



**A Study on Love Bombing, Narcissism and Emotional Abuse among Young Adults in
Relationship and Situationship**

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Abstract

Love bombing isn't a diagnostic term, though it is used by mental health professionals to describe a form of emotional abuse. Love bombing is a controlling and manipulative tactic most often used by narcissists and abusive individuals. They seek to quickly obtain affection and attention before tearing their victims down. Narcissistic abuse has a negative impact on both your physical and your emotional well-being. Being in an abusive relationship with someone who has narcissistic tendencies often can have lasting effects, even if the narcissistic abuser is no longer in your life. A total sample of 45 young adults in the age group of 18-25 years was collected. Standardised scales were used to measure love bombing, narcissism and emotional abuse. Results found out that none of the results were significantly correlated. However, there was a positive correlation for individuals in a relationship between love bombing and narcissism, love bombing and emotional abuse. Moreover, there was a negative correlation between narcissism and emotional abuse for people in a relationship. There was a negative correlation between love bombing and narcissism for people in situationships, love bombing and emotional abuse. Additionally, there was a positive correlation between

narcissism and emotional abuse for people in a situationship. However, all relationships were insignificant. Navigating a relationship with someone who has narcissistic personality disorder, or narcissistic tendencies can be difficult. Instead of attempting to “fix” them, focusing on our own behaviours and well-being is best suggested. This includes setting clear boundaries, building a strong support system, and practising staying calm and responding appropriately.

Keywords: *Love Bombing, Narcissism, Emotional Abuse, Young Adults, Relationship, Situationship*

INTRODUCTION

The term narcissism is derived from Narcissus, a character in Greek mythology best known from the telling in Roman poet Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, written in 8 CE. Book III of the poems tells the mythical story of a handsome young man, Narcissus, who spurns the advances of many potential lovers. When Narcissus rejects the nymph Echo, who was cursed to only echo the sounds that others made, the gods punish Narcissus by making him fall in love with his own reflection in a pool of water. When Narcissus discovers that the object of his love cannot love him back, he slowly pines away and dies.

Narcissism, pathological self-absorption, first identified as a mental disorder by the British essayist and physician Havelock Ellis in 1898. Narcissism is characterised by an inflated self-image and addiction to fantasy, by an unusual coolness and composure shaken only when the narcissistic confidence is threatened, and by the tendency to take others for granted or to exploit them. The disorder is named for the mythological figure Narcissus, who fell in love with his own reflection. According to Sigmund Freud, narcissism is a normal stage in child development, but it is considered a disorder when it occurs after puberty. In psychology and personality theory, narcissism refers to one element of the so-called “dark triad” of related

negative personality traits, the other two being Machiavellianism and Psychopathy. Individuals with narcissistic traits are obsessed with maintaining a very positive image of themselves. They constantly seek admiration and praise from others, and they may get upset when they don't receive it. They often manipulate people to make themselves look better. This behaviour is seen as a way for them to constantly boost their own self-esteem through their relationships with others.

Research findings employing the NPI describe a portrait of narcissists as possessing inflated and grandiose self-images. It is not surprising then that narcissists report having high self-esteem. However, these positive self-images appear to be based on biased and inflated perceptions of their accomplishments and their distorted views of what others think about them. For example, they overestimate their physical attractiveness relative to judges' ratings of their attractiveness, and they overestimate their intelligence relative to objective assessments of their IQ (Rosenthal & Hooley, 2010). In one experiment, narcissistic and non-narcissistic males (as identified on the basis of their NPI results) were interviewed by a woman whose responses were scripted; thus, all the men received the same social feedback. The narcissistic men, however, assessed the woman's attraction to them more highly than did non narcissistic men. Other findings indicate that narcissists take greater credit for good outcomes even when those outcomes occurred by luck or chance. Although narcissists' self-esteem is high, it is also fragile and insecure, as evidenced by its variability. It fluctuates from moment to moment, day to day, more than that of less-narcissistic people. Other research indicates that narcissists are more likely to have high explicit (conscious, self-reported) self-esteem and low implicit (nonconscious, or automatic) self-esteem. This finding suggests that although narcissists describe themselves in positive terms, their nonconscious feelings about themselves are not so positive.

A theme running through this work is that although narcissists' self-images are positive, they are also fragile and easily threatened. Their constant desire for positive self-evaluation leads them to view themselves and their accomplishments as superior to others or superior to objective indices of the attribute in question (Gabriel et al., 1994; John & Robins, 1994). Research indicates that narcissists' self-evaluations are likely to be inflated and fragile because they are gleaned from evidence that is not fully contingent on actual performance. However, this manufactured high self-esteem is fragile, unstable, and defensive (Rhodewalt & Morf, 1998, Rhodewalt et al., 1998). For example, when high and low narcissistic males, as identified by the NPI (Raskin & Hall, 1979) experienced identical, staged social interactions with a potential dating partner, high-NPI men concluded from the interaction that the woman was more romantically attracted to them than did low-NPI men (Rhodewalt & Eddings, 2002)

Kernis and Sun (1994) found that compared to low-NPI individuals, high NPIs rated positive feedback as more valid and positive evaluators as more competent, whereas negative feedback was viewed as less valid and the negative evaluator as less competent. Narcissists' positive but insecure self-views lead them to be more attentive and reactive to feedback from other people. However, not just any response or feedback from others is important to narcissists; they are eager to learn that others admire and look up to them. Narcissists value admiration and superiority more than being liked and accepted. Studies find that narcissists' self-esteem depends upon the extent to which they feel admired. Moreover, narcissists pursue admiration from others by attempting to manipulate the impressions they create in others. They make self-promoting and self-aggrandizing statements and attempt to solicit regard and compliments from those around them. They also respond with anger and resentment when they feel threatened by others. They are more likely to respond aggressively on such occasions and derogate those who threaten them, even when such hostile responding jeopardises the relationship.

Narcissists attempt to solicit admiration from those around them, and their hostility when others fail to respond appropriately contributes to the disturbed interpersonal relationships that are a hallmark of the disorder. Research has shown that people describe their narcissistic acquaintances as trying to impress others by bragging and putting down others. These behaviours are initially successful in that those who interact with narcissists find them to be competent and attractive. However, over time these partners come to view the narcissist as arrogant and hostile.

Findings from a range of studies suggest a picture of narcissists as people who use their friends to feel good about themselves. They pander for attention and admiration to support self-images that are positive but easily threatened. They are constantly on alert for even the smallest slight that they perceive as disrespect. Perhaps most importantly, narcissists' striving to self-enhance at the expense of their friends ultimately costs them the friendships.

Love bombing is an attempt to influence a person by demonstrations of attention and affection. It can be used in different ways and for either positive or negative purposes. Psychologists have identified love bombing as a possible part of a cycle of abuse and have warned against it. It has also been described as "psychological manipulation." To create a feeling of unity within a group against a society perceived as hostile. In 2011, clinical psychologist Oliver James advocated love bombing in his book *"Love Bombing: Reset Your Child's Emotional Thermostat,"* as a means for parents to rectify emotional problems in their children. Love bombing is a manipulative tactic employed by individuals with narcissistic or abusive tendencies in dating scenarios. *"Initially, you might feel safe, secure and swept off your feet because grand gestures are a self-esteem boost and make you feel important and desired,"* states psychologist Alaina Tiani, PhD. *"But the love bomber's goal is not just to seek love, but to gain control over someone else. Over time, those grand gestures are an effort to manipulate you and make you feel indebted to and dependent on them."*

While the experience of dating a love bomber varies, there are common signs to watch for, such as lavish gifts, excessive flattery, frequent texting filled with compliments, and an expectation of immediate responses. The phase of intense love bombing typically continues until its objective is achieved, usually the establishment of emotional attachment. Subsequently, the abuser may transition to other forms of control. However, if they perceive a decrease in the target's reliance on them, they may resort again to love bombing to regain control. Although initially appealing, love bombing can foster self-doubt and dependency. Mental health professionals often associate this behaviour with traits of narcissism or sociopathy. Genuine affection is mutual and should unfold at a pace that is comfortable for both parties. Love bombing, by contrast, tends to feel one-sided—with one partner showering the other with gifts, praise, and declarations of love—and moves at a pace where one partner feels overwhelmed or as if they're caught up in a whirlwind. Someone repeatedly crossing stated boundaries—even if they claim to have positive motives for doing so—may also be an indicator of manipulative intentions. Similarly, while it's normal for new partners to spend a lot of time together, feeling isolated from one's family and friends because one is spending all their time with a new love interest may suggest that the relationship is falling into unhealthy patterns.

Emotional abuse involves controlling another person by using emotions to criticise, embarrass, shame, blame, or otherwise manipulate them. While most common in dating and married relationships, mental or emotional abuse can occur in any relationship—including among friends, family members, and co-workers. Either way, emotional abuse can chip away at your self-esteem, and you can begin to doubt your perceptions and reality. In the end, you may feel trapped. Emotionally abused people are often too wounded to endure the relationship any longer, but also too afraid to leave. So, the cycle repeats itself until something is done. Sometimes emotional abuse is more obvious, like a partner yelling at you or calling you names.

Other times it can be more subtle, like your partner acting jealous of your friends or not wanting you to hang out with someone of another gender. While these emotionally abusive behaviours do not leave physical marks, they do hurt, disempower, and traumatise the partner who is experiencing the abuse. Research indicates that the consequences of emotional abuse are just as severe as those of physical abuse. Except, instead of physical marks and bruises, your wounds are invisible to others—hidden in the self-doubt, worthlessness, and self-loathing you may feel. When emotional abuse is severe and ongoing, you can lose your entire sense of self.

Over time, the accusations, verbal abuse, name-calling, criticisms, and gaslighting can erode your sense of self so much that you can no longer see yourself realistically. Consequently, you may begin to agree with the abuser and become internally critical. Once this happens, you become trapped in the abusive relationship, believing that you will never be good enough for anyone else. Eventually, you may pull back from friendships and isolate yourself, convinced that no one likes you. For these reasons and more, it can be tough to detect emotional abuse and see it as a dangerous concern. Even then, survivors of emotional abuse are often hesitant to seek help or tell friends and family about their relationship concerns because they fear they will not be believed or taken seriously. Nonetheless, emotional abuse is serious, and it is not uncommon for emotional abuse to escalate to physical violence. In some relationships, this escalation to physical abuse is slow, and in others, it can happen rapidly.

Love Bombing

“Love bombing is the act of overwhelming another person, usually a romantic partner, with attention, affection, and gifts” (Hayes & Jeffries, 2016). “It is easy to get swept up in this experience, whether one is the love bomber or the recipient. After all, as humans, we can fall in love pretty hard, and we flock to romantic films because there is something compelling and

pleasurable about seeing such intense displays of affection. We might even feel like we are in a movie montage, awash in a blur of deepening love” (Hayes & Jeffries, 2016).

According to Vaknin (2020) coercive or manipulative love bombing serves a particular function. First, it sends a very clear message: “I care about you so much. I can’t stop thinking about you. I just want to make you happy.” Second, it creates an image of the love bomber as deeply caring, generous, and full of good intentions. Third, it immerses the love bomber and the recipient in an alternative reality where their truly special, unique love unites them—and, just as importantly, separates them from others. Finally, it teaches the recipient of the love bombing to expect these powerful displays of love: They have been conditioned to await these gestures and to respond to them positively.

In abusive contexts, love bombing is often seen as the first step in a pattern of establishing coercive control over another person (Fox, 2013). In this sense, a period of pure love bombing lasts until it has served its purpose. Once the emotional attachment has been formed, an abuser can shift toward using other behaviours to control the target of the love bombing. However, they may resort again to these manipulative displays of affection and attention if they sense the target is losing their dependency on the abuser.

A comprehensive definition of toxic relationships was offered by clinical psychologist Cory in an article on Healthscope, a health and wellness magazine. Cory juxtaposes toxic relationships with healthy relationships this way. By definition, a toxic relationship is a “relationship characterised by behaviours on the part of the toxic partner that are emotionally and, not infrequently, physically damaging to their partner. While a healthy relationship contributes to our self-esteem and emotional energy, a toxic relationship damages self-esteem and drains energy. A healthy relationship involves mutual caring, respect, and compassion, an interest in our partner’s welfare and growth, an ability to share control and decision-making, in short, a shared desire for each other’s happiness. A healthy relationship is a safe relationship,

a relationship where we can be ourselves without fear, a place where we feel comfortable and secure. A toxic relationship, on the other hand, is not a safe place. A toxic relationship is characterised by insecurity, self-centeredness, dominance, control. We risk our very being by staying in such a relationship. To say a toxic relationship is dysfunctional is, at best, an understatement” (Cory, n.d., para. 4).

Strutzenberg (2016) examined the relationship between attachment style, self-esteem, and narcissism as they pertain to behavioural tendencies termed Love-Bombing behaviours among a sample of young adult Millennials. Love-Bombing was identified as the presence of excessive communication at the beginning of a relationship to passively obtain power and control over another’s life as a means of narcissistic self-enhancement. The sample consisted of 484 college students from a large southern university who ranged in age 18-30. The results indicated that Love-Bombing was positively correlated with narcissistic tendencies, avoidant attachment, anxious attachment, and negatively correlated with self-esteem. Love-Bombing was also associated with more text and media usage within romantic relationships. In conclusion, Love Bombing was found to be a logical and potentially necessary strategy for romantic relationships among individuals with high displays of narcissism and low levels of self-esteem. This was the first study to empirically examine Love-Bombing behaviours, thus future research needs to address the impact that these behaviours have on young adult relationships.

The study conducted by Batool et al. (2022) aimed to explore the dimensions of love bombing and to investigate experiences of females in romantic relationships. The study was qualitative in nature and used purposive sampling technique. Data were collected by in depth semi-structured interviews from unmarried females in manipulative romantic relationships who had been in the dating world for more than a year. The saturation point of interviews was 20. The responses provided by the females were audiotaped and transcribed by consulting

coding manuals for qualitative researchers. By using NVivo for analysis, several themes surfaced from which smaller clusters were furnished out. Themes were merged and revised to gain accuracy. Three core themes emerged which were as follows: *Theme of Charming Façade* which suggests that a false exaggerated appearance was projected that made them look more pleasant or better than they really are, *Theme of Exaggerated Admirations* was reported by participants as their partners overwhelming compliments, promises and grand gestures of affection and *Theme of Display of vulnerability* has two sub themes of Overmuch Victimhood and Self-Disclosure to Build Empathy. The study explored the phenomenon of love bombing to gain control over females in manipulative romantic relationships. Further research needs to be conducted on the separate themes that this study revealed. However, a basic framework has been laid out to facilitate upcoming research in this area. This study provides a deeper understanding of the phenomenon which will help provide awareness about manipulative relationships. Further research can be performed on each of the presented themes and can be explored individually.

Narcissism

Narcissism is a “self-centered personality style characterised as having an excessive preoccupation with oneself and one's own needs, often at the expense of others” (APA, 2021). Reich (1960, p.217) described narcissists as “people whose libido is mainly concentrated on themselves at the expense of object love” and who have “exaggerated, unrealistic – i.e., infantile – inner yardsticks.” Further, the author believed that narcissism is caused by repeated early childhood traumas that occur before the ego’s defence mechanisms are developed and lead the child to retreat inward to a safer self-protective fantasy world: “It is not so. I am not helpless, bleeding, destroyed. On the contrary, I am bigger and better than anyone else. I am the greatest, the most grandiose.”

Narcissistic individuals may be prone to over-consumption because they seek products that help boost their self-esteem. Research indicates that narcissistic individuals may prefer expensive, luxury, exclusive, new, and flashy products (Pilch & GórnikDurose, 2017; Sedikides et al., 2007)

Previous literature has associated narcissism with interpersonal difficulties. However, there is a lack of studies investigating the impact of narcissism within romantic dyads. A study done by Keller et al, (2014) extended the literature by examining relations between narcissism and conflict behaviours in both members of a romantic dyad. Participants in the study were 190 college-student couples, who completed questionnaire measures of their narcissism, conflict within their relationship, and a behavioural measure of aggression toward their partners. The results indicated a tendency towards homogamy for narcissism. A person's narcissism was related to their use of aggression and the partner's use of aggression. Several interactions between male and female narcissism were observed. For total NPI scores, the combination of high male and female narcissism was related to greater aggression. Grandiose Exhibitionism was only related to aggressive behaviour when partner Grandiose Exhibitionism was lower; when partner Grandiose Exhibitionism was higher, aggressive behaviour was generally higher regardless of a person's own Grandiose Exhibitionism.

A study done by Arabi (2023) investigated whether partner psychopathy and narcissism predicted post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms. Participants (N = 1294) involved in romantic relationships with individuals they perceived to have high narcissistic or psychopathic traits completed the Informant Five Factor Narcissism Inventory, the Modified Self-Report Psychopathy Scale and the PTSD Checklist for DSM-5 to assess partner traits and their own PTSD symptoms. The study also accounted for the impact of previous abuse history such as childhood abuse, manipulative behaviours associated with these partner traits such as love-bombing, gaslighting, stonewalling, jealousy induction, relationship status and duration,

and the presence of physical abuse. Multiple linear regression revealed that grandiose and vulnerable narcissism were significant predictors of PTSD symptomology for those who had already left the romantic relationship, even when previous abuse, physical abuse, manipulative tactics and abuse frequency were accounted for. Partner grandiose narcissism was the strongest predictor of PTSD and was more predictive than abuse frequency, childhood abuse or physical abuse for those who had left the relationship. Partner grandiose narcissism was the strongest predictor for most PTSD symptom clusters. Partner traits explained the most variance in PTSD intrusion and avoidance symptoms. Love bombing and jealousy induction were significant but weaker predictors of PTSD, and partially mediated the effect of grandiose narcissism on PTSD, although the direct effect of grandiose narcissism on PTSD was stronger than this mediation. For individuals who stayed in the relationship, only psychopathy, abuse frequency and childhood abuse remained significant predictors. This is the first study to establish that narcissistic partner traits are associated with posttraumatic symptomatology.

To date, there have been no long-term longitudinal studies of continuity and change in narcissism. The study by Wetzel et al. (2020), investigated rank-order consistency and mean-level changes in overall narcissism and three of its facets (leadership, vanity, entitlement) over a 23-year period spanning young adulthood (Mage=18; N = 486) to midlife (Mage=41; N = 237). The researchers also investigated whether life experiences predicted changes in narcissism from young adulthood to midlife, and whether young adult narcissism predicted life experiences assessed in midlife. Narcissism and its facets showed strong rank-order consistency from age 18 to 41, with latent correlations ranging from .61 to .85. We found mean-level decreases in overall narcissism ($d = -0.79$) and all three facets, namely leadership ($d = -0.67$), vanity ($d = -0.46$), and entitlement ($d = -0.82$). Participants who were in supervisory positions showed smaller decreases in leadership, and participants who experienced more unstable relationships and who were physically healthier showed smaller decreases in vanity

from young adulthood to middle age. Analyses of the long-term correlates of narcissism showed that young adults with higher narcissism and leadership levels were more likely to be in supervisory positions in middle age. Young adults with higher vanity levels had fewer children and were more likely to divorce by middle age. Together, the findings suggests that people tend to become less narcissistic from young adulthood to middle age, and the magnitude of this decline is related to the particular career and family pathways a person pursues during this stage of life.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse can include “verbal assault, dominance, control, isolation, ridicule, or the use of intimate knowledge for degradation” (Follingstad et al., 2005). It targets the emotional and psychological well-being of the victim, and it is often a precursor to physical abuse. The studies have suggested that there is a high correlation between physical abuse and emotional abuse in batterer populations (Gondolf et al., 2002), and verbal abuse early in a relationship predicts subsequent physical spousal abuse (Schumacher & Leonard, 2005).

According to O'Leary (2004) the terms "psychological abuse" and "emotional abuse" can be used interchangeably, unless associated with psychological violence. More specifically, "emotional abuse" is any abuse that is emotional rather than physical. It can include anything from verbal abuse and constant criticism to more subtle tactics such as intimidation, manipulation, and refusal to ever be pleased. This abuse occurs when someone uses words or actions to try and control the other person, to keep someone afraid or isolated, or try to break someone's self-esteem.

According to Mega et al. (2000) the victim may experience severe psychological effects. This would involve the tactics of brainwashing, which can fall under psychological abuse as well, but emotional abuse consists of the manipulation of the victim's emotions. The

victim may feel their emotions are being affected by the abuser to such an extent that the victim may no longer recognize their own feelings regarding the issues the abuser is trying to control. The result is the victim's self-concept and independence are systematically taken away.

According to a study done by Francis and Pearson (2021), emotional abuse in relationships is widespread and can have serious detrimental effects on subsequent functioning. Despite this, and despite the knowledge that adolescents aged 16-19 are most likely to fall victim to abuse in romantic relationships when compared to older age groups, research surrounding warning signs of abuse and adolescents' responses to them has been lacking. This study explored adolescents' attitudes towards, and responses to, warning signs of emotional abuse. Males and females aged 16-19 (N = 171) from two high schools and one University completed a purpose-designed questionnaire containing 20 statements of warning sign behaviours. They then answered questions measuring perceived acceptability of these behaviours and proposed responses to them. Warning signs were separated into four domains: denigration, personal degradation, public degradation, and verbal aggression. As expected, participants on average proposed passive or vague responses to warning signs in all four domains. Warning sign behaviours that involved personal degradation were perceived to be the least acceptable of all behaviours, but even 'risk aware' individuals still lacked knowledge of effective responses to warning signs. Females perceived warning sign behaviours to be the least acceptable and proposed the most assertive responses. However, the response protectiveness effect was reversed in those aged 19, with females proposing the least assertive responses. Although adolescents are aware of what constitutes unacceptable relationship behaviours, they still lack knowledge of the appropriate ways to respond to warning signs in order to discourage future abusive relationship behaviours.

Intimate partner violence (IPV) exposure has been associated with poor mental health outcomes for victims, but fewer studies have examined the unique contributions of emotional

abuse to mental health. Study by Estefan et al. (2016), explored the contextual relationships between the type and frequency of IPV, community factors, and emotional health. Data were collected from a community-based IPV intervention program. Logistic regression found an increased likelihood of depression for respondents who experienced emotional abuse more than once per week (odds ratio [OR] = 4.864) and were worried about contact by the abuser (OR = 5.898). Results indicate the need for specific policy and practice attention to this issue.

The study by Karakurt et al. (2013), aimed to investigate the moderating roles of gender and age on emotional abuse within intimate relationships. The study included 250 participants with an average age of 27 years. Participants completed the Emotional Abuse Questionnaire (EAQ; Jacobson and Gottman, 1998), whose four subscales are isolation, degradation, sexual abuse, and property damage. Multigroup analysis with two groups, female (n = 141) and male (n = 109), was used to test the moderation effect. Younger men reported experiencing higher levels of emotional abuse, which declined with age. Older females reported experiencing less emotional abuse than older males. Overall, emotional abuse was more common in younger participants. Younger women experienced higher rates of isolation, and women's overall experience of property damage was higher than that of men and increased with age. Results are interpreted through the Social Exchange and Conflict frameworks.

METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The purpose is to study love bombing, narcissism, emotional abuse among young adults in relationship and situationship.

Hypothesis

- There will be a positive correlation between love bombing and narcissism.
- There will be a positive correlation between emotional abuse and narcissism.

Methods

Sample

A total sample of 45 young adults in the age group of 18-25 years was collected from the city Ludhiana. The sample included (N= 22, situationship and N= 23, atleast in a relationship for past 6 months).

Measures

The following standardised tools were used to measure love bombing, narcissism, and emotional abuse among young adults.

Love Bombing Scale: The scale was developed based on previous literature regarding tendencies of narcissists in romantic relationships (Campbell, 1999; Campbell et al.,2002; Campbell & Foster, 2002; Foster et al., 2006; Oltmans et al.,2004) as well as assertions made by anecdotal accounts published to internet blogs. The scale was used to measure love bombing among young adults. The scale had a total of 8 items. The items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Narcissism: The scale NPI-16 items developed by drawing from across the dimensions of Raskin and Terry's (1988) 40-item measure. The scale consisted of 16 items. Each item had a pair of statements. The participant was required to choose one that described their feelings and beliefs.

Emotional Abuse: The scale as developed by Jacobson and Gottman (1998). The scale consisted of 28 items which assesses the level of emotional abuse of a person. The items were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (very often).

Procedures

The participants were informed about the purpose of the research and the questionnaires were filled through Google forms; each participant was thanked for their cooperation. Standardised psychological tests were administered to the participants.

Analysis of Data

Results

	Love Bombing	Narcissism	Emotional Abuse
N	22	22	22
Mean	21.6	5.68	47.1
Standard deviation	4.76	2.36	13.5

Table 2*Correlation between Love Bombing, Narcissism and Emotional Abuse of Situationships*

	Love Bombing	Narcissism	Emotional Abuse
Love Bombing	—		
Narcissism	-0.369	—	
Emotional Abuse	-0.062	0.031	—

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

Table 3*N, Mean and Standard Deviation of individuals in Relationship*

	Love Bombing	Narcissism	Emotional Abuse
N	23	23	23
Mean	21.5	5.78	45.3
Standard deviation	3.62	2.81	14.3

Table 4*Correlation between Love Bombing, Narcissism and Emotional Abuse in a Relationship*

	Love Bombing	Narcissism	Emotional Abuse
Love Bombing	—		
Narcissism	0.360	—	
Emotional Abuse	0.245	-0.064	—

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

Discussion of Results

The following are the finding of the study:

- ***Love Bombing and Narcissism of people in situationships***

Situationship as defined by dictionary.com “a romantic or sexual relationship that in undefined and non-committal.” The negative correlation ($r=-0.369$) was found to be not statistically significant. This suggests that while there may be a trend indicating that as love bombing increases narcissism decreases, this relationship is not strong enough to be statistically significant.

- ***Love Bombing and Emotional Abuse of people in situationships***

The negative correlation ($r=-0.062$) was found not statistically significant. This suggests that while there may be a trend indicating that as love bombing increases emotional abuse decreases, this relationship is not strong enough to be statistically significant.

- ***Narcissism and Emotional Abuse of people in situationships***

The positive correlation ($r=0.031$) was not statistically significant. This suggests that as narcissism increases emotional abuse increases, this relationship is not strong enough to be statistically significant.

- ***Love Bombing and Narcissism of people in relationships***

The positive correlation ($r=0.360$) was found to be not statistically significant. This suggests that there may be a trend indicating that as love bombing increases narcissism in a relationship increases, this relationship is not strong enough to be statistically significant.

- ***Love Bombing and Emotional Abuse of people in relationships***

The positive correlation ($r=0.245$), it is not statistically significant. This suggests that there may be a trend indicating that as love bombing increases emotional abuse in a relationship increases, this relationship is not strong enough to be statistically significant.

- ***Narcissism and Emotional Abuse of people in relationships***

The negative correlation ($r=-0.064$) it is not statistically significant. This suggests that there may be a trend indicating that as narcissism increases emotional abuse decreases, this relationship is not strong enough to be statistically significant.

The study by Strutzenberg, (2016) examined the relationship between attachment style, self-esteem, and narcissism as they pertain to behavioural tendencies termed Love-Bombing behaviours among a sample of young adult Millennials. Love Bombing was found to be a logical and potentially necessary strategy for romantic relationships among individuals with high displays of narcissism and low levels of self-esteem.

The study by Langlais et al. (2024) in a research paper titled “Defining and Describing Situationships: An Exploratory Investigation. Sexuality & Culture.” According to Sternberg’s Triangular Theory of Love, experiences of companionate and/or consummate love are often preceded by romantic love. However, situationships may be experiences of romantic love, without increases in commitment. Independent samples t-tests using Bonferroni corrections provided some support for the prescribed definition as there were significant differences regarding relationship quality and similarities regarding affectionate and sexual behaviours

between situationships and non-situationships. These results reflect that people in a situationship are, for the most part, emotionally and sexually invested even if they are not in a fully committed relationship.

The study by Crouch et al. (2015) in a research paper titled “Is narcissism associated with child physical abuse risk?” was designed to clarify the associations between covert narcissism, overt narcissism, negative affect, and child physical abuse (CPA) risk. It was hypothesised that covert (but not overt narcissism) would be significantly associated with parental CPA risk and that negative affect would partially mediate this association. Results of a path analysis supported the prediction that negative affect partially mediated the association between covert narcissism and CPA risk. Findings from the present study illustrate the value of assessing both overt and covert narcissistic features in research investigating the role of narcissism in interpersonal violence. Moreover, the results revealed that covert narcissism was associated with CPA risk, even after accounting for their mutual associations with negative affect. Additional research is needed to explicate the other cognitive/affective mechanisms through which covert narcissism increases risk of aggressive parenting behaviour.

Conclusion

The research aimed to study love bombing, narcissism, emotional abuse of people in a relationship and situationship among young adults. A sample of 45 young adults in the age group of 18-25 years were taken. Standardised scales were used to measure love bombing, narcissism and emotional abuse. Results found out that none of the results were significantly correlated. However, there was a positive correlation for people in a relationship between love bombing and narcissism, love bombing and emotional abuse. Moreover, there was a negative correlation between narcissism and emotional abuse for people in a relationship.

There was a negative correlation between love bombing and narcissism for people in situationships, love bombing and emotional abuse. Additionally, there was a positive correlation between narcissism and emotional abuse for people in a situationship. Healthy relationships involve honesty, trust, respect and open communication between partners and they take effort and compromise from both people. There is no imbalance of power. Partners respect each other's independence, can make their own decisions without fear of retribution or retaliation, and share decisions.

It is important to consider that we need to promote education on healthy relationship dynamics and early intervention strategies, also encourage self-worth and boundary-setting while fostering empathy to curb love bombing, narcissism, and emotional abuse among young adults.

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