A REVIEW OF THE DARK TRIAD, LEADERSHIP, AND LEADERSHIP STYLES: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE DARK TRIAD AND LEADERSHIP

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the literature on leadership, the Dark Triad (DT), and potential interventions for DT leaders. The purpose of this paper is to compare and contrast the behaviors and outcomes of modern leadership styles with that of DT leaders. The paper will also outline potential interventions for fixing adverse behaviors accompanying DT personality traits. When examining the literature, many authors comment on the effective and ineffective aspects of DT leadership, but they lack comprehensive interventions for dealing with leaders who exhibit DT personality traits and behaviors. It is of paramount importance to understand, intervene, and decrease these traits and behaviors in the workplace to boost the overall emotional, psychological, and physical safety of leaders, teams, and corporations. Exploring this could fuel more awareness of dark leader triads and potential interventions instead of merely exploring how these traits are exhibited in leadership or the workplace. This will enable more productivity and well-being in workplaces across the United States.

Keywords: *Leadership, Dark Triad*

INTRODUCTION

There is little disagreement that effective leadership is vital to creating thriving organizations. Leadership is the process of guiding and influencing others within a group to attain a common goal (Cotterill et al., 2022). Leaders are responsible for many processes, such as group cohesion and workflow management (Giannella et al., 2022). Without effective leaders, a company or organization may not be successful (Soeardi et al., 2022). Exploring factors that have a negative effect on leadership, such as immoral leadership, is essential to develop and evaluate effective leadership within organizations and workplaces.

Unethical and immoral leadership negatively affects the leaders', followers', and corporations' performances. Giannella et al. (2022) found that followers respect immoral but competent leaders less than leaders who are moral and less competent. Leaders who engage in aggressive humor often increase worker rumination, anxiety, and withdrawal behavior (He et al., 2023). These findings support the claim that leadership affects the basic emotional, psychological, and physical needs of employees and the well-being of the workplace (Soeardi et al., 2022). Dark Triad (DT) leadership embodies many of the behaviors associated with immoral leadership.

DT leadership is the most prominent example of immoral leadership. DT leadership is characterized by a combination of a need for power and a willingness to sacrifice the needs of oth-

ers to achieve these goals (Guillén et al., 2023). The DT is a term encompassing three personality traits, which are characterized by behavior that is immoral, self-interested, and socially deviant (Guillén et al., 2023; Walker et al., 2022). The three traits within the DT are Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and narcissism (Hudson, 2023). Successful leaders often focus on improving the workplace as a whole, which is juxtaposed against the goals and behaviors of DT leaders. In order to address DT issues, differences between DT leadership and positive leadership styles must be explored.

Two positive leadership styles are transformational and transactional leadership. Both transactional and transformational leadership contribute to successful workplaces, but only when leaders mobilize their followers to meet a beneficial goal (O'Reilly & Chatman, 2020). In instances where leaders fail their teams, some researchers argue that immoral behavior is to blame rather than their leadership competency (Ekizler & Bolelli, 2020). Based on such findings, the potential intersections between DT leadership behaviors and organizational failure are clear.

The exploration of this topic will be organized in the following order. First, there will be a brief overview of the negative effects that the DT can have on organizations and some of the research exploring ways to reduce DT traits and behavior. The overview will also include the history of leadership theories and the DT. This overview will establish the necessity of further exploring this subject in order to improve workplace environments. Second, there will be a short paragraph on the search methods used to obtain sources for this review. Then, definitions of transformational and transactional leadership and an exploration of the nuance of those subjects will be provided. Next, the paper will explore the intersections and associations between leadership styles and the DT. Finally, this paper will culminate in an analysis of the effects that DT leaders have on the people and organizations they interact with. Interventions for leaders with DT traits will also be explored to comment on potential responses and leadership development in these populations. To conclude, gaps in the research on these topics will be stated to highlight potential areas for future research about these topics.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

The presence of DT traits can significantly affect a leader's behavior, emphasizing the importance of exploring the relationship between leadership and the DT. Researchers suggest that narcissists, psychopaths, and Machiavellians are likely to seek out leadership positions (Genau et al., 2021; Guillén et al., 2023; Palmen et al., 2021; Steffens & Haslam, 2022). Diller, Czibor, Szabó, et al. (2021) showed that higher leadership levels are positively correlated with higher self and subordinate ratings for DT traits, which could imply that DT traits are considered necessary to succeed in leadership positions. These findings show that the DT is overly present in leadership positions, which means the negative aspects of DT leadership must be addressed.

The DT in leadership is often linked with socially aversive behaviors. For example, people who have high levels of narcissism often engage in behaviors that make them socially desirable or admired, even if these actions hurt others (Szabo et al., 2023). In addition, people with high levels of psychopathy in leadership are unconcerned with fostering cooperation and trust, and this can negatively impact followers (Elbers et al., 2023). Finally, people with high levels of Machiavellianism have difficulty in social settings due to their opportunistic and manipulative tendencies (Elbers et al., 2023). These examples support the claim that DT leaders often have a negative association with organizational commitment and work attitudes (Szabo et al., 2023). Luckily, psychology could be the key to changing these behaviors, boosting the well-being and productivity of all.

There are many methods of better understanding and improving DT leadership that are worth further investigation. For example, Hudson (2023) found that leaders who worked to increase agreeableness often saw a decrease in DT personality traits. Programs that train on sensitivity training and empathy training also help as interventions addressing DT behavior without addressing the source (Williams et al., 2022). This paper looks to understand the interaction of leadership and the DT to understand potential interventions to address maladaptive and destructive DT leader behaviors. However, before those interactions can be properly understood, leadership and the DT must be adequately defined.

Leadership theories have changed over time. The Great Man Theory and Trait Theory, developed in the 19th and 20th centuries, defined leadership as a fixed trait (Deshwal & Ali, 2020; Razali et al., 2022). In the 1940s, behavioral theory was developed to argue that successful leadership can be learned through behavior (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). In the 1960s, situational theories became prominent; these theorists argued that successful leadership depended on adaptation to individual situations (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). Today, two theories dominate leadership: transformational and transactional leadership.

This paper focuses on transformational and transactional leadership styles. These styles incorporate the prior theories but emphasize the leader's relationship with subordinates (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). For example, transformational leadership improves psychological well-being (Kim & Cruz, 2022), workplace performance (Jacobsen et al., 2022; Purwanto et al., 2020), and trust between employer and employee (Kloutsiniotis et al., 2023). Transactional leadership has been shown to increase knowledge sharing, work engagement, and employee job satisfaction (Nurlina, 2022) but not follower well-being (Udin et al., 2022). The psychological effects of these two leadership styles contrast with the effects of DT leadership.

The DT is a constellation of three personality traits: narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. Paulhus and Williams (2002) introduced the DT into scientific literature as traits that share socially averting, self-promoting, cold, and even aggressive behavior. Paulhus and Williams (2002) concluded that the three traits are distinguishable from each other but are still significantly related. For example, psychopathy is theorized to be a construct that includes Machiavellianism with the addition of impulsivity and risk-taking (Rogoza & Cieciuch, 2020). Such a theory would match how the definitions of psychopathy, narcissism, and Machiavellianism have changed over the years. Both narcissism and psychopathy are now defined as psychopathological personality disorders, whereas Machiavellianism is still defined as a singular trait (Duradoni et al., 2023). Even though the DT traits may often result in the same or similar outcomes in the workplace, the way in which each trait individually achieves those outcomes provides insight into both the individual trait and the DT as a whole. Looking at the traits as a whole and then looking at each trait individually is an essential method for analyzing the DT.

SEARCH METHODS

The collection of academic literature and clinical studies for this review was accomplished through electronic databases. The primary approach for collecting peer-reviewed empirical sources was using trusted databases such as Google Scholar, EBSCOhost, Science Direct, ProQuest, and the Grand Canyon University Library. The keywords, phrases, and Boolean operators used were designed to maintain a focus on the following subjects: the Dark Triad, workplace leadership styles, associations between leadership styles and the Dark Triad, outcomes of the Dark Triad within the workplace, and interventions for leaders with Dark Triad traits. All sources published before 2020 were filtered out to maintain relevancy to modern research. In summary, the criteria for selecting sources included publication in peer-reviewed and trusted journals or databases, relevancy to the subjects, and publication date.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

Transformational leadership demonstrates long-term employee development strategies and how such strategies affect the workplace. Transformational leadership is a style that focuses on inspiring and motivating followers to reach their greatest potential through personalized attention (Schattke & Marion-Jetten, 2022; Schreyer et al., 2023). Transformational leaders commonly empower their people, helping to establish a positive work environment that encourages enthusiasm, collaboration, and continual progress (Schreyer et al., 2023; Shah et al., 2022). Transformational leaders guide organizations through times of transition and uncertainty by instilling a sense of purpose and questioning the typical norm (Stelmokienė & Vadvilavičius, 2022). In summary, transformational leadership improves employees' long-term growth and well-being, juxtaposing transactional leadership.

TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP

Transactional leadership, also called managerial leadership, is a management style that focuses on the short-term results in a workplace. Unlike transformational leaders who aim for improvement

and change, transactional leaders work towards maintaining the status quo by finding and correcting faults in the work of their followers (Berkovich & Eyal, 2021). This leadership style is characterized by a relationship where the leader makes clear demands and expectations of their followers (Abbas & Ali, 2023; Berkovich & Eyal, 2021). These leaders often evoke minimal compliance from their followers due to the use of extrinsic motivators, such as praise, which positively reinforce the status quo (Abbas & Ali, 2023; Frangieh & Rusu, 2021). Transactional leaders are not focused on the personal growth of their employees and do not motivate or educate their followers to go beyond the status quo (Frangieh & Rusu, 2021). It has been found that transactional leadership has a negative relationship with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which is the extra voluntary behavior that an employee contributes to the organization beyond their original job description (Nugraha, 2021). Transactional leadership relies on extrinsic motivators, while transformational leadership focuses more on follower growth. Still, both of these goals are achieved differently due to differences in leader characteristics, such as the presence of DT personality traits.

THE DT, TRANSFORMATIONAL, AND TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP

The DT traits of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy all impact the effectiveness of leadership styles and organizational outcomes. The DT personality traits stand out among other potential leadership personalities and traits as a set of characteristics associated with manipulative, self-serving activities (Shah et al., 2022). Understanding the relationship between DT traits, transformational leadership, and transactional leadership is critical for businesses looking to execute effective and ethical leadership practices (Schreyer et al., 2023). Leaders with DT traits often display charm and confidence, attracting people with captivating personalities (Schreyer et al., 2023). The effects of their acts, however, become apparent over time. These leaders frequently place personal accomplishments ahead of the success of their organizations, resulting in an unhealthy work environment, a high turnover rate, and mediocre overall performance (Stelmokienė & Vadvilavičius, 2022). The research appears to imply that the short-term ben-

efits resulting from misleading and self-serving techniques may come at the expense of long-term harm to both individuals and the organizations they serve.

Transformational leadership and DT qualities are in opposition when practicing leadership, each with its own set of implications for individuals and organizations. Transformational leaders inspire and motivate their teams while establishing positive organizational cultures and driving achievement via cooperation and shared vision (Schreyer et al., 2023). In contrast, leaders with DT personalities may achieve short-term success through deception and self-interest. Still, their long-term effects can be harmful to individuals and the corporations they lead (Schattke & Marion-Jetten, 2022). This has been established through the study on DT qualities and behavior across cultures, which examines how they affect followers' extra effort, leadership effectiveness, and leader satisfaction (Stelmokienė & Vadvilavičius, 2022). Transactional leadership benefits the collective, while DT leadership will sacrifice the collective goal to meet their own interests; this contrast demonstrates how DT traits can conflict with leadership styles such as transactional leadership.

Researchers have also shown connections between transactional leadership and DT characteristics. Researchers have explored the potential consequences of aggressiveness and self-confidence as being necessary to make difficult decisions and drive results (Schattke & Marion-Jetten, 2022). DT leaders might prioritize their interests over those of the organization, potentially leading to unethical behavior and a hostile working atmosphere (Schreyer et al., 2023). The combination of transactional leadership and DT characteristics may result in a leadership style focused on short-term success with little regard for the organization's or its staff's long-term well-being (Schattke & Marion-Jetten, 2022). The emphasis on contingent benefits in transactional leadership, when coupled with DT traits, can cultivate a workplace driven solely by personal gain, fostering a competitive and cutthroat atmosphere (Schreyer et al., 2023). Moreover, the lack of empathy and ethical considerations associated with DT qualities may result in leaders exploiting their employees for personal benefit (Schreyer et al., 2023). The interplay between leadership style, DT characteristics, and

workplace environment means that DT leaders can have a wide range of effects on the workplace.

THE EFFECTS OF DT LEADERS

DT leaders can have various general and specific effects on a workplace. One general effect could be increasing self-uncertainty in the workplace. Individuals with high DT traits commonly showcase abusive and domineering behavior (Duradoni et al., 2023), which would decrease their self-uncertainty while increasing self-uncertainty in others (Guillén et al., 2023). Self-uncertainty is a concept found to be associated with reduced motivation to lead (Guillén et al., 2023). DT leaders could be cultivating self-uncertainty in employees of others as a way of maintaining power. However, DT leaders may perform such behavior unconsciously due to inherent self-confident predispositions. All three DT traits have been associated with increased risk-taking, so it can be theorized that individuals with DT traits perceive higher levels of benefits from risk-taking (Refaie et al., 2024). An increased perception of benefits and desire to take risks may demonstrate an inherent lack of self-uncertainty. More correlational research involving predispositions toward self-uncertainty and self-confidence within DT leaders is necessary to confirm this relationship. More experimental studies on abusive leadership and its effects on employee self-uncertainty would also be required. However, the negative behavior that the DT brings into the workplace suggests that, in general, employees will experience higher levels of self-uncertainty. The DT can also elicit more specific behaviors and outcomes within different workplace groups.

DT'S EFFECTS ON LEADERS

Recent research has provided insight into how the DT personality traits might influence individuals in corporate leadership into certain behaviors and decision-making processes. DT traits not only adversely affect the subordinates and lower-ranking employees in a corporation but can also affect the individual who possesses these traits (Palmer et al., 2020). Possession of DT traits can affect a leader in many ways, subsequently affecting the leader's work environment.

Narcissism- Effects on Leaders

The presence of narcissism in leaders affects how the leader approaches relationships. Diller, Czibor, Szabó, et al. (2021) found that narcissistic leaders can be very sensitive to critique and feedback, leading to empty relationships and feelings of loneliness. Palmer et al. (2020) found that social connections for narcissistic individuals are simply a form of transactions and commitments, similar to the social exchange theory (SET). Narcissistic leaders disregard the exchange or transaction necessary to foster healthy relationships and instead expect a higher reward for less effort from the leader (Diller, Czibor, Szabó, et al., 2021; Palmer et al., 2020). Further research on narcissistic leaders is needed to understand how such social behaviors affect the workplace. This transactional approach to relationships is also demonstrated in Machiavellian leaders.

Machiavellianism- Effects on Leaders

Machiavellianism results in many of the same social behaviors as narcissism; however, these behaviors are performed with different goals in mind. While narcissism is distinguished as using others to seek attention and admiration (Diller, Czibor, Szabó, et al., 2021), Machiavellianism is characterized as using others only for personal gain (Duradoni et al., 2023; Elbers et al., 2023). Like individuals who have narcissistic traits, Machiavellian personality traits also lead to individuals experiencing difficulty in creating and maintaining interpersonal relationships in the workplace (Diller, Czibor, Szabó, et al., 2021). Machiavellian leaders may be perceived by subordinates as genuine and caring in personal interactions despite the true motive being personal gain (Duradoni et al., 2023). Research has shown that Machiavellian leaders who use deceptive and exploitative tactics in the workplace severely lack empathy (De Hoogh et al., 2021). These behaviors can leave Machiavellian leaders with severe trust issues and severed relationships in the workplace. Further research is needed to understand whether such personal issues affect workplace interactions, given that Machiavellians will actively attempt to appear amiable. Amorality is inherent to many of the manipulative and deceptive tactics employed by Machiavellians; however, amorality is even more central within psychopathy.

Psychopathy- Effects on Leaders

Psychopathy has the most negative effects of DT due to its extreme amorality and lack of empathy. Psychopathy shares many behaviors

with narcissism and Machiavellianism, but the motives and presentation of these behaviors are different (Duradoni et al., 2023). Psychopaths also struggle with empathy (De Hoogh et al., 2021; Roy et al., 2023), but a psychopath's lack of empathy comes off as cold and callous (Palmer et al., 2020). Psychopathic leaders do not change their behavior while being watched, whereas narcissists and Machiavellians will exhibit behavior changes to gain favor and control (Diller, Czibor, Szabó, et al., 2021). Palmer et al. (2020) identified that psychopaths disregard the consequences of actions or behavior, whereas a narcissist might value some social connection in order to boost self-image. Machiavellians may exploit others by using them as a means for personal gain (De Hoogh et al., 2021), while psychopathic leaders will inflict pain simply for pleasure or to seek thrill in the workplace. These tendencies in a corporate environment lead to poor management styles and a lack of genuine social connections (Diller, Czibor, Szabó, et al., 2021; Fodor et al., 2021). Despite resulting in similar negative relationships, the differing motivations of DT leaders could imply that the DT has complex outcomes for leaders' personalities.

DT Comorbidity- Effects on Leaders

Central to the outcomes for DT leaders would be the possibility of comorbidity of DT traits. Machiavellianism is already considered an aspect of psychopathy (Rogoza & Cieciuch, 2020). It is reasonable to assume that there could be further examples of comorbidity within the DT. However, there is a lack of research on leaders with comorbidity of the DT traits. Given the extreme difference in motivation between psychopathy and the other DT traits, such comorbidity could result in unique leadership behaviors. Further research is needed to provide insight into how comorbidity affects the motivations and behaviors of DT leaders. Understanding such motivations and behaviors may also provide insight into the effects of DT leaders on followers.

DT'S EFFECTS ON FOLLOWERS

The DT has a variety of effects on followers. While some of these effects may be positive, many are considered to be deleterious and detrimental (Schyns et al., 2022). DT personality traits may impose greater psychological burdens on employees due to manipulative behaviors, misuse of social influence, and lack of concern for others' well-being associated with DT traits (Fodor et al., 2021; Palmer et al., 2020). Elbers et al. (2023) argue that DT traits correlate with lower levels of employees' basic needs satisfaction, which may also predict employee unhappiness and dissatisfaction. These negative impacts can depend on the length of leader-follower relationships, with longer relationships leading to less satisfaction with DT leader behaviors (Palmer et al., 2020). The negative impacts also depend on which DT trait manifests within the leader, hence why each trait will be looked at individually.

Narcissism- Effects on Followers

Narcissism is unique in its effects on followers because it can result in positive and negative outcomes depending on mediating and moderating factors. Narcissism can have adverse effects on the workplace when combined with contextual factors such as high levels of goal congruence, which activates a leader's narcissistic behaviors and leads to negative employee outcomes (Zhang et al., 2023). However, other contextual factors, such as high perceived leader effectiveness, can change employee perceptions of leaders from narcissistic to charismatic, which is associated with positive employee outcomes (Liu et al., 2022). However, these positive effects may regress due to an evolving follower-leader relationship and other tertiary factors. As followers become more acquainted with those taking on leadership roles, they tend to view those higher in narcissism as less effective and excessively self-maximizing (Lynch & Benson, 2023). In addition to the time of exposure, the relationship quality between leaders and followers plays a mediating role in the impact of narcissistic leadership qualities (Bernerth, 2022). Due to the effect of evolving employee-leader relationships, it is necessary to perform more longitudinal observational studies in real-world workplaces. Such studies would provide insight into the long-term effects of narcissistic leaders. Such studies would also help to identify which combinations of tertiary factors result in positive and negative outcomes for followers. Like narcissism, Machiavellianism may result in positive outcomes depending on the environment.

Machiavellianism- Effects on Followers

There are certain circumstances where a Machiavellian leader may have an effective leadership style, but this is often dependent on their level of political skill. Genau et al. (2021) state that leaders with high political skills can better mask their ulterior and manipulative motives, leading to increased effectiveness in leading others. However, increases in Machiavellian qualities show a negative relationship with employees' feelings of workplace empowerment, which may inhibit the potential for higher employee productivity (Frazier & Jacezko, 2021). Machiavellians also often use manipulative and harmful methods to influence followers to achieve the Machiavellian's desires and goals (Elbers et al., 2023). This abusive leadership style has been shown to decrease the extra work that employees or followers achieve beyond what is expected, similar to transactional leadership (De Hoogh et al., 2021; Frangieh & Rusu, 2021). This could imply that Machiavellian leaders would be effective in organizations that emphasize the transactional leadership style. Machiavellian leaders could be especially effective in pre-existing transactional leadership environments with clear rules. An environment with clear rules has been shown to mitigate the negative effects of Machiavellian leaders on followers, such as increases in unethical behavior (De Hoogh et al., 2021; Uppal & Bansal, 2023). Further study on Machiavellian leaders in transactional leadership environments is needed to determine if these theories are supported. While such negative effects can be mitigated and possibly even avoided within narcissism and Machiavellianism, the negative impact of psychopaths is rarely reduced.

Psychopathy- Effects on Followers

Psychopathic leaders have by far the most severe and wide range of negative effects on employees. Psychopathic leaders tend to display bullying behaviors toward subordinates in the workplace, leading to an intimidating environment, which discourages healthy discourse and silences employees out of fear of being targeted by the leader (Holland, 2020). For psychopathic leaders high in meanness and disinhibition, employee burnout is a common effect on followers who are subjected to these traits (Sutton & Stapleton, 2023). This burnout may lead to the long-term consequences of psychopathic leadership styles. Low

employee morale, a decline in job performance, and overall damage to the company's reputation have all been found to be products of psychopathic leaders (Holland, 2020). Job performance and company reputation may experience these negative results due to decreased employee-customer relations, as frustration builds up within followers and manifests itself in rude and abrasive interactions with others (Palmer et al., 2020). In more extreme cases of psychopathic leadership, there are cases in which the physical health of subordinates is affected, leading them to be unable to work again due to damages from the stress they endured (Holland, 2020). However, some psychopaths can attain leadership positions without causing overt negative outcomes within their organizations. Contrary to the destructive behavior associated with psychopathy, successful psychopathy is a term used to describe those with psychopathic features who experience fewer negative outcomes and more positive outcomes when compared to others who exhibit psychopathic traits (Welsh & Lenzenweger, 2021). Further research on the differences between typical psychopathy and successful psychopathy and the outcomes they result in is necessary for a better understanding of psychopathy's effect on the workplace. However, of all three DT leader traits, psychopathy still appears to have the most harmful and broad effects on followers; in addition, psychopathy also has significant negative effects on the wider organization.

DT'S EFFECTS ON CORPORATIONS

The presence of the DT within an organization's leadership can have erroneous effects not only on individual employees but also on the integrity and productivity of the organization as a whole. Damage to an organization can be done via risky behavior (Rosendale et al., 2022), fraudulent behavior (Tyas & Utami, 2020), and diminishing employee morale (Lainidi et al., 2023). DT leaders have significant control over the resources and employees of an organization, which positions DT leaders to perform the most damage to the organization through negative behavior.

A DT leader's control over an organization's finances represents a significant risk to the organization's well-being. The common desire for thrill-seeking and risk-taking among DT individuals could lead them to make impulsive deci-

sions (Refaie et al., 2024; Rosendale et al., 2022) when provided with the opportunity, potentially causing a significant financial loss for a company (Sekścińska & Rudzinska-Wojciechowska, 2020). Narcissists, in particular, have been shown to take financial and investment risks (Refaie et al., 2024), regardless of a substantial reward (Sekścińska & Rudzinska-Wojciechowska, 2020), and are highly opportunistic (Hartog et al., 2020). These behaviors are still present in psychopaths, but usually only to prevent loss in some way, and Machiavellians are the least likely to put their organization's finances at risk (Sekścińska & Rudzinska-Wojciechowska, 2020). Such risk-taking behaviors can also cross the line into fraudulent behavior.

There are indications of higher levels of fraudulent behavior among DT individuals. Fraudulent behavior can manifest in different forms, such as bypassing financial controls or passing audits when they should not (Lainidi et al., 2023). Studies suggest that each trait within the DT may motivate unethical behavior differently. Narcissists tend to behave unethically for personal gain (Hartog et al., 2020). Machiavellians also behave unethically for personal gain and seek opportunities to mislead others just because they have the chance (Sekścińska & Rudzinska-Wojciechowska, 2020). Psychopaths tend to rationalize their fraudulent behavior, regardless of the reason they engage in it (Sekścińska & Rudzinska-Wojciechowska, 2020). More research is needed to determine if these differing motivations translate to different types of fraudulent behavior. The beliefs and motivations of different DT leaders may be predictors of specific fraudulent behaviors within an organization. The beliefs and motivations of DT individuals can also be adopted by the organization as a whole, which creates a toxic work environment.

The negative behaviors of DT individuals and the amorality they perpetuate can spread across organizations, hurting that organization's productivity and morale. Studies indicate that DT individuals tend to diminish employee morale and productivity, especially when placed in a position of power (Lainidi et al., 2023). DT leaders tend to assert or maintain dominance via intimidation of their colleagues (Schattke & Marion-Jetten, 2022), which compromises the productivity and ethics of their subordinates (Lainidi et al., 2023; Mesdaghinia et al., 2023). The presence of DT leaders perpetuates further counterproductivity through creative methods to actively sabotage others (Gebben et al., 2021; Kapoor & Kaufman, 2022). This can take the form of rumors, cheating, and even physical and verbal harassment. DT leaders are more likely to harm and repel colleagues with such behavior and damage their organizations in the process (Fehr et al., 2020; Lainidi et al., 2023; Mesdaghinia et al., 2023). In addition, such behavior creates a competitive work environment which encourages negative behavior from employees. Mohd. Shamsudin et al. (2023) found that competitive work environments are likely to increase employee envy and result in employees withholding important information from peers. These findings demonstrate that the negative effects of DT leaders can affect an organization's entire culture, further supporting the need for effective DT leader interventions.

INTERVENTIONS FOR DT LEADERS

Given the widespread negative effects DT leaders can have, identifying ways to promote healthy behavior among leaders with DT is paramount for organizations. Suggesting effective approach-therapy methods and emphasizing the counselor-DT leader relationship may influence behavioral outcomes. In addition, encouraging organizations to reinforce ethical guidelines and reduce potential triggers of DT behavior may help organizations generate effective interventions to reduce harmful effects that may hinder the workplace. All of these methods must be considered in order to affect effective change in DT leaders.

APPROACH THERAPY METHODS

Developing a suitable approach-therapy method may influence the effectiveness of therapy sessions attempting to reduce undesirable behaviors in DT leaders. Counselors who took steps to become more agreeable were more likely to reduce levels of DT personality traits in individuals (Hudson, 2023). The practice of mindfulness is believed to moderate the presence of anxiety and depression within those with DT traits (Aldbyani & Al-Abyadh, 2022). Encouraging empathetic behavior within DT leaders could also improve broader prosocial behavior. Both narcissism and Machiavellianism were found to be capable of using cognitive empathy and emotional intelligence in order to achieve personal goals (Duradoni et al., 2023). If such behavior could be encouraged beyond personal gain, then levels of broader prosocial behavior may increase. More

experimental research is needed to determine whether this theory is supported. Such research is especially needed among leaders with psychopathic traits due to psychopathic leaders being associated with and demonstrating the least empathetic ability (Duradoni et al., 2023; Parameswaran & Elsawy, 2022; Roy et al., 2023). This lack of empathetic ability is likely due to the abnormalities in psychopathic brains (De Brito et al., 2021), which leads to misinterpretations of social responses (Plate et al., 2022). In response to such abnormalities, counselors must alter both their treatment methods and how they approach the DT leader they are coaching.

DT LEADER-COUNSELOR RELATIONSHIP

The relationship between a counselor and DT leader is important when the two are attempting to communicate from separate moral viewpoints. Leaders who exhibit DT personalities rarely seek therapy of their own will; therefore, it is the counselor's job to encourage clients to see the value in practices such as mindfulness and self-compassion (Diller, Frey, & Jonas, 2021). Diller, Frey, and Jonas (2021) argue that the success of therapy sessions heavily depends on the counselor's approach and motivation in finding the right strategy for dealing with clients who exhibit DT traits. Outwardly displaying empathy may also be beneficial when attempting to understand the client's state of mind (Duradoni et al., 2023). Successful strategies for narcissism were showing appreciation, building trust, and mirroring the client's behavior (Diller, Frey, & Jonas, 2021). When counseling a client who displays Machiavellianism, confronting the client, giving them feedback, and allowing them to self-reflect is the most favorable approach (Diller, Frey, & Jonas, 2021). Some successful strategies for psychopathy included showing empathy toward the client, letting the client self-reflect, and mirroring the client's behavior (Diller, Frey, & Jonas, 2021). Such practices may also show results when implemented by organizations as a whole. However, there is a lack of research that observes these counseling techniques and their effectiveness when they are practiced across organizations. A more supported technique that organizations can implement is reinforcing ethics and reducing triggers.

REINFORCING ETHICS AND REDUCING TRIGGERS

Organizations that reinforce their ethical values and identify potential triggers that release DT states amongst leaders may increase company productivity and cooperation. Companies that focus their attention on core values of mutual respect with clear guidelines and expectations can counteract the negative consequences of DT leadership (Diller, Czibor, Szabó, et al., 2021). Establishing leadership based on ethical values can promote a positive work attitude and improve skills such as problem-solving, building trust, and working as a team (Diller, Czibor, Szabó, et al., 2021). This may reduce the DT traits from triggering and help organizations maintain a cohesive environment in the workforce. Therefore, creating a comprehensive list of DT triggers could buffer the undesirable traits that come forth in a work setting.

CONCLUSION

This review examined the current literature on the variables of leadership and the DT, then reviewed the literature for potential interventions that may be used to fix adverse behaviors resulting from DT leadership. Transformational and transactional leadership are the two most prominent leadership styles discussed in the modern literature. The distinctions between these two leadership styles are the tactics used by the leader(s) to motivate the other group members to work and the variance in the dynamic of the leader-subordinate relationship. Transformational leadership is marked by an approach that emphasizes inspiration, encouragement, and stimulation to exceed expectations for the good of the company (and those therein); furthermore, leaders who use a transformational approach seek to have interpersonal connections with each subordinate to enable more fluid teamwork. Transactional leadership is marked by an approach that emphasizes rewards and punishments to ensure that subordinates sufficiently fulfill their tasks; thus, this leadership style is usually employed to meet deadlines. Moreover, transactional leaders do not seek interpersonal connections with their subordinates but are passive and reactionary. Transactional leaders interact with their subordinates to give demands, rewards, or punishments when necessary. Hence, transactional leadership is more likely to attract those with the DT traits; however, those using transformational leadership are not always without such traits.

DT traits do not always lead to poor leadership or impede workflow, and there are many cases

where DT leaders can perform effectively. However, these cases highly depend on tertiary factors such as employee perceptions, leader-employee relationship, and leadership style. A leader who possesses one or multiple DT traits and does not regulate behaviors can cause and exacerbate problems within an organization. A leader who does not practice restraint tends to have hostile or parasitic relationships with their subordinates, creating a toxic environment that damages the organization. Further research is needed regarding the contexts and factors that affect the manifestation of negative DT outcomes. Factors that could affect the perceptions of DT leaders, such as perceived effectiveness, time of exposure, and quality of relationship, must be researched in order to determine the effect of such factors on long-term workplace outcomes. Personal factors such as the differing motivations of DT leaders with different DT traits or the comorbidity of DT traits must also be explored to determine the relationship between motivations and behavior. Exploring these factors may help discover mitigating factors for negative DT outcomes.

Leaders possessing DT traits may practice several means of restraint and mitigation to reduce unpropitious behaviors. However, the most effective practice is therapy that promotes healthy coping mechanisms to increase cognitive empathy and emotional intelligence. Therapy approaches vary depending on the targeted DT trait; however, if the therapist is approach-motivated, there is an increased probability of discovering and implementing practical approaches. There is a need for research exploring the use of personalized counseling techniques being implemented in organizations as a whole. If data supports the effectiveness of such techniques outside of counseling, then negative DT behaviors could be further reduced. Furthermore, companies and organizations can implement measures to recognize the triggers for acting upon one's DT traits and intervene before an individual acts upon impulse. In summary, current literature has found measures that can be taken by organizations and individuals to combat adverse outcomes resulting from DT personalities. However, there is still a need for further research into wider interventions for DT leadership to establish more effective strategies.

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