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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DARK TRIAD, ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOR AWARENESS, AND SPORTS PERFORMANCE AMONG PAKISTANI ATHLETES

NAILA NAZAR



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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between Dark Triad traits, antisocial behavior awareness, and sports performance among Pakistani athletes. It examined whether demographic factors (gender, age, and type of sport) influenced these traits, and whether antisocial behavior awareness mediated the association between Dark Triad traits and sports performance. A cross-sectional research design was employed, involving 432 athletes aged 18–45 years recruited from universities, sports clubs, and national teams in Punjab, Pakistan. Standardized instruments were used: the Short Dark Triad Scale (SD3), the Athletes' Subjective Performance Scale (ASPS), and the newly developed Antisocial Behavior Awareness Scale (ABAS). Data were analyzed using Three-Way ANOVA to compare differences across demographic groups, whereas Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test direct and mediating effects. Findings revealed significant gender differences in Dark Triad traits and antisocial behavior awareness, when male athletes exhibiting higher Dark Triad traits, while female athletes demonstrated greater awareness of antisocial behavior ($F(1, 428) = 4.42, p < .05$). However, age and type of sport did not show significant effects. SEM analysis revealed that Machiavellianism ($\beta = -0.183$), Narcissism ($\beta = -0.180$), and Psychopathy ($\beta = -0.148$) had a negative impact on sports performance. In contrast, antisocial behavior awareness had a positive direct effect ($\beta = 0.298$) and mediated the negative impact of Dark Triad traits. The study underscores the importance of psychological awareness in mitigating the detrimental effects of dark personality traits on athletic performance. By introducing and validating the ABAS, this research provides a culturally relevant tool to assess antisocial behavior awareness among Pakistani athletes. The findings contribute to sports psychology literature by highlighting the interplay between personality traits, behavioral awareness, and performance outcomes. Practical implications suggest that coaches, sports psychologists, and policymakers should integrate awareness-based interventions to strengthen ethical conduct, foster team cohesion, and enhance sustainable sports performance.





HUBUNGAN ANTARA CIRI TRIAD GELAP, KESEDARAN TINGKAH LAKU ANTISOSIAL, DAN PRESTASI SUKAN DALAM KALANGAN ATLET PAKISTAN

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini mengkaji hubungan antara ciri Triad Gelap, kesedaran tingkah laku antisosial, dan prestasi sukan dalam kalangan atlet Pakistan. Kajian ini menilai sama ada faktor demografi (jantina, umur, dan jenis sukan) mempengaruhi ciri-ciri tersebut, dan sama ada kesedaran tingkah laku antisosial menjadi pengantara dalam hubungan antara Triad Gelap dan prestasi sukan. Reka bentuk kajian keratan rentas digunakan, melibatkan 432 atlet berumur antara 18-45 tahun yang dipilih daripada universiti, kelab sukan, dan pasukan kebangsaan di Punjab, Pakistan. Instrumen piawai terdiri daripada *Short Dark Triad Scale* (SD3), *Athletes' Subjective Performance Scale* (ASPS), dan skala yang baharu dibangunkan iaitu *Antisocial Behavior Awareness Scale* (ABAS). Data dianalisis menggunakan ANOVA Tiga Hala untuk membandingkan perbezaan antara kumpulan demografi, manakala Pemodelan Persamaan Berstruktur (SEM) digunakan bagi menguji kesan langsung dan kesan pengantaraan. Dapatan menunjukkan perbezaan jantina yang signifikan dalam ciri Triad Gelap dan kesedaran tingkah laku antisosial, apabila atlet lelaki menunjukkan skor Triad Gelap yang lebih tinggi, manakala atlet wanita menunjukkan tahap kesedaran yang lebih tinggi terhadap tingkah laku antisosial ($F(1, 428) = 4.42, p < .05$). Walau bagaimanapun, umur dan jenis sukan tidak menunjukkan kesan yang signifikan. Analisis SEM menunjukkan bahawa Machiavellianisme ($\beta = -0.183$), Narsisisme ($\beta = -0.180$), dan Psikopati ($\beta = -0.148$) memberi kesan negatif terhadap prestasi sukan. Sebaliknya, kesedaran terhadap tingkah laku antisosial memberi kesan langsung positif ($\beta = 0.298$) dan menjadi pengantara kepada kesan negatif Triad Gelap. Kajian ini menekankan kepentingan kesedaran psikologi dalam mengurangkan kesan buruk ciri Triad Gelap terhadap prestasi atlet. Dengan memperkenalkan dan mengesahkan ABAS, kajian ini menyediakan alat yang relevan dengan budaya untuk menilai kesedaran tingkah laku antisosial dalam kalangan atlet Pakistan. Hasil kajian ini menyumbang kepada literatur psikologi sukan dengan menekankan interaksi antara ciri personaliti, kesedaran tingkah laku, dan hasil prestasi. Implikasi praktikal mencadangkan agar jurulatih, pakar psikologi sukan, dan pembuat dasar mengintegrasikan intervensi berasaskan kesedaran untuk mengukuhkan etika, memupuk kesepaduan pasukan, dan meningkatkan prestasi sukan yang mampan.





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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AL	Adolescence-Limited
ASB	Antisocial behavior
ABAS	Antisocial Behavior Awareness Scale
ASPD	Antisocial Personality Disorder
ASPS	Athlete's Subjective Performance Scale
CB-SEM	Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling
CFI	Comparative Fit Index
CI	confidence intervals
CR	Critical Ratio
CATI	Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing
CFA	Confirmatory Factor Analysis
DSM-III	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Third Edition
DSM-IV	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition
DSM-V	Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition
EFA	Exploratory Factor Analysis
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
HDS	Hogan Development Survey



KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin
LCP	Life-Course-Persistent
NPI	Narcissist Personality Inventory
NPD	Narcissistic Personality Disorder
PABSS	Prosocial and Antisocial Behavior in Sport Scale
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PPI	Psychopathic Personality Inventory
PCL	Psychopathy Checklist
MDSS	Moral Disengagement in Sport Scale
RMSEA	Root Mean Square Error of Approximation
SAS	Sport Achievement Scale
SE	Standard Error
SEM	Structural Equation Modeling
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
SD3	Short Dark Triad
SPS	Sports Performance Scale
SRD	Self-Report Delinquency Scale
TLI	Tucker-Lewis Index
TPB	Theory of Planned Behavior

APPENDIX LIST

A Population and Simple

A1 List of universities in Punjab Province (Pakistan)

B Letter of Permutation

B1 List of Panel expertise

B2 Approval of Human Research Ethics

C Data Collection

C1 Informed consent form

C2 Questioner

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C4 Approval form Expert Research Instrument Validation

C5 The six steps of model specification in SEM

C6 Turnitin it in Report

D RIMS Approval

D1 Approval letter

D2 Articles

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This section addresses the central research issue concerning the relationship between the Dark Triad personality traits, antisocial behavior awareness, and sports performance among Pakistani athletes. The study aims to explore the direct, indirect, and mediating effects of Dark Triad traits Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy on sports performance, mediated by antisocial behavior awareness. The need for this research emerges from the limited understanding of how these personality traits influence athletic performance and team dynamics, particularly within the Pakistani sports context. Chapter 1 serves as the foundation of this study by introducing the research problem, background, objectives, and significance of the study. It provides a comprehensive overview of the key concepts and theoretical perspectives underpinning the research. Additionally, this chapter outlines the conceptual framework guiding the study, defines essential terms, and presents the research questions. By establishing the research context, Chapter 1 ensures clarity and direction for the subsequent chapters,



setting the stage for a rigorous exploration of the relationship between Dark Triad traits, antisocial behavior awareness, and sports performance.

1.2 Background of The Study

In competitive sports, personality plays a crucial role in shaping an athlete's performance, mindset, and ethical behavior. While traits such as resilience, discipline, and teamwork are widely celebrated, there is growing interest in the impact of darker personality traits, particularly those encompassed within the Dark Triad of Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). These traits, often associated with manipulation, self-interest, and impulsivity, have been found to be more prevalent among athletes than non-athletes, suggesting that they may offer certain competitive advantages but also present ethical concerns (Gonzalez-Hernandez, Cuevas-Campos, Tovar-Galvez, & Melguizo-Rodríguez, 2020).

One key issue is the extent to which athletes recognize and regulate their antisocial behaviors, as this awareness may mediate the relationship between personality and sports performance (Nazar & Khalid, 2023). However, research in this area remains limited, especially in non-Western, collectivist societies like Pakistan, where female athletes face unique cultural and societal challenges. This study aims to explore the interplay between Dark Triad traits, antisocial behavior awareness, and sports performance among female athletes in Pakistan, shedding light on how these psychological factors influence both success and sportsmanship in competitive environments.





Personality traits are essential in an athlete's success (Vaughan & Madigan, 2021). This includes direct and indirect effects on sports performance (Allen, Greenlees, & Jones, 2013). Literature suggests that personality may also be integral to elite athlete development (Hardy, Barlow, Evans, Rees, Woodman, & Warr, 2017). The Dark Triad is a particularly relevant set of personality traits (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). So far, research has only examined the prevalence of these traits in athletes, with athletes reporting higher levels of the Dark Triad than non-athletes (Vaughan, Madigan, Carter, & Nicholls, 2019).

According to the research conducted by Maples, Lamkin, and Miller (2014), the Dark Triad is comprised of three distinct yet intricately interwoven personality traits: Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy. Narcissism manifests as an overwhelming sense of grandeur and self-importance, leading individuals to perceive themselves as superior to others and often demanding admiration and validation. On the other hand, Machiavellianism is characterized by a cunning disposition, where manipulation and self-serving tactics are employed to achieve one's goals, often at the expense of others. Meanwhile, psychopathy reveals itself through impulsive behaviors, a striking absence of empathy, and heightened anxiety, creating individuals who may act unpredictably and disregard societal norms (Paulhus & Williams, 2002).

When these three dark traits converge, they paint a portrait of a personality that is not only hostile and antagonistic but also malicious and profoundly egocentric. This confluence of traits is frequently correlated with aggressive behavior, unethical decision-making, and significant difficulties in forming and maintaining healthy interpersonal relationships (Furnham, Richards, Rangel, & Jones, 2014; Muris, Merckelbach, Otgaar, & Meijer, 2017).





Existing research indicates that athletes exhibit higher levels of Dark Triad traits compared to non-athletes (Vaughan, Madigan, Carter, & Nicholls, 2019). This suggests that these traits may provide certain advantages in sports, such as increased competitiveness, resilience, and a willingness to take risks (Carter, Montanaro, Linney, & Campbell, 2015). For instance, Machiavellianism and Narcissism have been linked to strategic aggression, deception, and increased motivation to win, which can be beneficial in high-stakes competition. However, these traits are also associated with antisocial behaviors, poor sportsmanship, and unethical conduct, including cheating and doping in sports (Nicholls, Madigan, Backhouse, & Levy, 2017).

People tend to come up with reasons or excuses for their antisocial behaviors, especially when these behaviors go against their values and norms. Previous work has shown that people with antagonistic personality characteristics, such as Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy, reported more antisocial behaviors compared to their peers (Klimstra, Sijtsema, Henrichs, & Cima, 2014). Although little is known about the underlying factors influencing these associations, some work has shown that these personality characteristics were also associated with poorer moral reasoning and greater use of justification of antisocial behaviors, especially moral disengagement (Tuvblad, 2014).

While many studies focus on the direct impact of the Dark Triad on behavior, less attention has been given to athletes' awareness of their antisocial behaviors and the moral reasoning processes involved. Research suggests that individuals with high levels of Dark Triad traits are more likely to engage in antisocial behaviors, often justifying their actions through moral disengagement and rationalization (Tuvblad, 2014). In the





sports domain, this can manifest in rule-breaking, unsportsmanlike conduct, and an increased likelihood of engaging in unethical practices.

Antisocial behavior awareness refers to an athlete's recognition, justification, and regulation of morally questionable actions in competitive environments. Some studies suggest that athletes with higher Dark Triad traits may engage in antisocial behaviors but possess lower awareness or concern about their actions' ethical implications (Klimstra, Sijtsema, Henrichs, & Cima, 2014). This lack of awareness can further reinforce behaviors such as aggression, dishonesty, and manipulation, ultimately affecting personal and team dynamics.

In the realm of sports, emerging evidence indicates that the prevalence of the Dark Triad traits Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and psychopathy tends to be more pronounced among athletes compared to their non-athlete peers (Vaughan et al., 2019).

This intriguing finding has prompted a growing body of research aimed at exploring the various ways these personality traits manifest within athletic contexts. For instance, studies have revealed that individuals exhibiting higher levels of Dark Triad characteristics are more likely to harbor favorable attitudes toward doping, as well as a greater propensity to engage in actual cheating behaviors during competitions (Nicholls, Madigan, Backhouse, & Levy, 2017). Beyond ethical concerns, other research highlights the intricate interplay between the Dark Triad and mental toughness, suggesting that these traits can collectively influence physical activity levels among athletes (Vaughan, Carter, Cockroft, & Maggiorini, 2018).

Most recently, Vaughan and Madigan (2021) underscored the direct relevance of the Dark Triad within the sports arena, demonstrating that these traits not only predict





heightened competitiveness but also correlate with objective measures of sports training performance. Clearly, the implications of the Dark Triad are significant, warranting further exploration into how these psychological dimensions can affect athletes' conduct and overall performance in their sporting endeavors.

The traits associated with the Dark Triad personality can also be advantageous for athletes, particularly those focused on performance, as they may drive individuals to pursue personal objectives and excel, even if it comes at the cost of others' goals and feelings, thereby enhancing their likelihood of success (Carter, Montanaro, Linney, & Campbell, 2015). Dark Triad traits, may also contribute to mental toughness, strategic decision-making, and enhanced performance motivation in athletes (Vaughan, Carter, Cockroft, & Maggiorini, 2018). Recent research has linked these traits to increased competitiveness, higher training intensity, and greater resilience under pressure (Vaughan & Madigan, 2021).

The relationship between Dark Triad traits such as Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy and sports performance is multifaceted and may be influenced by an athlete's awareness of their antisocial behaviors. Athletes exhibiting high levels of these traits, combined with a lack of awareness regarding their antisocial tendencies, may be at increased risk for engaging in actions like doping, cheating, or causing interpersonal conflicts. These behaviors can adversely affect not only their performance but also their reputation within the sport. On the other hand, athletes who recognize and actively manage their antisocial behaviors may be able to leverage their competitive edge in a way that aligns with ethical sportsmanship, ultimately enhancing their performance while upholding integrity in competition.





Most research on the Dark Triad in sports has been conducted in Western contexts, leaving a gap in understanding how these traits operate in non-Western, collectivist cultures such as Pakistan. Cultural values influence moral reasoning, social behavior, and competitive strategies, meaning that the manifestation of Dark Triad traits in Pakistani female athletes may differ from Western counterparts. Given the unique sociocultural challenges faced by female athletes in Pakistan, such as gender biases, limited resources, and societal expectations, the interplay between personality, behavior, and performance warrants closer examination.

The current research intends to add to the existing body of literature by exploring the connection between Dark Triad personality traits, recognition of antisocial behavior, and athletic performance among female athletes in Pakistan.

Specifically, it seeks to determine whether higher levels of Dark Triad traits correlate with improved sports performance, the extent to which awareness of antisocial behavior mediates the connection between Dark Triad traits and sports performance, and how cultural and gender-specific factors shape these relationships within the context of sports in Pakistan. By addressing these research questions, this study will offer valuable insights into the psychological and ethical dimensions of elite sports performance, enhancing both the theoretical framework of sports psychology and practical applications for athlete development.





1.3 Problem Statement

The first problem to be addressed is the impact of negative personality traits. Sports teams and management worldwide have increasingly used mental techniques to enhance athletic performance. One aspect of this field focuses on assessing whether athletes possess specific personality traits that contribute to their success in their respective sports (Habib, Waris, & Afzal, 2019). These traits also influence the likelihood of athletes experiencing various emotions. Both Personality traits are significant factors in an athlete's sports experience because they impact performance, motivation, and overall well-being (Sheykhangafose, Abolghasemi, & Masouleh, 2021; Ionel, Ion, & Visu-Petra, 2023; Marchese, Lanzoni, & Steca, 2022). positive (e.g., happiness) and negative (e.g., anger), during their sporting endeavors (Laborde, Allen, Katschak, Mattonet, & Lachner, 2020). Indeed, personality traits play a significant role in sports performance. However, previous literature regarding this association among Pakistani athletes has not received adequate attention. Therefore, it has become essential to investigate how personality traits, such as the Dark Triad (comprising Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy), relate to the performance of athletes in Pakistan.

The second issue to be addressed is the absence of sufficient research evidence regarding Pakistani content. The "Dark Triad " refers to a set of three distinct yet interrelated personality traits: Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). Although these traits are typically viewed as maladaptive, there are instances where they may confer certain advantages to individuals (Furnham, Richards, & Paulhus, 2013). Empirical research has demonstrated a connection





between the Dark Triad and athletes' attitudes toward doping. For example, athletes exhibiting higher scores on the Dark Triad traits have been found to be more susceptible to doping behaviors (Nicholls et al., 2017). A comparative study between individuals with and without sports experience revealed significant disparities in Dark Triad scores; notably, athletes scored higher across all three traits than their non-athlete counterparts.

Furthermore, among athletes, those engaged in individual sports exhibited higher levels of Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy compared to those involved in team sports (Vaughan et al., 2019). Most published research are from European and American countries but in Pakistan still not enough evidence in terms of the Dark Triad as a predictor of sports performance. While prior studies underscore the significance of Dark Triad personality traits in the realm of sports such as attitudes toward doping and cheating (Nicholls, Madigan, Duncan, Hallward, Lazuras, Bingham, & Fairs, 2020), there has been relatively limited research conducted worldwide that investigates the association between the Dark Triad and overall sport performance among athletes. So, this research will fill this gap and investigate the relationship between Dark Triad and sports performance and antisocial behavior awareness as mediating roles among Pakistani athletes.

Antisocial behavior is a significant issue within the realm of athletics, encompassing actions that cause harm to others or result in negative consequences for athletes. One example of this is the act of physically intimidating or frightening an opponent (Sage, Kavussanu & Duda, 2006). Antisocial behavior is a pressing societal concern due to its detrimental effects on individuals, as well as its economic and social repercussions. This issue is prevalent across various social settings, including both the workplace and sports. Antisocial behaviors exhibited by teammates can include verbal





abuse, profanity, arguments, criticism, and expressions of frustration regarding one's own performance. Such actions can lead to serious ramifications for the recipient, evoking feelings of anger and overall negative emotions, which ultimately diminish the enjoyment of the sports experience. Research has indicated that antisocial teammate behavior is positively correlated with anger and negative emotions while being inversely related to both effort and perceived performance in cross-sectional studies (Al-Yaaribi & Kavussanu, 2018).

Although international research has increasingly examined the role of personality traits in sports performance, there remains a noticeable paucity of empirical studies focusing specifically on Pakistani athletes. A recent conceptual study by Nazar and Khalid (2023) highlighted the need to investigate how Dark Triad traits and antisocial behavior influence sports performance in Pakistan, proposing the development of an indigenous Antisocial Behavior Scale to address this gap. Given that cultural norms significantly shape both personality expression and behavioral outcomes, findings from Western contexts may not be fully generalizable to the Pakistani sporting environment. Additionally, the construct of antisocial behavior awareness, how athletes recognize, manage, and regulate antisocial tendencies, remains largely unexplored among Pakistani athletes, despite its relevance to ethical conduct, team dynamics, and performance outcomes (Nazar & Khalid, 2023; Khalid & Nazar, 2024). Addressing this gap promises culturally grounded insights into the interplay between the Dark Triad, antisocial behavior awareness, and sports performance in Pakistan, which is essential for evidence-based interventions and athlete development strategies within the region.





However, the relationship between antisocial behavior and sports performance is a crucial yet underexplored area in sports psychology, particularly in the context of Pakistani athletes. Antisocial behaviors in sports refer to actions that intentionally harm or disadvantage others, such as cheating, verbal abuse, intimidation, aggression, deception, and unsportsmanlike conduct (Sage, Kavussanu, & Duda, 2006). These behaviors can manifest in both individual and team sports, affecting not only an athlete's personal performance but also the overall dynamics and cohesion within a team. Research suggests that antisocial behavior can have both negative and positive implications for sports performance, depending on the context and the athlete's psychological disposition.

For example, antisocial behaviors are often associated with a range of negative outcomes, including diminished team morale, increased conflict, reduced trust among teammates, and heightened levels of stress and anxiety (Al-Yaaribi & Kavussanu, 2018). Athletes who frequently engage in antisocial actions may face social isolation, which can adversely affect their motivation, concentration, and ability to collaborate effectively in team sports. Furthermore, such behaviors can result in penalties, suspensions, or even disqualifications, impacting both individual and team performance. Research has indicated that athletes demonstrating higher levels of antisocial behavior often possess lower self-regulation skills, which may lead to inconsistent or suboptimal performance (McEwan & Zhang, 2023).

Conversely, some research indicates that specific antisocial behaviors such as strategic aggression, psychological intimidation, and deceptive tactics can yield short-term performance advantages, particularly in highly competitive sports (Lee, Whitehead, & Ntoumanis, 2007). For instance, certain elite athletes exhibit controlled





aggression and intimidation to secure a psychological edge over their opponents, which may bolster their competitive drive and effectiveness in high-pressure situations (Kavussanu et al., 2013). Nevertheless, while these behaviors may facilitate short-term success, they can compromise long-term performance sustainability, tarnish an athlete's reputation, and detrimentally impact mental well-being.

Despite growing interest in this topic, the mechanisms by which antisocial behavior affects sports performance remain unclear, particularly in non-Western sports contexts. There is a lack of empirical research examining the extent to which antisocial behavior directly influences athletic outcomes, team dynamics, and psychological well-being in Pakistani athletes. Furthermore, existing studies have not sufficiently explored the role of antisocial behavior awareness, how well athletes recognize and understand the consequences of their actions as a potential factor influencing sports performance.



The absence of a valid and reliable scale to measure antisocial behavior awareness among Pakistani athletes presents a significant gap in sports psychology research. Existing instruments, such as the Prosocial and Antisocial Behavior in Sport Scale (PABSS) (Kavussanu & Boardley, 2009), have primarily been developed and validated in Western contexts. The PABSS assesses both prosocial and antisocial behaviors in sports but does not specifically focus on athletes' awareness of their antisocial behaviors, which is a critical aspect for understanding self-regulation and ethical decision-making in sports. While PABSS has been widely used, it measures behaviors rather than the cognitive recognition and awareness of those behaviors, which may limit its effectiveness in examining how athletes perceive and justify their own actions.





Similarly, the Moral Disengagement in Sport Scale (MDSS) (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2008) evaluates the mechanisms through which athletes justify unethical behaviors, such as shifting blame, dehumanizing opponents, or downplaying consequences. However, MDSS focuses on moral reasoning and justification rather than direct awareness and acknowledgment of antisocial behaviors in real sports settings. Another related tool, the Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992), assesses hostile and instrumental aggression, but it does not capture the broader spectrum of antisocial behaviors in sports, such as cheating, unsportsmanlike conduct, or verbal abuse.

Given these limitations, the development of a new Antisocial Behavior Awareness Scale (ABAS) is essential to address this research gap. Unlike existing tools, ABAS is designed to measure athletes' perception, recognition, and awareness of their antisocial behaviors, rather than merely their engagement in such behaviors or the underlying psychological mechanisms. The scale will specifically evaluate how effectively athletes can identify antisocial behaviors, comprehend their consequences on performance and team dynamics, and recognize their ethical implications within sports. By incorporating a culturally relevant perspective, this scale will offer a more nuanced understanding of antisocial tendencies among Pakistani athletes, ultimately assisting sports psychologists, coaches, and policymakers in promoting ethical sportsmanship and enhancing team cohesion.

There is a notable lack of studies examining Dark Triad traits, specifically in the context of sports performance (McEwan & Zhang, 2023). Most existing research on these personality traits tends to focus on workplace behavior or general psychological outcomes, rather than athletic performance. While some studies have





investigated gender differences in Dark Triad traits, there is limited understanding of how these differences impact sports performance (Al-Yaaribi, Kavussanu, & Ring, 2018). The variations in Dark Triad traits Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy as well as antisocial behavior, influenced by factors such as gender, age, and type of sport, represent critical areas that remain underexplored, especially concerning Pakistani athletes. Understanding these differences is essential, as they can significantly affect athletes' performance, ethical decision-making, and team dynamics, ultimately shaping the culture of sports. However, most existing research primarily focuses on Western populations, creating a significant gap in our knowledge of how these psychological traits manifest across diverse demographic groups within Pakistan's sporting environment.



The differences in Dark Triad traits (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy) and antisocial behavior based on gender, age, and sport games are critical aspects that remain underexplored, particularly in the context of Pakistani athletes. Understanding these variations is essential, as they can influence athletes' performance, ethical decision-making, and team dynamics, ultimately shaping the culture of sports. However, existing research primarily focuses on Western populations, leaving a significant gap in knowledge regarding how these psychological traits manifest in different demographic groups within Pakistan's sports environment.

One of the most well-documented findings in personality research is that gender differences exist in Dark Triad traits and antisocial behaviors. Studies indicate that male athletes tend to score higher in Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy, displaying greater competitiveness, risk-taking, and manipulative tendencies compared to female athletes (Jonason et al., 2015; Vaughan et al., 2019). This difference may





explain why men are more likely to engage in direct physical aggression, rule-breaking, and intimidation, whereas women often exhibit relational aggression, such as social exclusion or psychological manipulation (Brewer & Abell, 2017). While these traits may provide a competitive edge in certain situations, they can also lead to conflicts, team dysfunction, and ethical violations. Moreover, narcissistic tendencies in male athletes are often linked to a greater focus on personal achievement and recognition rather than team cohesion, which can create tensions within team-based sports (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Despite these insights, there is limited empirical evidence examining gender-specific differences in the Dark Triad and antisocial behavior among Pakistani athletes, making it crucial to explore how these traits influence male and female athletes differently in various sports settings.



Similarly, age differences play a pivotal role in shaping an athlete's personality traits, ethical awareness, and behavioral tendencies. Research suggests that younger athletes (18–25 years old) typically score higher in Narcissism, impulsivity, and competitive aggression, which may contribute to a win-at-all-costs mentality (Makim & Shetty, 2018). This age group is more prone to antisocial behaviors such as cheating, verbal aggression, and unsportsmanlike conduct due to their higher emotional reactivity and lower impulse control (Nicholls et al., 2020). In contrast, older athletes (26+ years old) tend to exhibit greater self-regulation, emotional stability, and ethical awareness, possibly due to accumulated experience and exposure to sportsmanship principles (Kawamoto et al., 2020). This suggests that antisocial behaviors may be more prevalent in younger athletes, raising concerns about early intervention and psychological skill training to promote ethical sports participation. However, no prior research has investigated how age-related differences in the Dark Triad and antisocial behavior





impact sports performance among Pakistani athletes, highlighting the need for further examination in this area.

Additionally, the type of sport an athlete participates in significantly influences the prevalence of Dark Triad traits and antisocial behaviors. Prior research has already established robust differences between individual and team sports, showing that athletes in individual sports (e.g., tennis, boxing, swimming) tend to score higher in Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy compared to those in team sports (Vaughan et al., 2019). Individual sports emphasize self-reliance, personal dominance, and psychological resilience, aligning with narcissistic self-focus and Machiavellian strategic thinking (Roberts et al., 2017). In contrast, team sports emphasize cooperation, communication, and collective success, which generally discourage extreme self-centeredness and manipulative tendencies (McEwan & Zhang, 2023). However, while these distinctions between individual and team sports are well documented, much less attention has been given to whether meaningful differences also exist within team sports. Comparisons among football, cricket, basketball, hockey, and other team-based disciplines remain scarce, leaving an important gap in understanding how the social, cultural, and structural demands of different team sports may uniquely shape Dark Triad traits and antisocial behaviors.

Not all team sports are alike. Contact-intensive sports such as football and hockey are frequently associated with higher levels of aggression and risk-taking, as athletes in contact sports generally display significantly greater anger and competitive aggression than those in non-contact sports (Kowalski et al., 2016). Adolescents engaged in contact sports also tend to demonstrate heightened aggressiveness compared to their peers in non-contact sports, further highlighting the psychological distinctions





between sporting contexts (Bojanić et al., 2020). In contrast, sports such as cricket and badminton involve less physical confrontation and instead emphasize patience, discipline, and strategic play. Team cohesion and collaboration in such sports have been shown to reduce antisocial tendencies and mitigate aggressive behavior (Voinea et al., 2021). Basketball, meanwhile, represents a hybrid structure, requiring both physical assertiveness and complex tactical coordination. These structural and cultural differences across team sports may shape the extent to which athletes express Dark Triad traits and antisocial behaviors. Moreover, psychopathic traits such as impulsivity, fearlessness, and lack of empathy already linked to antisocial conduct in sporting environments further underscore the need to explore these dynamics (Schaap & Buunk, 2023). Despite the cultural importance of football, cricket, basketball, badminton, and hockey in Pakistan, little empirical research has examined how these specific team sports differ in relation to Dark Triad traits and antisocial behavior awareness, creating a pressing need for further investigation.

The lack of research on gender, age, and sport differences in Dark Triad traits and antisocial behaviors among Pakistani athletes presents a significant gap in sports psychology. Without a clear understanding of these demographic variations, coaches, sports psychologists, and policymakers may struggle to develop effective personality-based interventions, ethical training programs, and team management strategies. Addressing this issue is critical to ensuring that athletes are not only skilled competitors but also ethically responsible individuals who contribute to a positive sporting environment. By examining these differences within the Pakistani context, this research aims to bridge existing knowledge gaps and provide valuable insights into how





psychological traits shape athletic performance, ethical decision-making, and long-term sports success.

As sports performance becomes a primary focus of this research, evaluating and measuring player performance in team sports such as football and basketball presents challenges. This difficulty arises from the complex movements that naturally occur during game situations, which are characteristic of open-skill activities involving various performance factors (Eom & Kim, 2002). Although evaluations are typically based on coaches' observations, this method is vulnerable to personal biases, limited human memory capacity, and players' fame, all of which can compromise the accuracy and consistency of specific evaluations and feedback (Franks & Goodman, 1984). A systematic literature review by Saw et al. (2016) demonstrated that subjective performance ratings are more sensitive than objective measures when assessing athletes' performance, particularly in team sports. Given the increasing importance of subjective performance measurement, researchers have focused on developing measurement tools (Nahum et al., 2016; Nahum, 2019; Pensgaard & Duda, 2003). Therefore, this study will specifically evaluate the impact of the Dark Triad personality traits and antisocial behavior on subjective sports performance achievement.

The role of antisocial behavior awareness as a mediator in the relationship between Dark Triad traits (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy) and sports performance also remains an unexplored area in sports psychology, particularly within the Pakistani athletic context. While previous research has established that Dark Triad traits are positively linked to antisocial behaviors in sports, such as cheating, aggression, deception, and rule-breaking (Nicholls et al., 2017), the underlying psychological mechanisms that explain how and why these behaviors impact





performance remain unclear. One critical gap in the literature is whether athletes' awareness of their antisocial behaviors influences their sports performance either by mitigating the negative effects of such behaviors or by reinforcing their use for competitive advantage. Despite the growing interest in antisocial behaviors in sports, no prior study has examined antisocial behavior awareness as a mediating factor between Dark Triad traits and sports performance. Addressing this issue is crucial, as it may provide deeper insights into how athletes recognize, justify, or regulate their own unethical behaviors and whether this awareness ultimately influences their performance outcomes.

Antisocial behavior awareness refers to an athlete's ability to recognize, understand, and acknowledge behaviors that violate ethical norms in sports, including aggression, intimidation, cheating, and unsportsmanlike conduct (Al-Yaaribi & Kavussanu, 2018). Some athletes may engage in moral disengagement, where they rationalize their antisocial actions as acceptable within the competitive context (Boardley & Kavussanu, 2009). For instance, an athlete high in Machiavellianism may use strategic manipulation and deception to outplay opponents, while a narcissistic athlete might justify aggressive dominance as a necessity for personal success. Similarly, individuals high in Psychopathy may lack empathy or remorse, making them more prone to engaging in antisocial behaviors without recognizing their moral or social consequences (Sijtsema, Garofalo, Jansen, & Klimstra, 2019). However, athletes who possess a greater awareness of their antisocial behaviors may be more likely to self-regulate their actions, reducing excessive aggression or unethical conduct that could otherwise harm their sports performance. Conversely, those with low antisocial





behavior awareness may continue engaging in such behaviors, leading to penalties, poor team cohesion, and decreased performance sustainability over time.

While previous studies have delved into the direct effects of Dark Triad traits namely Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy, on antisocial behavior and athletic performance, there remains a noticeable gap in the research regarding the role of antisocial behavior awareness in moderating or mediating this intricate relationship. Some investigations have indicated that engaging in antisocial behaviors can detrimentally affect performance by fostering interpersonal conflicts, diminishing team morale, and ultimately curbing the potential for long-term success (McEwan & Zhang, 2023). Conversely, other research posits an intriguing perspective that in certain contexts, particularly within highly competitive or contact-heavy sports, antisocial behavior, when strategically employed, may yield short-term performance enhancements (Vaughan & Madigan, 2021). This nuanced interplay suggests that the presence of antisocial behavior awareness could be pivotal, influencing whether such behaviors are curbed or instead encouraged. This awareness represents a critical lens through which we can better understand the ways in which Dark Triad traits shape athletic outcomes, as it may ultimately determine how athletes navigate the complexities of competition and collaboration in their respective sports.

In light of these gaps, the present study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the psychological underpinnings of athletic behavior by examining both personality traits and antisocial tendencies among Pakistani athletes. Specifically, it aims to compare the manifestation of Dark Triad traits (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy) and antisocial behavior across gender, age groups, and types of sports. Beyond descriptive comparisons, the study investigates how each of the



Dark Triad traits relates to athletes' perceptions of their sports performance, while also exploring the role of antisocial behavior as a mediating mechanism in these relationships. Furthermore, it examines the direct association between antisocial behavior awareness and sports performance, thereby integrating both individual dispositions and behavioral awareness into a single framework. Collectively, these objectives will contribute to a nuanced understanding of how dark personality traits and antisocial tendencies interact to influence performance outcomes in the sporting context of Pakistan.

1.4 Research Objectives

This study aims to explore the direct and indirect effects of Dark Triad traits on sports performance, the role of antisocial behavior awareness as a mediator, and variations across gender, age, and sports categories. The following research objectives (RO) have been designed to address these gaps:

- RO1 : To compare the Dark Triad personality (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, Psychopathy) based on gender, age, and types of sports among Pakistani athletes.
- RO2 : To compare the antisocial behavior based on gender, age, and types of sports among Pakistani athletes.
- RO3 : To compare the sport performance based on gender, age, and types of sports among Pakistani athletes.
- RO4 : To determine the relationship between Machiavellianism and sports performance among Pakistani athletes.
- RO5 : To determine the relationship between Narcissism and sports performance among Pakistani athletes.

- RO6 : To determine the relationship between Psychopathy and sports performance among Pakistani athletes.
- RO7 : To determine the mediation effect of Antisocial Behavior on the relationship between Machiavellianism and sports performance among Pakistani athletes.
- RO8 : To determine the mediation effect of Antisocial Behavior on the relationship between Narcissism and sports performance among Pakistani athletes.
- RO9 : To determine the mediation effect of Antisocial Behavior on the relationship between Psychopathy and sports performance among Pakistani athletes
- RO10 : To determine the relationship between Antisocial Behaviour Awareness and Sport Performance among Pakistani athletes

1.5 Research Questions

The following research questions have been formulated to achieve these objectives:

- RQ1 : Do Dark Triad traits (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, Psychopathy) differ by gender, age group, and type of sport among Pakistani athletes?
- RQ2 : Does antisocial behavior differ by gender, age group, and type of sport among Pakistani athletes?
- RQ3 : Does sport performance differ by gender, age, and type of sport among Pakistani athletes?
- RQ4 : What is the relationship between Machiavellianism and sport performance among Pakistani athletes?
- RQ5 : What is the relationship between Narcissism and sport performance among Pakistani athletes?
- RQ6 : What is the relationship between Psychopathy and sport performance among Pakistani athletes?
- RQ7 : Does antisocial behavior mediate the relationship between Machiavellianism and sport performance among Pakistani athletes?

- RQ8 Does antisocial behavior mediate the relationship between Narcissism and sport performance among Pakistani athletes?
- RQ9 Does antisocial behavior mediate the relationship between Psychopathy and sport performance among Pakistani athletes?
- RQ10 What is the relationship between antisocial behavior awareness and sport performance among Pakistani athletes?

1.6 Conceptual framework

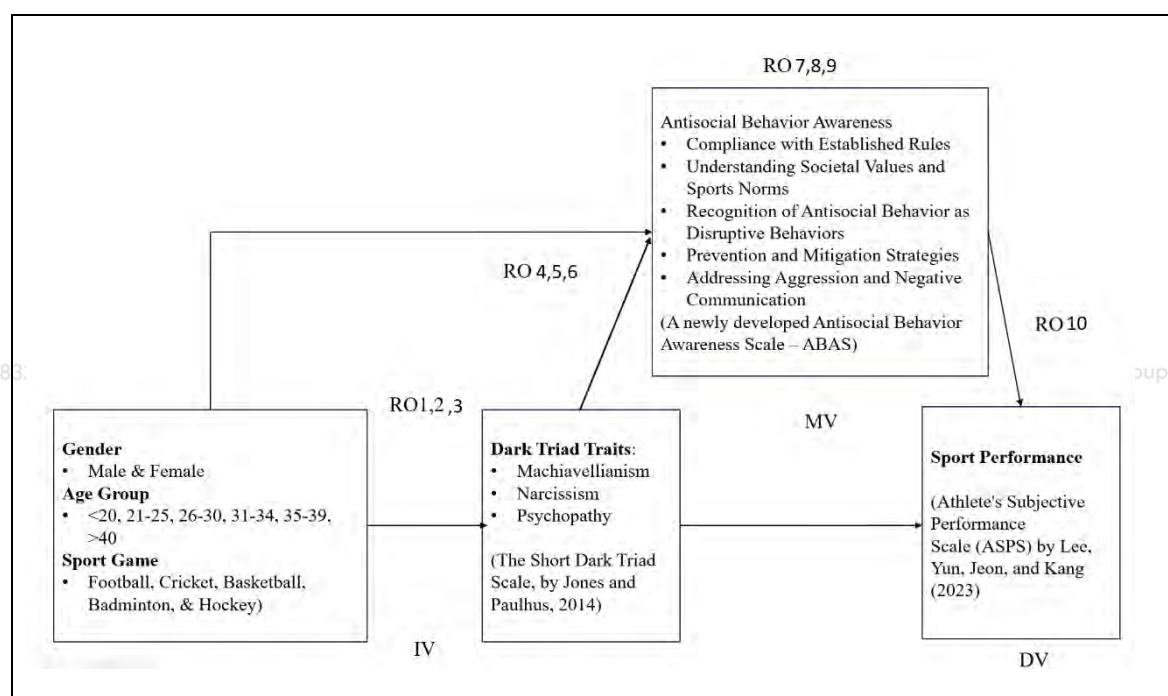
The conceptual framework of this research carries three predictors under Dark Triad personality (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy), one mediation as antisocial behavior, and one outcome variable (sports performance). In contrast, compassion was also be measured on three demographics, (gender, age, and types of sports) in Dark Triad and antisocial behavior. Figure 1.1 shows the association of Dark Triad personality (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy) with sports performance and antisocial behavior. There is also an association between antisocial behavior and sports performance. A Dark Triad personality is a combination of three personalities such as Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy, which was measured as predictors in this study and presented in the model.

Antisocial social behavior combines harmful behaviors that go against accepted social norms, habitually causing harm to others or ignoring established social rules and expectations. So, in this research, antisocial behavior is a mediator. Performance is very important in every sport, not only for athletes but also for team and team management, therefore sports performance is the outcome variable in this research and showed in the model with Dark Triad personality and antisocial behavior. Therefore, this model represents the mediation role of antisocial behavior between the Dark Triad

(Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy) and sports performance. The Dark Triad was presented as a predictor variable in the model (Machiavellianism, Narcissism, and Psychopathy), antisocial behavior was used as a mediator, and sports performance was the dependent variable. Whereas, the differences in Dark Triad and antisocial behavior are based on gender, age, and types of sports.

Figure 1.1

Conceptual Framework of the Study



1.7 Importance of The Study

The present research contributes to a large body of literature regarding theoretical and practical implications. This research gained the attention of sports psychologists, coaches, and sports policymakers to develop policies regarding personality traits such as Dark Triad and antisocial behavior. The theoretical significance of this research is to investigate the role of Dark Triad personality in sports performance among Pakistani



athletes, with the mediation effect of antisocial behavior in the relationship between Dark Triad personality and sports performance. This research is also essential because it measures the difference in Dark Triad and antisocial behavior based on gender, age, and sports categories. Because Pakistani culture has different norms for males and females, this may affect their personality and antisocial behavior.

The research was also added major contributions to the literature on an indigenous scale of Antisocial Behavior among Pakistani athletes, adding significant implications for Pakistani athletes. The Indigenous scale was help to measure antisocial behavior in a better way among Pakistani athletes in future studies. This research is also important to provide an association between Dark Triad personality, antisocial behavior, and sports, which helps worldwide researchers to conduct interventions on these variables to improve sports performance.



As far as the practical contribution of this research, this present research gives direction regarding the Dark Triad personality and antisocial behavior to coaches and sports directors to improve sports performance. The association between Dark Triad personality, antisocial behavior, and sports performance has not received abundant attention within the literature and looks neglected. This neglect has created an absence of literature and a gap among Pakistani athletes. The findings can thus serve as a supply of information for future researchers on the effectiveness of personality traits on sports performance among athletes. The findings of the present research have also been helpful for the study of the association of Dark Triad personality, antisocial behavior, and sports performance among athletes in different parts of the world.





Exploring how these personality traits influence sports performance can provide valuable insights into the behavioral and psychological factors contributing to athletic success or failure. This understanding can help coaches and sports psychologists better support athletes in optimizing their performance. These relationships within the Pakistani context can reveal how cultural and societal factors impact the expression and effects of the Dark Triad traits. This can contribute to the broader field of cross-cultural psychology and help tailor interventions and support systems to specific cultural contexts.

Understanding how the Dark Triad traits affect male and female athletes differently can lead to developing gender-specific training and coaching strategies. This can enhance the effectiveness of performance-enhancement programs and address athletes' unique needs based on gender. The impact of these traits across different age categories, the study can inform age-appropriate interventions and support mechanisms. This can help young athletes develop healthier psychological profiles and improve their long-term athletic potential. The study can provide valuable information on how the Dark Triad traits influence performance in various sports categories. This can guide coaches and sports organizations in designing training programs and team dynamics that account for these personality traits, improving overall team performance and individual athlete satisfaction. Exploring the psychological mechanisms through which the Dark Triad traits impact performance can help identify specific areas for intervention.

Identifying the impact of the Dark Triad traits on sports performance can lead to the creation of effective intervention strategies to manage or mitigate their negative effects. This can enhance athletes' well-being, improve team cohesion, and lead to





better performance outcomes. The findings of the study can inform policies and best practices within sports organizations, educational institutions, and athletic programs. By integrating psychological insights into training and development frameworks, these entities can better support athletes in achieving their full potential.

1.8 Operational Definition

An operational definition is a meticulously crafted, clear, and quantifiable description of a variable or concept that plays a vital role in research. It delineates with precision the specific methods used to measure or manipulate the variable in question during a particular study. This clarity ensures that the concept is consistently interpreted and observed across different contexts, providing a common understanding among researchers. The operational definition is applied to the principal variables of the study, as detailed below:

1.8.1 Dark Triad

The term Dark Triad encompasses a cluster of three personality traits: Psychopathy, Machiavellianism, and Narcissism. These traits are often characterized by their negative, maladaptive nature and are typically perceived as socially undesirable. Psychopathy is marked by a lack of empathy and remorse, Machiavellianism is defined by cunning manipulation and exploitation of others, while Narcissism entails an inflated sense of self-importance and a deep need for admiration. In the context of psychological





research, the Dark Triad traits are evaluated using the Short Dark Triad Scale (SD3), a measurement tool developed by psychologists Paulhus and Williams in 2014, designed to provide a concise yet effective assessment of these complex and troubling personality dimensions.

1.8.2 Antisocial Behavior Awareness

In this study, the concept of antisocial behavior awareness is defined as an athlete's ability to recognize, comprehend, and critically assess behaviors that breach established ethical and social norms within a sporting environment. This awareness encompasses the capacity to identify various detrimental actions, including but not limited to aggression, cheating, deceptive tactics, rule violations, and unsportsmanlike conduct. Furthermore, it involves an understanding of the far-reaching consequences these behaviors can have on individual performance, the cohesion and morale of team dynamics, as well as the athlete's own personal integrity and reputation. To evaluate this awareness comprehensively, the Antisocial Behavior Awareness Scale (ABAS) was meticulously crafted specifically for this study, measuring athletes' recognition and understanding across several pivotal dimensions, including:

- 1) Recognition of Antisocial Behavior: The ability to identify unethical and harmful actions in sports.
- 2) Understanding of Consequences: Awareness of how antisocial behaviors impact personal and team performance.



- 3) Compliance with Ethical Norms: Willingness to adhere to sportsmanship values and rules.
- 4) Aggression and Negative Communication Awareness: Recognition of aggressive verbal and physical actions that disrupt fair play.
- 5) Prevention and Mitigation Strategies: The extent to which an athlete takes responsibility for avoiding or discouraging antisocial behaviors.

Elevated scores on the Antisocial Behavior Awareness Scale (ABAS) reflect a heightened awareness and sensitivity to antisocial behaviors within the realm of sports. This increased cognizance may play a significant role in fostering improved ethical decision-making and positively influencing performance outcomes, ultimately contributing to a more respectful and fairer competitive environment.

1.8.3 Sports Performance

In this study, sports performance is operationalized as athletes' perceptions of their satisfaction with their own performance, as measured by the Athletes' Subjective Performance Scale (ASPS), developed and validated by Lee, Yun, Jeon, and Kang (2023). The ASPS comprises six items: 1) Your overall satisfaction with your sporting performance this week.; 2) The extent you contributed to your team's success this week; 3) The extent your true capabilities were reflected in your performances this week; 4) The extent you helped improve teammates' performance this week; 5) Your satisfaction with how you performed in the most challenging moments this week; and 6) The extent you think your coach was satisfied with your performance this week. All the items were



rated originally on a 1–10 scale from “not at all satisfied” to “fully satisfied,” targeting the most recent competitive week.

1.8.4 Pakistani Athletes

In this study, Pakistani athletes are defined as male and female individuals currently affiliated with recognized sports clubs, universities, or national teams (public or private) situated in Punjab, Pakistan, and eligible to compete under their respective institution or club at the time of data collection. Participants were selected from three districts of Punjab: Faisalabad, Lahore, and Bahawalpur, representing seven universities and five registered sports clubs across these districts. All participants were active athletes competing in sports such as football, cricket, hockey, basketball, or badminton. Their ages were categorized into five groups: below 20, 26-30, 31-34, 35-39, and above 40.

1.9 Study Limitation

While anticipating the findings of this study, it is crucial to acknowledge certain research limitations that could impact the generalizability of the results. Nonetheless, rigorous methods were implemented to mitigate these potential shortcomings, ensuring the integrity of the study's conclusions. The first limitation is geographical in nature, as the research exclusively focused on players from three cities within the Punjab province of Pakistan. This narrow demographic scope means that the findings may not be





representative of players from other regions or provinces, which could limit the applicability of the results to a broader context.

The second limitation pertains to the educational background of the participants. Data was gathered exclusively from players who possess a certain level of literacy, specifically those who can read and comprehend both Urdu and English. This selection criterion potentially excludes insights from individuals with less formal education or literacy challenges, thereby skewing the findings towards a more educated demographic. The third limitation involves the selection criteria for participants, who were solely those affiliated with university clubs and who have competed at the national level. This focus on a specific group of players may overlook the experiences and perspectives of amateur athletes or those competing at different levels, thereby narrowing the understanding of the broader athletic community.



Lastly, the fourth limitation of this research is centered on the physical and psychological fitness of the participants. The study only included players who were deemed healthy and fit, deliberately excluding those who are disabled or who face physical challenges. Consequently, this limitation raises concerns about the inclusiveness of the findings and highlights a potential gap in understanding the experiences of all athletes, particularly those with disabilities. In summary, while the study's methodology aimed to uphold high standards, these limitations must be considered when interpreting the findings, as they delineate the specific context and population to which the results apply.





1.10 Study Delimitation

This study was bounded by several delimitations that shaped its scope and focus. Firstly, the geographical delimitation restricted the research to three prominent cities in Punjab, Pakistan: Faisalabad, Lahore, and Bahawalpur. As a result, the findings are not representative of other cities in the region, thus narrowing the applicability of the insights gathered. Secondly, the player population represented another key delimitation. This research exclusively targeted educated and registered player affiliated with clubs and universities, as well as those who have actively participated in national games. This intentional selection led to a limitation in diversity, as it did not account for players outside of these categories, consequently affecting the breadth of the study's conclusions regarding the overall player population.



Moreover, the study also focused on a specific age demographic, encompassing adults aged 18 to 35. This choice further defines the parameters of the research but potentially overlooks the varying experiences and behaviors of younger or older athletes. Due to practical considerations, the sample size was inherently limited, stemming from the population confined to the three selected cities. This limitation inevitably raises concerns about the generalizability of the findings to the broader player population throughout Pakistan. Additionally, the study was carried out within a specific time frame, centering on a single sports season or a defined period of years, which restricts the ability to account for longer-term changes in player behavior and sports performance. Lastly, external factors that could significantly influence athletes' behavior and performance, such as coaching styles, team culture, socioeconomic status, and personal life events, were not extensively explored in this research. Consequently,



the study remains focused yet somewhat constrained, lacking a comprehensive examination of the myriad influences that can affect athletes over time.

1.11 Summary

This section offers a comprehensive introduction to the current research endeavor. It delves into the background of the study, framing it within the context of previously published research that explores the intricate relationship between the Dark Triad personality traits namely, Narcissism, Machiavellianism, and Psychopathy and their impact on antisocial behavior and sports performance. The problem statement articulates the critical assertion that the Dark Triad traits serve as significant predictors of sports performance, while also emphasizing that antisocial behavior acts as a crucial mediating factor linking these personality traits to athletic outcomes. Additionally, the objectives of the study clearly outline its intended purpose, illuminating the path this research aims to navigate in understanding these complex interconnections.