

NARCIZAM, MAKIJAVELIZAM I PSIHOPATIJA U ZDRAVSTVENOM SEKTORU

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APSTRAKT

Uvod. Mračna trijada predstavlja skup tri socijalno nepoželjne, ali relativno stabilne crte ličnosti: narcizam, makijavelizam i psihopatiju. Ove osobine karakterišu manipulativnost, emocionalna hladnoća, nedostatak empatije, potreba za dominacijom i usmjerenost ka ličnoj koristi. Iako se najčešće proučavaju u okviru opšte populacije i psihopatologije, sve veći značaj pridaje se istraživanju njihove prisutnosti među zdravstvenim radnicima zbog mogućeg uticaja na profesionalne odnose i kvalitet zdravstvene njege. Cilj ovog rada bio je prikazati značaj, karakteristike i prisustvo dimenzija mračne trijade među zdravstvenim radnicima, u zdravstvenom sektoru. Pregled literature pokazuje da izražene osobine narcizma, makijavelizma i psihopatije mogu biti povezane sa smanjenom empatijom, narušenom timskom saradnjom, profesionalnim konfliktima i kontraproduktivnim ponašanjem na radnom mjestu. Istraživanja sprovedena među ljekarima i medicinskim sestrama ukazuju na povezanost mračne trijade sa agresivnijom komunikacijom, emocionalnom distancom,

NARCISSISM, MACHIAVELLIANISM AND PSYCHOPATHY IN THE HEALTHCARE SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

Introduction. The Dark Triad refers to a set of three socially undesirable but relatively stable personality traits: narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. These traits are characterized by manipulateness, emotional coldness, lack of empathy, a need for dominance, and self-interest orientation. Although they are most commonly studied in the general population and in psychopathology, increasing attention has been given to their presence among healthcare professionals due to their potential impact on professional relationships and the quality of healthcare delivery. The aim of this paper was to show the importance, characteristics and presence of dimensions of the dark triad among health workers in the health sector. A review of the literature shows that pronounced narcissistic, Machiavellian, and psychopathic traits may be associated with reduced empathy, impaired teamwork, workplace conflicts, and counterproductive behavior. Studies conducted among physicians and nurses indicate a link between Dark Triad traits and more aggressive communication, emotional detachment,

neetičkim ponašanjem i povećanim rizikom od profesionalnih grešaka. Iako pojedine karakteristike, poput samopouzdanja i odlučnosti, mogu imati funkcionalnu ulogu u određenim situacijama, važno je prepoznati potencijalno negativan uticaj mračnih osobina na radno okruženje i sigurnost pacijenata. Zaključak. Potrebna su dodatna istraživanja kako bi se jasnije definisala zastupljenost i značaj mračne trijade među zdravstvenim radnicima, kao i mogućnosti prevencije i unapređenja profesionalnih odnosa u zdravstvenom sistemu.

Ključne riječi: mračna trijada, zdravstveni radnici, zdravstveni sektor.

UVOD

Proučavanje osobina ličnosti kod zdravstvenih radnika predstavlja nedovoljno istraženo područje, posebno kada su u pitanju takozvane mračne crte ličnosti koje se teško mogu povezati sa empatijom, humanošću i altruizmom – osobinama koje čine osnovu pomagačkih profesija. Koncept mračne trijade obuhvata tri međusobno povezana, ali različita konstrukta: makijavelizam, narcizam i psihopatiju. Ove osobine dijele zajedničke karakteristike poput manipulativnosti, emocionalne hladnoće, nedostatka empatije, agresivnosti i težnje ka ličnoj koristi, zbog čega se smatraju društveno nepoželjnim, iako su relativno stabilne crte ličnosti [1]. Osobine mračne trijade ne podrazumijevaju nužno postojanje psihijatrijskog poremećaja, već ukazuju na obrasce ponašanja koji mogu negativno uticati na profesionalne odnose, etičko postupanje i kvalitet zdravstvene njege. Smatra se da zajedničku osnovu ovih osobina čine nizak nivo empatije, interpersonalni antagonizam, sklonost manipulaciji i eksploataciji drugih, kao i smanjeno poštenje i saradljivost [2]. Cilj

unethical behavior, and an increased risk of professional errors. Although certain characteristics, such as self-confidence and decisiveness, may have a functional role in specific situations, it is important to recognize the potentially negative impact of dark personality traits on the work environment and patient safety. Conclusion. Further research is needed to more clearly define the prevalence and significance of the Dark Triad among healthcare workers, as well as the possibilities for prevention and improvement of professional relationships within the healthcare system.

Keywords: Dark Triad, healthcare workers, healthcare sector.

INTRODUCTION

The study of personality traits among healthcare workers represents under-researched area, especially when it comes to so-called dark personality traits that are difficult to reconcile with empathy, humanity, and altruism qualities that form the foundation of helping professions. The concept of the Dark Triad includes three interrelated but distinct constructs: Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. These traits share common characteristics such as manipulateness, emotional coldness, lack of empathy, aggressiveness, and a tendency toward self-interest, which is why they are considered socially undesirable, although they are relatively stable personality traits [1]. Dark Triad traits do not necessarily imply the presence of a psychiatric disorder, but rather indicate behavioral patterns that may negatively affect professional relationships, ethical conduct, and the quality of healthcare. It is believed that these traits share a common basis consisting of low empathy, interpersonal antagonism, a tendency to manipulate and exploit others, as well as

ovog rada bio je prikazati značaj, karakteristike i prisustvo dimenzija mračne trijade među zdravstvenim radnicima, u zdravstvenom sektoru.

DIMENZIJE MRAČNE TRIJADE

Mračna trijada obuhvata tri osnovne dimenzije ličnosti: makijavelizam, narcizam i psihopatiju. Kasnije je ovom konceptu dodat i sadizam, čime je formirana mračna tetrada, ali taj konstrukt nije predmet ovog rada. Zajedničke osobine ovih konstrukata su destruktivnost, potreba za moći, manipulativnost, emocionalna distanca i odsustvo empatije. Povezanost između ovih osobina uočena je mnogo prije nego što je uveden termin „mračna trijada“, ali su se tada proučavale odvojeno, uglavnom u okviru psihopatologije. Uvođenje ovog konstrukta omogućilo je sagledavanje mračnih osobina i na subkliničkom nivou, odnosno kod osoba koje ne ispoljavaju kliničke poremećaje ličnosti, ali pokazuju određene neadaptivne obrasce ponašanja [2]. Mračne osobine ličnosti razlikuju se od kliničkih oblika narcizma i psihopatije, koji predstavljaju ekstremne manifestacije i često zahtijevaju stručnu psihološku ili forenzičku intervenciju [1, 2, 3].

Makijavelizam

Makijavelizam podrazumijeva manipulativno ponašanje, korištenje drugih radi ostvarivanja sopstvenih ciljeva, kao i izraženu potrebu za moći i kontrolom. U zdravstvenim ustanovama ove osobine mogu se manifestovati kroz prikrivanje grešaka, manipulisanje informacijama ili narušavanje timske saradnje radi lične koristi. Takvo ponašanje posebno je problematično jer može ugroziti povjerenje koje predstavlja osnov profesionalnih odnosa u zdravstvu. Osobe sa izraženim makijavelističkim crtama često karakterišu cinizam, smanjena

reduced honesty and cooperativeness [2]. The aim of this paper was to show the importance, characteristics and presence of dimensions of the dark triad among health workers in the health sector.

DIMENSIONS OF THE DARK TRIAD

The Dark Triad consists of three main personality dimensions: Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy. Later, sadism was added to this model, forming the Dark Tetrad; however, this construct is not the focus of this paper. The common features of these constructs include destructiveness, need for power, manipulateness, emotional detachment, and lack of empathy. The connection between these traits had been observed long before the term “Dark Triad” was introduced, but they were previously studied separately, mainly within psychopathology. The introduction of this construct enabled the examination of dark traits at a subclinical level, meaning in individuals who do not exhibit clinical personality disorders but still demonstrate certain maladaptive behavioral patterns [2]. Dark personality traits differ from clinical forms of narcissism and psychopathy, which represent extreme manifestations and often require professional psychological or forensic intervention [1, 2, 3].

Machivellianism

Machiavellianism refers to manipulative behavior, using others to achieve personal goals, as well as a strong need for power and control. In healthcare settings, these traits may manifest through concealing mistakes, manipulating information, or undermining teamwork for personal gain. Such behavior is particularly problematic because it can jeopardize the trust that forms the foundation of professional relationships in healthcare. Individuals with pronounced Machiavellian

moralna odgovornost i pragmatičan pristup donošenju odluka. Istovremeno, sposobnost dugoročnog planiranja i kontrolisanja emocija može ih učiniti uspješnim u poslovnom okruženju, gdje nerijetko zauzimaju visoke pozicije. Istraživanja ukazuju na značajnu povezanost makijavelizma i psihopatije, iako se razlikuju po nivou impulzivnosti koja je izraženija kod psihopatije [4, 5].

Psihopatija

Psihopatija predstavlja pojam koji se dugo proučava u okviru kliničke psihologije i psihijatrije. Karakterišu je emocionalna hladnoća, impulsivnost, nedostatak griže savjesti i smanjena empatija prema drugima. Kod zdravstvenih radnika, posebno u stresnim radnim uslovima, blaže psihopatske osobine mogu se ispoljiti kroz ravnodušnost prema patnji pacijenata, grubu komunikaciju ili zanemarivanje etičkih principa bez osjećaja odgovornosti. Dosadašnja istraživanja pokazuju da su psihopatske osobine češće izražene kod muškaraca nego kod žena, dok žene rjeđe ispoljavaju antisocijalno ponašanje. Takođe, brojna istraživanja ukazuju da su određeni elementi narcizma prisutni kod većine ljudi kao dimenzije ličnosti koje se mogu mjeriti različitim skalama [2, 6].

Narcizam

Narcizam se najčešće manifestuje kroz osjećaj superiornosti, grandioznosti i potrebu za divljenjem i priznanjem. Osobe sa izraženim narcističkim crtama često pokazuju smanjenu empatiju prema pacijentima i saradnicima. Kod ljekara se narcizam može ispoljiti autoritativnim stilom rada, ignorisanjem mišljenja drugih članova tima i donošenjem odluka bez konsultacija. Kod medicinskih sestara i tehničara narcističke osobine mogu dovesti

traits are often characterized by cynicism, reduced moral responsibility, and a pragmatic approach to decision-making. At the same time, their ability to plan long-term and control emotions may make them successful in business environments, where they often occupy higher positions. Research indicates a significant relationship between Machiavellianism and psychopathy, although they differ in the level of impulsivity, which is more pronounced in psychopathy [4, 5].

Psychopathy

Psychopathy is a concept long studied within clinical psychology and psychiatry. It is characterized by emotional coldness, impulsivity, lack of remorse, and reduced empathy toward others. Among healthcare workers, especially in high-stress working conditions, milder psychopathic traits may manifest as indifference toward patient suffering, harsh communication, or neglect of ethical principles without feelings of responsibility. Previous research shows that psychopathic traits are more commonly expressed in men than in women, while women less frequently exhibit antisocial behavior. Furthermore, many studies indicate that certain elements of narcissism are present in most people as personality dimensions that can be measured using various scales [2, 6].

Narcissism

Narcissism is most commonly manifested through a sense of superiority, grandiosity, and a need for admiration and recognition. Individuals with pronounced narcissistic traits often show reduced empathy toward patients and colleagues. In physicians, narcissism may be expressed through an authoritarian working style, ignoring the opinions of other team members, and making decisions without consultation. In nurses and technicians, narcissistic traits may lead to competitive

do takmičarskog ponašanja, omalovažavanja kolega i emocionalne distance prema pacijentima. Za razliku od vulnerabilnog narcizma, grandiozni narcisi smatraju da zaslužuju poseban društveni status i priznanje, te vjeruju da posjeduju superiorne sposobnosti u odnosu na druge [2, 7, 8].

PRIKAZ RELEVANTNIH STUDIJA

Dosadašnja istraživanja o mračnoj trijadi uglavnom su bila usmjerena na ispitivanje individualnih razlika u opštoj populaciji, dok su studije koje uključuju zdravstvene radnike znatno rjeđe. Ipak, profesije u zdravstvenom sektoru, posebno ljebarska, često su povezane sa visokim društvenim statusom, odgovornošću i dobrim finansijskim primanjima, zbog čega postoji opravdan interes za proučavanje osobina mračne trijade upravo u ovom profesionalnom okruženju. Rezultati istraživanja pokazali su da u kolektivima sa velikim brojem medicinskih sestara često postoji izražena netrpeljivost i otežana timska saradnja. Ispitanici su posebno isticali povišen nivo verbalne agresivnosti i konflikata u svakodnevnoj komunikaciji. Takvi međuljudski odnosi mogu negativno uticati na radnu atmosferu, smanjiti zadovoljstvo zaposlenih i otežati efikasno obavljanje profesionalnih zadataka. Nedostatak međusobnog poštovanja, podrške i otvorene komunikacije često dovodi do stvaranja podjela unutar tima, što može umanjiti kvalitet saradnje među zdravstvenim radnicima. Pored toga, kontinuirana izloženost konfliktima povećava rizik od profesionalnog stresa, sindroma sagorijevanja na poslu i smanjene motivacije za rad. Zbog toga je od posebnog značaja razvijanje kulture međusobnog uvažavanja, jačanje timskog duha i primjena strategija za konstruktivno rješavanje konflikata u zdravstvenim ustanovama [9]. Rezultati

behavior, belittling colleagues, and emotional distance from patients. Unlike vulnerable narcissism, grandiose narcissists believe they deserve a special social status and recognition and consider themselves superior to others [2, 7, 8].

OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT STUDIES

Most research on the Dark Triad has focused on individual differences in the general population, while studies involving healthcare workers are considerably less common. However, healthcare professions, particularly medicine, are often associated with high social status, responsibility, and good financial compensation, which is why there is justified interest in examining Dark Triad traits within this professional context. The research results showed that in work environments with a large number of nurses, there is often pronounced interpersonal intolerance and impaired teamwork. Participants particularly highlighted increased levels of verbal aggression and conflicts in everyday communication. Such interpersonal relationships can negatively affect the work atmosphere, reduce employee satisfaction, and hinder the efficient performance of professional duties. A lack of mutual respect, support, and open communication often leads to divisions within the team, which may diminish the quality of collaboration among healthcare professionals. Furthermore, continuous exposure to conflicts increases the risk of occupational stress, burnout syndrome, and reduced work motivation. Therefore, fostering a culture of mutual respect, strengthening team spirit, and implementing strategies for constructive conflict resolution are of particular importance in healthcare institutions [9]. Results of another study conducted among healthcare workers indicated that psychopathy and narcissism

druge studije sprovedene među zdravstvenim radnicima ukazali su da osobine psihopatije i narcizma imaju značajan uticaj na kvalitet međuljudskih odnosa u zdravstvenim ustanovama, dok makijavelizam nije pokazao statistički značajnu povezanost sa odnosima u kolektivu [10]. Istraživanje provedeno na uzorku od 400 ljekara u Pakistanu pokazalo je da su izraženije osobine psihopatije, makijavelizma, narcizma i sadizma povezane sa kontraproduktivnim ponašanjem na poslu, uključujući nesavjestan rad, neodgovornost, uzimanje mita i učestala bolovanja [11]. Slični rezultati potvrđeni su i u istraživanju među medicinskim sestrama u Kini, gdje je utvrđena povezanost između osobina mračne trijade i nepoželjnog profesionalnog ponašanja [12]. Prisustvo izraženih osobina mračne trijade među zdravstvenim radnicima može imati brojne negativne posljedice, kao što su smanjen kvalitet zdravstvene njege, loši međuljudski odnosi, konflikti unutar tima, profesionalno sagorijevanje i povećan rizik od stručnih grešaka. Zbog toga je značajno unaprijediti psihološku procjenu zaposlenih, razvijati etičke vrijednosti tokom obrazovanja i podsticati kulturu otvorene komunikacije, međusobnog poštovanja i timskog rada. Razumijevanje mračne trijade ne treba posmatrati kao stigmatizaciju zdravstvenih radnika, već kao mogućnost unapređenja radnog okruženja, zaštite pacijenata i profesionalnog razvoja zaposlenih [3]. Ljekarska profesija u savremenom društvu često nosi visok društveni ugled i finansijsku sigurnost, posebno kada je riječ o specijalističkim granama medicine. Upravo zbog toga postavlja se pitanje da li osobe koje obavljaju ovako odgovorne i društveno cijenjene profesije pokazuju određene specifičnosti u odnosu na osobine ličnosti

significantly influence the quality of interpersonal relationships in healthcare institutions, while Machiavellianism did not show a statistically significant association with team relationships [10]. A study conducted on a sample of 400 physicians in Pakistan showed that higher levels of psychopathy, Machiavellianism, narcissism, and sadism were associated with counterproductive workplace behavior, including negligence, irresponsibility, bribery, and frequent absenteeism [11]. Similar findings were confirmed in a study among nurses in China, where a relationship between Dark Triad traits and undesirable professional behavior was established [12]. The presence of pronounced Dark Triad traits among healthcare workers may have numerous negative consequences, such as reduced quality of care, poor interpersonal relationships, team conflicts, professional burnout, and an increased risk of medical errors. Therefore, it is important to improve psychological screening of employees, develop ethical values during education, and promote a culture of open communication, mutual respect, and teamwork. Understanding the Dark Triad should not be viewed as stigmatization of healthcare workers, but as an opportunity to improve the working environment, patient safety, and professional development [3]. The medical profession in modern society often carries high social prestige and financial security, especially in specialist fields of medicine. This raises the question of whether individuals working in such responsible and socially respected professions exhibit specific personality traits related to the Dark Triad compared to the general population. In addition to physicians, it is important to emphasize the role of nurses, technicians, and other healthcare staff who play a key role in maintaining health and providing care. However, unlike physicians,

mračne trijade u poređenju sa opštom populacijom. Pored ljekara, važno je istaći značaj medicinskih sestara, tehničara i ostalog zdravstvenog osoblja koje ima ključnu ulogu u očuvanju zdravlja i pružanju zdravstvene zaštite. Međutim, za razliku od ljekara, ova zanimanja često nemaju isti društveni status niti nivo profesionalnog priznanja, što može dodatno uticati na međuljudske odnose i profesionalno zadovoljstvo zaposlenih. Iako postoje pojedinačna istraživanja na ovu temu, još uvijek nema dovoljno naučnih dokaza koji bi potvrdili da zdravstveni radnici, a posebno lekari, u većoj mjeri posjeduju osobine mračne trijade u odnosu na druge profesije ili opštu populaciju [13, 14]. Osobine poput izražene potrebe za dominacijom, osjećaja superiornosti, nedostatka empatije, prekomjernog isticanja ličnih uspjeha i težnje ka moći nisu poželjne u profesijama koje se temelje na humanosti i pomoći drugima. Zbog toga je važno prepoznati štetne obrasce ponašanja i usmjeriti pažnju na posljedice koje oni mogu imati na pacijente, kolege i cjelokupan zdravstveni sistem. Neadaptivno ponašanje nije uvijek otvoreno i lako uočljivo, već se može manifestovati kroz prikrivene oblike ponašanja, poput izbjegavanja odgovornosti, uskraćivanja pomoći drugima ili različitih oblika profesionalne neetičnosti. U Bosni i Hercegovini ne postoje studije koje su se bavile istraživanjem dimenzija mračne trijade u zdravstvenom sektoru. Stoga je potrebno dalje istraživati prisustvo osobina mračne trijade kod zaposlenih u zdravstvenom sektoru i njihov uticaj na profesionalno funkcionisanje.

ZAKLJUČAK

Osobine mračne trijade mogu imati značajan uticaj na međuljudske odnose, profesionalnu komunikaciju i kvalitet rada u zdravstvenom

these professions often do not have the same level of social status or professional recognition, which may further influence interpersonal relationships and job satisfaction. Although individual studies exist, there is still insufficient scientific evidence to confirm that healthcare workers, particularly physicians, exhibit Dark Triad traits to a greater extent than other professions or the general population [13, 14]. Traits such as a strong need for dominance, feelings of superiority, lack of empathy, excessive self-promotion, and a desire for power are undesirable in professions based on humanity and helping others. Therefore, it is important to recognize harmful behavioral patterns and consider their potential consequences for patients, colleagues, and the healthcare system as a whole. Maladaptive behavior is not always overt and easily noticeable; it may appear in subtle forms such as avoiding responsibility, withholding help, or various forms of professional unethical conduct. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, there are no studies examining Dark Triad dimensions in the healthcare sector. Therefore, further research is needed to investigate the presence of Dark Triad traits among healthcare employees and their impact on professional functioning.

CONCLUSION

Dark Triad traits can have a significant impact on interpersonal relationships, professional communication, and the quality of work in the healthcare sector. Existing research shows that pronounced narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy among healthcare workers may be associated with reduced empathy, impaired teamwork, and more frequent workplace conflicts. However, certain traits such as self-confidence, decisiveness, and the ability to act under pressure may, in some situations, have a functional role. Recognizing and

sektoru. Dosadašnja istraživanja pokazuju da izražen narcizam, makijavelizam i psihopatija kod zdravstvenih radnika mogu biti povezani sa manjkom empatije, otežanom timskom saradnjom i češćim konfliktima u radnom okruženju. Ipak, određene osobine poput samouvjerenosti, odlučnosti i sposobnosti djelovanja pod pritiskom mogu u pojedinim situacijama imati i funkcionalnu ulogu. Prepoznavanje i razumijevanje ovih karakteristika važno je za unapređenje profesionalnih odnosa, očuvanje etičkih principa i sigurnosti pacijenata. Zbog nedovoljnog broja istraživanja u ovoj oblasti, neophodno je sprovesti dodatne studije koje bi detaljnije objasnile prisustvo i uticaj mračne trijade među zdravstvenim radnicima.

understanding these characteristics is important for improving professional relationships, maintaining ethical principles, and ensuring patient safety. Due to the limited number of studies in this field, further research is necessary to more comprehensively explain the presence and impact of the Dark Triad among healthcare professionals.

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