

The Narcissist Personality Tendencies of Women Employees and its Impact in Banks and FMCG Sector: A Delhi NCR Study

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Abstract

Female workforce increasingly constitutes a very important chunk of corporate world today and there is a need of empirical researches in the area of business administration focusing on them. Review of past studies suggest that earlier psychologists considered women to be more narcissistic than men, though latter researches proved and gave a very different story altogether. Thus the present study aims to understand the affect and construct of narcissism among the female employees who are engaged in two very important sectors of the economy, namely banks and fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry on the basis of various independent variables, thereby also testing different hypotheses related to the objectives of the present study. Designing the research in a non-experimental, descriptive and quantitative manner, stratified random sampling technique aided in getting the sample size of women employees working in the above discussed types of organizations numbering 133. Additionally the raw data collected through primary method was analyzed and the tools used were viz. Cronbach's Alpha to test the reliability of Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) while Pearson correlations (bivariate), Pearson Chi-Square test, means, standard deviation and percentages were used for further investigation. It was established through the findings that women working the FMCG sector had more narcissistic tendencies than those working in banks. Further, findings suggest that income had a negative correlation with the narcissism levels; education, age and marital status were not having any statistical relationship with the construct of narcissism. Interesting findings also emerged for the employees working in different job categories vis-à-vis narcissism and they can serve as a guiding light for the practicing managers in the corporate world.

Keywords: Women Employees, Narcissism, Banks, FMCG Industry, Delhi NCR

I. Introduction and Literature Review

The contemporary corporate environment necessitate the study of narcissism and give it a due importance for the intricacies involved for the narcissistic individuals working in organizations in sustaining healthy and durable liaison and bond with their co-workers. This is particularly important because the narcissistic individuals are likely to have unscrupulous dealings, harming a business or any organization, thus to understand and transact with such persons is very important. Therefore before continuing with the study at hand, let us first understand what narcissism actually is. As aptly put by Wink (1991), narcissism is a personality trait involving characteristics of extraversion, aggressiveness, self-assuredness, and the need to be admired. Miller & Campbell (2008) have put narcissism as people having, self-love, pride and who are self highlighting.

Narcissism is a psychological construct which is also used in the organizational context and has a wide implication for practicing managers in various business entities. Ellis was the pioneer author to use the expression narcissism in the year 1898 which was subsequently employed by Freud to mention persons with extreme self-admiration (Ellis, 1898; Freud, 1914/1991). Coming to the characteristic features of the narcissists, they are always concerned with self, how their wishes and needs could be fulfilled and giving least concern for others, which can be termed as self interest over the common interest. Kernberg (1975) goes to the extent of terming narcissists at times parasitic in nature, besides being without

a doubt exploitative in their dealings (without feeling any guilt for it), charming and engaging on the outside and cold and ruthless inside.

Studies like that of Goncalo, Flynn & Kim (2010) have suggested that the narcissists have an inflated belief that they are very creative and they try to impose this thinking on others. The researchers further suggest that in a group setting taking many narcissist to perform a job does help the creativity aspect, but only to a certain level, not beyond that as after this they start causing conflicts which disturbs the whole setup. However, researches have also suggested that in a frenzied work situation which may require organizational changes, narcissist execute their tasks better (Maccoby, 2000).

Considering themselves to be inimitable and distinctive from others, Rose (2002) has categorized the narcissist individuals of being having affirmative self-concept and having a strong self-esteem. Additionally, the flip side of narcissism is also given by authors like Zeigler-Hill, Myers, & Clark (2010) who put forward that narcissist people are self centered and keeping the entire spotlight on them, they lack understanding/empathy for others and they employ intra-personal mechanisms and inter-personal strategies to facilitate their movement. The organizational or work consequences of having narcissist on board is given by Rosenthal & Pittinsky (2006) who say that other employees or managers are hindered by such people, they can be exploited. Narcissists also show decadent conducts, ignore external reality and have less trusting organizational relationship. Reality of today's organizations is working in teams and the attributes discussed above are contrary to such functioning.

Another organizational implication of narcissism as put by Blair, Hoffman and Holland (2008) is that narcissists in organizational setting are after more control, influence or supremacy as judged against others who are working with them. As already put elsewhere the authors also state that they are likely to reach higher organizational levels thanks to their narcissistic propensity which make a very good initial impression and charm. Talking of charm, managers have to take cue from various researches like that of Back, Schmukle and Egloff (2010) who suggest that narcissists create positive first impressions as they dress very well, their facial expression is very charming, they exhibit positive self confidence among other attributes. Thus under the circumstances like job interviews where the interviewer has known such person for a very limited period of time, he can be conned and select such person, which of course could be detrimental for the organization later.

The review of relevant literature further hint to the fact that many authoritative posts in business as well as politics are held by narcissists as it is one of the tendencies of people having narcissist propensity to surface as leaders (Deluga, 1997; Nevicka, De Hoogh, Van Vianen, Beersma, & McIlwain, 2011). The present study specifically focuses on the women workers thus need to understand who among both the sexes have been found to be more narcissists. Review of studies have given a kind of mixed results, for instance Tschanz, Morf, & Turner (1998) and Watson, Taylor, & Morris (1987) suggest that men demonstrate higher levels of narcissism as compared to members of fairer sex.

Nevertheless researches also indicate that the difference in the levels of narcissism taking up gender per se is almost non-existent (Jackson, Ervin, & Hodge, 1992; Bleske-Rechek, Remiker, & Baker, 2008). Further Roberts, Edmonds, & Grijalva (2010) have also pointed towards the affect of age on narcissism, which states that narcissism decreases as the age of people increase. The authors additionally put that average narcissism difference between men and women remains constant across age.

Thus the review of related studies clearly shows both the positive as well as the negative aspects of having a narcissistic personality amidst you in the organization. It is also found in various researches that unlike the traditional stereotype that women are more narcissist than men, which is also expelled, future studies can be done keeping in mind these observations and researching further on these context in different sectors of the world of work. Consequently, making the managers aware of these features would help them to

make an informed choice so as to employ or for that matter place such employees in positions best suited for them. This will also help the organizations in getting the best out of narcissistic people and to avoid their postings on the tasks/departments which may have negative consequences for having such people. Therefore the present study was done to explore various related factors in the Indian context about narcissism among women which would be clearer after going through the objectives of the study at hand discussed in the next section.

II. Objectives of Research

The objectives of the present research are:

1. To assess the narcissism level of female employees working in banking and FMCG sectors.
2. To understand the relationship between educational level of the surveyed employees and their narcissism levels.
3. To analyze the affect of age on the narcissism levels of the surveyed employees working in the banking and FMCG organizations.
4. To investigate the association between employee income and whether it has any affect on narcissism or not.
5. To examine the relationship between marital status and narcissism levels of the employees taken up in the present research.
6. To find out the narcissism levels of employees working in different job categories.

III. Conceptual Model

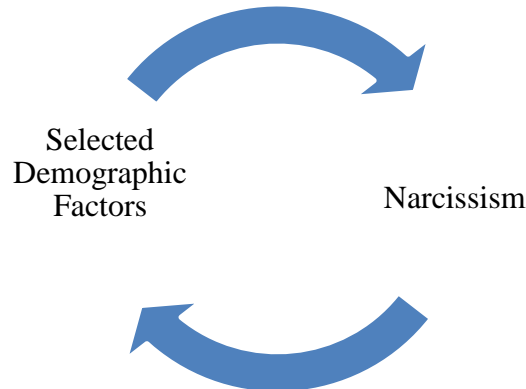


Figure1. Conceptual Model of the Study

The conceptual model of the present study assumes that some of the selected demographic variables like education, age, income and marital status would have affect on narcissism levels of the employees. It further assumes that narcissism also would have counter affect on these demographic factors for the female study participants. These postulations were tested in the due course of study so as to come out with meaningful results.

IV. Statement of Hypotheses

Hypotheses mentioned below were tested in the course of study:

Null Hypothesis (H_0). There is no significant difference in narcissism levels of female employees working in banks and FMCG companies.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1). There is significant difference in narcissism levels of female employees working in banks and FMCG companies.

Null Hypothesis (H_0). There is no corresponding affect of education on the levels of narcissism for female employees of banks and FMCG companies.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1). There is a corresponding affect of education on the levels of narcissism for female employees of banks and FMCG companies.

Null Hypothesis (H_0). Age has no significant correlation with the narcissism levels of the female employees working in banking and FMCG sectors.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1). Age has a significant correlation with the narcissism levels of the female employees working in banking and FMCG sectors.

Null Hypothesis (H_0). Income of female bank and FMCG employees has no significant relationship with their narcissism level.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1). Income of female bank and FMCG employees has a significant relationship with their narcissism level.

Null Hypothesis (H_0). Marital status has no significant relationship with the narcissism level of female employees working in banks and FMCG companies.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1). Marital status has a significant relationship with the narcissism level of female employees working in banks and FMCG companies.

V. Research Methodology:

The present study adopted the research design which was non-experimental, descriptive and quantitative in nature, and the sample was taken through stratified random sampling technique earlier, as part of principal author's doctoral work. The area of study being Delhi National Capital Region (NCR), two types of organizations was considered for the research namely private banks and the companies involved in production of fast moving consumer goods popularly known as FMCG. All the sampled employees from these organizations were females only with the total sample size amounting to 133. As far as the statistical tests go, the reliability of the 16 item Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) which was developed by Ames et al. (2006) was tested through Cronbach's Alpha test of reliability. Additional tools employed were Pearson correlations (bivariate), Pearson Chi-Square test, means, standard deviation and percentages.

VI. Findings of the Research

1. Instrument Reliability Statistics

Table 1. Reliability Statistics

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI)	.608	16

Since the present research was part of a larger doctoral study, an earlier used instrument called Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) was employed. For the purpose of assessing the reliability of the research instrument Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient was used as a statistical tool. The alpha coefficient for the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI) was .608 which had 16 items for assessing and was found consistent internally as per the threshold set by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) and Song and Parry (1993).

2. Composition of the Sample

Table 1 presents the sample composition of the present study. As can be observed from the table, most of the sampled female employees were in the age group of 25-30 years (56.4%) where majority were working in the FMCG sector (72.2%). Coming to the educational profile most of the sampled employees had master degree (57.9%) and were single in bigger part

(55.6%). The income level of the employees surveyed varied but majority of them were in the earning group of Rs. 20-30000 at 42.1%.

Table 2. Sample Composition of the Study

	In years	Percentage		Marital Status	Percentage
Age	>25	17.3		Single	55.6
	25-30	56.4		Married	44.4
	30-35	11.3			
	35-40	12.0			
	<40	3.0			
	Total Number	133		Total Number	133
Organizational Gender Dynamics	Female in Banks	27.8		Income Percentage	
				> Rs. 10000	2.3
	Female in FMCG	72.2		Rs. 10-20000	21.1
				Rs. 20-30000	42.1
				Rs. 30-40000	23.2
				< Rs. 40000	11.3
	Total Number	133	Total Number	133	
Education	Bachelors	34.6			
	Masters	57.9			
	Doctorate	7.5			
	Total Number	133			

3. Findings of the Study Based On Analysis of Data

3.1. Comparative Analysis of Narcissism Level of Employees

As the present research basically deals with determining the narcissism levels of the female employees working in banks and FMCG companies it was found that those working in latter type of organizations (M= 7.39, SD= 2.629) were more narcissist than bank employees (M= 7.32, SD= 3.266). Pearson chi square test value of 26.173, df 1 and asymptotic significance of .000 (p<.05) shows a very significant difference between female bank employees and their counterparts in FMCG companies in their level of narcissism. Therefore null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in narcissism levels of female employees working in banks and FMCG companies is rejected.

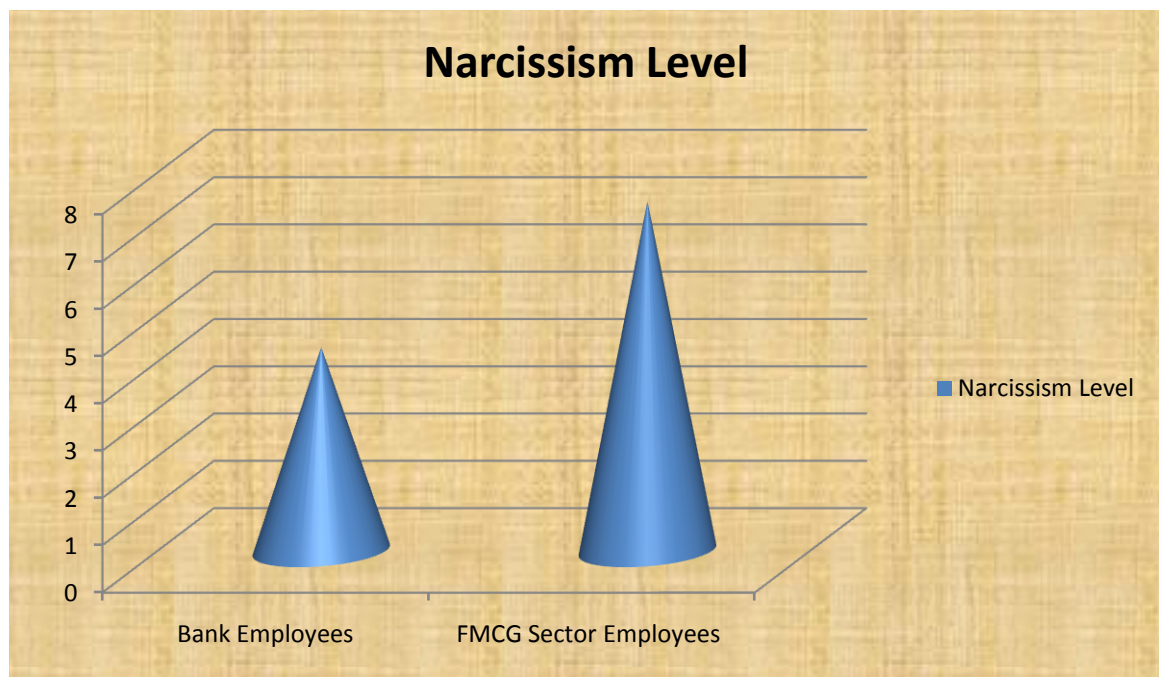


Figure 2. Narcissism Level of the Female Employees

3.2. Relationship between Education and Narcissism

Among the female employees surveyed the association between level of attainment in education and their level of narcissism was determined and it was found that those having masters degree were the most narcissists (M= 7.92, SD= 2.823) and second were those having bachelors degree (M= 6.67, SD= 2.251). The least narcissist were the employees having doctorate degrees (M= 6.30, SD= 4.084). Further examination however establish that on the basis of education there were no correlation with the level of narcissism as increase or decrease in education level did not affect the narcissism level of the employees $\{r = .097$, two tailed significance $.267 (p > .05)\}$. Thus the null hypothesis that there is no corresponding affect of education on the levels of narcissism for female employees of banks and FMCG companies is accepted.

3.3. Affect of Age on Narcissism

The affect of age on narcissism level was verified and was found that the narcissism level was highest for 25-30 years age group (M= 7.72, SD= 2.644) while close second was for age group 30-35 years (M= 7.67, SD= 4.271). These two groups were followed by those in 35-40 years and less than 25 age groups (M= 6.75, SD= 2.769; M= 6.65, SD= 2.308 respectively). The least narcissist group among the female employees were those who were above 40 years of age with mean 6.25 and standards deviation .957, there by indicating that among women older age was related with less narcissistic behavior. Conversely it was further established that there was a negative correlation between age and narcissism but the difference was not statistically significant $\{(Pearson\ correlation\ coefficient\ r = -.034\ and\ two-tailed\ significance\ value\ of\ .701\ (p > .01)\}$. The null hypothesis that age has no significant correlation with the narcissism levels of the female employees working in banking and FMCG sector is therefore accepted.

3.4. Employee Earnings and Narcissism

It was endeavored to understand the association between income of the employees surveyed and their narcissism levels, at the outset it was found that among them those who were in income bracket of Rs. 11-20000 the narcissism levels were the highest (M= 8.57, SD= 2.098) followed by the individuals who earned less than Rs. 10000 (M= 8.00, SD= .000). At the third pedestal were the employees in the income bracket of Rs. 21-30000 ((M= 7.50, SD= 3.081) followed by those on income bracket of 31-40000 (M= 6.71, SD= 3.024) and those who earned more than Rs. 40000 (M= 5.87, SD= 1.598). Pearson Bivariate Correlation

further pointed to the fact that with $r = -.285$, $p < 0.01$ (two-tailed significance value = .001) there was a very significant negative correlation between income and narcissism levels of the employees surveyed. For that reason the null hypothesis that income of female bank and FMCG employees has no relationship with their narcissism level was rejected. Therefore it simply implies as the income of the female workers increased their narcissism level decreased.

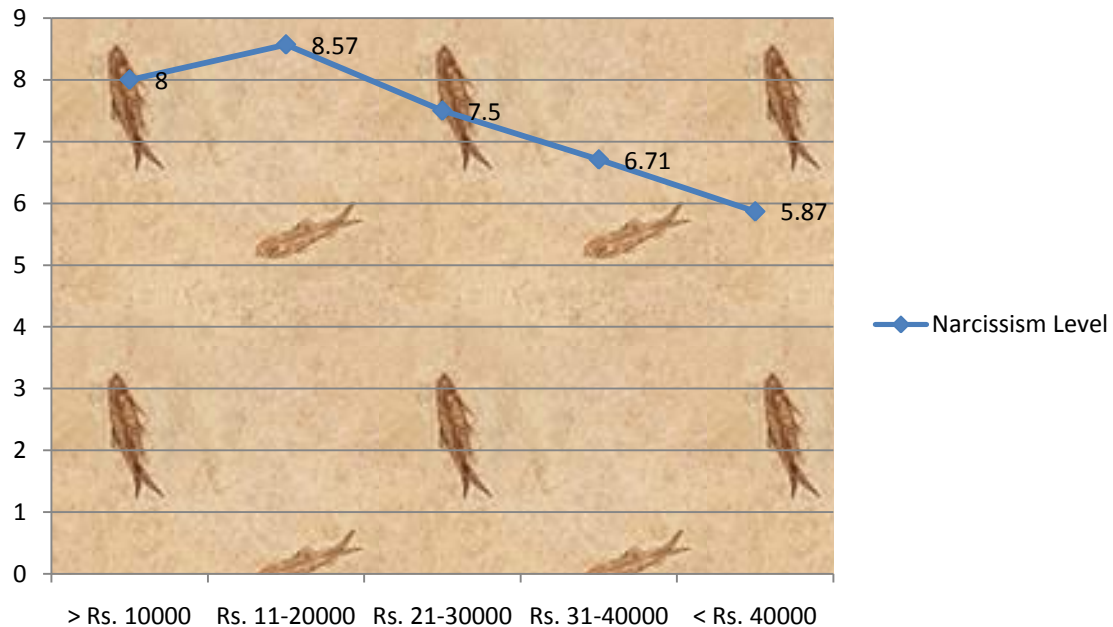


Figure 3. Income and Narcissism Levels

3.5. Association between Marital Status and Narcissism

It was tried to be established in the research the difference in narcissism level of the female employees who were married and those who were single. Among the married employees ($M=7.51$, $SD= 2.944$) and single ($M=7.26$, $SD= 2.710$) it was found that former set were having higher narcissism levels. However Pearson chi square test value of 1.692, df 1 and asymptotic significance of .193 ($p > .05$) show no significant difference between married and single women in their level of narcissism. Thus the null hypothesis that marital status has no significant relationship with the narcissism level of female employees working in banks and FMCG companies is thereby accepted.

3.6. Narcissism Levels of Employees engaged in Core Banking, Marketing and Other Job Categories

The job categories surveyed in the present study show different levels of narcissism and it was found that those engaged in marketing jobs were most narcissists ($M= 7.43$, $SD= 2.506$) followed by those who were engaged in 'others' job category which included myriad work profiles of the employees ($M= 7.31$, $SD= 2.673$). Least narcissists were the employees engaged in core banking jobs ($M= 7.29$, $SD= 3.805$).

VII. Conclusion, Recommendations and Limitations

The present study concludes that women employees surveyed from the FMCG sector were more narcissist than their counterparts working in banks. Further it was found that this difference was statistically significant thereby indicating that those women who have more narcissist tendencies tend to prefer working in corporate sector rather than working in banking sector organizations. It is thus recommended at this pedestal that further studies can take up women or even men employees from other sectors of the economy and comparative study can be done with those working in the sectors taken up in the present research.

Narcissism also did not seem to affect the educational attainment of the women employees surveyed; therefore it indicates that whether they have attained higher degree or not narcissism did not play any role in it. Additionally, though statistically not supported to have any effect on the narcissism levels of the employees researched, preliminary findings suggest that younger women employees were found to be more narcissists. It further indicates that the present generation of women employees is having more narcissist propensity as compared to older ones. Therefore it is suggested here that if new recruitment and selections are to be done in companies or for that matter banks and narcissism is to be taken into consideration than the level of educational attainment or for that matter age can be ignored for any negative consequences.

It was further found that as the income levels of the surveyed employees increased their narcissism levels decreased. This takes the research a step further and suggests that those employees who earned less were most likely of lower age group and it has already being pointed that younger generation in the study is found to more narcissist. Here it can be safely assumed that narcissism was negatively associated with the earning potentials of the participants. Therefore here it is recommended that managers should not necessarily associate narcissism with the material attainment potential of the employees.

Nonetheless the present research did not establish any association between marital status and various job categories of the surveyed participants and their level of narcissism. Nonetheless the preliminary findings suggested that married employees were more narcissists as compared to their single counterparts. Also as it is desired those employees who were engaged in marketing jobs were having higher degree of narcissism and those working in core banking jobs the least which can be a guiding light for recruiting candidates who have higher narcissism level for this job category.

The major limitation of the present study was that only women employees were taken up, which can be improved in future researches by also including the male participants. Also the research was confined and limited to the objective on the larger doctoral study done by the principle author, thus limiting the scope only to the two types of organizations studied as well as taking up only Delhi NCR region within its domain. Further in the future studies narcissism and its affect could be investigated on the job performance of the employees not limited by the organizations or the area of the study at hand, but in other organizational context also. Even larger sample sizes can be taken up in the future studies which can aid practicing human resource manager's chalk out better personnel policies.

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