

# Effects of Dark Triad upon Human Sexuality

## Karanlık Üçlü'nün İnsan Cinselliği Üzerine Etkileri

Ece E. Müezzın <sup>1</sup>, Zihniye Okray <sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

The dark triad in psychology includes personality traits of narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. These personality traits are called "dark" because of their bad qualities. Psychopathic, narcissistic, Machiavellian, and sadistic traits make up the dark tetrad of personality traits. Health Organization (2002), while making statements covering issues such as sexuality, gender identity/roles, sexual pleasure, establishing close relationships and reproduction, also includes some factors that affect these concepts. These elements include environmental, social, cultural, economic, religious, historical and legal factors as well as biological and psychological factors. This study, which has been conducted with a systematic review method, aims to determine what effects the dark triad and the dark tetrad have on sexuality by bringing together the studies of the dark triad and the dark tetrad on sexuality and sexuality related topics. As a result, it was found that the dark triad and the dark tetrad are reflected in people's professional, social, educational, even romantic relationships, sexual behaviors, as shown in many previous studies, and are associated with rape myths, short-term relationships, partner selection and romantic relationships utilitarianism. The findings are discussed in the light of the literature.

**Keywords:** Dark triad, dark tetrad, sexuality

### Öz

Bu kişilik özellikleri kötü nitelikleri nedeniyle "karanlık" olarak adlandırılırlar. Karanlık dörtlüyü ise psikopatik, narsistik, Makyavelci ve sadist kişilik özelliklerinin oluşturmaktadır. Dünya Sağlık Örgütü (2002) cinselliği; cinsiyet, cinsiyet kimlikleri/rolleri, cinsel haz, yakın ilişkiler kurma ve üreme gibi konuları kapsayan açıklamalar yaparken bunun yanı sıra bu kavramlara etki eden bazı unsurlara da yer vermektedir. Bu unsurlar çevresel, sosyal, kültürel, ekonomik, dini, tarihi ve yasal faktörleri içerdiği gibi biyolojik ve psikolojik faktörleri de içermektedir. Sistematik derleme yöntemiyle yapılmış bu çalışma karanlık üçlü ve karanlık dörtlünün cinsellik ve cinsellikle ilişkili konularda yapılan çalışmalarını bir araya getirerek karanlık üçlünün ve karanlık dörtlünün cinsellikle ilgili ne gibi etki alanları olduğunu belirlemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Sonuç olarak karanlık üçlü ve karanlık dörtlünün daha önce de birçok çalışmada ortaya konulduğu gibi insanların mesleki, sosyal, eğitim hatta romantik ilişkilere, cinsel davranışlarına yansıdığı, tecavüz mitleri, kısa süreli ilişkiler, eş seçimi ve romantik ilişkilere faydacılıkla ilişkili olduğu bulunmuştur. Bulgular literatür ışığında tartışılmıştır.

**Anahtar sözcükler:** Karanlık üçlü, karanlık dörtlü, cinsellik

<sup>1</sup>Final International University, Kyrenia, KKTC

<sup>2</sup>European University of Lefke, Nicosia, KKTC

✉ Ece E. Müezzın, Final International University, Kyrenia, KKTC  
ece.muezzin@asbu.edu.tr | 0000-0002-5496-8813

**THERE** are many theories developed to define personality. Personality is a hypothetical structure or organization, it contains consistent behavior patterns, it is fixed, it is individual behavior patterns that distinguish one individual from another (Okray 2020). One of the first theorists to define personality as some particular trait was G.W. Allport. Allport defined personality traits as giving similar responses to similar events in different times and situations with certain predisposition factors. According to Allport, personality traits affect the individual's perceptions as well as being the source of their motivation and enable them to do their behavior in a certain way (Allport 1966). Like the definition of personality, what is normal and pathological in personality has been one of the topics that have been discussed often.

Paulhus and Williams (2002) named the aggressive but also non-pathological Machiavellian, narcissism, and psychopathic personality traits as the Dark Triad. All three are socially malignant traits and include behavioral tendencies towards positive self-promotion, emotional isolation, hypocrisy, and aggression. Machiavellianism defined in the dark triad; manipulative, emotionless, superficial, strategic rather than impulsive, Psychopathy; adventurous, with impulse control deficiencies, hostility in interpersonal relationships, and Narcissism; It expresses qualities such as authoritarianism, sovereignty, exaggerated self-love, superiority, and egocentrism (Li et al. 2019). Chabrol et al. (2009) stated in a study they conducted with adolescent criminals that sadism, which is related to the dark triad and is also not at a pathological level, should be added to the triad and called the Dark Tetrad. The characteristics of sadism, which are closely related to the Dark Triad, are characterized by the pleasure of suffering and persecution in daily life (Book et al. 2019).

The first behavioral genetic research on the Dark Triad variable (narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy) and their relationship to Big 5 personality traits was conducted by Vernon, et al. (2008). A total of 278 adult twins were studied, demonstrating significant relationships between each of the Dark Triad variants and some of the Big 5. It has been demonstrated that these variables can be largely attributed to their association with genetic factors. It showed that at the univariate level, all traits were influenced by genetic and unshared environmental factors, and the inheritance ranged from .31 to .72. Only Machiavellianism has shown that shared environmental factors also have the effect.

Jakobwitz and Egan (2006) predicted that the "dark triad" would emerge as a single dimension expressing the main interpersonal elements of primary psychopathy. As a result of the study, while there was a negative correlation between primary psychopathy and compliance, no relationship was found with being conscientious. While there is a relationship between secondary psychopathy and Neuroticism, it has been revealed that Neuroticism is also positively associated with primary psychopathy and Machiavellianism. Accordingly, even in the general population, while the dark dimension of personality can be defined as low coherence, most of the anti-social behaviors in normal individuals seem to be supported by high neuroticism and low conscientiousness.

Sexism (both hostile and benevolent) appears to be associated with the dark triad personality traits of narcissism, psychopathy, and Machiavellianism. The relationship

between sexism and the dark triad is similar for men and women. However, males have more dark triad traits than females. They argued that the sexist ideology was significantly predictive of the dark triad, citing sexism as a source of the dark triad traits. Unlike many other traits, it shows that the dark triad is partly the result of the socially supported, undeserved male power and privilege reflected by sexism and sexism (Gluck, Heesacker, & Choi 2020).

Crysel et al. (2013) suggested that the Dark Triad traits are associated with similarly focused, short-term traits and risky behaviors such as impulsivity and seeking sensation. In this context, they conducted two studies. Both studies revealed a positive correlation (positive correlation) between Dark Triad traits and impulsivity and sensation seeking. As a result of the experimental part of the study, while the participants under ego threat had a significantly positive relationship (positive correlation) with narcissism, no relationship was found for those who were not threatened. Therefore, in order to understand risky behaviors, the effects of the Dark Triad traits should be considered.

Like all other personality traits, the Dark Triad / Quad systematically affects how individuals perceive the world. After being defined by Paulhus and Williams (2002), the effects of the Dark Triad / Quad in many areas have been investigated. The main domains of the dark triad can be classified as working life, romantic relationship choices, impulsivity and risky behaviors, and socio-emotional development (Set 2020). The dark triad / tetrad can also affect the attitudes, behaviors and thoughts of individuals related to sexuality and sexual issues. The World Health Organization (2002) covers issues such as sexuality, gender identities / roles, sexual pleasure, establishing close relationships and reproduction, but together with the social, economic, religious, cultural, legal and historical elements of the society, as well as the biological and psychological structure of the individual He says it is a product of his interaction. The aim of this study is to bring together the studies of the dark triad and the dark tetrad on sexuality and sexuality issues, and try to determine what influence the dark triad has on sexuality.

## Method

This research has been undertaken by systematic review method. Systematic review is the synthesis and presentation of many studies conducted with similar methods by experts in the field (Karaçam 2013).

In this study, the keywords “dark triad” and “sexuality” were searched in Scopus and ScienceDirect databases in February 2021. Language restriction was not applied in the screening. During this first search, 59 articles were found in the Scopus database and 70 articles in the ScienceDirect database. After this first determination, the main data sources of this study were reached based on some inclusion and exclusion criteria.

The steps applied in the inclusion and exclusion criteria are as follows:

Step 1. Articles to be published between 2002-2021.

Step 2. Articles to be published in the field of psychology and social sciences.

Step 3. Finding “dark triad-dark triad”, “dark four-quad tetrad”, sexual expressions in the title, keyword and abstract of the article.

Step 4. Elimination of review articles and articles that serve as letters to the editor.

Step 5. Elimination of scale validity and reliability studies developed on the subject.

Step 6. Screening of research articles that have been scanned in multiple databases.

According to these inclusion and exclusion criteria, a total of 16 research articles, 8 in the Scopus database and 8 in the ScienceDirect database, were included in the study. The research articles used in the review study and their features are given in Table 1.

## Results

In the study by Carton and Egan (2017), the effect of Dark Triad (DT) characteristics and personality on psychological, physical and sexual abuse was investigated. The main purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between personality and DT characteristics and the psychological and physical / sexual abuse associated with intimate partner violence (IPV). In this study by Carton and Egan (2017); They studied the effect of individual DT traits on an individual's psychological propensity to IPV, the increasing validity of DT in the relationship between general personality traits and IPV, and which combination of DT traits with particular individual disposition best predicted physical, sexual, and psychological IPV. 128 participants were included in the study through advertisements (social media, posters and flyers). The sample consisted of 105 women and 23 men. 115 of the participants are 6 are White, 6 are Black, 6 are Asian and 11 are Hispanic. 93 people had been in a close relationship for more than a year at the time of testing, and 35 had previously been in a relationship for a year or more. 119 of these relationships are heterosexual, 6 are homosexual and 1 polyamory (polytheism). Amongst the relationships, 31 were married, 44 were living together, 2 were same-sex partners, and 51 were dating. All participants completed four psychometric questionnaires as well as socio-demographic information about gender, age, ethnicity, years of education, number and current situation and type of relationship. The measurement tools used in the study are as follows: Big Five Dimensions Scale (BFAS), Conflict Tactics Scale Short Form (CTS2S), Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Abuse (MMEA), Short Dark Triad (SD3). In this study, a regression design was used in which psychological and physical / sexual abuse were the criteria and the predictor variables of gender, age, DT and Big Five personality traits. As a result of correlation and regression analysis, it is observed that low compliance and psychopathy have a strong and predictive relationship with both psychological abuse and physical / sexual abuse. In another finding, low compliance predicts that both participants and their spouses may commit the crime of physical / sexual abuse. On the other hand, it could not be concluded that the Dark Triad provides increased validity for prediction of psychological abuse or physical / sexual abuse rather than basic low compliance. According to the results of this study, it was concluded that the psychopathic elements of DT were responsible for the relationship with IPV and psychological abuse, but the main source of the effect was low compliance. This emphasizes that IPV and psychological harassment are not committed especially by people with mental

disorders, but by people who express common disposition characteristics in the general population.

Baughman et al. (2014) analysed on the links between the Dark Triad traits (i.e., narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy) and sexual fantasies in their work. 643 undergraduate students (29.5% male, 70.5% female) (Mean = 18.56, sd = 2.50) between the ages of 16-54 were included in the study. The Short-Dark Triad, which measures narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy, and the Wilson Sex Fantasy Questionnaire, which measures individual differences in sexual fantasies, were used as measurement tools in the research. As a result of the study, it was found that among the Dark Triad traits, psychopathy is strongly associated with the general sex drive, as well as fantasies involving exploratory, impersonal, and sadomasochistic themes. In addition, people with high scores in narcissism reported more frequent engagement in intimate sexual fantasies. It was concluded that the psychopathic traits in the Dark Triad facilitate the general sexual desire in men. Overall, these findings suggest that the Dark Triad facilitates an exploitative, short-term mating strategy.

In 2 different studies of Prusika et al. (2021) they have examined the connections between the Dark Triad, sex acquisition strategies and relationship outcome. In the first study, they predicted that individuals who scored higher in Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy would score higher in approval and readiness to use different tactics to achieve in sex. A total of 589 people, 72.2% female (n = 425) and 24.1% male (n = 142) participated in the study, and 3.7% of these participants did not answer the question about gender. In the study, Short Dark Triad Scale (SD3) and Acquisition Scale (TOSS) were used as measurement tools. As a result of the first study, it was found that the Dark Triad has a tendency to use persuasion and especially coercion as a means of obtaining in sex. Narcissism, in particular, was equally associated with persuasion and coercion, but there was also a higher probability of using coercion. Machiavellianism and psychopathy (the stronger disposition) were linked to a higher likelihood of affirmation and coercion. 542 participants, 271 heterosexual couples, were included in the study 2, in which the connection of the Dark Triad with the quality of the relationship at the individual level (actor effect) and between couples (partner effect) was included. The ages of the participants (N = 542) ranged from 18 to 74, and the average age Average age. = 26.29 (ss = 10.34). The aim of the second study was to expand and deepen the findings from the first study in the context of romantic relationships (which investigated the connection between Dark Triad traits, persuasion and compulsion). In the study, the Short Dark Triad Scale (SD3), the Tactics of Obtaining Gender Scale and the Investment Model Scale were used as measurement tools. As a result of the research, it showed that there are differences between the genders. Accordingly, it was concluded that the Dark Triad in men was related to the approval of coercion, while the Dark Triad in women was related to both techniques (coercion and persuasion). All Dark Triad traits were found to be related to measures of the quality of the relationship in various configurations at the individual and couple levels. For example, higher psychopathy in men negatively affected the investments, satisfaction and commitment that their female partners

**Table 1. The research articles included in the review study and their features**

| Author                     | Topic  | Sampling   | Data collection method  |
|----------------------------|--|--|---|
| Carton and Egan (2017)     | Analysing the influence of dark triad (DT) traits and personality on psychological, physical and sexual abuse. Exploring connections between Dark Triad traits (i.e., narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy) and sexual fantasies. | 105 women and 23 men   | All participants completed four psychometric questionnaires as well as socio-demographic information about gender, age, ethnicity, years of education, number and current situation and type of relationship. |
| Baughman et al. (2014)     | Exploring connections between Dark Triad traits (i.e., narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy) and sexual fantasies.  | 643 undergraduate students aged 16-54 (29.5% male, 70.5% female)   | Participants completed measurement tools.   |
| Prusika et al. (2021)      | Two different studies have been conducted investigating the Dark Triad and its connection with compelling and persuasive tactics to achieve the quality of sex and romantic relationships.   | S1. 72.2% female (n=425) and 24.1% male (n=142) total 589 participants<br>S2. 542 participants including 271 heterosexual couples  | Participants completed measurement tools.   |
| Waddell et al. (2020)      | The Dark Triad's explanation of the difference in emotional manipulation over and beyond hegemonic masculinity.  | Participants (N=327; 119 males, 208 females)   | Completed measurement tools via online.   |
| Brewer et al. (2018)       | Three different studies have been conducted in the context of the effects of Dark Triad traits (Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and narcissism) on women's romantic relationships.  | S1. Between the ages of 20-45 (Mean =24.06, SD =4.82), heterosexual female (N=122)<br>S2. Between 16-65 years (Mean =24.59, SD =8.62), heterosexual female (N =265)<br>S3. 18-62 years old (Mean =29.99, SD =10.81), heterosexual female (N=240) | Completed measurement tools via online.   |
| Clancy et al. (2020)       | The state of sexually explicit texting was analysed positively related to being sexually active, becoming sexually active at a younger age, and receiving sexually explicit messages from others.  | 52.8% female and 47.2% male total 691 young adults   | Participants completed measurement tools.   |
| Patch and Figueredo (2017) | They explored how the Early Life Stress (ELS) and Life History (LH) strategy affects personality and attitudes towards infidelity, mating effort, and casual sex.  | 66% women, 44% men   | Participants completed measurement tools.   |

| Data collection tool  | Result   |
|---|--|
| Big Five Dimensions Scale (BFAS), Conflict Tactics Scale Short Form (CTS2S), Multidimensional Measure of Emotional Abuse (MMEA), Short Dark Triad (SD3)   | According to the results of this study, it was concluded that the psychopathy elements of the Dark Triad are responsible for the relationship with intimate partner violence and psychological abuse, but the main source of the effect is low compatibility.  |
| The Short-Dark Triad, which measures narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy, and the Wilson Sex Fantasy Questionnaire, which measures individual differences in sexual fantasies, were used as measurement tools in the research.  | Among the Dark Triad traits, it was concluded that psychopathy is associated with the general sexual drive as well as fantasies that include exploratory, impersonal, and sadomasochistic themes, people with high scores in narcissism engage in intimate sexual fantasies more often, and psychopathic traits facilitate general sexual desire in men.   |
| S1. Short Dark Triad Scale (SD3) and Acquisition Scale (TOSS)<br>S2. Short Dark Triad Scale (SD3), Tactics of Obtaining Gender Scale and Investment Model Scale   | S1. Conclusion: The Dark Triad has been found to have a tendency to use persuasion and especially coercion as a means of obtaining in sex.<br>S2. Conclusion: According to this, it was concluded that the Dark Triad in males was associated with the approval of coercion, while the Dark Triad in females was associated with both techniques (coercion and persuasion).  |
| Compliance of Masculine Norms Inventory-46 (CMNI-46) and Short Dark Triad (SD3)   | It is important in that existing functional definitions of hegemonic masculinity traits are similar to certain 'dark' personality traits. Therefore, while predicting antisocial behaviors and tendencies, it has been revealed that perhaps the variance explained by hegemonic masculinity can be better understood with dark personality traits.  |
| S1. Mach IV Machiavellianism measure), Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale, NPI-16 (narcissism measure) and Experiences in Close Relationships Revised Questionnaire<br>S2. Mach IV, NPI-16, Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale and Adaptation Scale<br>S3. Mach IV, NPI-16, Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale and Interpersonal Violence Control Scale   | S1. High secondary psychopathy and low narcissism were found to predict higher levels of attachment anxiety. It was concluded that High Machiavellianism, primary psychopathy, and secondary psychopathy each predict higher attachment avoidance.<br>S2. Machiavellianism predicted that a partner has lower active or passive constructive responses and less active destructive responses to destructive (or potentially destructive) behavior. It was found that primary psychopathy predicts more active and passive destructive behavior, whereas secondary psychopathy predicts less active constructive responses.<br>S3. Secondary psychopathy has been associated with increasing levels of each form of control (control through surveillance and threats, control over daily routines and decision making, and control over autonomous behavior). Machiavellianism and primary psychopathy have also been shown to predict increased control over autonomous behavior. |
| Dissemination Behaviors of Sexual Content Scale and Dark Triad Rating Scale   | Sexually explicit messaging has been found to have high narcissistic characteristics.  |
| Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (ACE), Neighborhood Context Scale, Material Needs Scale, Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI), Mini-K Short Form, High K Strategy Scale (HKSS), Rand 36 Item Health Questionnaire: version 1, Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI), Dark Inventory (DI), Short Dark Triad (SD3), Jake's Sin Scale, Impulse Control Scale, Behavioral Inhibition, Cognitive Inhibition and Self-regulation (BRIEF), Rule Governance Scale, Mating Effort Scale (MES), Infidelity Thought Inventory (ITI), Multidimensional Sociosexual Orientation Inventory (MSO) | Early Life Stress, Life History, and a hostile social scheme have been found to increase psychopathy, which directly increases unbounded sociosexual attitudes.  |

**Table 1. Continued**

| Author                    | Topic  | Sampling                         | Data collection method   |
|---------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|
| Tsoukas and March (2018)  | They investigated the predictors of sex and Dark Tetrad traits on long and short mating orientations.                                  | 63% women, 37% men               | An online questionnaire has been applied.                              |
| March and Wagstaff (2017) | The predictive value of gender, Machiavellianism and the value giandn to the partner in the behavior of sending obscene photove.       | 72% women, 28% men               | An online questionnaire has been applied.                              |
| Carter et al. (2018)      | It was investigated whether the Dark Triad personality traits associated with mating success predicted the number of children one has. | 55.4% men, 44.6% women           | An online questionnaire was applied with the snowball sampling method. |
| Smith et al. (2019)       | The relationship between the Dark Triad traits and sexual motivation has been investigated.  | 28.7% men, 71.3% women           | A questionnaire was applied to students taking psychology courses.     |
| Kardum et al. (2019)      | The effect on the behaviours of Dark Triad and partner retention in couples who are in emotional relationship                          | 100 couples. 50% women, 50% men. | A questionnaire was applied to the participants.                       |
| Jonason et al. (2013)     | They investigated the psychosocial burden of the Dark Triad in three countries (America, Poland, and Singapore).                       | 59% women, 41% men               | A questionnaire was applied to the participants.                       |
| Lyons et al. (2021)       | The role of social media and the dark triad in situational and psychological factors in rape cognition was examined.                   | 26.1% men, 73.9% women           | An online questionnaire was applied to the participants.               |
| Lyons et al. (2020)       | They investigated the predictability of the Dark Triad and sexual assertiveness of sexual coercion on women and men.                   | 38% men, 62% women               | An online questionnaire was applied to the participants.               |

put into the relationship, but this mechanism has also been shown to operate in the opposite direction.

In the study by Waddell *et al.* (2020) it has been hypothesized that hegemonic masculinity would be an important and positive predictor of people's willingness to participate in

| Data collection tool  | Result   |
|---|--|
| Short Dark Triad Scale (SD-3), Short Sadistic Impulse Scale (SSIS), Short and Extended Mating Orientations Scale (EM-SOI).  | Gender, dark triad, and sadism were found to predict short-term mating orientations. In long-term mating behavior, gender was not determined as a predictor, but a positive relationship was found with narcissism and a negative relationship with psychopathy and sadism.  |
| Mate Value Scale (MVS), Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI-16), Levenson Psychopathy Scale, Machiavellianism Scale (MACH-IV), Short Sadistic Impulse Scale (SSIS)                        | It was determined that males send more photos with explicit content than females and Machiavellianism and the value scores granted to sexual partners also predicted the obscene photo image scores. It was concluded that personality traits predicted behavior as the mediator of all other dark personality scores of Machiavellianism.   |
| Short Dark Triad Scale (SD-3)   | For men, psychopathy was found to be a negative predictor of having children, while narcissism was found to be a positive predictor. For women, psychopathy was found to be a negative predictor of having a child.  |
| Dark Tetrad Scale, Sexual Goals Scale, Sexual Motivations Scale, Emotional and Motivational Orientation Scale in Sexual Arousal (AMORE)   | They determined that individuals with high Machiavellian scores did their sexuality for more selfish purposes such as stress discharge and show of power, as well as to control their sexual partners or to establish an emotional relationship with their sexual partner. The rise of psychopathy has found that they use sex for stress discharge but don't care about their sexual partners. No relationship has been found with narcissism and sadism.   |
| Self-Report Psychopathy Scale, Narcissistic Personality Inventory, Machiavellianism Scale (MACH-IV), Mate Retention Inventory (MRI)   | It has been found that men try to retain their sexual partners more than women, men attach importance to cost, and both women and men pay attention to utilitarian relationships. In men, especially narcissism and psychopathy showed a high correlation with utilitarian relationships.  |
| Dark Triad Scale, Arizona Life Biography Questionnaire (ALBH)   | In the Singapore and Poland samples, the Dark Triad was found to be more associated with psycho-social burden than America. While narcissism was higher in the sample of Poland and America, it was observed that the life stories of men, regardless of where they lived, played a mediating role in the dark triad. The dark triad components have been found to cause limited experience in romantic relationships.   |
| Short Dark Triad Inventory, Rape Supports Attitude Scale, Rape Victim Empathy Scale, Hostile Masculinity Scale, Social Media posts rating questionnaire.                                      | Higher scorers in the Dark Triad found the sexist tweets more acceptable and funny. Sexist tweets were not found to be effective on rape-related cognitions. Increased Dark Triad scores were positively correlated with attitudes supporting rape, blaming the victim, and hostile masculinity. As a result of the regression analysis, it was determined that psychopathy is the most important predictor of rape myths.   |
| Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI-16), Levenson Psychopathy Scale, Machiavellianism Scale (MACH-IV), Hurlbert Index of Sexual Assertiveness (HISA), Rejection Sexual Persistence Scale. | As a result of the research, it was found that the Dark Triad is an important predictor of sexual coercion in men. While the dark triad in men was highly correlated with sexual compulsion and narcissism, it was negatively correlated with Machiavellianism and sexual entrepreneurship. Sexual coercion in women has been associated with narcissism. As a result of the regression analysis, psychopathy and low sexual entrepreneurship were found to be the predictor of sexual coercion in men, while only narcissism was found to be a positive predictor in women. |

emotional manipulation and their perceived emotional manipulation abilities. Both the willingness to participate in emotional manipulation and the perceived ability to emotionally manipulate were included in the current study, as those involved in emotional manipulation had to (a) be willing and (b) perceive themselves in a way that could manipulate others. In

addition, it was assumed in the study that the Dark Triad would explain the difference in emotional manipulation above and beyond hegemonic masculinity. Participants ( $N = 327$ ; 119 males, 208 females) completed the questionnaire online. The ages of the participants varied between 18 and 71 (Mean = 30.54, SD = 11.89) and most of them were defined as heterosexual (77.4%). Conformity of Masculine Norms Inventory-46 (CMNI-46) and Short Dark Triad (SD3) were used as measurement tools. Hierarchical regression analysis revealed that hegemonic masculinity for both men and women was an important predictor of one's willingness and perceived ability to emotionally manipulate others. However, when the Dark Triad features are added to the model, it has been found that the contribution of hegemonic masculinity becomes insignificant. These findings are important in that existing functional definitions of hegemonic masculinity traits are similar to certain 'dark' personality traits. Therefore, while predicting antisocial behaviors and tendencies, it has been revealed that perhaps the variance explained by hegemonic masculinity can be better understood with dark personality traits.

In the study of Brewer et al. (2018), three different studies were conducted in the context of the effect of Dark Triad traits (Machiavellianism, psychopathy and narcissism) on women's romantic relationships. In the first study, heterosexual women ( $N = 122$ ) aged 20-45 years (Mean = 24.06, SD = 4.82) participated in the study online, and all participants were in a romantic relationship for at least 3 months during the study. Average duration of intercourse was between 6 months and 3 years. Participants completed socio-demographic questions, Mach IV Machiavellianism measure), Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale, NPI-16 (narcissism measure), and Experiences in Close Relationships Reviewed Questionnaire. Two-stage multiple hierarchical regression was performed to determine whether the Dark Triad traits (Machiavellianism, narcissism, primary psychopathy, secondary psychopathy) predicted attachment anxiety while controlling the participant's age and relationship length. As a result, it was found that high secondary psychopathy and low narcissism predicted higher levels of attachment anxiety. It was concluded that High Machiavellianism, primary psychopathy, and secondary psychopathy each predict higher attachment avoidance. In the second study, heterosexual women ( $N = 265$ ) aged 16-65 years (Mean = 24.59, sd = 8.62) were included in the online study, and all participants were in a romantic relationship for at least 3 months during the study. The average duration of intercourse was between 8 months and 3 years. Participants completed socio-demographic questions and then Mach IV, NPI-16, Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale and Adaptation Scale. Two-stage multiple hierarchical regression was performed to determine whether the Dark Triad traits (Machiavellianism, primary psychopathy, secondary psychopathy, narcissism) predicted output, voice, loyalty, and neglect while controlling age and relationship length. Machiavellianism predicted that a partner has lower active or passive constructive responses and less active destructive responses to destructive (or potentially destructive) behavior. It was found that primary psychopathy predicts more active and passive destructive behavior, whereas secondary psychopathy predicts less active constructive responses. In the third study, heterosexual females ( $N = 240$ ) aged 18-62 ( $M =$

29.99, SD = 10.81) participated online, and all participants were in a romantic relationship for at least 3 months during the study. The average duration of intercourse lasted between 7 months and 5 years. Participants completed socio-demographic questions, followed by Mach IV, NPI-16, Levenson Self-Report Psychopathy Scale, and Interpersonal Violence Control Scale. As a result, secondary psychopathy has been associated with increased levels of each form of control (control through surveillance and threats, control over daily routines and decision making, and control over autonomous behavior). Machiavellianism and primary psychopathy have also been shown to predict increased control over autonomous behavior.

In the study by Clancy et al. (2020) sexual content messaging has been shown to be sexually active, becoming sexually active at a younger age, and being sexually active. It was assumed to be positively associated with receiving messages. It was also assumed that sexual messaging propagation would be associated with higher levels of dark triad traits, and males were more likely to approve of motivations related to social status than females. Participants consist of a total of 691 young adults, 52.8% female and 47.2% male and 18-35 years old (Mean = 22.43, sd = 3.17). In the study, Dissemination Behaviors Scale with Sexual Content and Dark Triad Rating Scale were used as measurement tools. Respondents who did sexually explicit texting (17.4%) were more likely to be sexually active and, from a younger age, requested sexually explicit messages, received widespread sexually explicit messages, and reported higher levels of dark triad traits. It was found that sexual images were generally taken from the opposite sex and shared with their fellows. It has been shown that while men and women tend to spread sexually explicit messages equally, men tend to spread sexually explicit messages to more people. Four unique factors have been associated with sexually explicit message propagation. These; Demanding sexually explicit messages, receiving disseminated sexually explicit messages, spreading one's own sexually explicit message and having high narcissistic characteristics.

Patch and Figueredo (2017) investigated how Early Life Stress (ELS) and Life History (LH) strategy affects personality and attitudes towards infidelity, mating effort, and casual sex. The sample was comprised of 66% female, 44% male, average age 19.06 [sd = 1.7, range 18-35] total 300 undergraduate students. Adverse Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (ACE), Neighborhood Context Scale, Material Needs Scale, Parental Connecting Tool (PBI), Mini-K Short Form, High K Strategy Scale (HKSS), Rand 36 Item Health Questionnaire: Version 1, Ten-Item Personality Inventory (TIPI), Dark Inventory (DI), Dark Short Triad (SD3), Jake's Sin Scale, Impulse Control Scale, Behavioral Inhibition, Cognitive Inhibition and Self-regulation (BRIEF), Rule Governance Scale, Mating Effort Scale (MES), Intention towards Infidelity Scale (ITI), Multidimensional Sociosexual Orientation Inventory (MSO) were used. Unit weighted composite scores for Early Life Stress (ELS) were estimated by calculating the means of standardized scores for all non-deficient scales. The results showed that the structural equation model was determined and the effects of ELS and LH on unrestricted socio-sexual attitudes were partially mediated by psychopathy. ELS, LH, and a hostile social scheme have been found to increase psychopathy,

which directly increases unbounded socio-sexual attitudes. These results support the theory that psychopathy is an adaptive trait to increase short-term mating opportunities.

Tsoukas and March (2018) examined the roles of sex and the dark tetrad in long and short-term mating orientations. Feedback was received from 464 participants who reached the research on social media on a voluntary basis. The age range of the participants participating in the questionnaire ranges between 18-69 (Mean = 24.73, sd = 7.86). 63% of the participants defined themselves as female, 37% male, 71% heterosexual, 6% homosexual, 16% bisexual and 7% as "other" gender. 44% of the participants stated that they were single and 27% of them had a long term relationship. Short Dark Triad Scale (SD-3), Short Sadistic Impulse Scale (SSIS), Short and Long Term Mating Orientations Scale (EM-SOI) were used as measurement tools in the study. Among the findings obtained from the study, it was found that gender, dark triad and sadism predicted short-term mating orientations. In long-term mating behavior, gender was not determined as a predictor, but a positive relationship was found with narcissism and a negative relationship with psychopathy and sadism. Dark tetrad was found to be the main predictor, especially in short-term mating behaviors.

March and Wagstaff (2017) investigated whether gender, the value given to the mating partner, and Machiavellianism were predictors of explicit photo submission. Of the 240 participants participating in the study, 72% are women and 28% are men. The mean age of the participants was reported as  $25.96 \pm 9.79$ . The research data were collected online. Sexual Equivalence Scale (MVS), Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI-16), Levenson Psychopathy Scale, Machiavellianism Scale (MACH-IV), Short Sadistic Impulse Scale (SSIS) were used as measurement tools in the study. Among the findings, it was determined that men sent more obscene photos than women, and Machiavellianism and the value scores given to the sexual partner also predicted the obscene photo image scores. It was concluded that personality traits predicted behavior as the mediator of all other dark personality scores of Machiavellianism. Researchers thought that sending obscene photos might be related to short-term mating behavior.

Carter et al. (2018) investigated the relationship between the number of children acquired throughout life and the dark triad. The research was carried out with 314 participants reached by snowball sampling in the online environment. The age range of the participants varies between 18-69 (Mean: 35.04 SD: 11.18). 55.4% of the participants are men and 44.6% are women. Participants were asked about socio-demographic variables such as income and number of children. Participants range from 0 to 4 children (Mean: 0.56, SD: 0.97). The Short Dark Triad Scale (SD-3) is presented with these socio-demographic variables. Psychopathy was found to be a negative predictor for men, while narcissism was found to be a positive predictor. For women, psychopathy was found to be a negative predictor of having a child. It has been interpreted that the dark triad differed in the decision to reproduce and have children of men and women.

Smith et al. (2019) analysed the relationship between dark personality traits and sexual motivation. Data from the participants were collected through an online questionnaire applied to students taking psychology courses at the university. 28.7% male and 71.3% female, aged

between 18-44 (Mean: 19.35, SD: 2.25) submitted to the study. Dark Quad Scale, Sexual Goals Scale, Sexual Motivations Scale, Emotional and Motivational Orientation Scale for Sexual Arousal (AMORE) were used as data collection tools. The findings obtained from the study determined that individuals with high scores of Machiavellianism did not only for more selfish purposes such as stress discharge, show of power, but also to control their sexual partners or to establish an emotional relationship with their sexual partner. The rise of psychopathy has found that they use sex for stress relief, but they don't care about their sexual partners. No relationship has been identified with narcissism and sadism.

Kardum et al. (2019) investigated the relationship between the dark triad and holding the spouse in romantic couples. 100 couples in romantic relationships were included in the study. Self-Report Psychopathy Scale, Narcissistic Personality Inventory, Machiavelism Scale (MACH-IV), Dual Handling Inventory (MRI) were applied to the participants. Among the findings obtained from the study, it was determined that men try to retain their sexual partners more than women, men attach importance to cost, and both women and men pay attention to utilitarian relationships. Especially in men, narcissism and psychopathy showed a high correlation with utilitarian relationships.

Jonason et al. (2013) investigated the psycho-social burden of the dark triad in Singapore, Poland, and America. Among the subjects participating in the research, 264 are from the United States, 185 from Singapore and 177 from Poland. 59% of 626 participants are women and 41% are men. The age range of the participants is 17-53 (Avg: 21.17, SD: 5.04) for America, 19-28 (Avg: 21.89, SD: 1.62) for Singapore and 18-63 (Avg: 26.99, SS: 8.22). The Dark Triad Scale and the Arizona Life History Questionnaire (ALBH) were used as measurement tools in the study. Among the findings, the psycho-social burden of the Dark Triad was found to be more associated with the Singapore and Poland samples than the United States. While narcissism was higher in the sample of Poland and America, it was observed that the life stories of men played a mediating role in the dark triad, regardless of where they lived. The dark triad components have been found to cause limited experience in romantic relationships.

Lyons et al. (2021) investigated how situational and mental factors in rape cognition are affected by social media and the dark triad. 26.1% of the participants are men and 73.9% are women. The average age of the participants was calculated as  $26.79 \pm 11.29$ . The data of the research were collected through an online questionnaire. In the study, 20 fake tweeters were created and the comments of the profiles, 10 of which were sexist and 10 of which were unloading, were asked from the participants to rate them as sexist-unloading. Later, the Short Dark Triad Inventory, Rape Supports Attitude Scale, Rape Victim Empathy Scale, Hostile Masculinity Scale were applied to the participants. Findings from the study High scorers in the Dark Triad found sexist tweets more acceptable and funny. Sexist tweets were not found to be effective on rape-related cognitions. Increased Dark Triad scores were positively correlated with attitudes supporting rape, blaming the victim, and hostile masculinity. As a result of the regression analysis, it was determined that psychopathy is the most important predictor of rape myths.

Lyons et al. (2020) investigated whether the dark triad and sexual entrepreneurship predicted sexual coercion differently in men and women. Participants were 62% female and 38% male, aged between 18-69 (Mean: 22.56, SD: 7.20). Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI-16), Levenson Psychopathy Scale, Machiavellianism Scale (MACH-IV), Sexual Entrepreneurship Scale (HISA), Sexual Persistence After Rejection Scale were used as measurement tools. As a result of the research, it was found that the Dark Triad is an important predictor of sexual coercion in men. While the dark triad in men was highly correlated with sexual coercion and narcissism, it was negatively correlated with Machiavellianism and sexual entrepreneurship. Sexual coercion in women has been associated with narcissism. As a result of the regression analysis, psychopathy and low sexual entrepreneurship were found to be the predictor of sexual coercion in men, while only narcissism was found to be a positive predictor in women.

## Discussion

In this literature study to identify the domains of influence of the Dark Triad on human sexuality, the studies conducted in this field are based on partner violence and attitudes towards rape (Carton and Egan 2017, Lyons et al. 2020, 2021, Waddell et al. 2020, Pruiska et al. 2021), sexual fantasies (Baugham et al. 2014), harmony in romantic relationships (Jonason et al. 2013, Brewer et al. 2018, Kardum et al. 2019), sexual motivation, breeding and mating orientations (Patch and Figueredo 2017, March and Wagstaff 2017, Carter et al. 2018, Tsoukas and March 2018, Øverup and Webster 2019, Clancy et al. 2020).

Many studies have also revealed that the Dark Triad includes personality traits that affect human sexual behavior (Set 2020). In this review study, it was observed that psychopathic characteristics in male participants determined attitudes towards partner violence, attitudes towards rape, mating, reproduction, sexual motivation, and romantic relationships.

In their study, Makros et al. (2011) investigated the relationship between psychopathy and sexual sadism, highlighting the lack of emotion and lack of empathy of psychopathy in sexual sadistic acts, as well as lack of behavioral inhibition. Similarly, in this study, it was found that men with high levels of psychopathy regard sexuality as a stress discharge tool, do not care about the feelings of their sexual partner and emphasize more cost and utilitarianism in their relationships (Kardum et al. 2019). Mouilso and Calhoun (2013) found that rapists have higher levels of psychopathy and acceptance of rape myths than non-rapists. They found a highly significant relationship between accepting rape myths and psychopathy. In the studies of Pruiska et al. (2021), Lyons et al. (2020, 2021), Waddell et al. (2020), Lyons et al. (2020) Carton and Egan (2017) have found that The Dark Triad with its hegemonic masculinity The use of force in sexuality, deserving of sexual intercourse, sexist attitudes, blaming the rape victim, hostile masculinity and acceptance of rape myths are associated with psychopathy.

It has been revealed that those who try to keep their partners in harmony and romantic relationships are also individuals with psychopathic characteristics. Secure attachment must be established for a healthy relationship. Nickisch et al. (2020) found that individuals with

anxious and avoidant attachment styles (insecure attachment) got high scores in the Dark Triad and Dark Four. In this review study, Brewer et al. (2018) found that those who exhibit Machiavellianism and psychopathic characteristics cannot be securely attached in their romantic relationships. Jonason et al. (2013) also found that the rise of the Dark Triad is related to the inability to establish romantic relationships and their hesitant romantic relationship experiences.

Sending obscene content and obscene messaging were found to be related to Machiavellian and narcissism components of the Dark Triad of Clancy et al. (2020) and March and Wagstaff (2017). Clancy et al. (2019) found that Machiavellianism and narcissism are related. Similarly, Shim et al. (2007) found that they shared content such as sending explicit photos and messaging on the internet more.

On the mating behaviors, the relationship between the dark triad and short-term relationships for stress release was revealed (Tsoukas and March 2018, Smith et al. 2019). Jonason, Valentine et al. (2011) and Carter, Campbell et al. (2014) also found that males with higher dark Triad scores exhibit more short-term mating behaviors.

## Conclusion

The Dark Triad and the Dark Tetrad are reflected in people's professional, social, educational, even romantic relationships and sexual behaviors, as has been shown in many previous studies. In line with the findings obtained in this review study, it was found that the Dark Triad / Tetrad was associated with utilitarianism in rape myths, short-term relationships, mate selection, and romantic relationships.

## References

- Allport GW (1966) Traits revisited. *Am Psychol*, 21:1-10.
- Baughman HM, Jonason PK, Veselka L, Vernon PA (2014) Four shades of sexual fantasies linked to the Dark Triad. *Pers Individ Dif*, 67:47-51.
- Book A, Visser BA, Blais J, Hosker-Field A, Methot-Jones T, Gauthier NY et al. (2016) Unpacking more "evil": What is at the core of the dark tetrad? *Pers Individ Dif*, 90:269-272.
- Brewer G, Bennett C, Davidson L, Ireen A, Phipps AJ, Stewart-Wilkes D et al. (2018) Dark triad traits and romantic relationship attachment, accommodation, and control. *Pers Individ Dif*, 120:202-208.
- Carter GL, Campbell AC, Muncer S (2014) The Dark Triad: Beyond a 'male/mating strategy. *Pers Individ Dif*, 56:159-164.
- Carter GL, Lyons M, Brewer G. (2018) Lifetime offspring and the Dark Triad. *Pers Individ Dif*, 132:79-83.
- Carton H, Egan V (2017) The dark triad and intimate partner violence. *Pers Individ Dif*, 105: 84-88.
- Chabrol H, Van LN, Rodgers R, Séjourné N (2009) Contributions of psychopathic, narcissistic, Machiavellian, and sadistic personality traits to juvenile delinquency. *Pers Individ Dif*, 47:734-739.
- Clancy EM, Klettke B, Hallford DJ, Crossman AM, Maas MK, Toumbourou JW (2020) Sharing is not always caring: Understanding motivations and behavioural associations with sext dissemination. *Comput Human Behav*, 112:1-9.
- Clancy EM, Klettke B, Hallford DJ (2019) The dark side of sexting—factors predicting the dissemination of sexts. *Comput Human Behav*, 92:266-272.
- Crysel LC, Crosier BS, Webster GD (2013) The Dark Triad and risk behavior. *Pers Individ Dif*, 54:35-40.
- Gluck M, Heesacker M, Choi HD (2020) How much of the dark triad is accounted for by sexism? *Pers Individ Dif*, 154:109728.
- Jakobwitz S, Egan V (2006) The dark triad and normal personality traits. *Pers Individ Dif*, 40:331-339.

- Jonason PK, Valentine KA, Li NP, Harbeson, CL (2011) Mate-selection and the Dark Triad: Facilitating a short-term mating strategy and creating a volatile environment. *Pers Individ Dif*, 51:759-763.
- Jonason PK, Li NP, Czarna AZ (2013) Quick and dirty: Some psychosocial costs associated with the Dark Triad in three countries. *Evol Psychol*, 11:172-185.
- Karaçam Z (2013) Sistematik derleme metodolojisi: Sistematik derleme hazırlamak için bir rehber. *Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi Hemşirelik Fakültesi Elektronik Dergisi*, 6:26-33.
- Kardum I, Hudek-Knezevic J, Mehic N (2019) Dark Triad traits and mate retention behaviors in romantic couples: the actor-partner interdependence model. *Evol Psychol*, 17:1-11.
- Liu G, Meng Y, Pan Y, Ma Y, Zhang D (2019) Mediating effect of dark triad personality traits on the relationship between parental emotional warmth and aggression. *J Interpers Violence*, 0886260519877950.
- Lyons M, Houghton E, Brewer G, O'Brien F (2020) The dark triad and sexual assertiveness predict sexual coercion differently in men and women. *J Interpers Violence*, 0886260520922346.
- Lyons M, Rowe A, Waddington R, Brewer G (2021) Situational and dispositional factors in rape cognitions: the roles of social media and the Dark Triad traits. *J Interpers Violence*, 0886260520985499.
- March E, Wagstaff DL (2017) Sending nudes: Sex, self-rated mate value, and trait Machiavellianism predict sending unsolicited explicit images. *Front Psychol*, 8:2210.
- Mokros A, Osterheider M, Hucker SJ (2011) Psychopathy and sexual sadism. *Law Hum Behav* 35:188-199.
- Mouilso ER, Calhoun KS (2013) The role of rape myth acceptance and psychopathy in sexual assault perpetration. *J Aggress Maltreat Trauma*, 22:159-174.
- Okray Z (2020) Kişilik: Tanımı, Sınıflamaları ve Kişilik Bozuklukları. İstanbul, Efe Akademi.
- Patch EA, Figueredo AJ (2017) Childhood stress, life history, psychopathy, and sociosexuality. *Pers Individ Dif*, 115:108-113.
- Paulhus DL, Williams KM (2002) The dark triad of personality: Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. *J Res Pers*, :556-563.
- Prusik M, Konopka K, Kocur D (2021) Too many shades of gray: The Dark Triad and its linkage to coercive and coaxing tactics to obtain sex and the quality of romantic relationships. *Pers Individ Dif*, 170:1-14.
- Set Z (2020) Sosyal kötücül kişilikler: karanlık üçlü. *Psikiyatride Güncel Yaklaşımlar*, 12:318-329.
- Shim JW, Lee S, Paul B (2007) Who responds to unsolicited sexually explicit materials on the internet? The role of individual differences. *Cyberpsychol Behav*, 10:71-79.
- Smith CV, Øverup CS, Webster GD (2019) Sexy deeds done dark? Examining the relationship between dark personality traits and sexual motivation. *Pers Individ Dif*, 146:105-110.
- Tsoukas A, March E (2018) Predicting short-and long-term mating orientations: the role of sex and the dark tetrad. *J Sex Res*, 55:1206-1218.
- Vernon PA, Villani VC, Vickers LC, Harris JA (2008) A behavioral genetic investigation of the Dark Triad and the Big 5. *Pers Individ Dif*, 44:445-452.
- Waddell C, Van DG, March E, Grieve R (2020) Dominance or deceit: The role of the Dark Triad and hegemonic masculinity in emotional manipulation. *Pers Individ Dif*, 166:1-6.
- WHO (2002). *Defining Sexual Health: Report of A Technical Consultation on Sexual Health*. Geneva, World Health Organization.

**Authors Contributions:** The authors attest that they have made an important scientific contribution to the study and have assisted with the drafting or revising of the manuscript.

**Peer-review:** Externally peer-reviewed.

**Conflict of Interest:** No conflict of interest was declared by the authors.

**Financial Disclosure:** The authors declared that this study has received no financial support.