

## INTRODUCTION

The Dark Triad – Machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy, have been conceptualized as a cluster of cold-hearted, socially aversive personalities (Jonason et al., 2013) coupled with the tendency to promote short-term, exploitative social strategies (Harrison et al., 2018). Not only did the Dark Triad traits showed correlation with antisocial activities, they are also associated with a greater level of schadenfreude – satisfaction at the misfortune of others (James et al., 2014).

### Purpose

Given the recognition that both risk-taking tendency and limited empathy play a dangerous role on the behavioural outcomes of individuals with dark personality traits, the present research intends to examine the association between Dark Triad of personality, empathy, and risk-taking in five commonly encountered domains – ethical, financial, health/safety, social, and recreational

The present study is the first to look into the association between Dark Triad traits and domain-specific risk-taking tendency.

### Research questions

- (1) Is there a relationship between Dark Triad of personalities, empathy and risk behaviours?
- (2) Does each Dark Triad trait relates to ethical, financial and health/safety risk-taking?
- (3) Will Dark Triad and empathy predict ethical risk-taking?

## METHOD



### Design

- Correlational survey methodology
- Google Forms



### Measures

- Short Dark Triad (SD3) – Total Dark Triad, Machiavellianism, Narcissism, Psychopathy
- Empathy Scale – Total Empathy
- Domain-Specific Risk-Taking scale (DOSPERT)
  - Total RT, Ethical RT, Financial RT, Health/Safety RT, Social RT, Recreational RT



### Sample

- 160 Malaysian young adults
- 98 females, 59 males and 1 others
- Age ranging from 18-26 years old; M = 21.9, SD = 1.61
- 145 students, 13 working adults

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Dark Triad and Empathy

- Only Machiavellianism and psychopathy were weakly correlated with low empathy, suggesting a possible role of cultural values in affecting the sensitivity to others.

### Dark Triad and Risk-taking

- High Machiavellianism scores were associated with higher tendency of engaging in risk behaviour in all domains. High narcissism scores were related to higher tendency of conducting ethical, financial, health/safety and social risk behaviour. Individuals with high psychopathy scores are more likely to take risk related to the ethical, financial, health/safety and recreational domains.
- Psychopathy has the strongest positive association with the three risk-taking domains - ethical, financial and health/safety, followed by Machiavellianism and narcissism.

### Empathy and Risk-taking

- Negative correlation was observed between empathy and ethical as well as financial risk-taking, while positive correlation was found between empathy and social risk-taking.

### Ethical Risk-taking

- Standard multiple regression analysis on the influence of total Dark Triad and empathy on ethical risk-taking showed significant results;  $R=.57$ ,  $R^2=.32$ ,  $F(2,155) = 36.64$ ,  $p < .001$ . Total Dark Triad and empathy predicted 32.1% variability of ethical risk-taking tendency.

## CONCLUSION

By presenting a significant association between the three variables, this research has provided empirical support to the possible damaging effects DarkTriad personalities can exert in society. To avoid putting executive decisions in the hand of malevolent risk-takers, it is crucial for employers to assess for Dark Triad personalities prior to the promotion of new leaders.

## REFERENCES

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