of 40 forced-choice items, each having 2 bipolar statements. The respondents had to select the best suited statement for him. This scale also measures 7 component of narcissism including- Superiority, Authority, Exploitativeness, Vanity, Self-Sufficiency, Exhibitionism and Entitlement. Inventory has been reported to possess good psychometric properties.

Mental Well-Being Scale (Warwick, Edinburgh, 2007): It was developed in Warwick and Edinburgh University. It comprises 14 statements having a 5 point rating scale. The scale has been reported to have good psychometric properties.

Results

Obtained data on narcissism scale and mental well-being were calculated. On the basis of participants' responses on narcissism scale, they were classified into high and low narcissism personalities. T test was computed to examine the effect of narcissism personality on mental well-being of participants.

Table 1: Effect of narcissism on mental well-being

	Narcissism				t ₍₅₈₎
	High		Low		
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Well-being	61.00	6.71	48.27	8.88	6.26**

** $P < 0.01$

Table 1 above presents the effect of narcissism on mental well-being of middle aged people. It is evident from the table that participants with high narcissism show significantly higher ($t_{(58)} = 6.26$, $P < 0.01$) level of mental well-being (Mean = 61.00, SD = 6.71) as compared to participants with low narcissism (Mean = 48.27, SD = 6.71).

Table 2: Correlation coefficient of dimensions of narcissism with mental well-being

Dimensions of Narcissism	Mental Well Being
Authority	.53**
Self Sufficiency	.40**
Superiority	.54**
Vanity	.55**
Entitlement	.19
Exploitations	.26
Exhibitionism	.63**
Narcissism (Total score)	.78**

** $P < 0.01$

To explore the relationship between dimensions of narcissism and mental well-being, a product moment correlation coefficient was calculated. The results of this calculation presented in table 2 above indicate a significant correlation of authority, self-sufficiency, superiority, vanity, exhibitionism and total narcissism with mental well-being. The results, thus, show that authority is positively significant correlated with mental well being ($r = .53$, $p < .01$). Similarly, a significant positive correlation was found between self sufficiency and mental well being ($r = .40$, $p < .01$), superiority and mental well-

being ($r = .54$, $p < .01$), vanity and mental well-being ($r = .55$, $p < .01$), and exhibitionism and mental well-being ($r = .63$, $p < .01$). Overall score of high narcissism is also significant positively correlated ($r = .78$, $p < .01$) with mental well being.

Discussion

The present study was designed to address the narcissism effect on mental well-being. Sixty middle ages participants were administered Narcissistic Personality Inventory and mental well-being questionnaire along with a demographic information sheet. Findings of the study reveals that people having high narcissism have higher mental well-being as compared to people with low narcissism who have lower mental well-being. Results also showed that high narcissists have greater mental well-being so they can be deployed on a job which demands public speaking, stage performances or meeting new people. These results, therefore, are in contrast to other research findings that have supported the fact that high narcissistic people are psychologically unhealthy. Bogart, Benotsch and Palovic (2004), for example, found that normal narcissistic people act as they are in psychological problems and reports emotional high and low. The contradictory finding of this study is indicative of some unique characteristics of middle aged people and warrant for more careful future researches on the topic.

The findings of the study are interesting and it opens the door for further researches in the same domain. Since the mental well-being of low narcissists is comparatively low therefore they can be counseled to achieve the optimum level of narcissism which may help them to improve the mental well-being. Since the present research is conducted on a small sample, the results cannot be generalized. Thus a more careful study with diverse population sample is required.

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