

PRELIMINARY VALIDATION OF THE DARK TRIAD QUESTIONNAIRES IN A SPANISH JUVENILE JUSTICE SAMPLE



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INTRODUCTION

The interest in the Dark Triad (DT) constellation -machiavellianism (Mach), psychopathy (Psy), and narcissism (Narc)- has significantly increased during last years. The Dirty Dozen Scale (DD) [1] and the Short Dark Triad Questionnaire (SD3) [2] are promising short measures of these constructs that have been adapted and validated to different languages and cultures. More recently, it has been proposed that sadism could be a fourth dark personality trait; however, the evidence up to now is inconclusive and more data is needed. The Varieties of Sadistic Tendencies Scale (VAST), was specifically developed for the assessment of this construct [3]. The study of "dark" personality traits could be useful to predict aggressive and antisocial behaviour in different kinds of populations and contexts.

MAIN PURPOSE

The aims of this study were (a) to analyze the internal consistency and the convergent and divergent validity of the DD, the SD3, and the VAST, and (b) to study the relationships of these measures with proactive/reactive aggressions and different types of antisocial behaviour.

RESULTS

Table 1. Internal consistency of Dark Triad measures and VAST

	DD				SD3			VAST		
	Psy	Mach	Narc	Total	Psy	Mach	Narc	Vic	Dir	Total
Cronbach's alpha	.45	.84	.76	.82	.84	.71	.51	.58	.69	.78
Mean Inter-item correlation	.19	.59	.44	.28	.22	.37	.10	.19	.20	.19

Note. DD = Dirty Dotzen; SD3 = Short Dark Triad; VAST = Varieties of Sadistic Tendencies; Psy = Psychopathy; Mach = Machiavellism; Narc = Narcissism; Vic = Vicarious. Dir = Direct.

METHOD

Twenty-three youth (16-22 years) from a juvenile detention center completed the DD, the SD3 and the VAST. These three questionnaires had been previously adapted with authors' permission and a back translation was carried out. In order to measure aggression and antisocial behaviour, participants responded the Reactive-Proactive Aggression Questionnaire (RPQ), and the short version of the Antisocial Behavior Questionnaire (ABQ-s) respectively.

Table 3. Zero-order correlations between Dark Triad measures and VAST

	Measure	VAST		
		Vicarious	Direct	Total
Dark Triad	DD Total	.20	.64**	.51*
	Psychopathy	.33	.55**	.52*
Machiavellianism	DD	.34	.67**	.60**
	SD3	.34	.58**	.55**
Narcissism	DD	-.19	.26	.07
	SD3	.30	.39	.40

Note. DD = Dirty Dotzen; SD3 = Short Dark Triad; VAST = Varieties of Sadistic Tendencies.

*p<.05; **p<.01.

Table 2. Zero-order correlations among Dark Triad measures

	Measure	Psychopathy		Machiavellianism		Narcissism	
		DD	SD3	DD	SD3	DD	SD3
Dark Triad	DD Total	.53*		.74**		.64**	
	Psychopathy	DD	-				
	SD3	.27	-				
Machiavellianism	DD	.69**	.52*	-			
	SD3	.52*	.58**	.77**	-		
Narcissism	DD	.09	.33	.40	.41*	-	
	SD3	.29	.71**	.64**	.57**	.50*	-

Note. DD = Dirty Dotzen; SD3 = Short Dark Triad. Bold correlation coefficients represent the convergent validity correlations.

*p<.05; **p<.01.

Table 4. Zero-order correlations of Dark Triad measures and VAST with aggression and antisocial behaviour

	Measure	RPQ			ABQ				
		Proactive	Reactive	Total	Against norms	Vandalism	Aggression	Stealing	Drugs
Dark Triad	DD	.58**	.38	.54**	.45*	.23	.56**	.34	.44*
	Total								
Psychopathy	DD	.43*	.39	.46*	.39	.24	.46*	.32	.35
	SD3	.69**	.57**	.71**	.60**	.47*	.76**	.57**	.57**
Machiavellianism	DD	.60**	.38	.56**	.50*	.32	.57**	.49*	.45*
	SD3	.51*	.34	.48*	.48*	.22	.48*	.48*	.55**
Narcissism	DD	.29	.13	.24	.15	-.03	.25	-.02	.21
	SD3	.65**	.52*	.66**	.39	.36	.52*	.46*	.40
Sadism	Vicarious	.62**	.62**	.69**	.53**	.36	.52**	.26	.33
	VAST Direct	.58**	.45*	.58**	.53*	.39	.40	.25	.20
	Total	.68**	.60**	.71**	.60**	.43*	.51*	.29	.29

Note. DD = Dirty Dotzen; SD3 = Short Dark Triad; VAST = Varieties of Sadistic Tendencies; RPQ = Reactive Proactive Aggression; ABQ = Antisocial Behaviour Questionnaire.

*p<.05; **p<.01.

CONCLUSIONS

- With some exceptions, internal consistency of the scales was acceptable.
- The DD and SD3 showed adequate convergent validity for the Machiavellianism construct, but low regarding to Psychopathy.
- Both psychopathy and maquiavellianism traits (but not narcissism) were associated with sadism, specially for direct sadism compared to vicarious.
- Dark Triad and Sadism scales were related to aggression, specially to proactive aggression compared to reactive.
- Dark Triad and Sadism scales were more associated with antisocial behavior against norms and antisocial aggressive behavior than with vandalism, stealing and drugs-related antisocial behaviours.
- Narcissism was the trait that showed the lowest association with antisocial behavior.

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