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**ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ATTACHMENT
STYLES AND THE DARK TRIAD (MACHIAVELLIANISM,
NARCISSISM AND PSYCHOPATHY)**

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Abstract. This study aims to test whether there is a relationship between attachment style and the Dark Triad personality traits. A bivariate correlational design and a mean difference analysis were used to determine differences by sex. The sample consisted of 303 Spanish participants over 18 years of age. They were administered the Attachment Questionnaire (CaMir-R) and the Short Dark Triad (SD3). A negative relationship was obtained between secure attachment style and Dark Triad psychopathy and a positive relationship between insecure attachment and dark personality, highlighting disorganized attachment with Machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy personality traits. In addition, the male group scored higher on these traits. It is important to establish secure attachments in childhood, as dark personality traits are characterized by the inability to emotionally bond with others and are a key predictor of insecure attachment and, therefore, comprise socially aversive personality dimensions.

Key words: secure attachment, insecure attachment, Dark Triad, narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy.

**ANÁLISIS DE LA RELACIÓN ENTRE LOS ESTILOS DE APEGO Y LA
TRÍADA OSCURA (MAQUIAVELISMO, NARCISISMO Y
PSICOPATÍA)**

Resumen. Este estudio pretende comprobar si existe relación entre el estilo de apego y los rasgos de personalidad de la Tríada Oscura. Se planteó un diseño correlacional bivariado y un análisis de diferencias de medias para determinar las diferencias por sexo. La muestra se formó por 303 participantes españoles mayores de 18 años. Se les administró el Cuestionario de Apego (CaMir-R) y el Short Dark Triad (SD3). Se obtuvo una relación negativa entre el estilo de apego seguro y la psicopatía de la Tríada Oscura y una relación positiva entre el apego inseguro y la personalidad oscura, destacando el apego desorganizado con los rasgos de personalidad maquiavelismo, narcisismo y psicopatía. Además, el grupo de hombres puntuó más alto en dichos rasgos. Es importante establecer unos vínculos afectivos seguros en la infancia, ya que, los rasgos de personalidad oscuros se caracterizan por la incapacidad de vincularse emocionalmente con los demás siendo un predictor clave del apego inseguro y, por lo tanto, comprenden dimensiones de la personalidad socialmente aversivos.

Palabras clave: apego seguro, apego inseguro, Tríada Oscura, narcisismo, maquiavelismo, psicopatía.

Introduction

The Dark Triad would be formed by three personality traits: narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy. This dark personality is what we would commonly call a "bad person" or one who presents "a dark personality", hence its name. These dimensions share traits tending towards insensitivity, selfishness and malevolence in interpersonal relationships with others (Paulhus and Williams, 2002).

Different authors (Bloxson et al., 2021) have concluded that the inability to emotionally bond with others is a key predictor of insecure attachment and thus involves traits of the Dark Triad, which comprises three socially aversive or dark-side personality dimensions: Machiavellianism is characterized by deception, manipulation, cynicism, and exploitation of others (Ali and Chamorro-Premuzic, 2010; Ináncsi et al., 2015). Narcissism is related to egocentrism, grandiose thinking, vanity, attention seeking, and lack of empathy (Krizan and Herlache 2018; Pincus and Lukowitsky, 2010). And, psychopathy is characterized by impulsivity, deception, antisocial, callous, and arrogant behaviors (Mack et al., 2011; Mayer et al., 2020). For this study, we will focus on those of subclinical and non-pathological level, which would be those that are not under clinical supervision (González, 2015).

In the last decade the works conducted have shown the importance of studying dark traits, since, they have detrimental effects on social relationships and affective bonds (Vize et al., 2018). Which begs the question, is developing any dark personality traits a sign of exhibiting parental disengagement in childhood?

The human being comes into contact with the outside world at birth. From then on, different attachment relationships will be established with the people who are close to him (Pérez-Aranda et al., 2019). Therefore, attachment is the union or affective bond that is established during these early stages of life between the infant of a few months and its mother, father or primary caregiver (Ortiz and Marrone, 2002). This influence should be understood in a bidirectional way (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991), since the child's personality will depend on the joint action of the attachment figure and the child's temperament. However, unlike attachment, personality is conceived in adulthood (Rabadán et al., 2019), and may end up developing some of these dark traits.

In this sense, one of the pioneers in the study of attachment was the psychoanalyst and psychiatrist John Bowlby, who put an end to the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1952). Bowlby realized that many of the adolescents he treated in consultation with a criminal background had in common a dysfunctional childhood, separated parents and/or early family losses (Holmes and Slade, 2017). He defined attachment as the type of relationship that occurs between the newborn and its primary caregiver, being determinant in the development of behavior and later emotional development (Bowlby, 1997). It will be this bond through which the newborn experiences its first pleasant feelings (of security, trust or affection) and unpleasant feelings (of fear, abandonment or insecurity), and from which it builds the foundations in such a way that it transcends in the nature of the future relationships it creates (Bueno, 2020) and thus establishes the basis of its personality.

Attachment fulfills two basic functions: on the one hand, survival, which would encompass the protection and care of the child and, on the other hand, emotional security, which would encompass psychological development and personality formation (Rivas, 2018). In addition to these, it would fulfill other complementary functions: such as socialization,

communication and psychosocial relationships (Rivero et al., 2016) where the child would develop empathy and learn prosocial behaviors, cognitive development where it stimulates curiosity and the desire to explore the environment (Galán, 2020) and, finally, it would promote physical and psychological health through the stable and satisfactory affective relationship with those attachment figures.

Mary Ainsworth conducted a series of investigations on the interaction between mother and child and its influence on the formation of attachment. For this purpose, he designed an experiment called the Stranger Situation (Bell and Ainsworth, 1972), in which he classified the different attachment styles (the strange situations). Specifically, it focused on the observation of interaction behaviors that were exposed to the mother: proximity and contact seeking, contact maintenance, proximity avoidance and contact resistance (Delgado, 2004).

These strange situations (Ainsworth, 1989) were classified into three types: secure attachment, insecure avoidant attachment and resistant/ambivalent attachment. Later, Main and Salomon (1990) added a fourth attachment style, disorganized. This study will focus on the four attachment styles mentioned above:

Secure attachment: described as a satisfying bond, with a good relationship with both the external environment and the caregiver that allows him/her to explore the world safely. The child feels that he/she is protected against any misfortune that may occur. It is achieved through caring, continuous contact that is sensitive to the child's needs (Chen, 2017; Solomon et al., 2017).

Anxious/ambivalent insecure attachment: excessive tendency to seek proximity, lower tolerance to separation from the attachment figure, responding with protesting and angry behaviors, resulting in emotional dysregulation (Mikulincer and Shaver, 2019; Smolewska and Dion, 2005).

Avoidant insecure attachment: characterized by a strong distancing from the attachment figure, paying more attention to other things, avoiding close contact, showing rejection, rigidity, hostility and difficulty in regulating their emotions (Bueno, 2020; Jonason et al., 2014).

Disorganized insecure attachment: shares characteristics with anxious insecure attachment and avoidant insecure attachment, but does not belong to either of them. This is because the child demonstrates confused, incoherent and contradictory behaviors (Ballester et al., 2014; Heym et al., 2020). This would be the case of negligent caregivers where the child loses trust in them.

Therefore, attachment is a process that serves as the basis for all affective relationships throughout life (Monteca, 2014). While it is true that attachment is established from birth and can remain stable throughout its course (Pierucci and Luna, 2014), new attachment figures (such as work, friendship and partner relationships) can also influence it and cause insecure behavior in childhood to end up learning more secure behaviors as we grow up (Morales and Ventura, 2016). In contrast to this, personality is forged in adulthood, which could lead us to think that there is a cause-effect relationship between the development of attachment in childhood and the subsequent development of personality (Monteserín, 2012).

As indicated above, both Bowlby (1976) and Ainsworth (1989) have shown the relevance of the attachment bonds established with fathers and mothers during infancy for the establishment of future affective relationships (Casullo and Liporace, 2005). Thus, those infants who achieved secure attachment relationships with caregivers who were loving and sensitive to their needs, ended up establishing more stable bonds with their peers, which are characterized by intimacy and affection (Brando et al., 2008). Whereas, those who achieved insecure attachment relationships with their parents, being these more cold, distant or neglectful, would have more problems when establishing bonds with other people in their

environment (Apostolou et al., 2019). is insecure attachment, therefore, an indicator of developing some dark personality trait?

Previous research has indicated that Machiavellianism and psychopathy, are positively associated with insecure attachment (Ali and Chamorro-Premuzic 2010; Mack et al., 2011). Specifically, psychopathy is related to greater anxious and avoidant attachment (Mayer et al., 2020), whereas, Machiavellianism is related to more anxious behaviors, avoidant attachment (Connor et al., 2020) and/or disorganized attachment (Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991). However, regarding narcissism it is not clear, with some research favoring an anxious/ambivalent insecure attachment (Gómez, 2020) and others favoring a more secure attachment (Jonason et al., 2014).

Few studies look at gender when it comes to establishing who scores higher on any obscure trait. According to Jonason and Davis (2018), Dark Triad traits, are associated more with masculinity than femininity.

In any case, there are no compelling studies to speak of a particular attachment style in each of the Dark Triad traits.

In view of the above, the general objective of this study focuses on analyzing the relationship between the attachment style developed in childhood and the personality traits of the Dark Triad (narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy). The working hypotheses are as follows:

Hypothesis 1: There is a negative relationship between secure attachment style and Dark Triad personality traits.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between insecure attachment style and dark personality traits.

Hypothesis 3: The male group is expected to score higher than the female group on the Dark Triad traits, with no significant differences in attachment styles.

Method

Participants

The sample of participants in this study consisted of three hundred and three persons (N=303), whose ages ranged from 18 to 77 years (M=32.41 and SD=15.32). In turn, it was represented by 195 women (64.4%), 107 men (35.3%) and 1 non-binary person (0.3%). Of these, 185 participants were single (61.1%), 102 were married or cohabiting (33.7%), 10 were separated or divorced (3.3%) and 6 were widowed (2%).

Regarding the educational level of the participants, all of them had some kind of education, of which 2 people had unfinished primary education (0.7%), 11 had primary education (3.6%), 29 had secondary education (9.6%), 38 had vocational training (12.5%), 37 had higher education (12.2%), 1 had special education (0.3%) and 185 had university education (61.1%).

The annual income collected in the sample would be as follows: 23 participants would be paid less than 5,000 €/year (7.6%), 21 between 5,000 - 10,000 €/year (6.9%), 46 between 11,000 - 15,000 €/year (15.2), 32 between 16,000 - 20,000/year (10.6%), 85 between 21,000 - 30,000 €/year (28.1%), 41 between 31,000 - 40,000 €/year (13.5%), 22 between 41,000 - 50,000 €/year (7.3%) and 33 would charge more than 50,000 €/year (10.9%).

The inclusion criteria used in the present study were: being of legal age (>18 years) and Spanish nationality.

Instruments

A series of self-reported questionnaires were completed by the participants of the present research to elaborate the collection of information relevant to the project. The instruments used for this data collection were those explained below, whose *Cronbach's alpha* coefficients reported refer to those of the present study:

Ad hoc questionnaire: this would focus on collecting significant sociodemographic data on the participants (age, sex, marital status, place of residence, educational level and income level).

Attachment Questionnaire (CaMir-R): is a shortened version of the original questionnaire (Balluerka et al., 2011), which assesses attachment-related cognitions. This questionnaire was validated into Spanish by authors Redondo and Herrero (2019) and focuses on the assessment of individuals' past and present attachment experiences, as well as their personal interpretation of parental attitudes during childhood. It consists of 29 items to be answered with a five-point Likert-type scale (1 = "strongly disagree"; 2 = "disagree"; 3 = "indifferent"; 4 = "agree" and 5 = "strongly agree"). It takes about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The items are grouped into six factors: Safety (7 items), Worry (6 items), Parental Interference (4 items), Parental Authority Value (3 items), Self-sufficiency and resentment towards parents (4 items) and Childhood Trauma (5 items). Two of the factors are related to parenting styles (Parental Interference and Value of Parental Authority), and the other four to attachment (Security, Preoccupation, Self-Reliance and Childhood Trauma). In our work, only the 22 items corresponding to the attachment part were passed: Security ($\alpha = .93$), Worry ($\alpha = .83$), Self-sufficiency and resentment toward parents ($\alpha = .66$), and Childhood trauma ($\alpha = .88$). These results correspond respectively to Secure Attachment, Anxious/Ambivalent Insecure Attachment, Avoidant Insecure Attachment and Disorganized Insecure Attachment.

Short Dark Triad (SD3): Jones and Paulhus (2002) designed one of the main scales to measure the components of the Short Dark Triad. Adapted to Spanish by Pineda et al., (2020). It assesses the three personality dimensions of the Dark Triad together (narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy) and subclinically. The SD3, in this adapted version, consists of a total of 27 items, divided into 3 subscales with 9 items for each construct, corresponding to each of the dark personalities: Machiavellianism ($\alpha = .70$), narcissism ($\alpha = .68$) and psychopathy ($\alpha = .78$), respectively. Each item should be answered with a five-point Likert-type scale (0 = "completely disagree" to 4 = "completely agree").

Procedure

This work is part of a broader study composed of several forms, but for this particular work, two of them have been applied: the first one studies the attachment style in childhood and the second one analyzes the personality traits of the Dark Triad.

The questionnaires were digitized through the Google Forms platform and distributed through the snowball procedure. In turn, the study link was disseminated through different social networks (Instagram, Facebook, Twitter), instant messaging channels (WhatsApp, Telegram) and other digital platforms (YouTube channels, etc.). When explaining the instructions for the questionnaires, an informed consent form was included to ensure the anonymity and confidentiality of the responses and the participants' compliance with the requirements. Consent was signed through the selection of an option on the questionnaire, which indicated that the participant had read and agreed to participate in the study.

Finally, this work has been approved by the ethics committee of the Universidad Europea del Atlántico.

Data Analysis or Analysis Strategy

The analysis carried out in this study is a correlational design with the aim of clarifying the relationship between the parental attachment style displayed in childhood and the development of the Dark Triad personality traits. The bivariate relationship between the variables studied was analyzed by means of *Pearson's correlation coefficient*, considering the sign, strength and significance of each calculated relationship.

After this, an analysis of mean differences in the variables studied was performed in order to determine the relationships between women on the one hand and men on the other. For this purpose, a comparison of the correlations was made for statistically significant data, which follow the *Student's t* distribution for independent samples with a significance level of $p < .05$. We also proceeded to use *Cohen's d* statistic (Cohen, 1980) to measure the effect size as the difference of the standardized means of the male and female groups.

All analyses were performed with SPSS program version 22.

Results

First, a bivariate correlational analysis was performed to determine whether the data collected in **Table 1** (*Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and correlation coefficients (Pearson's r) between parental attachment style and Dark Triad personality traits*) established significant correlations between attachment type in childhood and dark personality in adulthood.

Table 1

Descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and correlation coefficients (Pearson's r) between parental attachment style and Dark Triad personality traits.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Secure Attachment	29.33	5.80	-						
2. Anxious/Ambivalent Attachment	19.51	5.35	.15*	-					
3. Avoidant Attachment	12.13	3.44	-.56***	.06	-				
4. Disorganized Attachment	10.05	5.18	-.60***	-.03	.48***	-			
5. Machiavellianism	16.32	6.15	-.10	.05	.36***	.17**	-		
6. Narcissism	13.76	5.22	.07	-.03	.10	.12**	.35***	-	
7. Psychopathy	8.00	5.26	-.19***	-.01	.29***	.24***	.58***	.33***	-

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

As can be seen in **Table 1** (appendix), this analysis revealed the following results: a statistically significant, negative, low-strength relationship was found between secure attachment style and the Dark Triad personality trait psychopathy. Likewise, no statistically significant relationships were found between secure attachment and Machiavellianism, as in narcissism. On the other hand, no statistically significant relationships were observed for anxious/ambivalent insecure attachment style with any of the dark personality traits: Machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy.

Continuing with the correlational analysis, a statistically significant, positive, moderate-strength relationship was found between the avoidant insecure attachment style and the Dark Triad personality trait Machiavellianism. In addition, a statistically significant, positive, low-strength, positive relationship was observed between avoidant insecure attachment style and the dark personality trait of psychopathy. On the other hand, no statistically significant relationships were observed for insecure avoidant attachment style and narcissism.

Finally, a statistically significant, positive, low-strength, positive correlation was found between disorganized insecure attachment style and Machiavellianism, narcissism, and Dark Triad psychopathy personality traits.

Once the bilateral correlations were found, we proceeded to perform an analysis of mean differences by gender between men and women separately, in the variables studied, to see if one of these two groups established more significant scores than the other, as can be seen in **Table 2** of the appendix (*Analysis of mean differences by gender between the attachment style and the personality traits of the Dark Triad*). It should be noted that the non-binary sex was excluded from this analysis of mean differences because we only had one participant and the results were not going to be relevant.

Table 2

Mean difference analysis by gender between attachment style and Dark Triad personality traits.

	Genre				<i>t</i>	<i>d</i>
	Male (<i>n</i> = 107)		Female (<i>n</i> = 195)			
	M	SD	M	SD		
Secure Attachment	29.32	5.73	29.31	5.87	0.14	0.00
Anxious/Ambivalent Attachment	18.13	4.98	20.22	5.37	-3.31***	-0.40
Avoidant Attachment	12.38	3.21	12.02	3.55	0.88	0.10
Disorganized Attachment	9.80	4.66	10.21	5.45	-0.65	-0.08
Machiavellianism	17.68	5.72	15.56	6.28	2.89**	0.35
Narcissism	14.99	5.74	13.07	4.80	3.10**	0.36
Psychopathy	10.03	5.60	6.91	4.74	5.12***	0.60

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Sex differences in attachment style and dark personality trait scores were explored. For this purpose, a *Student's t-test* for independent samples was performed together with *Cohen's d* statistic to measure the effect size. Within the results found in the type of attachment variable, minimal differences were observed in the subscales of the questionnaire applied, with no significant differences in relation to the gender variable.

Similarly, dark personality traits (Machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy) were explored and all of them were found to be statistically significant and relevant scores were found to exist, with men scoring higher in all of them compared to women participants in the present study. In turn, all of them also presented a medium effect size.

Discussion

The main objective of this research focuses on studying the relationship between the attachment style developed in childhood and the personality traits of the Dark Triad (narcissism, Machiavellianism and psychopathy).

Recalling the hypotheses put forward, *Hypothesis 1* studied the negative relationship between secure attachment style and Dark Triad personality traits. In contrast, *Hypothesis 2* examined whether there is a positive relationship between insecure attachment style and dark

personality traits. And finally, *Hypothesis 3* expected the male group to score higher than the female group on the Dark Triad traits, with no significant differences in attachment styles.

In *Hypothesis 1* we can see reflected in the results found, a negative relationship between secure attachment style and the Dark Triad personality trait psychopathy. This means that, at higher levels of secure attachment, individuals report lower levels of psychopathy. In a study by Celedón et al., (2016), the types of attachment of a group with psychopathic and antisocial traits are described. Participants who possessed a secure attachment style tended to establish stable and satisfying interpersonal relationships, to the detriment of aggressive, isolating, impulsive and deceitful behaviors. Therefore, it is not strange to think that people with secure attachment will establish good affective bonds, empathize with others and be affectionate (Brando et al., 2008), moving away from these dark traits that are characterized by presenting psychological violence, moral inhibition, manipulation, low kindness, insensitivity and confused behaviors in contexts of interpersonal and social interaction (González, 2015). However, because of this emotional coldness, psychopathy correlates positively with insecure avoidant attachment whose main characteristic is disengagement (Morell, 2021), thus agreeing with our *hypothesis 2*, where higher levels of insecure avoidant attachment, individuals report higher levels of psychopathy.

Following the results of *hypothesis 1*, no statistically significant relationships were found between secure attachment and Machiavellianism, as well as between secure attachment and narcissism. Contrary to this, Wolfsberger (2015) pointed out that narcissistic adults reported a childhood in which there was a lack of affection from the mother, whereas, they enjoyed a good relationship with the father, developing in adulthood a secure attachment style, unlike those people with Machiavellian personality. Dickinson and Pincus (2003), supported these results, providing data where narcissism presented a secure attachment style. However, Diamond et al., (2014), found results partially in line with our *hypothesis 2*, where subclinical narcissism was related to avoidant and disorganized insecure attachment. Other authors revealed results contrary to ours, since, a negative relationship was established between narcissism and insecure attachment (Krizan and Herlache, 2018). This may be due to the fact that the bonds established in childhood were not entirely bad, thanks to the high self-esteem that narcissistic people present, as well as, high parental care (González, 2015).

In *hypothesis 2*, the positive and significant relationship between insecure attachment style (specifically, avoidant and disorganized attachment) and Dark Triad personality traits can be seen reflected. These traits have been studied in a combined manner, as well as from a more individual perspective. Thus, research such as that conducted by authors like Bloxson et al., (2021) have concluded that the inability to emotionally bond with others is a key indicator of insecure attachment (Jonason et al., 2018) and thus involves developing dark personality traits, comprising the three dimensions of the Dark Triad considered socially aversive. Jonason et al., (2014), already predicted in their research that Dark Triad personality traits were positively related to indicators of dysfunctional parenting (i.e., insecure attachment and limited parental care) and negatively related to secure attachment style.

Following the analysis, statistically significant results were found between the avoidant insecure attachment style and the Machiavellian personality trait. This means that, at higher levels of insecure avoidant attachment, individuals report higher levels of Machiavellianism. Different research has reached the same conclusion (Stevenson and Akram, 2020) because Machiavellian people live in an emotionally empty world with no connection to their own emotions (alexithymia). This disengagement with their environment is a result of being unaware of their own emotional experiences, being unable to empathize with others and provide social support (Ináncsi et al., 2015).

In sum, this paper presents significant results between disorganized attachment and the three traits of the Dark Triad (narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy). Being due

to the fact that disorganized attachment coexists with both anxious insecure attachment and avoidant attachment (Stevenson and Akram, 2020), in which the person demonstrates confused, incoherent and contradictory behavior in terms of their attachment relationships with others (Ballester et al., 2014; Heym et al., 2020), with disengagement with their environment predominating.

Finally, in *hypothesis 3*, possible sex differences are posited to explain the relationship between attachment and dark personality. Although within the dark personality traits (Machiavellianism, narcissism and psychopathy), a higher score was found in all of them in men compared to women, it is a minimal difference and, therefore, not very representative to establish as relevant results in our study. However, Jonason et al., (2018) conducted a gender role view in which dark traits related more to masculinity and less to femininity. This result coincides with those of a study conducted with a Spanish population (Dorta, 2021), where men scored higher on Dark Triad traits than women, suggesting that sex differences may be part of a coordinated system of social adaptations that allow men, in particular, to be more reckless, manipulative, prone to self-love, and more eager to lead than women.

This paper provides a more detailed look at the relationship between attachment style and dark personality traits. At least two of these traits, Machiavellianism and psychopathy, are closely related to insecure attachment (Bloxom et al., 2021). Specifically, avoidant and/or disorganized attachment is the one that provides the most significant data when making correlations. Whereas, narcissism does not seem to show the same connections. It may imply that it is less maladaptive than the other two dark traits (Heym et al., 2020) in terms of parental care and bonding (Nickisch et al., 2020). In addition, this study offers a more comprehensive approach to the relationship of attachment and dark personality traits as opposed to others, which focus more on romantic attachment. It can also be seen that men score higher on dark personality traits than women (Connor et al., 2020). Thus, both may experience socialization and bonding differently.

Therefore, the practical implications that this work could have, in clinical terms, are directed towards prevention plans for a correct development of the secure attachment style in parents and the implementation of preventive programs in schools and institutes, in order to modify manipulative, deceptive and antisocial behaviors, characteristic of the Dark Triad. These programs would provide them with the necessary tools to be able to establish healthy relationships and establish appropriate emotional bonds, as well as to avoid, identify and get out of aversive situations and/or relationships.

On the other hand, it would be advisable to establish educational programs of more egalitarian socialization in which men are not treated favorably, or simply normalized, when it comes to behaving more recklessly, insensitively and lacking in empathy, unlike women.

There are several future lines of research that may emerge based on the present study, since further research on parental attachment and Dark Triad traits is needed. It would be interesting to expand the study sample to include as many countries as possible. With this we could study the relationships between the attachment styles that predominate in each country and the dark personality. As well as, explore the differences in parenting in different cultures to delve deeper into their possible causes.

The three components of the Triad coincide in a fundamental trait: the absence of empathy, not being able to put oneself in the place of another person, so another possible line of research could be to analyze the mediating relationship of empathy and see how it acts between the type of attachment and dark personality traits.

No studies have been found that investigate the age of these variables. Thus, a longitudinal study of the different age ranges could provide us with data on whether the personality remains stable over time or, on the contrary, may change over the years, thanks to the new bonds established. Research on marital status has not been found either, and it could

be relevant to study the cohabitation (alone or in a couple) of those people with dark personality traits.

The major limitation of this study was the form that was given to the different participants, since, as this research was part of a larger and more global study, the questionnaire was very long. This could have caused the participants to arrive tired at the last questions and the answers were not the same as they would have been if they had been at 100% of their attentional faculties.

Another limitation of this work is that no significant correlations were found between anxious attachment and dark personality traits. This could be due to the fact that in previous studies the anxious/ambivalent attachment is more from the point of view of an intimate relationship with the partner and not so much from the attachment style of parental care, which would be the one that occupies our research.

In any case, there are no compelling studies to speak of a particular attachment style in each of the Dark Triad traits. Therefore, it is important to continue to conduct studies on childhood attachment and dark personality, since, on the one hand, most of the studies found focus on a more intimate, romantic or couple attachment (Del Giudice, 2011), and it would be interesting to isolate it from parental attachment. And, on the other hand, the studies conducted fail to give the same answer to which particular attachment style is related to the traits of the Dark Triad.

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