REVISED NEO PERSONALITY INVENTORY PROFILES OF NARCISSISTIC AND NONNARCISSISTIC PEOPLE

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Summary.—This study investigated the construct validity of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory against the Revised NEO Personality Inventory to test the hypothesis that narcissistic and nonnarcissistic people have different personality profiles. The two inventories were administered to 96 male and 92 female undergraduates. Multivariate as well as univariate analyses of variance indicated that the Revised NEO Personality Inventory profiles were significantly different for narcissistic and nonnarcissistic groups which supported the construct validity of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory.

In recent years there has been a burgeoning interest in the study of narcissism as a personality trait (Emmons, 1987; Wink & Gough, 1990). According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (American Psychiatric Association, 1980), the essential features of narcissistic personality disorder include grandiose sense of self-importance, exhibitionism, hypersensitivity to criticisms of others, lack of empathy, sense of entitlement, and exploitiveness. The Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin & Hall, 1979) is a widely used instrument for measuring narcissism as a personality trait. Using this inventory, some researchers have investigated empirically the relationship between the construct of narcissism and different personality traits such as assertiveness (Watson, McKinney, Hawkins, & Morris, 1988), empathy (Watson, Grisham, Trotter, & Biderman, 1984), and sensation seeking (Emmons, 1981).

To investigate the construct validity of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory, this study tested the hypothesis that narcissistic and nonnarcissistic people have different personality profiles, using the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992) which provides scales for measuring the five major factors of personality, namely, neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness, and conscientiousness.

Method

The Narcissistic Personality Inventory and the Revised NEO Personality Inventory were administered to 188 psychology undergraduates (96 men and 92 women) in groups of 30 to 40 subjects. The subjects ranged in age from 18 to 54 years, with a median of 19 yr., and received partial course credit for their participation.

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NARCISSISM AND THE NEOP-PI—R

The Narcissistic Personality Inventory contains 54 forced-choice items and its split-half reliability was reported to be .80 (Raskin & Hall, 1979). The Revised NEO Personality Inventory contains 240 items which are evenly divided among the five domain scales measuring the five major personality factors. Each domain scale contains six eight-item facet scales. The alpha coefficients of reliability for the five domain scales were reported to range from .86 to .92, with a median of .89.

Subjects were divided into narcissistic (n = 89) and nonnarcissistic (n = 93) groups using the median-split (Mdn = 22.3), and the two groups were compared using multivariate as well as univariate analyses of variance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

For the narcissistic group, the means and standard deviations on the five Revised NEO Personality Inventory scales were for Neuroticism 95.6 and 23.6, Extraversion 121.9 and 18.8, Openness 115.6 and 22.0, Agreeableness 99.2 and 15.7, and Conscientiousness 110.8 and 22.8. Means and standard deviations of the same scales for the nonnarcissistic group were for Neuroticism 99.8 and 23.3, Extraversion 115.8 and 21.2, Openness 116.3 and 21.6, Agreeableness 115.8 and 17.4, and Conscientiousness 111.1 and 20.8.

The mean Revised NEO Personality Inventory scores of the narcissistic and nonnarcissistic groups were significantly different (Wilks $\lambda = .73; F_{5,176} = 12.91, p < .0001$). Univariate analysis of variance indicated significant differences between the two groups on the Extraversion ($F_{1,186} = 4.18, p < .05$) and Agreeableness ($F_{1,186} = 46.0, p < .001$) scales. As compared with the nonnarcissistic group, the narcissistic group had a significantly higher mean on the Extraversion scale and a significantly lower mean on the Agreeableness scale.

These results strongly supported the hypothesis that narcissistic and nonnarcissistic students have different personality profiles. Similar results were reported by Bradlee and Emmons (1992). The present study supports the construct validity of the Narcissistic Personality Inventory as a measure of maladjusted narcissism.

REFERENCES


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