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DARK TRIAD PERSONALITY TRAITS, COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOR AS PREDICTORS OF WHISTLEBLOWING INTENTIONS AMONG SECONDARY TEACHERS IN AWKA CITY

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ABSTRACT

The present study examined the impact of Dark Triad personality traits (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy) and Counterproductive Work Behaviour (CWB) in predicting Whistle-blowing Intention (WBI) among secondary teachers in Awka City. A total of one hundred and thirty-one (131) secondary school teachers (64 males, and 67 females, mean age = 29.72yrs, SD = 2.44) participated in study. Three instruments were used for data collection namely: Short Dark Triad (SD3) Scale, Counterproductive Work Behaviour Scale, and Whistleblowing Intension Scale. The hypotheses were tested using correlation analysis and hierarchical multiple regression analysis with stepwise modeling. Results indicated that while Machiavellianism and Psychopathy did not significantly predict whistleblowing intention, Narcissism emerged as a significant positive predictor. Additionally, CWB did not significantly predict whistleblowing intention. The study's implications are significant for school management, suggesting that personality traits, particularly narcissism, may influence whistleblowing behaviors, thus necessitating targeted interventions to foster an ethical work environment. Furthermore, the study calls for the integration of personality assessments into recruitment and training programs to better manage whistleblowing intentions and improve organizational integrity. Limitations of the study were also discussed, and future research directions proposed.

Keywords*:* Machiavellianism, Narcissism, Psychopathy, Counterproductive Work Behaviour

Introduction

Whistleblowing, the disclosure of unethical, illegal, or inappropriate activities within organizations, plays a crucial role in maintaining ethical standards and organizational accountability (Miceli, Near, & Dworkin, 2008). As whistleblowers expose wrongdoing to prevent harm to stakeholders or society, their actions are often viewed as acts of moral courage. However, whistleblowing intentions are influenced by a range of individual and situational factors, including personality traits and workplace behavior. In educational systems, where the ethical conduct of teachers shapes societal values and the learning environment, understanding the determinants of whistleblowing intentions is particularly important. This study examines the roles of Dark Triad personality traits and counterproductive work behavior (CWB)

as predictors of whistleblowing intentions among secondary school teachers in Awka City, Nigeria.

The Dark Triad, comprising Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy, represents socially aversive personality traits characterized by manipulativeness, grandiosity, and callousness, respectively (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Individuals high in Machiavellianism often pursue personal goals through cunning and manipulation, while narcissists exhibit excessive self-importance and a sense of entitlement. Psychopaths, on the other hand, tend to lack empathy and exhibit impulsive, antisocial behaviors. These traits have been shown to influence ethical decision-making and workplace dynamics, often predicting behaviors that deviate from organizational norms (Spain, Harms, & LeBreton, 2014). Their influence on whistleblowing intentions is complex. For example, Machiavellian individuals may perceive whistleblowing as a strategic tool, while narcissistic or psychopathic individuals may view it as unnecessary or inconsequential to their personal goals.

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB), which encompasses actions such as theft, sabotage, and incivility, also plays a critical role in shaping whistleblowing intentions. CWBs are behaviors that harm organizations or their members and are often driven by personality traits, workplace stressors, and perceptions of injustice (Spector et al., 2006). Research suggests that individuals who engage in CWBs may either avoid whistleblowing due to fear of retaliation or engage in whistleblowing strategically to deflect attention from their own misconduct (Bowling & Gruys, 2010). Thus, CWBs serve as both potential inhibitors and motivators of whistleblowing intentions, adding complexity to the predictive models of this behavior.

In the context of Nigerian secondary schools, the ethical challenges faced by teachers are further compounded by cultural and institutional dynamics. Teachers in Awka City, like many in Nigeria, operate within hierarchical systems that often discourage dissent and prioritize conformity (Okafor, 2017). Resource constraints, political interference, and limited protection for whistleblowers can discourage individuals from exposing wrongdoing, even when they recognize the moral imperative to do so. Additionally, societal attitudes toward whistleblowers, often characterized by mistrust or fear of retaliation, create an environment where ethical decision-making is fraught with personal and professional risks.

Understanding the interaction between personality traits, workplace behaviors, and whistleblowing intentions is essential for promoting ethical practices in schools. While previous studies have extensively examined the antecedents of whistleblowing in corporate or governmental settings, the educational sector, particularly in non-Western contexts, remains underexplored. This research seeks to fill this gap by investigating how Dark Triad traits and CWBs influence whistleblowing intentions among secondary school teachers in Awka City. By focusing on this unique population, the study offers valuable insights into the psychological and behavioral determinants of whistleblowing in a culturally specific context. The findings will inform policies and interventions aimed at fostering ethical behavior,

protecting whistleblowers, and creating an environment where teachers feel empowered to report misconduct. Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader discourse on organizational ethics, offering implications for both educational institutions and the wider Nigerian society.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Whistleblowing Intentions

Whistleblowing intentions refer to an individual's willingness or predisposition to report unethical, illegal, or inappropriate practices within an organization (Miceli, Near, & Dworkin, 2008). These intentions are influenced by a combination of individual characteristics, organizational factors, and contextual considerations. At the individual level, personality traits, moral values, and perceived responsibility significantly shape whistleblowing intentions. Employees who perceive whistleblowing as a moral obligation or those with a strong sense of justice are more likely to express a willingness to report misconduct (Dozier & Miceli, 1985). However, these intentions are not merely driven by internal factors; organizational culture, leadership, and the presence or absence of protective mechanisms also play a critical role.

Fear of retaliation, lack of confidentiality, and perceptions of organizational justice heavily influence whistleblowing decisions. Employees are more likely to intend to blow the whistle in environments where whistleblowers are protected, and the organization demonstrates a commitment to ethical practices (Kaptein, 2011). Conversely, environments characterized by punitive measures or cultures that stigmatize whistleblowers deter such actions. Moreover, the seriousness of the wrongdoing and the perceived likelihood of corrective action further determine whether individuals act on their whistleblowing intentions (Near & Miceli, 1995).

Dark Triad Personality Traits

The Dark Triad personality traits- Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and narcissism- represent socially aversive traits characterized by manipulative, self-serving, and callous tendencies (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Machiavellianism is marked by a strategic focus on manipulation, deceit, and exploitation to achieve personal goals, often with little regard for ethical or moral considerations (Christie & Geis, 1970). Individuals high in Machiavellianism are pragmatic and calculated, excelling in environments where manipulation and strategic maneuvering yield personal advantages.

Psychopathy, another component of the Dark Triad, is characterized by impulsivity, lack of empathy, and antisocial behaviors. Psychopathic individuals exhibit emotional detachment, fearlessness, and a tendency toward reckless or harmful actions (Hare, 2003). These traits often lead to exploitative and destructive behaviors, especially in interpersonal and organizational contexts. Unlike Machiavellian individuals, psychopaths are less strategic and more impulsive, often acting without consideration of long-term consequences.

Narcissism, the third trait, is defined by an inflated sense of self-importance, entitlement, and a need for admiration (Raskin & Hall, 1979). Narcissistic individuals display grandiosity, arrogance, and a lack of empathy, often pursuing self-

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enhancement at the expense of others. While narcissism can manifest positively in leadership or ambition, it frequently results in interpersonal conflicts and exploitative behaviors when coupled with high levels of entitlement and low emotional intelligence.

Together, these traits are associated with various negative outcomes in personal and organizational settings, including unethical decision-making, counterproductive work behaviors, and strained interpersonal relationships. The interplay between these traits often amplifies their adverse effects, making the Dark Triad a focal point for understanding maladaptive behaviors in psychology and organizational studies (Jonason et al., 2010).

Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB)

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) encompasses intentional actions by employees that harm an organization or its members. These behaviors range from minor infractions, such as absenteeism and gossiping, to more severe actions like theft, sabotage, or harassment (Spector et al., 2006). CWBs are typically classified into two categories: organizational-targeted behaviors, which include actions like theft and property damage, and interpersonal-targeted behaviors, such as incivility and verbal aggression toward colleagues (Robinson & Bennett, 1995).

The antecedents of CWBs are multifaceted and often involve a combination of individual, situational, and organizational factors. At the individual level, personality traits such as low conscientiousness, high neuroticism, and traits associated with the Dark Triad- Machiavellianism, psychopathy, and narcissism- are significant predictors of CWB (Mount, Ilies, & Johnson, 2006). Situational factors, such as perceived injustice, workplace stress, and lack of supervisory support, can exacerbate CWBs by creating environments where employees feel justified in acting against organizational norms (Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001).

Organizations often incur significant costs due to CWBs, including financial losses, decreased productivity, and diminished employee morale. While some employees engage in CWBs as a form of retaliation against perceived mistreatment or organizational injustice, others may do so opportunistically in environments with weak ethical controls (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). Addressing CWB requires comprehensive strategies that combine clear ethical guidelines, effective leadership, and interventions targeting individual and organizational-level predictors.

Hypothesis Development and Research Framework

Dark Triad Personality Traits and Whistleblowing Intentions

The relationship between Dark Triad personality traits and whistleblowing intentions is a complex interplay of individual motivations and behavioral tendencies, particularly among secondary school teachers in Awka City. Drawing on the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991), which posits that behavioral intentions are shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, individuals high in Dark Triad traits may exhibit unique predispositions regarding whistleblowing. For example, Machiavellianism, characterized by

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manipulative and self-serving behaviors, may deter whistleblowing intentions, as such individuals are more likely to prioritize personal gain over ethical actions (Christie & Geis, 1970). Similarly, psychopathy, marked by impulsivity and lack of empathy, may result in diminished moral responsibility and lower likelihood of reporting wrongdoing (Hare, 2003).

Narcissistic individuals, driven by self-enhancement and a need for admiration, may also show reduced whistleblowing intentions unless they perceive personal benefit or recognition. Empirical research supports these associations. For instance, Jonason et al. (2010) found that individuals with higher Dark Triad traits tend to engage in fewer prosocial behaviors, including whistleblowing, due to their self-centered nature and disregard for others. Additionally, studies have shown that individuals with high Machiavellianism and psychopathy are less likely to engage in ethical behaviors like whistleblowing, as they tend to prioritize personal interests over organizational ethics (Zheng, 2016). In educational settings, where ethical decision-making and concern for others are key, the Dark Triad traits are likely to influence how teachers react to perceived wrongdoing in their schools.

However, contextual factors such as organizational culture and ethical climate may moderate these relationships. For instance, an environment that fosters ethical accountability and protective measures for whistleblowers could potentially mitigate the negative influence of Dark Triad traits on whistleblowing intentions (Near & Miceli, 1995). Based on these insights, it is hypothesized that teachers high in Dark Triad personality traits are less likely to exhibit whistleblowing intentions in the private sector in Awka city. Specifically,

H_{1a}: Machiavellianism will be negatively and significantly related to whistleblowing intentions, such that teachers with higher levels of Machiavellianism will exhibit lower whistleblowing intentions.

H_{1b}: Psychopathy will be negatively and significantly related to whistleblowing intentions, such that teachers with higher levels of psychopathy will exhibit lower whistleblowing intentions.

H_{1c}: Narcissism will be negatively and significantly related to whistleblowing intentions, such that teachers with higher levels of narcissism will exhibit lower whistleblowing intentions.

Counterproductive Work Behaviour and Whistleblowing Intentions

The relationship between counterproductive work behavior (CWB) and whistleblowing intentions among secondary school teachers in Awka City can be explored through the lens of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991). According to TPB, behavior is influenced by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived control over the behavior, all of which are shaped by individual and situational factors. In the context of education, CWBs, such as absenteeism, disruptive behavior in the classroom, or insubordination, are often responses to dissatisfaction with workplace conditions, perceived injustice, or stress (Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001). Teachers who engage in CWBs may view whistleblowing as a means to address systemic issues, unethical practices, or injustices within their schools,

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such as corruption, exploitation, or safety violations.

Empirical research has shown that individuals who engage in CWBs, driven by frustration or a sense of powerlessness, may be more inclined to report organizational wrongdoing as a way to correct perceived injustices or seek retribution (Miceli, Near, & Dworkin, 2008). In educational settings, teachers who experience unethical treatment or dissatisfaction with school administration may be motivated to expose issues like mismanagement, unfair treatment, or violations of student rights (Kaptein, 2011). However, teachers may also refrain from whistleblowing if they perceive that doing so could result in retaliation or negatively affect their career prospects, especially in environments with limited ethical support or strong hierarchical structures (Near & Miceli, 1995). Given these dynamics, it is hypothesized that teachers who engage in higher levels of counterproductive work behavior will have stronger whistleblowing intentions, driven by a desire to address perceived organizational wrongs and mitigate the negative consequences of their actions. More specifically,

H_2: There will be a positive and significant relationship between counterproductive work behaviour and whistleblowing intentions among secondary school teachers in Awka City, such that teachers who engage in higher levels of counterproductive work behavior will have stronger whistleblowing intentions.

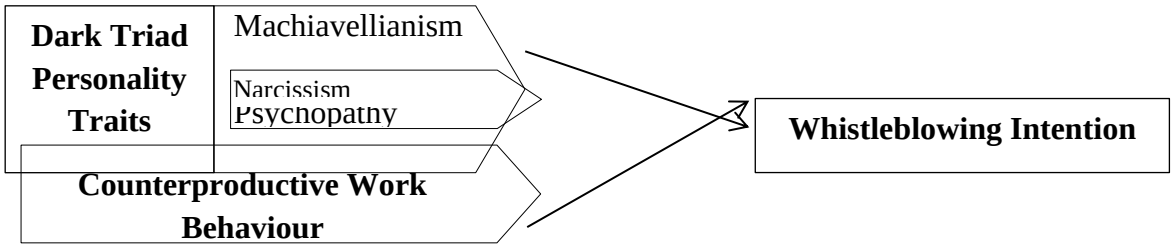


Figure 1: Research Model

Research Methodology

Sample and Procedure

A total of hundred and thirty-one (131) secondary school teachers participated in the study. The teachers were selected using convenient sampling technique from five randomly selected secondary schools (Ezi-Awka Community Secondary School, Capital City Secondary School, F. S. T. C Awka, Grace Court International Schools, and Kenneth Igwebuike Grammar School) located in Awka City. The demographic attributes of the sampled participants revealed the following: Of the 131 participants, 64 (48.9%) were males while 67 (51.1%) were females. The participants' age ranged from 18 to 55 years with a mean age of 29.72 and SD of 2.44. Hundred (76.3%) of the respondents had 1-10 years of job tenure, 22 (16.8%) had 11-20 years of job tenure, while 9 (6.9%) had 21-30 years of job tenure. Sixty-four (48.9%) of the respondents had NCE/OND as their highest level of education, 43 (32.8%) had Bachelor/HND, 14 (10.7%) had PGD/PGDE, and 10 (7 %) had masters. 150 questionnaires were initially distributed out

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of which 138 were returned, indicating a response rate of 92.0%. However, 7 returned questionnaires were discarded due to incomplete information, resulting in a total of questionnaires utilized for data analysis.

Measures

Three instruments were used for data collection namely: Short Dark Triad (SD3) Scale (Jones & Paulhus, 2014), Counterproductive Work Behaviour Scale (Dalal, Lam, Weiss, Welch, & Hulin, 2009), and Whistleblowing Intension Scale (Park et al., 2018).

Dark triad personality traits (Machiavellianism, Narcissism and Psychopathy levels of the teachers) were measured with 27-item Short Dark Triad (SD3) Scale (Jones & Paulhus, 2014). Items were graded on a on a Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Sample items include: "It's not wise to tell your secrets" (Machiavellianism); "People see me as a natural leader" (Narcissism); "I like to get revenge on authorities" (Psychopathy). Five of the items were reverse coded. The items on the SD3 Scale have been found to be reliable and valid at .71, .77, and .80 for narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy respectively (Jones & Paulhus, 2014).

Counterproductive work behaviour was assessed using a 12-item Counterproductive Work Behaviour Scale (Dalal et al., 2009). The items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree, to 5 = strongly agree. A sample item is: "Behaved in an unpleasant manner toward my supervisor/a co-worker". All items on the scale were directly coded and scored. Wahyu (2013) found this instrument to be reliable at .67.

Whistle blowing intension was measured with 14-item whistleblowing intension scale (Park et al., 2008). The scale is divided into six dimensions representing six different types of whistleblowing with two or three indicators per dimension. The dimensions include external, internal, anonymous-identified, formal-informal whistleblowing types which are two extremes of three continuums of whistle blowing types. A sample item is: "I report the wrongdoing to the appropriate persons". Each of the items was rated on a five-point likert-type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The Cronbach's alpha values for each of the dimension include: Internal- .72; External- .61; Identified- .67; Anonymous- .64; Formal- .51; and informal- .58 (Park et al., 2008).

Revalidation of Measures

The measures were revalidated by the researcher via a pilot study involving sixty-one (61) secondary school teachers drawn from three high schools (St. Lucy International Schools Ifite-Awka, Dike Memorial Secondary School Awka, and Enzy Royal Schools) all located in Awka. Revalidation reliability estimates of .58, .56, and .52 were obtained by the researcher for Machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy subscales respectively. Moreover, .80 Cronbach's Alpha was obtained for CWB, while .75 was obtained for whistleblowing intension Scale.

Design and Statistical Analysis

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey design, collecting data from the target population at a single time point. Hierarchical multiple regression and correlation analyses were conducted to test

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the proposed hypotheses. Data processing and analysis were performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Results

Correlational Analysis Results

The mean, standard deviation, reliability estimates, and inter-correlations among the study variables were first investigated and are presented in Table 1 below. Overall, the study findings did not support the hypotheses. To begin with, among the darktriad personality traits (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy**)** only narcissism had significant (positive) correlation with whistleblowing intention which is at sharp contrast with hypothesis 1b. Furthermore, counterproductive work behaviour significantly and negatively correlated with whistleblowing intention (r = -.23, p< .01) which partially contradicted the second hypothesis in terms of the direction of the relationship.

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviation, Reliability Estimates, and Inter-Correlations among the Study Variables

Variables		*M*	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5
1	Machiavellianism	30.27	4.34	(.58)				
2	Narcissism	29.26	4.41	.11	(.56)			
3	Psychopathy	21.26	4.61	.10	-.10	(.52)		
4	CWB	21.30	5.19	.05	-.32**	16	(.80)	
5	WBI	44.16	7.02	.01	.22*	-.07	-.23**	(.75)

Note: *p < .05(two-tailed), **p < .01 (two-tailed), N = 131; CWB: Counterproductive Work Behaviour, WBI: Whistleblowing Intention.

Hypothesis Testing Using Regression Analysis

The results of the hierarchical multiple regression between the predictor variables [DarkTriad personality traits (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy), and Counterproductive work behaviour (CWB)] and criterion variable (Whistleblowing intention) are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2: Hierarchical Multiple Regressions for the predictions of Whistleblowing Intention (WBI)

Variables	**Beta (β)**	**T**	**R^2**	**$R^2\Delta$**	**FΔ**
Step 1					
Age	.085	.661			
Gender	.033	.381	.084*	.084*	2.904*
Job Tenure	-.212	-1.674			
Education	-.187	-1.847			
Step 2					
Machiavellianism	-.038	-.431	.086	.001	.186

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Step 3					
Narcissism	.189	2.194*	.120*	.034*	4.815*
Step 4					
Psychopathy	-.017	-.196	.120	.001	.038
Step 5					
CWB	-.136	-.1.482	.136	.016	2.196

Note: *$p < 0.05$, **$p < 0.01$, ***$p < 0.001$; CWB: Counterproductive Work Behaviour

The demographic variables (age, gender, job tenure and education) entered in first step of the regression model as covariates collectively accounted for 8.4% [$R^2\Delta = .084$; $F\Delta$ (4, 126) = 2.904, $p < .05$] variation in whistleblowing intention.

The addition of Machiavellianism personality trait in step 2 of the equation failed to significantly predict whistleblowing intention (β = -.038, p = ns.). However, the variance in whistleblowing intention explained on account of Machiavellianism was 0.1% [$R^2\Delta = .001$; $F\Delta$ (1, 125) = .186, p = ns].

Narcissism personality trait entered in the third step of the equation significantly and positively predicted whistleblowing intention (β = .189, $p < .05$). The variance in whistleblowing intention explained on account of Narcissism was 3.4% [$R^2\Delta = .034$; $F\Delta$ (1, 124) = 4.815, $p < .05$].

The inclusion of Psychopathy personality trait in the Fourth step of the equation did not significantly predict whistleblowing intention (β = -.017, p = ns.). However, the variance in whistleblowing intention explained on account of Psychopathy was 0.1% [$R^2\Delta = .001$; $F\Delta$ (1, 123) = .038, p = ns].

CWB entered in the fifth and final step of the equation failed to significantly predict whistleblowing intention (β = -.136, p = ns.). However, the variance in whistleblowing intention explained on account of CWB was 1.6% [$R^2\Delta = .016$; $F\Delta$ (1, 122) = 2.196, p = ns.].

Accordingly, Narcissism personality trait (t = 2.194) made the biggest (positive) contribution in predicting whistleblowing intention followed by CWB (t = -1.482).

Discussion

The first finding that Machiavellianism failed to significantly predict whistleblowing intention, suggests that individuals high in Machiavellianism may not strongly associate their manipulative and self-serving tendencies with the motivation to report organizational wrongdoing. This result aligns with the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991), which posits that attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control guide intention. It is possible that Machiavellian individuals prioritize strategic gains over ethical considerations, leading to an ambivalence or avoidance of whistleblowing unless it directly benefits their personal goals.

Existing research on Machiavellianism and whistleblowing presents mixed findings. For instance, Kaptein (2011) argued that individuals with high Machiavellian tendencies are less likely to report wrongdoing due to their skepticism about systemic change and their focus on maintaining control over

outcomes. Similarly, O'Fallon and Butterfield (2005) observed that Machiavellians often view whistleblowing as a disruption to organizational stability, which could interfere with their ability to exploit the system for personal gain. However, studies like Zheng (2016) indicate that in situations where whistleblowing aligns with personal advantages or serves as a strategy to undermine competitors, individuals high in Machiavellianism may exhibit higher intentions to report unethical practices. The absence of such situational incentives in the current study might explain the non-significant findings.

Another plausible explanation is the influence of organizational culture and norms, which are critical determinants of subjective norms under TPB. In contexts where whistleblowing is perceived as socially undesirable or met with retaliation, even individuals with Machiavellian traits may perceive a lack of behavioral control, reducing their intention to act. This aligns with the findings of Miceli and Near (1992), who noted that whistleblowing intentions are significantly moderated by organizational climate and perceived support, factors that might dilute the predictive power of personality traits like Machiavellianism.

The second finding that narcissism significantly and positively predicted whistleblowing intention contrasts with hypothesis 1b and highlights the complex nature of narcissistic behavior. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991), intention is shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Narcissistic individuals, characterized by a heightened need for recognition and self-importance, may view whistleblowing as an opportunity to assert their moral superiority or gain attention, especially in contexts where such actions can enhance their social image (Brunell et al., 2008).

This result aligns with studies like Campbell et al. (2011), which suggest that narcissists are motivated by actions that project their self-image as ethical or heroic, even when their underlying motives are self-serving. Conversely, the findings diverge from earlier assumptions that narcissists, due to their self-centered nature, would prioritize personal interests over organizational justice (Jonason et al., 2010). The significant relationship observed could also reflect contextual factors, such as a supportive environment for whistleblowing, which might reinforce narcissists' perceived control over the behavior, as posited by TPB. Thus, the positive link between narcissism and whistleblowing intentions may stem from a combination of self-enhancement motives and favorable subjective norms, underscoring the importance of considering individual traits alongside contextual influences.

The third finding that psychopathy did not significantly predict whistleblowing intention suggests that individuals with high psychopathic traits may not be particularly inclined to report organizational wrongdoing. This result may be explained by the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991), which highlights the importance of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control in shaping behavioral intentions. Psychopaths are typically characterized by impulsivity, a lack of empathy, and a focus on personal gain (Hare, 2003), which may lead them to avoid whistleblowing if it

conflicts with their immediate self-interests or could risk exposure. They may also perceive whistleblowing as a threat to their control over their environment, thus reducing their perceived behavioral control in such situations.

Previous studies support this view, showing that individuals with psychopathic traits often prioritize their own goals over organizational ethics, thus diminishing their likelihood of engaging in whistleblowing (Lilienfeld & Andrews, 1996). Additionally, the absence of significant findings may reflect the lack of external motivation or perceived rewards for psychopathic individuals to engage in whistleblowing, consistent with findings from O'Fallon and Butterfield (2005) that individuals high in psychopathy tend to focus more on manipulating situations for personal advantage rather than reporting unethical behavior. This supports the notion that psychopathy may not be a strong predictor of whistleblowing intention unless contextual factors, such as significant personal gain, are involved.

The fourth finding that Counterproductive Work Behavior (CWB) did not significantly predict whistleblowing intention suggests that engaging in CWBs may not directly influence an individual's decision to report organizational misconduct. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB; Ajzen, 1991), intention is shaped by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. Individuals prone to CWBs may have negative attitudes toward organizational norms or authority but may lack the subjective norms or perceived control necessary to engage in whistleblowing, as their actions are often driven by self-interest or retaliation rather than organizational justice (Spector et al., 2006).

This result aligns with findings from Henik (2015), which indicated that employees engaging in CWBs are less likely to engage in proactive, morally-driven behaviors like whistleblowing, as their actions are often motivated by personal grievances rather than ethical considerations. The lack of a significant relationship could also reflect a psychological disconnect where individuals engaging in CWBs do not view themselves as morally obligated to address organizational wrongdoings. Additionally, factors such as fear of retaliation or the perceived futility of whistleblowing may further diminish their intentions, consistent with TPB's emphasis on perceived behavioral control.

Practical Implications of the Findings

The findings provide nuanced insights into the dynamics of personality traits, counterproductive work behavior (CWB), and whistleblowing intentions, offering practical implications for human resource management, organizational culture, and policy-making.

First, the non-significant relationship between Machiavellianism and whistleblowing intention suggests that individuals characterized by manipulative tendencies may lack the intrinsic ethical motivation required for whistleblowing, aligning their actions more with self-interest than organizational justice. For HR practices, this highlights the importance of monitoring employees with high Machiavellian traits and fostering transparent organizational norms that reduce opportunities for manipulation (O'Boyle et al., 2012). Organizations

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should also emphasize collective accountability to mitigate the negative influences of such traits.

Second, the significant positive relationship between narcissism and whistleblowing intention provides an intriguing contrast. Narcissistic employees, despite their self-centered tendencies, may engage in whistleblowing to gain recognition or assert moral superiority. HR departments could channel these tendencies positively by recognizing and rewarding ethical behavior while ensuring that whistleblowing policies are not exploited for personal gain. Providing training that aligns personal motivations with organizational goals could further enhance ethical practices among narcissistic employees (Grijalva & Harms, 2014).

Third, the non-significant prediction of whistleblowing intention by psychopathy underscores the challenge of addressing traits characterized by impulsivity and a lack of empathy. Psychopathic tendencies may suppress ethical decision-making processes, making interventions such as ethics training and mentorship critical. Organizations should emphasize role modeling by ethical leaders to counteract these tendencies and create a supportive environment where ethical actions are encouraged (LeBreton et al., 2006).

Finally, the failure of CWB to predict whistleblowing intention suggests that deviant workplace behaviors may not necessarily align with proactive ethical actions. This finding emphasizes the importance of fostering a workplace culture where ethical conduct is normalized and encouraged, regardless of an employee's past behavior. For instance, implementing anonymous reporting mechanisms and reinforcing the benefits of whistleblowing for the organization could empower employees to act ethically even if they have engaged in CWBs.

Overall, these findings underscore the necessity for organizations to adopt comprehensive strategies to cultivate ethical behavior. Using the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), organizations can enhance attitudes toward whistleblowing, strengthen subjective norms through visible leadership support, and improve perceived behavioral control by providing accessible and confidential reporting channels. Through these measures, organizations can better navigate the complexities of personality traits and workplace behaviors, fostering an environment that promotes ethical accountability.

Limitations of the Study and Suggestions for Future Studies

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causality between personality traits, counterproductive work behaviors (CWB), and whistleblowing intentions. While significant relationships were observed, longitudinal research could provide a clearer understanding of how these variables interact over time (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Future studies should employ longitudinal designs to establish temporal precedence and causality.

Second, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce social desirability bias, as participants might underreport negative traits such as Machiavellianism, psychopathy, or CWB, and overreport ethical behaviors like

whistleblowing intentions (Paulhus & Vazire, 2007). Incorporating multi-source data, such as supervisor assessments or behavioral observations, could provide a more comprehensive and objective assessment of these constructs.

Third, the study's sample was limited to secondary school teachers in Awka City, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other professions, sectors, or cultural contexts. For instance, the significance of narcissism in predicting whistleblowing intentions might vary across industries with differing norms around recognition and authority. Future research should replicate this study in diverse organizational and cultural contexts to assess the consistency of the findings (Hofstede, 2001).

Lastly, while the study focused on the Dark Triad traits, it did not consider other potential predictors of whistleblowing intentions, such as organizational justice perceptions, ethical climate, or individual moral development. Including these variables in future research could provide a more holistic understanding of the factors influencing whistleblowing behavior. Additionally, integrating qualitative methods, such as interviews or case studies, could uncover nuanced insights into the decision-making processes behind whistleblowing.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the relationship between Dark Triad personality traits, counterproductive work behavior (CWB), and whistleblowing intentions among secondary school teachers in Awka City. While Machiavellianism and psychopathy were not significant predictors of whistleblowing intentions, narcissism emerged as a positive predictor, suggesting that individuals with narcissistic traits may engage in whistleblowing to enhance their self-image. Additionally, CWB did not significantly influence whistleblowing intentions, highlighting the complexity of ethical decision-making in the workplace. These findings contribute to our understanding of the psychological factors influencing whistleblowing and underscore the need for further research to explore the contextual and longitudinal dynamics of these relationships. The study also highlights the practical implications for HR practices, suggesting that organizations should consider personality traits when designing interventions to foster an ethical work environment and promote whistleblowing. Future research should build on these findings by addressing the limitations identified, such as the cross-sectional nature of the study and the sample's limited generalizability, to further refine our understanding of whistleblowing behaviour.

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