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Different perspectives on narcissism in organizational contexts – a review and future research directions

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Abstract: Nowadays, the popular press and the majority of studies had encouraged a negative view of narcissism and described it as “a guilty - personality construct” in most organizational behaviors. We reviewed the literature on narcissism in the organizational context and argue that narcissism may be conceived as being both healthy for the individual and the firm performance. We begin by briefly describing the concept of narcissism, assessment and several theoretical models. We next review the research on narcissism concerning leadership and performance. The results suggest that narcissistic leaders can have positive organizational effects. Directions for future research, theoretical implications, and emerging themes are discussed.

Keywords: Narcissism, Leadership, Performance, Organizational behaviors

Introduction

Narcissism is the most frequent personality construct linked with unethical behavior and ineffective leadership strategies (Neveicka, Ten Velden, De Hoogh, & Van Vianen, 2011; Tamborski, Brown, & Chowning, 2012). Although there has been a wealth of theoretical articles and models that tried to explain the constellation of narcissism (Baumeister & Vohs, 2001; Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Campbell & Foster, 2007; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001), only a few authors (Hoffman et al., 2013; Spurk, Keller, & Hirschi, 2016; Wang, & Jiang, 2014) were able to explore the relationship between narcissism and other types of behaviors in the organizational setting. Narcissism has become the “guilty-personality construct” that contributes to immoral and ineffective behaviors and negatively affects interpersonal performance and integrity (Blair, Hoffman & Helland, 2008).

The present article aimed to highlight the less coherent results from the literature and to contribute to the debate about the positive and negative impact of narcissism in the organizational context. Thus, we proposed a new view balancing both the negative and positive aspects of this construct. First, we made a brief presentation of basic definitions, the main theoretical models of

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narcissism, its classifications and the most used assessment measures, to provide a state-of-the-art in the understanding of the research topic. We then reviewed the empirical evidence for our proposal and presented a systematic review of the relationship between narcissism, leadership, and performance in the organizational settings. The final section of the article examined the implications of our study and the future research directions that reinterpret the major findings in the literature.

Narcissism – basic definitions

Narcissism is defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Disorders (5th ed. [DSM-5]; American Psychiatric Association, 2013) as a “pervasive pattern of grandiosity (in fantasy or behavior), need for admiration, and lack of empathy, beginning by early adulthood and present in a variety of contexts” (p. 669). The description of narcissism as a broad personality construct that includes fantasies of unlimited success or power, a constant need for admiration, entitlement, lack empathy, an exaggerated sense of self-importance and exploitation of others (American Psychiatric Association, 2013) revealed only the dark side of the construct. Because they easily succeed in attracting the attention of other people, narcissistic individuals are often charming and sociable while simultaneously insensitive to others’ feelings (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Narcissists are often fascinating because they seem to have a set of incongruent features - they can be understood as “adult versions with infant characteristics” (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001, p. 177). Narcissists have a “chronic state of self-under-construction” (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001, p. 178) due to their maladaptive self-enhancement strategies (Pincus et al., 2014), an exaggerated sense of entitlement, desire of power and low levels of empathy (Campbell et al., 2011).

The main theoretical models of narcissism

Due to the complexity of narcissism, a theoretical understanding of its traits, their structure and functioning is required. In the following, we will present a summary of some influential theoretical models that have explained the manifestations of narcissism.

The dynamic self-regulatory processing model (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001) describes narcissism as a dynamic system consisting of social, cognitive and affective self-regulatory processes to maintain the desired self in social situations. The most important aspect highlighted in this model is that narcissistic individuals use intrapersonal and interpersonal self-regulatory strategies which can lead to a “chronic state of self-under-construction” (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001, p. 178). The key concepts of the model are the self-regulation strategies, the interpersonal and intrapersonal processes, the self-knowledge component and the social relationships component (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001, p.

181). The authors conclude that narcissism manifests as a form of social intelligence and its main purpose is to display high levels of perceived control by manipulating the contexts, highlighting the positive events, keeping grandiose self-views and removing every threat (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001).

The extended agency model (Campbell & Foster, 2007) refers to the interpersonal and intrapersonal forms of the narcissists' self-regulation. The basic assumptions of the model are that the qualities of the narcissist and the self-regulation strategies function like a system that generates positive feelings - identified as "narcissistic esteem" (Campbell & Foster, 2007, p. 121). The central elements of the model are the narcissistic personality, interpersonal skills, the intrapsychic and interpersonal self-regulation strategies and the narcissistic esteem (Campbell & Foster, 2007, p. 122). The model is based on the interdependence between its components which involves mutual reinforcement of each element in the system and postulates that the narcissistic person has no overarching goals (Campbell, Brunell & Finkel, 2006; Campbell & Foster, 2007).

The contextual reinforcement model (Campbell & Campbell, 2009) explains that narcissistic self-enhancement is possible through the help of others. This one adds the social context to explain the narcissistic manifestations and the possible benefits for the self and the others. The key concepts of the model are "emerging setting / emerging zone (the benefits of narcissism as seen in short-term contexts and early-stage relationships with unknown people)" and "enduring setting / enduring zone (the costs of narcissism as seen in long-term relationships with known people)" (Campbell & Campbell, 2009, p. 218). The authors conclude that the benefits of the narcissistic leaders in the emerging zone manifest in successful performance, in a transformational leadership style, and leadership emergence. Thus, the narcissists suffer in enduring relationships and continually search to start new relationships to return in the emergent zone where they usually are in the spotlight. However, when the context is new the narcissism generates a lot of benefits and the narcissistic person thrives (Campbell & Campbell, 2009).

The addiction model (Baumeister & Vohs, 2001) postulates that narcissism can be considered a pattern of addiction, characterized by "periods of relative normality punctuated by phases of self-aggrandizing inflation" (Baumeister & Vohs, 2001, p. 206). In other words, narcissism is not a stable sense of inflated self-regard but is rather characterized by inner urges, craving for esteem and the other's approval.

When we try to analyze the developing relationships with narcissistic people, the Chocolate cake model of narcissism (Campbell, 2005) explains the dynamics. The model can be explained with a metaphor. Narcissistic individuals are like eating a chocolate cake – initially, they are better than non-narcissistic

persons but over time became toxic but after eating the chocolate cake you feel depressed and unhealthy (Campbell, Hoffman, Campbell, & Marchisio, 2011).

Above we described three prominent self-regulation approaches. They vary in some ways but share a common view of narcissism as a self-regulatory process. Most of the models described above need more testing to determine their validity. However, these models can help us to better understand the core traits of narcissism and the specific sets of processes that can explain the continuity of narcissistic personality in certain social contexts. In conclusion, all these models are useful when conceptualizing the narcissistic behaviors in organizational contexts, in the relationships with coworkers or the leadership styles of managers. This review may help to clarify some relationships that have been overlooked or misunderstood because the relationship between narcissism, leadership, and performance was often analyzed on student samples or in laboratory conditions. Thus, the purpose of this review is to describe the present state of knowledge in the field, by including only studies that were made in organizational contexts and with employees samples.

Narcissism – classifications

According to the conceptualization of subclinical narcissism, adults regularly “have narcissistic needs that require age-appropriate provisions to support and maintain self-cohesion and a realistic sense of self-esteem” (Cain, Pincus, & Ansell, 2008, p. 640). Pathological narcissism “develops when there is a malfunction in the normal progression of self-development, resulting in an inability to maintain self-cohesion and increased self-esteem dysregulation” (Cain et al., 2008, p. 640). The need for admiration and the motives to self-enhance are normal aspects of personality (Pincus, 2013) and it is normal for individuals to strive to see themselves in a positive light and to seek experiences of self-enhancement, such as achievements, victories and winning competitions (Pincus, Cain, & Wright, 2014). Most individuals seek out their gratification to improve their self-image in ways that are culturally and socially acceptable using mature regulatory mechanisms (Roche, Pincus, Lukowitsky, Ménard, Conroy, 2013). In contrast, pathological narcissism appears when there is an impairment in the self-regulation capacities that transforms into an extreme urge to satisfy the needs for admiration, recognition, manipulation, and exploitation of others (Pincus, 2013; Pincus et al., 2014).

The majority of studies have analyzed multiple forms of narcissism and the most often referred to are the grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (Dickinson & Pincus, 2003; Miller et al., 2011). The grandiose (or overt) narcissism manifests by unrealistic expectations, overt self-enhancement, entitlement, positive illusions about the reality and denial of weaknesses (Dickinson & Pincus, 2003; Miller, Lynam, Hyatt, & Campbell, 2017). The most widespread measure used by non-clinical researchers to measure grandiose

narcissism is the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI-40; Raskin & Terry, 1988). It contains 40-items that measure the general construct of narcissism based on seven factors identified as Authority, Exhibitionism, Superiority, Vanity, Exploitativeness, Entitlement, and Self-Sufficiency. The NPI-40 (Raskin & Terry, 1988) is a forced-choice self-report measure in which the individuals need to select between one of two statements, a narcissistic statement and a neutral (non-narcissistic) statement, that best describe their personality (e.g. A: “I am no better or worse than most people” or B: “I think I am a special person”). More recently, the Narcissistic Admiration and Rivalry Questionnaire (NARQ; Back et al., 2013) became widely used in research. The NARQ (Back et al., 2013) is an 18-item measure of grandiose narcissism, differentiating between the agentic (admiration) and antagonistic (rivalry) parts of grandiose narcissism and addressing the narcissists’ affective–motivational, cognitive, and behavioral processes.

The vulnerable (covert) narcissism (Wink & Donahue, 1997) manifests through shyness, hypersensitivity, and excessive reliance on external feedback to self-enhance. The vulnerable narcissist suffers from distress, fragility, self-absorption, entitled behaviors and emotional lability (Miller et al., 2017). Strucke and Sporer (2002) argue that the difference between grandiose and vulnerable narcissism consists of different reactions to social interactions (disgust, in the case of vulnerable narcissism; constant search of new social contexts in the case of grandiose narcissism). Campbell (2001) argue that a clinical narcissist is distanced from the real self, empty and sometimes exhausted, in contrast to the subclinical narcissist that is happier, more energetic and less socially anxious. To measure only vulnerable (covert) narcissism, The Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS; Hendin & Cheek, 1997) is a commonly used scale. The scale was derived from Murray’s Narcissism Scale (1938) and it contains 10 items that are summed up into one dimension that evaluates the hypersensitive narcissistic characteristics. For measuring multidimensionally pathological narcissism, The Pathological Narcissism Inventory (PNI; Pincus, 2013) assesses both overt and covert expressions of narcissistic grandiosity and narcissistic vulnerability. The inventory consists of 52 items and measures exploitativeness, self-sacrificing self-enhancement, grandiose fantasy (composites for narcissistic grandiosity), contingent self-esteem, hiding the self, devaluing and entitlement rage (composites for narcissistic vulnerability) (Wright, Lubowitsky, Pincus, & Conroy, 2010).

To summarize, we presented a series of definitions of narcissism, the prominent theoretical models of narcissism and we by briefly described key concepts, the main classifications used in past research and the most common ways of measuring this construct. Our review focuses on the grandiose and subclinical narcissism, described as a personality trait that is normally

distributed in the adult population (Roberts, Woodman, & Sedikides, 2018). The importance of grandiose narcissism is derived from its high prevalence in leadership, decision making and performance field (Campbell et al., 2011). In this paper, we use the narcissist term as a convenient way of describing a high score on the Narcissistic Personality Inventory scale (Raskin & Terry, 1988). Because there are many contradictory results regarding the effects of narcissism in the organizational environment, we tried to condense these results and highlight the inconsistencies by 1) presenting the studies included in the review and their main results, 2) commenting (where appropriate) about the inconsistencies, and 3) proposing directions for future research.

Method

The article entails a systematic literature review, an approach based on the explicitly documented and replicable search of published research. We followed the best-practice examples from previous reviews on the relationship between narcissism and different topics from organizational contexts (Campbell et al., 2011; Ouimet, 2010).

Literature Search

Included research was collected by searching the most relevant journals and databases such as Web of Science, ScienceDirect, Sage, Google Scholar, using the following keywords (and variations thereof): “narcissism and job performance” / “firm performance” / “group performance” / “team performance”; “narcissism and leadership” / “leadership effectiveness”. The review covers the available literature from 2000 to 2018.

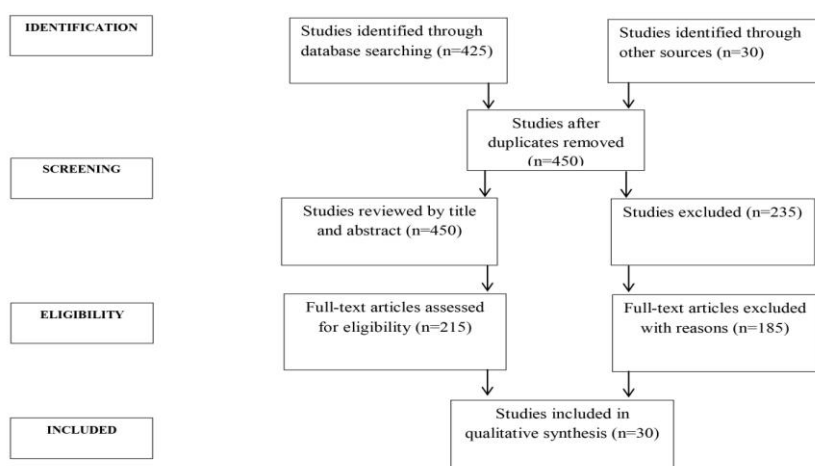


Figure 1. Selection of studies – relationship between narcissism, leadership and performance in organizational context

Selection of the studies

A study had to report a relationship between leadership criterion (leadership effectiveness, leadership emergence) and narcissism or between performance criterion (job performance, firm's performance, team / group performance) and narcissism. We included only studies using employed adults. In other words, studies were included in the review according to the following criteria: a) the sample was drawn from a population of employees because according to the purpose of the review, we want to identify published papers examining narcissism in organizational contexts; b) the article focused on subclinical narcissism. The grandiose form of narcissism (Wink, 1991) is commonly labeled as subclinical narcissism (Rohmann, Neumann, Herner, & Bierhoff, 2012), while vulnerable narcissism is commonly described as clinical (Miller & Campbell, 2008; Miller et al., 2018). Furthermore, different measures have been developed to allow separate assessment of grandiose (e.g., Narcissistic Personality Inventory [NPI], Raskin & Terry, 1988) and vulnerable narcissism (e.g., Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale [HSNS], Hendin & Cheek, 1997). Finally, grandiose narcissism has a higher prevalence in leadership and performance contexts (Campbell et al., 2011); c) the assessment of narcissism was made using the NPI (Raskin & Terry, 1988) because it is by far the most common narcissism measure used and represents a valid and reliable instrument to assess subclinical narcissism in various countries and languages (Brailovskaia, Bierhoff, & Margraf, 2017); d) the design of the study was correlational. A correlational study design will best answer to our questions in the sense that correlational studies show some links between variables in their natural environment and we can draw conclusions about how the mechanism works in reality, integrating a larger number of people who act according to their own traits and not according to an artificial division made by the experimenter. Furthermore, it is important to have a clear protocol to systematically analyze the studies' findings (Waddington et al., 2012) and to respect the guidelines for using the approach when defining the criteria (Higgins & Green, 2011).

Categorization

For each of the included articles, we assessed the following information: (1) general information about the authors' name, title, year of publication, journal and abstract; (2) the level of analysis (individual, teams, organization); (3) the theoretical definition of narcissism; (4) the study's design (non-experimental, field survey); (5) the assessment of narcissism (measures of NPI; Raskin & Terry, 1988) and (6) the variables assessed. This information was used to categorize the articles and extract their main findings.

Results and discussions

We summarize the research design and the assessment approaches to leader narcissism and performance variables, employee narcissism and different organizational outcomes, which have been used in 30 original articles, before providing a more detailed view of results.

Research design and assessment

This process returned 30 original articles (see Figure 1). Twenty-four articles contained data with measures using the NPI questionnaire (Raskin & Terry, 1988). Table 1 lists the twenty-four studies included in the review and the following details: authors, sample size, sample type, narcissism measure, relationship analyzed, main results. In table 2 are listed six other relevant studies on employees samples using other measures of Narcissism: three studies used unobtrusive measures of narcissism (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007), two studies used the Narcissism scale (Wink & Gough, 1990) from California Psychological Inventory, and one study used a list of eight adjectives for ratings of narcissism (Resick et al., 2009).

We excluded all the studies that were not empirical (reviews, synthesis, and meta-analyses), the studies made on student samples and the experimental studies. Thus, few studies were made in organizational context on samples of employees, leaders or CEOs. Furthermore, we eliminated the studies that used the measures of narcissism from the dark triad (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). We made this decision because in a meta-analysis made by O'Boyle, Forsyth, Banks, and McDaniel (2012) on the articles published between 1951 and 2011 ($N = 43,907$) they found that the dark triad explains little to no variance in job performance. Furthermore, O'Boyle et al. (2012, p. 572) argued that many items from the Dirty Dozen measure (Jonason & Webster, 2010) are "prone to socially desirable responses" (e.g. "I tend to lack remorse", "I tend to exploit others towards my own end"). The Dirty Dozen 12-item measure (DD, Jonason & Webster, 2010) uses just four items per construct to measure the DT (Miller et. al., 2011) and the "components of the DT have been shown to be multifaceted, but nearly all articles are aggregating the DT constructs (e.g. exploitativeness dimension of narcissism may strongly relate to exchange violations and lower performance, while the self-confidence dimension may positively relate to performance)" (O'Boyle et al., 2012, p. 571).

Table 1 presents all the selected studies that meet the selection criteria. Next, Table 2 presents six studies that we considered relevant for our analysis but are included in a separate table because are studies that use different measurements of narcissism.

Problematic aspects of the analysis of narcissism

Currently, the business plays a much bigger role in our lives than it used to do because it is experiencing enormous changes that call for complex skills, visionary and charismatic leadership (Maccoby, 2000). In the literature, the construct of narcissism is often analyzed whether as a bright side or a dark side of personality (Campbell, Bosson, Goheen, Lakey, & Kernis, 2007; Fatfouta & Schröder-Abé, 2018). The problem with this approach is that any personality configuration can contain both sides. For example, Maccoby (2000; 2003) argues that a productive narcissist who is successful because he has great vision and wants to create the future by risk-taking can easily turn non-productive when faced with paranoia and competitiveness. Furthermore, Maccoby (2000) noticed (from his experience as an adviser to top managers) a pronounced change in the personality of the leaders and that narcissism can be extraordinarily useful and even necessary. The author explained that narcissistic leaders are “gifted and creative strategists who see the big picture and find meaning in the risky proposition of changing the world and leaving behind a legacy” (Maccoby, 2000, p. 69).

Narcissistic leadership doesn't always mean successful leadership (Higgs, 2009) because many factors can interfere with the leadership process and can influence the expected results (Campbell et al., 2011) in the performance arena (Roberts et al., 2018). Therefore, narcissism and the different organizational behaviors should be discussed through a more nuanced interpretation from a balanced view.

Table 1. Description of studies that analyze the relationships between narcissism, leadership and organizational performance according to selection criteria

Study	Sample	Variables	Measure	Correlations among variables
1. Andreassen, Ursin, Eriksen & Pallesen (2012)	Bank employees (N = 235)	Narcissism; Workaholism; Work engagement; Professional position.	NPI 40-item (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	NPI and vigor (.22**), dedication (.23**), absorption (.22**), drive (.14*), enjoyment of work (.41**), work hours (.17*).
2. Chen, Ferris, Kwan, Yan, Zhou, & Hong (2013)	Study 1: Technicians Subordinates (N = 235); Supervisors (N = 235); Study 2: Sales clerks subordinates (N = 204);	Narcissism; Workplace incivility; Work engagement; Task performance rated by supervisor.	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006) NPI 40- item (Emmons, 1987)	Study 1: NPI and conscientiousness workplace incivility, work engagement, task performance (all ns); Study 2: NPI and Neuroticism (.40**), conscientiousness (-.15*), workplace incivility (-.17*), work engagement

Study	Sample	Variables	Measure	Correlations among variables	
3.	Clark, Lelchook, & Taylor (2010)	Supervisors (<i>N</i> = 65) Working students (<i>N</i> = 323)	Narcissism; Perfectionism; Positive and negative affect BigFive personality; Workaholism.	NPI 40-item (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	(.17*), task performance (.16*). NPI and extraversion (.47**), agreeableness (-.11*), neuroticism (-.16**), openness (.20**), negative affect (ns), positive affect (.28**), high standards (.12*), discrepancy (ns), order (ns.) workaholism overall (.24**), impatience (.28**), compulsion to work (.19**), polychronic control (.15**).
4.	Erkutlu (2014)	Faculty members and deans (<i>N</i> = 793)	Narcissism; Psychological well-being; Psychological capital.	NPI-16 item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	NPI and psychological well-being (-.33***), psychological capital (-.29***).
5.	Erkutlu & Chafra (2017)	Employees (along with their first-line managers) (<i>N</i> = 1,613)	Leader narcissism; Job embeddedness; Moral attentiveness; Leader behavioral integrity.	NPI 40-item (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	NPI and follower moral attentiveness (-.23**), leade behavioral integrity (-.33***), follower job embeddedness (-.35***).
6.	Erkutlu & Chafra (2017)	Certified Nurses (<i>N</i> = 1,215)	Leader narcissism; Organizational Cynicism; Psychological strain; Psychological capital.	NPI 40-item (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	NPI and psychological strain (.17*), psychological capital (-.34***), organizational cynicism (.18*).
7.	Galvin, Waldman, & Balthazard (2010)	Leaders (<i>N</i> = 55) Subordinates, peers or professional colleagues (<i>N</i> = 225)	Narcissism; Leader charisma; Core self-evaluations; Socialized vision; Bold vision.	NPI 34-item (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	NPI and socialized vision (-.36**), vision boldness (.44**), core self-evaluation (.33*), charismatic leadership (ns), contingent reward (ns), leader effectiveness (ns).
8.	Gardner & Pierce (2011)	Employees (<i>N</i> = 236)	Narcissism; Organizational self-esteem; Employee in-role	NPI 25-item (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	NPI and OBSE (.23**), job satisfaction (.28*), job involvement (.18*), intrinsic motivation (.14*),

Different perspectives of narcissism in organizational context

Study	Sample	Variables	Measure	Correlations among variables
		performance; Negative feedback and hostility; Job satisfaction; Job involvement; Intrinsic work motivation; Extra-role (voice, helping).		effort (<i>ns</i>), hostility (.18**), helping (<i>ns</i>), voice (<i>ns</i>), in-role performance (<i>ns</i>).
9.	Guedes (2017) Top managers (N = 968)	Narcissism; Performance (self-reported and objective).	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	NPI and self-reported performance (.16***), objective performance (<i>ns</i>), tenure in firm (-.05*).
10.	Hoffman, Strang, Kuhnert, Campbell, Kennedy, & LoPilato (2012) Managers (N = 233) Subordinates (N = 168)	Narcissism; Ethical context Leader effectiveness; Ethical leadership.	NPI 40-item (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	NPI and ethical leadership (<i>ns</i>), leadership effectiveness (<i>ns</i>), ethical context (<i>ns</i>).
11.	Judge, LePine, & Rich (2006) Study 1: Master's degree candidates with work experience (N = 134); Study 2: Full-time employees (members of a beach patrol) (N = 131)	Narcissism; Big Five personality traits; Leadership (self and other ratings); Workplace Deviance (self and other ratings); Contextual performance (self and other ratings); Task performance (self and other ratings).	NPI-37 item (Raskin & Hall, 1979,1981)	Study 1: NPI and neuroticism (<i>ns</i>), extraversion (.36**), openness to experience (<i>ns</i>), agreeableness (-.24**), conscientiousness (<i>ns</i>), leadership-self (.35**), leadership-other (.20*). Study 2: NPI and leadership-self (.34**), leadership-other (<i>ns</i>), workplace deviance – self (<i>ns</i>), workplace deviance-other (.24**), contextual performance- self and other (<i>ns</i>), task performance self and other (<i>ns</i>).
12.	Klimchak, Carsten, Morrell, & MacKenzie Jr (2016) Full-time employees (N = 167)	Narcissism; Entitlement; Organizational Identification; Employee Voice; Taking Charge Behavior	NPI 7-item authoritative subscale (Raskin & Hall, 1981)	NPI and entry level (-.32**), supervisor (.17*), managerial level (.17*), core self-evaluation (.46**), entitlement (.29**), organizational identity (.26**), voice (.42**), taking charge (.44**).

Study	Sample	Variables	Measure	Correlations among variables
13. Liu, Chiang, Fehr, Xu, & Wang (2017)	Leaders ($N = 211$); Subordinates ($N = 1,205$)	Leader unfairness perceptions; Leader narcissism; Leader self-interested behavior; Team voice and pro-social behavior.	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	NPI and leader education leader tenure (.19*), leader unfairness perceptions (<i>ns</i>), leader self-interest behavior (<i>ns</i>), team prosocial behavior (<i>ns</i>) and team voice behavior (<i>ns</i>).
14. Macenczak, Campbell, Henley, & Campbell (2016)	Study 1 Employees ($N = 135$)	Narcissism; Overconfidence; Overprecision; Overplacement; Overestimation on a trivia questions task.	NPI 40-item (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	Study 1: NPI and overprecision (.44**), overplacement (.18*), overestimation (.36**).
15. Owens, Wallace, & Waldman (2015)	Employees ($N = 876$); Leader-rated follower job performance ($N = 230$); Follower productivity ($N = 116$)	Leader narcissism; Leader humility; Perceived leader effectiveness; Follower job engagement; Follower subjective and objective job performance.	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	NPI and leader humility (<i>ns</i>), perceived leader effectiveness (<i>ns</i>), follower job engagement (<i>ns</i>), follower subjective performance (<i>ns</i>), follower objective performance (.41**).
16. Peterson, Galvin, & Lange (2012)	CEOs ($N = 126$)	CEOs Narcissism; CEO founder status; Organizational identification; CEO servant leadership; Firm performance	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	NPI and firm performance (-.23**), servant leadership CEO organizational identification (-.19*), founder status (.34**), CEO tenure (.21**), prior performance (-.31**), transformational leadership (-.20*).
17. Reina, Zhang, & Peterson (2014)	CEOs ($N = 97$)	CEO's Grandiose Narcissism; Organizational Identification; Top management teams (TMT) behavioral	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	NPI and CEO education (<i>ns</i>), founder status (.29**), firm size (<i>ns</i>), prior firm performance (-.22*), CEO organizational identification (<i>ns</i>), TMT behavioral integration (-

Different perspectives of narcissism in organizational context

Study	Sample	Variables	Measure	Correlations among variables
		integration; Firm performance (ROA).		.24*), firm performance (-.30*).
18. Rode, Judge, & Sun (2012)	Study 2 (N = 269) Employees (21%) Supervisors (56%) Middle and top level managers (26%)	Narcissism; Protestant work ethic; Core self-evaluations Job and life satisfaction; Turnover; Burnout; Affective commitment; Organizational identification; Perceived organizational support.	NPI 37- item (Emmons, 1987)	NPI and protestant work ethic (ns), core self-evaluations (.21**), job satisfaction (ns), life satisfaction (.16**), intrinsic job satisfaction (-.15**), extrinsic job satisfaction (ns), turnover intention (ns), person-environment fit (ns), person-job fit (ns), burnout (ns), affective commitment (ns), organizational identification (ns), perceived organizational support (ns).
19. Treadway, Yang, Bentley, Williams, & Reeves (2017)	Employees (N = 184)	Narcissism; Leader member-exchange; Feeling envied; Job performance.	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	NPI and position (ns), tenure (ns), store location (-.26*), leader member-exchange (-.15*), feeling envied (.25**), performance (ns).
20. Wales, Patel, & Lumpkin (2013)	CEOs (N = 173)	CEO narcissism; Entrepreneurial orientation; Firm performance variance.	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	NPI and industry sales (.24**), entrepreneurial orientation (.27**), industry venture sales (.17*), environmental dynamism (.27**), environmental complexity and munificence (ns), CEO tenure and TMT size (ns), firm size and age (ns).
21. Wang & Jiang (2014)	Full-time employees (N = 403)	Narcissism; Abusive supervision; Deviance toward the supervisor.	NPI-short version (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	NPI and abusive supervision (-.11*), deviant behavior (.08*).

Study	Sample	Variables	Measure	Correlations among variables
22. Zagenczyk, Smallfield, Scott, Galloway, & Purvis (2017)	Employees ($N = 262$)	Narcissism; Psychological contract violation; Exit movements in organization; Neglect.	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	NPI and tenure (.12 ^{**}), violation (<i>ns</i>), exit (<i>ns</i>), neglect (<i>ns</i>).
23. Zhang, Ou, Tsui, & Wang (2017)	Study 1: CEOs ($N = 63$); TMT ($N = 328$); Middle managers ($N = 645$); Study 2: CEOs (143); TMT ($N = 190$)	Narcissism; Humility; Socialized charisma; Firm innovative culture; Firm innovative performance.	NPI 16- item (Ames, Rose, & Anderson, 2006)	Study 1 and Study 2: NPI and CEO socialized charisma (<i>ns</i>), firm innovative culture (<i>ns</i>), CEO humility (<i>ns</i>), CEO tenure (<i>ns</i>), CEO education (<i>ns</i>), firm performance (<i>ns</i>), firm size (<i>ns</i>).
24. Zitek & Jordan (2016)	Study 1b MTurk users (64% employees, $N = 301$)	Narcissism; Perceived SES; Rank in organization; Support for hierarchy in business.	NPI 40-item (Raskin & Terry, 1988)	NPI and rank in organization (.19 [*]), perceived socioeconomic status (.12 [†]), support for hierarchy in business (.14 [*]).

Note. The values between parentheses are zero-order correlations. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; [†] $p \leq 0.10$; *ns* – nonsignificant results; OBSE – Organizational based self-esteem; NPI – abbreviation for narcissism; SES – socioeconomic status.

Leader narcissism

Although narcissism has been a strong predictor of leader emergence (Campbell & Campbell, 2009), it has also been an inconsistent predictor of leader effectiveness (Simonet, Tett, Foster, Angelback, & Bartlett, 2018). Even though narcissists are viewed as self-centered and arrogant, some studies proposed that narcissism can be beneficial and productive in moments of uncertainty (Smith, Hill, Wallace, Recendes, & Judge, 2018) because the narcissistic leaders are very confident in their abilities, have a bold vision and are persistent in their pursuit of goals (Paulhus & Williams, 2002; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006).

To have a closer look at the relationship between narcissism and charismatic leadership we will analyze the results obtained in the study made by Galvin *et al.* (2010) conducted on 55 leaders and 225 subordinates, peers and professional colleagues. Narcissism significantly and positively correlated with

charismatic leadership, vision boldness, core self-evaluations, but negatively correlated with a socialized vision. Furthermore, the authors collected data from the perspective of others regarding leadership effectiveness and the results showed that leadership effectiveness was positively associated with leader charisma (Galvin et al., 2010).

Table 2. Summary of studies for the relationships between narcissism, leadership and organizational performance using other measures of narcissism

Study	Sample	Variables	Measure	Correlations among variables
1. Blair, Hoffman, & Helland (2008)	Professionals from an executive MBA program Employees (N = 154) Supervisors (N = 148)	Narcissism; Managerial performance (Participative management, Team building, Confrontation effectiveness, Sensitivity, Integrity, Analysis, Judgment, Planning and organizing, Initiative).	Narcissism scale (Wink & Gough, 1990)	Supervisor ratings results for narcissism and participative management (-.19*), team building (-.22*), confrontation effectiveness (-.18*), sensitivity (-.18*), integrity (-.21*), analysis (ns), judgment and decision making (ns), planning and organizing (ns), initiative (ns). Subordinate ratings results for all variables mentioned above are non-significant (ns).
2. Brunell, Gentry, Campbell, Hoffman, Kuhnert, & DeMarree (2008)	Practicing managers from MBA program (Study 3, N = 153)	Narcissism; Sociability; Leadership skills.	Narcissism scale (Wink & Gough, 1990)	Narcissism and sociability (.29**), expert ratings about leadership skills (.20**).
3. Chatterjee & Hambrick (2007)	CEO (105 firms from ExecuComp) (N = 111)	CEO's Narcissism; Strategic dynamism; Acquisitions; Performance extremeness; Performance fluctuation.	Narcissism index (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007)	CEO's narcissism and ownership (-.17*), separate COO (.18*), firm age (.16*), firm revenues (.17*) strategic dynamism (.18*), change in SICs (.16) number of acquisitions (.25*), size of acquisitions (.17*), ROA extremeness (.22*), TSR extremeness (.15*), ROA fluctuation (.13*), endogeneity control (.25*).
4. Engelen, Neumann,	CEO (41 firms from S&P 500)	CEO's	Narcissism index	CEO's narcissism and EO performance (ns), company

Study	Sample	Variables	Measure	Correlations among variables
& Schmidt (2016)	Index and ExecuComp) ($N = 41$)	Narcissism; Firm's EO performance; Market concentration and dynamism.	(Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007)	size (ns), high-tech revenue share ($-.19^\dagger$), market concentration (ns), market dynamism (ns).
5. Oesterle, Elosge, & Elosge (2016)	CEO (31 firms; panel data from largest German manufacturing firms) ($N = 60$)	CEO's Narcissism; Firm's performance (ROA); Internalization;	Narcissism index (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007)	CEO's narcissism and growth of FSTS ($.16^\dagger$), firm performance (ns), firm size & ($.28^{**}$).
6. O'Reilly, Doerr, Caldwell, & Chatman (2014).	Employees ($N = 250$)	CEO's Narcissism ratings of employees; CEO Tenure; CEO total compensation; CEO-TMT compensation gap; CEO total shareholding value.	List of eight adjectives used for rating (Resick et al., 2009)	CEO's narcissism and company size ($.38^\dagger$), funder ($.31^\dagger$), tenure ($.44^*$), CEO total compensation ($.40^*$), CEO - TMT compensation gap ($.40^*$), value of CEO's shares ($.44^{**}$).

Note. The values between parentheses are zero-order correlations. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; $^\dagger P \leq 0.10$; ns – nonsignificant results; COO – person that focuses on internal operating matters; FSTS - the ratio of foreign sales to total sales as a measure of internalization; ROA - firm's return of asset ratio as a measure of firm performance; SIC - Standard Industrial Classification; TMT – top management team; TSR - total shareholder returns.

Together, these results suggest that certain aspects of narcissism may be functional in the organizational environment. For example, a charismatic leader is inspiring to others, confident, determined, optimistic and challenging (Bass & Avolio, 1990, apud Galvin et al., 2010). A socialized charismatic leadership is described by the altruistic intentions of the leader to serve the best interests of the collective (Galvin et al., 2010). Thus, the followers of charismatic leaders will be willing to engage in actions that support the leader's vision (Howell & Shamir, 2005). However, highly charismatic leaders can be less effective because they lack operational behavior (Vergauwe, Wille, Hofmans, Kaiser, & De Fruyt, 2018).

Furthermore, in terms of leadership effectiveness, having a bold vision about the future is a quality that makes narcissistic leaders pursue their goals and overcome any issue that the organization may face, sometimes by underestimating the needed resources (Galvin et al., 2010). Narcissistic leadership can manifest through constructive vision orientation and communication, depending on the self-deceptive form of narcissism (Humphreys et al., 2016). For example, the bold vision allows narcissistic leaders to demonstrate their ambitions and great plans. On the other hand, the narcissistic display of a socialized vision leadership can give them attention, positive feedback from others, encouragements and the opportunity to build and maintain their positive image in a collective. Therefore, displaying a socialized vision can be a useful technique through which narcissistic leaders can maintain their narcissistic self and their needs in the social scene. Further research should investigate different methods through which narcissistic leaders could develop and train a socialized vision because socialized leaders serve the interests of others and align their vision with the employee's needs (Popper, 2002).

Liu et al. (2017) offered a more nuanced perspective on understanding when and why narcissism influences the leaders' and the followers' behavior and made a study on 211 leaders and 1,205 subordinates. It highlights the fact that the effects of narcissism depend on how the leaders are treated by the organization. More precisely, when leaders perceive that they are treated unfairly they behave in a self-defensive way, but when they feel that are treated fairly they act in a less self-interested manner. Therefore, the main implication of this study's results is that it is important to build an organizational culture based on transparency and a climate that emphasizes fair treatment between employees (Liu et al., 2017).

Some studies suggest another series of relationships between narcissism and effective leadership. For instance, *Erkutlu and Chafra* (2017) analyzed 1,613 employees along with their first-line managers to investigate the relationship between leader narcissism, leader behavioral integrity, the employees' job embeddedness, and moral attentiveness. The results revealed that the leader's narcissism, the employees' morale attentiveness, and the employees' job embeddedness are negatively correlated. Furthermore, the leader's narcissism and the leader's behavioral integrity were negatively correlated. Interestingly, both the employees' moral attentiveness and the leader's behavioral integrity moderated the negative relationship between the leader's narcissism and the subordinate job embeddedness. Thus, when the employees had high levels of moral attentiveness, the relationship between the leader's narcissism and their job embeddedness was weaker.

Same authors, *Erkutlu and Chafra* (2017), conducted another study on 1,215 certified nurses to examine the relationship between leader's narcissism

and employee organizational cynicism introducing the employee's psychological strain as a mediator and their psychological capital as moderator. They found a positive effect of a leader's narcissism on employee's cynicism and support for the mediating effect of the employee's psychological strain.

The results from the both studies presented above indicated that narcissistic individuals lack integrity and therefore organizational cynicism may appear among the employees. The psychological strain has the roots in the workplace stressors such as workload, conflicts, and abusive leadership (Stordeur, D'hoore, & Vandenberghe, 2001) and eventually can lead to an increased organizational cynicism. However, psychological strain occurs due to several factors, not only from narcissistic leadership. Thus, future studies could to take into account and control other job variables that can contribute to high levels of employee stress such as the domain of work, job description, and responsibilities, work schedule, salary or job tenure.

Another study made by *Erkutlu (2014)* examined the relationship between narcissism and psychological well-being on a sample of 793 faculty members and deans and the results showed a significantly negatively association. More than that, psychological capital moderated the relationship between narcissism and psychological well-being. Thus, the perception of employees of narcissistic leaders is important for their well-being. A narcissistic leadership perceived as a pattern of arrogance, lack of integrity and difficulties in interpersonal relationships can lead to poor quality social exchanges in the workplace.

Future studies should explore the specific behaviors of a narcissistic leader that can lead to a decrease in the psychological well-being of employees, to high levels of psychological strain and cynicism. We argue that the direct effects of narcissism on employees in the organizational setting are more visible if we analyze the supervisor's narcissism. Interactions between the supervisor and employees are much more common than interactions between CEOs and employees. The employees are affected by the managerial decisions and changes in organizational strategy (Sitlington & Marshall, 2011). Thus, further studies should investigate the interventions of supervisors in individual efforts that can either disturb or inhibit. Moreover, narcissist followers can engage narcissist leaders in a toxic relationship because they choose to support and take part in certain toxic behaviors (Dorasamy, 2018).

The analysis of the described studies brings to the forefront several important aspects of ethics. Thus, maybe the constant need to achieve high goals and to have great visions interferes with the lack of moral sensibility (Roberts, 2001), and the lack of integrity of narcissists in leadership positions (Blair et al., 2008). Situational factors can moderate the influence of narcissism on certain ethical leadership aspects and leader effectiveness. However, in the study conducted by *Hoffman et al. (2012)* on 233 managers and 168 subordinates the main effect of narcissism on effective and ethical leadership was insignificant.

The authors explored the associations between narcissism and follower perceptions of both ethical and effective leadership and obtained a general pattern of insignificant effects of narcissism and weak negative relations to leadership outcomes when coworkers' ratings of leader behaviors were used.

Researchers (Blair et al., 2008; Hoffman, et al., 2012) suggest that the narcissists fit better in less ethical contexts because in a tolerant work climate in which there are unethical behaviors the narcissists' behaviors cannot be overlooked or unseen. For example, in a highly ethical organizational climate, the behaviors that not adhere to such a climate are evaluated more negatively by coworkers and become more salient (Hoffman et al., 2012). Thus, as an important implication of the studies discussed above is the fact that ethical climate can be a moderator of the influence of narcissism on leadership. To better understand the situation, further studies should measure the ethical context of the company, the moral and ethical values of employees, supervisors, and leaders, and apply an interpersonal framework.

The study made by *O'Reilly et al.* (2014) based on 250 employee ratings of CEO's narcissism from 32 high-technology firms, revealed that the CEO's narcissism is significantly correlated with CEO total compensation and to the total value of the CEO's shareholdings. Furthermore, the narcissistic CEOs have greater pay compared to their senior teams. Narcissism is also positively related to CEO tenure and firm size and marginally associated with the CEO being the founder. *O'Reilly* and his colleagues (2014) explained that characteristics of narcissistic CEOs allow them to influence other people into providing higher compensation. The positive correlation between narcissism and founder status is an interesting finding because it highlights the narcissistic leader's persistence and confidence in their potential to survive on the market. However, the interpretation of these results should be carefully considered. As the authors point out, the nature of executive compensation systems depends on compensation policies and the nature of the industrial area of the company (*O'Reilly et al.*, 2014). Furthermore, the level of entitlement may have an important role in determining the CEO's compensation because they are seen as a central key to organizations (*Jordan, Ramsay & Westerlaken*, 2016).

Paradoxes of leader's narcissism

Recently, the authors employed a paradox theory to analyze leader narcissism combined with humility. A paradox refers to "contradictory elements that exist simultaneously and persist over time" (*Smith & Lewis*, 2011, p. 386). Recent studies (*Owens et al.*, 2015; *Zhang et al.*, 2017) tested this paradox perspective to verify whether narcissism and humility can function together to predict workplace effectiveness. The idea was tested by *Owens et al.* (2015) on a sample of 879 employees, 230 leader-rated follower job performance and 116

ratings on follower productivity, and their results showed that we can counteract the potentially dark effects on narcissism by practicing humility. More exactly, the results of their study evidentiate that when the leaders show humility, narcissism is associated with positive effects in terms of leader effectiveness and follower outcomes (follower job engagement and follower subjective or objective job performance). In other words, the combined effect of leader narcissism and humility makes the followers work harder and be more engaged.

Even though the outcomes of humble leadership are sparsely analyzed in the literature (Owens & Hekman, 2012), several researchers indicated that humility is critical for leadership effectiveness (Nielsen & Marrone, 2018), employee proactive behavior (Chen, Liu, Zhang, & Qian, 2018) team interactions and performance (Owens & Hekman, 2015; Rego, Cunha, & Simpson, 2018). However, the interaction between the leader's narcissism and his displayed humility manifests according to the goals he wants to achieve within the company. For example, in an important meeting with board members in which it is very important to reach a consensus on a particular issue of interest, the narcissistic CEO can display a humble image, but when they need to attract investors their behavior will be predominant narcissistic to draw the attention of themselves.

Zhang et al. (2017) conducted two studies and the total number of participants for both studies consisted of 206 CEOs, 513 Top Management Teams and 645 Middle Managers. They explained that a CEO who is both humble and narcissistic activates certain traits depending on the context. The main results of the *Zhang et al. (2017)* study showed that humility and narcissism interact to enhance CEO effectiveness in promoting firm innovation (innovative culture and innovative performance). Furthermore, socialized charisma mediated the interaction of CEO humility and narcissism to firm innovation.

Researchers showed that the interaction between humility and narcissism produces positive effects on the followers (Owens et al., 2015). The positive interaction effects occur through a mediating mechanism of socialized charisma (Zhang et al., 2017). The practical implication of the studies described above is that we can view narcissism from a balanced perspective, not only from a darker side. Leader's narcissism can have a positive effect on the followers when certain egoistic tendencies of narcissism are counterbalanced by humility. Further research should examine how different leader characteristics interact to predict other organizational outcomes and examine other contradictory traits that could coexist and drive to a higher potential in an organizational setting. In other words, future research should analyze more closely the possibility of counteracting the "adverse" effects of narcissism on others, by looking for mechanisms to mediate the negative impact of narcissism.

CEOs narcissism and firm performance

Wanting to show why and how narcissist CEO can have positive outcomes on firm performance, *Reina et al. (2014)* found that the of CEO's grandiose narcissism predicts firm performance in a moderated and mediation model. Analyzing a sample of 97 CEOs, they found that when the narcissistic CEOs define themselves in terms of the attributes of their organizations (i.e., high in organizational identification), their narcissism is beneficial to Top Management Team (TMT) behavioral integration and ultimately to firm performance. In contrast, when the CEOs' self-identities are not connected with that of their organizations, their narcissism is detrimental to TMT behavioral integration and, indirectly, to firm performance.

Contrary to the perspective outlined in the previous study, *Peterson et al. (2012)* hypothesized that narcissism decreases organizational identification because narcissistic CEOs are too preoccupied with the self, superiority and are unlikely to think of themselves as part of a collective organizational identity. Peterson et al. (2012) analyzed a sample of 126 CEOs from firms in the technology industry, of following executive characteristics – CEOs narcissism (self-reported), CEO founder status and organizational identification (self-reported) – in relationship with CEOs servant leadership style (self-reported) and firm performance. The firm performance was measured by objective data – return on assets (ROA) which consists of “annual income before extraordinary items and discontinued operations, divided by net assets” (Peterson, et al., 2012, p. 580). This indicator is commonly used to measure objective organizational performance (Singh, Darwish, & Potočnik, 2016). The results highlight the negative relationship between CEO narcissism and servant leadership and a null relationship between CEO narcissism, servant leadership behaviors when organizational identification was included in the regression analyses.

Thus, we can conclude by analyzing the results of both studies (Peterson et al., 2012; Reina et al., 2014) that organizational identification plays an important mediating role in the relationship between narcissism and leadership, and represents a key factor that helps CEOs to strongly identify with their firms (Lange, Boivie & Westphal, 2015).

Narcissism and organizational identification are worthwhile to be further discussed because this can make the connection with an unexplored paradox of organizational identification named “narcissistic organizational identification”. This concept was introduced by *Galvin et al. (2015)* and was defined as “means that the individual sees his / her identity as central to the identity of the organization, with the result that the individual perceives the organization's identity as being secondary and subsumed within the individual's identity” (p. 164). Thus, a highly narcissistic person that have a self-focus and feelings of grandiosity is likely to develop a form of narcissistic organizational

identification in which they think they are central to organization and have a sense of psychological ownership (Galvin et al., 2015). Although organizational identification is a “good thing”, in high doses is likely to have adverse effects leading to self-serving behaviors and exploitation of others. First, further research should try to investigate whether the narcissists with low organizational identification and the narcissists with high narcissistic organizational identification engage in pro-organizational behaviors in the same manner. Second, is worth considering the mechanism through which high identification with the organization leads to the transfer of individual behaviors on how to run the company. Furthermore, the difference between a non-narcissistic person with high organizational identification and a narcissistic person with high organizational identification should be explored. The narcissistic CEO will exploit the organization and its employees or will understand that the organization is a vehicle for self-promotion and success?

A possible explanation for this question can be found in the study made by *Chatterjee and Hambrick (2007)* on a sample of 111 CEOs. The results suggested that narcissistic CEOs favor actions that attract attention and the CEOs narcissism is positively related to multiple indicators of strategic dynamism and grandiosity of the company. Strategic dynamism was measured using a series of indicators for each company, such as advertising intensity / sales, research and development intensity / sales, expenses / sales, and financial leverage. Performance extremeness and performance fluctuation were examined using the total shareholder returns and return on assets (ROA). The results of their empirical study showed that CEO's narcissism is positively associated with strategic dynamism, with the number of acquisitions and extreme performance. The authors conclude that CEO's narcissism may be a good ingredient for bold, strategic and visible choices that stimulate a distinctive pattern of managerial actions.

Guedes (2017) analyzed a sample of 986 top managers, their narcissism and measures of subjective and objective performance. The measures of subjective performance relied on self-reports of managers about how they think their firm performed in comparison with other competitors on several areas: the sales and revenues growth, number of employees growth, return of assets, innovation of products, services, and processes, adoption of new technologies, qualities of the products and services, variety of the products and services and customer satisfaction. The objective measures of performance were the average return on assets (ROA) and the return on sales for the last three years. Narcissism was positively correlated with self-reported performance but uncorrelated with objective performance. In line with these results, *Macenczak et al. (2016)* empirical study on 135 employees revealed that narcissism was a significant predictor for each type of overconfidence (overprecision, overplacement, and overestimation) in a task that involves trivia questions.

Thus, we can conclude that narcissistic people have a tendency to overestimate their own performance as well as that of the company. If we take into account that a managerial position involves a series of decisions that need to be taken in the absence of all the necessary information, sometimes a high self-confidence is required to take an important and quick decision in spite of the circumstances. We already know that narcissism is related to risk-taking (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007) and this exposure may have the roots in excessive trust. Thus, we can draw a picture of the results of the studies described above. Overconfidence can lead to risky behaviors and decisions taken by the leader who in turn can lead to extreme performance, but as Pierre Corneille (1636) wrote in his French tragedy “Le Cid”: “To conquer without risk is to triumph without glory (act II, scene ii)”. Future research might use self-reported performance measures for a control variable (Guedes, 2017) to verify the differences between objective and subjective performance. Moreover, scholars can carry out follow-up studies when they get divergent results between subjective and objective performance to identify the possible explanations given by company managers.

Entrepreneurial orientation and narcissism

To understand the strategic mechanism that the narcissistic CEOs use to influence changes in organizational performance, *Wales et al. (2013)* have conducted a study on 173 CEOs to investigate the relationship between narcissism, entrepreneurial orientation, and firm performance. To measure the variance in firm performance they examined the companies’ sales data from a period of five years. Results showed that the relationship between CEO narcissism and firm performance’s variance (increases and decreases in firm performance) is partially mediated by the entrepreneurial orientation. Consequently, CEOs’ narcissism is associated with an orientation towards organizational growth (innovation, risk-taking, proactiveness).

Engelen et al. (2016) found that entrepreneurial orientation positively predicted shareholder value. The firm's performance was defined by the market value of a company assets divided by its current replacement costs and was calculated by dividing the sum of market capitalization and total liabilities by the sum of common equity and total liabilities (Ozgan, 2011, apud Engelen et al., 2016). In their study, the CEO's narcissism was a moderator of the entrepreneurial orientation and performance relationship. The main findings suggest that in highly concentrated and dynamic markets, the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and shareholder value increased with CEOs' narcissism. The authors argue that even though CEOs' narcissism has no direct effect on performance, we cannot talk about a “universal recipe for beneficial or harmful CEO personality traits” because we need to take into account the firm

context and posture (Engelen et al., 2016, p. 19).

Another important perspective that complements the image of narcissistic leaders and their implications at the firm's level is the managerial influence on international decisions. *Oesterle et al. (2016)* highlighted in their empirical study on 60 CEOs, that CEO narcissism has important consequences for the international evolution of a firm. The measure for internationalization was the growth of the firm's DOI (the ratio of foreign sales to total sales) and “high-risk foreign sales” (firm's share of foreign sales realized in other countries with high psychic distance). The CEO narcissism is significantly positively related to the growth of a firm's DOI, but not with “high-risk foreign sales”. Their findings highlight the fact that narcissistic CEOs have an important role in managerial decision-making and the internationalization of a firm.

Because the targeting of an international sales market is increasingly important for most businesses, the implications of this research revealed that scholars need to take into consideration the managers' characteristics for foreign operations. Moreover, narcissism plays an important role in entrepreneurial intentions (Mathieu & St-Jean, 2013). Narcissists can have enough confidence in their own forces to start a business because they overestimate their skills, but in the long-run, the effects should be studied further to see how many of them manage to keep their companies on the labor market.

Employee narcissism and organizational outputs

Gardner and Pierce (2011) made a field study conducted in a mining and manufacturing organization on 236 employees. Participants occupied a variety of positions in the organization (managers, engineers, safety inspectors, supervisors, manufacturing employees). The results suggest that there are significant correlations between narcissism and organization-based self-esteem (OBSE). Also, OBSE correlated with job satisfaction, job involvement, intrinsic motivation, in-role performance and helping behaviors. Even though the authors hypothesized that between narcissism, job satisfaction, job involvement, and intrinsic work motivation will be a negative relationship, the results showed a contrary pattern. Thus, they found significant positive correlations between narcissism and job satisfaction, job involvement and intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, narcissism was uncorrelated with in-role performance, extra-role behaviors (helping others) and effort after receiving negative feedback. The authors argue that narcissists are efficient in finding organizations and roles that fit their preferences and enable them to satisfy their grandiosity needs. However, when rated by their co-workers, narcissists were neither better nor worse job performers than non-narcissists (referring to measures of extra-role behaviors of helping and voice and in-role behaviors). Finally, the positive correlation of narcissism with hostility and disbelief in negative feedback can be explained by

the fact that people get upset when they receive negative feedback or are criticized for their work (Gardner & Pierce, 2011).

Zitek and Jordan (2016) analyzed a sample of 301 employees and brought evidence that narcissism, support for hierarchy and current perceived rank in the hierarchy are positively correlated. The authors argue that narcissistic employees support hierarchy in business due to their current higher organizational rank. Their results can be related to leadership emergence due to the narcissist's overconfidence and the overestimation of their ability to rise. *Brunell et al. (2008)* analyzed the leader emergence on a sample of 153 practicing managers engaged in a leaderless group discussion and found that narcissism significantly predicted leadership emergence ratings made by expert observers. In line with these results, *Judge et al. (2006)* found evidence in their first study on 134 participants, that narcissism significantly and positively predicted both self and other ratings of leadership. Interestingly, in their second study on a different sample of 131 beach patrol members, the results indicate that narcissism significantly and positively predicted self-ratings of leadership but negatively predicted other ratings of leadership. Even more, narcissism was positively related to self-ratings and other-ratings of workplace deviance. The different results may be due to the fact that they come from independent sources (self-reports of narcissism and others report of narcissism) (Judge et al., 2006). Another important finding is that narcissism was more negatively related to other ratings of contextual performance, rather than to task performance.

Thus, we can conclude that narcissistic employees need a social scene to evolve, shine and maintain their grandiose self. They are overconfident in their capabilities to obtain a leadership position and to rise in rank (Zeitek & Jordan, 2016) by the emergence in organizational contexts (Brunell et al., 2006). The enhanced self-perception can harm effect others' perceptions (Judge et al., 2006). Further research should take into account the socially desirable responses given by the others or by the peers when the narcissists being rated is in a position of power. Another important aspect is the fact that the self-ratings need to be interpreted carefully because people tend to show themselves in a favorable light – narcissistic individuals even more.

Wang and Jiang (2014) found that when analyzing the abusive treatments from the supervisors on narcissistic subordinates compared with non-narcissistic ones in a 403 sample of employees, the narcissistic subordinates reported less abusive supervision. Even though Wang and Jiang (2014) reported small but significant coefficients, the results suggested that narcissism was negatively related to abusive supervision and abusive supervision was positively correlated with subordinates' deviance toward the supervisor. Interestingly, in *Blair et al. (2008)*, narcissism was significantly and negatively correlated with supervisor ratings of participation, confrontation effectiveness, team building, and

sensitivity. However, narcissism and subordinate ratings of interpersonal performance were not related. Furthermore, narcissism was not significantly related to the supervisor or subordinate ratings of analysis, judgment and decision making, planning and organizing, or initiative. Their study concluded that narcissism was not significantly related to supervisor ratings of conceptual performance, subordinate ratings of interpersonal performance, subordinate ratings of conceptual performance, and subordinate ratings of integrity.

Treadway et al. (2017) investigated on a sample of 184 employees the effect of employee narcissism on feeling envied, the interactions of narcissism and leader-member-exchange on feeling envied and the relationship between feeling envied and performance. Narcissism positively affects feeling envied, which in turn negatively affects performance. The model proposed by authors has the premises in the inflated sense of self-worth of narcissistic employees that can affect performance due to the envy of colleagues because the personal social interactions provide narcissists opportunities to reinforce their superiority over co-workers (Treadway et al., 2017). Employee narcissism was related to feeling envied only when employees also perceived high leader-member-exchange with their supervisor. Narcissism did not affect feeling envied when employees rated a low leader-member-exchange. These findings reveal the important role of the relationship between supervisor and subordinates and the need for maintaining a balanced quality leader-member-exchange relationship in organizational in-groups. As a strategy to counter the feeling of envy in employees, transparent practices and rewards based on real progress, reduced social comparison at work and the encouragement towards teamwork may have positive results.

Chen et al. (2013) found support in two studies in which they analyzed a total sample of 439 subordinates and 300 supervisors that work engagement mediated the effect of incivility on task performance, but only for highly narcissistic individuals. Incivility has a great impact on task performance and work engagement. Narcissism moderated the incivility's effects and the study brings an important contribution because the need for self-enhancement of the narcissists makes them the most exposed and affected by incivility and negative feedback.

Another study made by *Zagenczyk et al. (2017)* on a sample of 262 employees revealed that the relationship between narcissism and exit movements in the organization (e.g. changing job, quitting or thinking about that) is stronger when employees report high levels of psychological contract violation as opposed to low levels. The authors argue that psychological contract violation is a situation that activates certain dispositional characteristics within employees which in turn can affect the organization. However, further research should investigate this relationship because every employee when feels a threat or report a high level of psychological contract violation thinks about exit movements. Taking into account the situational factors in the workplace to

explore the effects of narcissism on predicting performance at work might allow us to better understand how narcissistic individuals behave when perceiving a threat.

The results mentioned in previous studies were concerned with narcissistic and entitled workers. But can these workers have positive effects on the organization they belong to? The study made by *Klimchak et al. (2016)* on a sample of 167 full-time employees provide evidence that narcissism is a moderator of the relationship between entitlement and proactive behaviors. In other words, employees lower on narcissism are less likely to exhibit taking charge behaviors when they report low levels of entitlement compared to those higher in narcissism. A possible explanation indicated by authors is that when highly narcissistic employees feel like they are owed more than they receive, they can choose to refrain from taking charge behaviors. Further research should investigate the relationship between narcissism and entitlement because the results of *Klimchak and his colleagues (2016)* suggest that people can be high on narcissism and low on entitlement. Maybe this combination of traits can lead to several positive organizational results.

Narcissism and other organizational variables

Clark et al. (2009) examined the relationship between narcissism and workaholism on 323 working students. They found out that narcissism was positively related to overall workaholism, impatience, and compulsion to work. A plausible hypothesis for these results can be the need for power and self-enhancement of narcissistic people. In line with these results, the study made by *Andreassen et al. (2012)* on a sample of 235 bank employees revealed that narcissism correlated significantly and positively with the enjoyment of work and engagement in work. Furthermore, the managers reported higher levels of narcissism, drive, enjoyment of work and engagement in work than the levels of subordinates.

The results of *Rode et al. (2012)* indicate that core self-evaluations and narcissism are positively associated but lead to opposite effects. More exactly, in regression analyses, narcissism was negatively associated with all three measures of job satisfaction (overall job satisfaction, intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction), whereas core self-evaluation was positively associated with them. Furthermore, narcissism and burnout were positively associated but core self-evaluations were negatively associated with burnout. These results raise some questions. First, core self-evaluations (*Judge, Locke, & Durnham, 1997*) is a higher-order construct considered a positive side personality characteristic (*Resick, Whitman, Weingarden, & Hiller, 2009*) composed by self-esteem, self-efficacy, locus of control and neuroticism. Research on this subject indicates that core self-evaluations are related to several job attitudes (*Rode et al., 2012*), such as performing better at work, more successful careers and higher satisfaction,

lower levels of stress and job conflict (Judge, 2009). Second, it is interesting to make a parallel between a high core self-evaluation leader and a high narcissistic leader. The high core self-evaluation leader can be described as confident, with a positive view about self and a strong belief about the fact that they have control over the outcomes of their actions (Resick et al., 2009). The high narcissistic leaders are described as having high confidence in their ability to perform better than the previous leaders that the organization had. They are orientated to invest effort into performance-related activities to obtain recognition, using a strategic dynamism (the development and search of new resources and have a bold vision) (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007; Judge, LePine, & Rich, 2006). Further research should investigate the relationship between narcissism and core self-evaluations of leaders because these concepts have many elements in common that could help us understand better leadership behaviors. As a strategic influence, the narcissistic transformational leader can foster commitment to the organization's vision by encouraging others to approach problem-solving situations (Resick et al., 2009). The narcissistic leader can become aware of his or her critical personal experiences and understand the driving forces that direct their thinking and actions by rethinking about the self (Showry & Manasa, 2014). Thus, if we help them to be self-aware, the narcissistic leaders can become humbler, sensitive to others' needs and productive at work.

Summary of results

Narcissism is a relatively paradoxical phenomenon consisting of mixtures that define a certain pattern of personality and behaviors (Krizan & Herlache, 2018). Narcissism is related to self-enhancement (Paulhus & Williams, 2002) and can be valuable in short-term and maladaptive in the long-term (Treadway et al., 2017). We identified evidence that highlights the negative role of narcissism in organizational settings. The leader's narcissism and behavioral integrity are negatively correlated (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2017) favoring employee cynicism, psychological strain (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2017) and affecting the well-being of employees (Erkutlu, 2014). Furthermore, narcissism negatively predicted contextual performance, but not task performance (Judge et al., 2006). Thus, research on implications of narcissism on task performance is needed, eventually with the manipulation of the audience, perceived competition or rewards.

On the other hand, narcissism positively relates to enjoyment of work, engagement in work and workaholism (Andreassen et al., 2012; Clark, et al., 2010), charismatic leadership, vision boldness and core self-evaluations (Galvin, et al., 2010; Rode et al., 2012). Employee narcissism positively correlates with job satisfaction, job involvement, organizational based self-esteem and intrinsic motivation (Gardner & Pierce, 2011). Narcissistic employees are overconfident (Macenzak et al., 2016), feel envied at work (Treadway et al., 2017), support hierarchy in business (Zeitek & Jordan, 2016) and take charge behaviors when reporting high levels of entitlement (Klimchack et al., 2016). Narcissistic leaders

self-report higher performance (Guedes, 2017), are perceived as efficient and innovative in performance when also have higher humility (Owens et al., 2015; Zhang et al., 2017) and can increase the entrepreneurial orientation in the organization they lead (Wales et al., 2013).

Theoretical implications and future research directions

First, our aim was to fill a gap in understanding the dynamics of narcissism in organizational settings through a systematic analysis of studies that met the selection criteria. In this process, we highlight the main findings of the leader's and the employee's narcissism and their possible consequences in organizational settings. Second, we emphasized future research directions and deficient empirical results that need to be studied further. An important strength of this study is that we reviewed the literature from both perspectives (bright and dark sides of narcissism) and advocated for a balanced view of narcissism in an attempt to provide an integrative and more focal perspective.

This rich set of features of narcissism raises many further questions because depending on how it is activated, narcissism can have major benefits in various areas of organizational performance. Even though narcissistic individuals are dominated by the continuous “feeding of self” by obtaining admiration, success, power, and status, they can dynamize the environment they belong to. They mobilize people and activate available resources (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007). Organizations should embrace both the valuable, successful aspects of employee narcissism and the aspects that can lead to failure. The negative effects of narcissism can be trained by increasing humility, cooperation between workers and promoting a transparent policy. A company's destiny and evolution can be influenced by many factors, and one of them is the (narcissistic) personality of the CEO or leader. In the same manner, narcissistic leader manifestations can be trained or educated by encouraging healthy management practices and frequent feedback from the top management team. Additional research is needed on how narcissism affects performance in groups or work teams. The main focus in the literature about narcissism is on leadership, with a specific focus on manifestations of narcissistic leaders. A significant gap in the literature is in the area of narcissistic followers (Treadway et al., 2017), the effects on task performance, dynamism, self-regulation strategies used at the workplace by narcissistic employees, the degree of success in career and teamwork.

We argue that one reason for the current lack of convergent results is that most of researchers studying narcissism and organizational outputs are “trapped” in their dominant approaches (Humphreys et al., 2016) that often result in “isolated effects” that ignore the context and the interpersonal processes (Dinh et al., 2014, p. 37).

We see great opportunities for practitioners regarding organizational climate analysis by developing managerial plans that take into account aspects of leaders' personality. Thus, the possible negative effects of the narcissism of the employee or of the leaders in the labor relations can be minimized and the gains brought by this feature can be maximized and capitalized. On the basis of our systematic review of the literature, we find that personality continues to be a relevant variable in organizational settings. Our review challenges the previously held assumptions about bright and dark traits, good or bad personality and lead the research to the next level.

Limitations

This review of the literature has a series of limitations, which must be taken into account when interpreting the results described above. Because we selected a set of studies in line with the focus of this review, based on selected criteria, we excluded at the same time other relevant studies. The first limitation pertains to the diversity of the samples used in studies included for analysis, because they came from different work settings (e.g., engineering, manufacturing, medical, etc.). Second, this review's conclusions were based especially on one measure of narcissism, the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; Raskin & Hall, 1988). The review could be extended by utilizing other measures of narcissism, but also studies with different research designs.

However, the purpose of this review was to clarify how leader and employee narcissism relates to performance and other relevant variables at organizational levels of analysis from an organizational psychology perspective. Furthermore, we did not compare the strength of the relationships in a standard manner across studies through meta-analyses. We decided to approach the research through a systematic review and integrate findings from different levels of analysis of narcissism in a qualitative way, maintaining a common form of assessment of narcissism. The insights provided by this review are meant to inspire advances in new empirical research and to highlight important implications for human resource management. Recruitment, selection and performance assessment, job satisfaction and teamwork represent a series of paths that can raise several organizational aspects when we deal with individuals with high levels of narcissism. We encourage researchers to examine the role of narcissism in a balanced view, integrating or controlling the situational factors and organizational processes to isolate better the implications and the effects of narcissism in the organizational settings.

Conclusions

The link between narcissism and leadership is very prototypical in research and well documented. Narcissistic individuals seek positions of power, emerge as leaders in social contexts and sometimes are perceived as effective

due to their characteristics. However, the relationship between narcissism and performance is still unclear. Thus, a different perspective on narcissism emphasizes the need to study the possible presence of some mediating variables that can have a positive impact on management practices. The focus of this review was on the future research directions derived from inconsistent findings and the need for in-depth research on the mechanism of narcissism and the impact on the organization. The current study provided nuanced insights into narcissism's relationship with several organizational outcomes by showing that narcissists' characteristics can be useful in organizational context.

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