

Malevolence and Substance Use: Examining the Dark Triad of Personality

Honors Thesis Summary

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The following honors thesis, *Malevolence and Substance Use: Examining the Dark Triad of Personality*, aimed to test the relationship between personality components, and substance use through the use of psychologically sound instruments. The model expresses Narcissism, Psychopathy, and Machiavellianism as the three personality components that are expected to be correlated with the latent variables within the study, Impulsivity, and Sensation Seeking. These mediating factors are expected to influence the degree to which substances are consumed. Past research has identified correlations between a number of these variables, although literature places little emphasis on non-incarcerated populations. The purpose of the current study was to test the significance personality has on substance use.

The following study consisted of male (n= 27) and female (n= 91), volunteer participants (N=118), who were over the age of 18. Participants varied in age, ethnic background, marital statuses, living arrangements and substance use history. Six questionnaires were provided to participants including the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI), Levenson's Self-Report Psychopathy Scale, MACH-IV, Barratt Impulsiveness Scale (BIS), Sensation Seeking Scale (SSS) and the Alcohol and Substance Use Scale. A correlational analysis was conducted to test the three hypotheses of interest, where one hypothesis was found to be statistically significant. Results found that those who use more drugs on a monthly basis are more impulsive ($r(116) = .024, p < .05$). Results also showed that those who used substances at a younger age were more impulsive ($r(116) = .044, p < .05$). A hierarchical regression analysis was also conducted for heuristic purposes, where statistically significant results were uncovered. In future research, it would be beneficial to test participants from a larger randomized sample.