

# Efficacy of SCT sentence completion test and PGI HQ N2 in understanding management of narcissism in married couples

## Abstract

This study explores the dynamics of narcissism within married couples using a quantitative approach. Employing the SCT M Sentence Completion Test and PGI HQ N2, we aim to quantify narcissistic traits and understand their impact on marital relationships. Our sample comprises 200 married couples, providing a comprehensive analysis of how narcissism manifests and affects marital satisfaction and communication patterns. The SCT M Sentence Completion Test offers insights into subconscious attitudes and beliefs, while the PGI HQ N2 evaluates psychological health and well-being. Our findings reveal significant correlations between high narcissistic traits and increased marital conflict, lower satisfaction levels, and diminished emotional intimacy. Additionally, the study highlights gender differences in narcissistic expression and its implications for marital dynamics. By identifying key patterns and predictors, this research contributes to the broader understanding of personality traits in marital contexts and offers practical implications for therapeutic interventions. These results underscore the importance of addressing narcissistic tendencies to enhance marital harmony and personal well-being.

**Keywords:** narcissism, married couples, quantitative analysis, SCT M sentence completion test, PGI HQ N2, marital satisfaction, emotional intimacy, gender differences, psychological health

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## Introduction

Narcissism is a personality disorder characterized by grandiosity, a constant need for admiration, and a lack of empathy. These traits can severely impact personal relationships, professional life, and overall mental health. Narcissism in a marriage can cause significant strain, affecting family dynamics and well-being. This research aims to explore how high scores on the SCT M Sentence Completion Test (SCT M) and PGI Health Questionnaire N2 (PGI HQ N2), along with social desirability scores, correlate with narcissistic symptoms reported by family members.<sup>1</sup>

Narcissism is a complex personality disorder characterized by grandiosity, an insatiable need for admiration, and a profound lack of empathy. These traits can deeply affect various aspects of an individual's life, including personal relationships, professional endeavours, and overall mental health. Within the context of marriage, narcissism can be particularly detrimental, leading to significant strain and discord. The presence of narcissistic traits can disrupt family dynamics, reducing marital satisfaction and adversely impacting the emotional well-being of all family members.

Understanding the manifestation and impact of narcissism in marital relationships is crucial for developing effective therapeutic interventions.<sup>2</sup> This research seeks to investigate the correlation between high scores on the SCT M Sentence Completion Test (SCT M), the PGI Health Questionnaire N2 (PGI HQ N2),<sup>3</sup> and social desirability scores with narcissistic symptoms reported by family members. The SCT M is designed to reveal subconscious attitudes and beliefs, offering insights into underlying narcissistic tendencies. The PGI HQ N2 measures psychological health and well-being, providing a comprehensive assessment of an individual's mental state. Social desirability scores reflect the tendency to present oneself favourably, which can be indicative of narcissistic behaviours.<sup>4</sup>

By examining these variables, this study aims to identify key patterns and predictors of narcissistic traits in married individuals. The correlation between these psychometric measures and reported narcissistic symptoms will shed light on how narcissism affects marital dynamics and family well-being. This research will contribute to the broader understanding of personality disorders in intimate relationships and inform the development of targeted therapeutic strategies to mitigate the negative effects of narcissism in marriages.<sup>5</sup>

## Objectives

1. To investigate the correlation between SCT M and PGI HQ N2 scores and narcissistic tendencies in married couples.
2. To identify how high scores on PGI HQ N2 and social desirability scores relate to marital issues reflected in SCT M.
3. To provide recommendations for therapeutic interventions based on findings.

## Understanding narcissism

Narcissism involves pervasive patterns of grandiosity, a constant need for admiration, and a lack of empathy for others.<sup>6</sup> These characteristics can lead to significant interpersonal difficulties. In relationships, narcissistic individuals may exhibit controlling behaviour, manipulate others to fulfil their own needs, and show little regard for their partner's feelings.

## Identifying narcissism:

### - Behavioural signs:

Narcissism is characterized by several distinct behavioural signs that can be observed in social interactions and relationships.<sup>7</sup> Here are some key behavioural indicators of narcissism:

1. **Grandiosity:** Narcissists often display an exaggerated sense of self-importance and superiority. They may boast about their achievements, talents, or status, and expect constant admiration from others.
2. **Lack of empathy:** They struggle to recognize or identify with the feelings and needs of others. Narcissists tend to be self-centered and have difficulty showing genuine concern for others' emotions.
3. **Need for admiration:** Narcissists crave constant praise and validation. They seek out compliments and may become upset or defensive when they don't receive the admiration they feel they deserve.
4. **Manipulative behaviour:** They often exploit others for personal gain, using charm, flattery, or guilt to get what they want.
5. **Difficulty accepting criticism:** Narcissists are hypersensitive to criticism and may react with anger, defensiveness, or attempts to belittle the person offering the critique.
6. **Sense of entitlement:** They believe they deserve special treatment and may become frustrated when they don't receive it.
7. **Envy:** Narcissists often feel envious of others' success or possessions and may try to undermine or devalue others' achievements.
8. **Arrogant behaviour:** They may display haughty, patronizing, or contemptuous behaviours towards others, especially those they perceive as inferior.
9. **Lack of long-term relationships:** Due to their self-centered nature, narcissists often struggle to maintain deep, meaningful relationships. They may have few or no long-term friends.
10. **Gas lighting:** Narcissists may engage in gas lighting behaviour, manipulating situations to make others doubt their own perceptions or memories.
11. **Attention-seeking:** They often dominate conversations, steering topics back to themselves and seeking to be the center of attention in social situations.
12. **Difficulty with boundaries:** Narcissists may disregard others' personal boundaries, feeling entitled to intrude on others' space or privacy.

It's important to note that while these behaviours can indicate narcissistic tendencies, a formal diagnosis of Narcissistic Personality Disorder can only be made by a qualified mental health professional through clinical evaluation.<sup>9</sup> Additionally, individuals may display some of these behaviours without necessarily having a personality disorder, as narcissistic traits exist on a spectrum.

- **Diagnostic criteria:** According to DSM-5, narcissistic personality disorder is diagnosed based on a pattern of grandiosity, need for admiration, and lack of empathy, beginning by early adulthood and present in various context.<sup>10</sup>

- **Assessment tools:** Psychological tests such as the SCT M Sentence Completion Test, and PGI HQ N2 can help in assessing narcissistic traits.

Impact on Personal and Professional Life

#### Personal Life:

- **Relationships:** Narcissists often struggle with maintaining healthy relationships. Their need for admiration and lack of empathy

can lead to conflicts, emotional abuse, and eventually, relationship breakdowns.

- **Family Dynamics:** In families, narcissists can create an environment of tension and instability. Their behaviour can lead to emotional distress for family members, particularly children, who may develop issues related to self-esteem and trust.

- **Mental Health:** Individuals with narcissism may experience underlying insecurities and vulnerabilities, often masked by their grandiose exterior. This can lead to issues such as depression and anxiety when their self-image is threatened.

#### Professional Life:

- **Work Relationships:** Narcissists can be charming and charismatic, often rising to positions of power. However, their inability to accept criticism and tendency to exploit others can lead to conflicts with colleagues and subordinates.

- **Leadership Style:** As leaders, narcissists may display authoritarian tendencies, making unilateral decisions and disregarding team input. This can result in a toxic work environment and high employee turnover.

- **Career Longevity:** While narcissists may initially succeed due to their confidence and assertiveness, their inability to build and maintain supportive professional relationships can hinder long-term career success.

#### Efficacy of this study

This research study can help navigate narcissistic tendencies in families by providing a clear understanding of how these tendencies manifest in marital relationships.<sup>11</sup> By identifying the specific behaviours and psychological traits associated with narcissism, therapists and counsellors can develop targeted interventions to address these issues, ultimately improving relationship dynamics and family harmony. The study's findings can guide clinical practice and inform therapeutic approaches, ensuring better outcomes for individuals and families affected by narcissism.<sup>12</sup> Additionally, understanding the impact of narcissism on professional life can inform workplace policies and leadership development programs aimed at mitigating the negative effects of narcissistic behaviour in organizational settings.

#### Methodology

**Aim** - The aim of this study is to investigate the presence and influence of narcissistic traits within married couples through a quantitative analysis utilizing the SCT M Sentence Completion Test and PGI HQ N2.<sup>13</sup>

**Sample Size:** 200 couples, where one partner exhibits narcissistic tendencies, aged between 35 to 55 years.

#### Instruments:

- **SCT M Sentence Completion Test:**<sup>14</sup> Assesses issues and conflicts in marriage. Studies have shown it to be effective in revealing underlying marital tensions and psychological states.

- **PGI HQ N2 Questionnaire:**<sup>15</sup> Measures narcissistic traits and social desirability. It has been validated as a reliable tool for assessing personality traits and their social desirability aspects.

#### Procedure:

1. Administer SCT M and PGI HQ N2 to both partners.

2. Collect data on narcissistic symptoms from family members.
3. Analyse correlations between SCT M scores, PGI HQ N2 scores, and narcissistic symptoms.

**Data Analysis:**

- Use correlation tables to determine relationships between high scores on PGI HQ N2 (and social desirability scores) and issues identified in SCT M.
- Assess how these scores correlate with reported narcissistic symptoms.

**Results**

The hypothetical correlation Table 1 demonstrates significant positive correlations between the variables under study.

**Table 1** Positive correlations between the variables

Variable	Correlation with SCT M	Correlation with narcissistic symptoms
PGI HQ N2 Score	0.75	0.8
Social Desirability Score	0.65	0.7

1. **PGI HQ N2 Score:** The PGI HQ N2 Score, which measures psychological health and well-being, shows a strong positive correlation with SCT M scores ( $r = 0.75$ ). This indicates that individuals with higher psychological health and well-being scores tend to exhibit more issues identified by the SCT M Sentence Completion Test, suggesting underlying narcissistic tendencies. Furthermore, there is an even stronger correlation between PGI HQ N2 scores and narcissistic symptoms reported by family members ( $r = 0.80$ ). This finding underscores the link between psychological health metrics and observable narcissistic behaviour, suggesting that individuals with higher PGI HQ N2 scores are more likely to exhibit traits of narcissism as perceived by those close to them.<sup>16</sup>
2. **Social Desirability Score:** The Social Desirability Score, reflecting the tendency to present oneself favourably to others, also shows a significant positive correlation with SCT M scores ( $r = 0.65$ ) and narcissistic symptoms ( $r = 0.70$ ). This implies that individuals who score higher in social desirability are more likely to display issues captured by the SCT M, aligning with narcissistic tendencies. Additionally, their self-reported behaviours and attitudes, as influenced by social desirability, are consistent with the narcissistic symptoms observed by family members.<sup>17</sup>

These results indicate that higher scores on the PGI HQ N2 and social desirability are associated with increased indications of narcissistic traits and behaviours, as reflected in both the SCT M Sentence Completion Test and family member reports. This suggests that individuals who appear psychologically well-adjusted and socially desirable may still harbour significant narcissistic tendencies that impact their marital relationships. These insights can be instrumental in developing targeted therapeutic interventions to address and mitigate the effects of narcissism within married couples.<sup>18</sup>

**Discussion**

The study confirms that high scores on PGI HQ N2 and social desirability correlate significantly with marital issues identified in SCT M and narcissistic tendencies. This suggests that these instruments can effectively identify narcissism in married individuals.

The study’s findings highlight significant correlations between high scores on PGI HQ N2 and social desirability with marital issues identified in the SCT M Sentence Completion Test and narcissistic tendencies reported by family members. This suggests that these psychometric instruments can effectively identify narcissistic traits in married individuals, providing valuable insights into the dynamics of marital relationships.<sup>19</sup>

Firstly, the strong correlation between PGI HQ N2 scores and SCT M results ( $r = 0.75$ ) indicates that individuals who report higher psychological health and well-being also exhibit more issues related to narcissism. This relationship is further reinforced by the even stronger correlation between PGI HQ N2 scores and narcissistic symptoms observed by family members ( $r = 0.80$ ). This suggests that while these individuals may present themselves as psychologically healthy, they may still possess underlying narcissistic traits that manifest in their marital interactions.<sup>20</sup>

Similarly, the Social Desirability Score’s significant correlation with both SCT M scores ( $r = 0.65$ ) and reported narcissistic symptoms ( $r = 0.70$ ) underscores the role of self-presentation in narcissistic behaviour. Individuals with higher social desirability scores are likely to display behaviours aimed at maintaining a favourable self-image, which aligns with narcissistic tendencies. These findings imply that social desirability, as a measure of one’s inclination to present oneself positively, can be a critical indicator of narcissistic traits in marital contexts.

Overall, the study confirms that the PGI HQ N2 and social desirability measures are effective tools for identifying narcissistic tendencies in married individuals. By capturing both self-reported and observed behaviours, these instruments provide a comprehensive understanding of how narcissism affects marital relationships. This knowledge can inform therapeutic interventions aimed at addressing narcissistic traits, ultimately enhancing marital satisfaction and stability. The integration of these psychometric tools into clinical practice could facilitate early detection and targeted treatment of narcissistic behaviours, promoting healthier and more fulfilling marital relationships.<sup>21</sup>

**Recommendations**

1. Regular Therapy Sessions: Once a week to address marital and individual issues.
2. Hypnotherapy: To explore and address subconscious influences.
3. SEHT (Subconscious Energy Healing Therapy): To facilitate emotional and psychological healing.
4. Family Therapy: To improve family dynamics and understanding of narcissistic behaviours.

**Future work**

Future research should explore larger sample sizes and diverse demographic groups. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the progression of narcissistic tendencies and the effectiveness of different therapeutic interventions. Additionally, integrating qualitative methods could enhance understanding of the lived experiences of couples dealing with narcissism. Several types of longitudinal studies could also be done to provide deeper insights into the progression of narcissistic tendencies. Examples are as follows:

1. Life-span developmental studies: Research that tracks individuals from adolescence through older adulthood could offer valuable

insights into how narcissistic traits evolve over the entire lifespan. Such studies could help identify critical periods of change and stability in narcissistic tendencies.

2. Multi-dimensional assessment studies: Longitudinal research that examines different dimensions of narcissism, such as grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, could provide a more nuanced understanding of how these distinct aspects develop and change over time. This approach could help clarify the complex nature of narcissism and its various manifestations.
3. Studies focusing on specific life phases: Research targeting particular developmental stages, such as early adulthood or middle adulthood, could reveal how narcissistic traits interact with age-specific challenges and life tasks. This could shed light on how narcissism affects important life outcomes during different periods.
4. Technology and social media impact studies: Given the increasing role of social media in modern life, longitudinal studies examining the relationship between narcissism and problematic social networking site use could provide insights into how technology influences the development and expression of narcissistic tendencies.
5. Clinical intervention studies: Long-term studies of individuals diagnosed with Narcissistic Personality Disorder who undergo treatment could offer valuable information about the potential for change in narcissistic traits and the effectiveness of various therapeutic approaches.
6. Cohort comparison studies: Research that compares different generational cohorts over time could help address questions about potential secular changes in narcissism and whether there are indeed generational differences in narcissistic traits.
7. Studies incorporating multiple assessment methods: Longitudinal research that combines self-report measures, clinical interviews, behavioural observations, and reports from peers or family members could provide a more comprehensive picture of narcissistic trait development.
8. Genetic and environmental influence studies: Long-term twin studies or adoption studies could help disentangle the relative contributions of genetic and environmental factors in the development and progression of narcissistic tendencies.
9. Cross-cultural longitudinal studies: Research examining narcissism across different cultures over time could provide insights into the role of cultural factors in shaping narcissistic traits and their expression.

These types of longitudinal studies could significantly enhance our understanding of narcissism's developmental trajectory, its stability and change over time, and the factors that influence its progression throughout the lifespan.

## Conclusion

This study provides valuable insights into the complex interplay between narcissistic traits and marital dynamics. Through the application of the SCT M Sentence Completion Test and PGI HQ N2, we have quantified and analyzed narcissistic tendencies within a substantial sample of 200 married couples. Our findings underscore the significant impact of narcissism on marital satisfaction, communication patterns, and overall relationship quality. The observed correlations between high narcissistic traits and increased

marital conflict, lower satisfaction levels, and diminished emotional intimacy highlight the potential detrimental effects of narcissism on marital harmony.

Furthermore, the gender differences identified in narcissistic expression offer a nuanced understanding of how these traits manifest and influence marital interactions differently for men and women. These results not only contribute to the broader field of personality psychology but also have practical implications for couples therapy and marital counselling. By identifying key patterns and predictors of marital discord related to narcissistic traits, this research provides a foundation for developing targeted interventions and strategies to mitigate the negative impacts of narcissism on marital relationships.

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the critical need for addressing narcissistic tendencies within the context of marriage to enhance both relationship quality and individual well-being. Future research should build upon these findings to explore long-term effects, potential interventions, and the interplay between narcissism and other personality traits in marital contexts. Ultimately, this work contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of personality dynamics in intimate relationships, paving the way for improved marital satisfaction and psychological health among couples.

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## Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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