Understanding the Manifestation of Psychopathic Personality
Characteristics Across Populations

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Psychopathic personality traits have been identified in research on criminal and noncriminal samples (Hare, 2003; Babiak, Hare, & Neumann, 2010). A large body of research exists on criminal psychopathy; however, limited empirical understanding has emerged for noncriminal psychopathy. It is unknown whether the empirical knowledge on criminal psychopathy is generalisable to psychopathic personality in the broader community (Gao & Raine, 2010). The current thesis sought to address the lack of research on psychopathy outside of the correctional setting (Hall & Benning, 2006; Skeem, Polaschek, Patrick, & Lilienfeld, 2011). The present research aimed to develop a greater understanding of psychopathic traits across specific populations, incorporating three samples. These were a community based sample (n = 115), criminal sample of community based probation and parole offenders (n = 44) and business sample consisting of working professionals and students completing a Master of Business Administration Degree (n = 60).

The current research conducted three separate studies designed to expand on the understanding of the manifestation of psychopathic traits in specific populations. It was hypothesised that the findings of these three studies would have important implications for understanding psychopathic personality across different populations. Psychopathy was assessed in the current research using the self-report measure the Psychopathic Personality Inventory-Revised (Lilenfeld & Widows, 2005). The first two studies examined the relationship between psychopathy, emotional and social capabilities, negative emotionality, gender and age. The current research partially consisted of self-report measures and examined mimicry, emotional recognition and social information processing through experimental procedures. The emotional recognition experiment was developed based on Niedenthal, Brauer, Halberstadt, and Innes-Ker (2001) and social information was examined using the methodology developed by Wilson, Demetroff, and Porter (2008). Study one and study two specifically examined, psychopathy, empathy, emotional intelligence, emotion recognition, mimicry, social information processing, and negative emotionality. Study one investigated the relationship between these variables in a community sample and study two examined business and criminal samples.

Based on a Mixed design ANOVA, the higher psychopathy group was found to have poorer emotional recognition for the mimicry experimental task, although this was not
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observed in the business or community samples. A series of Mixed Design ANOVA’s were conducted to examine the effect of psychopathy on character recognition and recall. The results were partially consistent with Wilson et al. (2008) with psychopathy found to significantly predict recall of the unsuccessful character in the community sample, however, this result was not found in the business or criminal samples. Hierarchical regressions analyses were conducted to examine emotional intelligence and empathy in both studies. Psychopathy was found to be a significant negative predictor of empathy in the criminal and community samples, but not the business sample. For both study one and study two, psychopathy did not significantly predict emotional intelligence.

The third study sought to examine the manifestation of psychopathic traits in the specific samples, investigating differences in psychopathy factors. The additional contribution of interpersonal factors such as assertiveness, locus of control and impression management in explaining psychopathy was examined. Findings from a MANOVA revealed significant sample differences for psychopathic factors. Significantly, higher scores of fearless dominance were found in the business and community samples, while higher levels of self-centered impulsivity were observed in the criminal and community samples. A multinomial regression analysis was conducted, revealing that the business sample had significantly higher levels of fearless dominance compared to the community sample and that the criminal sample had significantly elevated levels of self-centered impulsivity compared to the community sample. The results of the thesis provided support for theories of criminal and noncriminal psychopathy, suggesting that theoretical differences may be attributed to populations examined. Implications for the current study lie within advancing the empirical data on noncriminal psychopathy, including psychopathic traits differences between offenders and individuals in corporate positions.

Keywords: psychopathy, psychopathic personality, noncriminal, successful, personality traits, emotion, social information, empathy, emotional intelligence
Declaration by Author

This thesis is submitted to Bond University in fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. This thesis represents my own original work towards this research degree and contains no material that has previously been submitted for a degree or diploma at this University or any other institution, except where due acknowledgement is made.

_______________________________
Signature
Nathan Brooks
Research Outputs and Publications During Candidature

**Peer-reviewed Publications**


**Published and Presented Conference Abstracts**

Ethics Declaration

The research associated with this thesis received ethics approval from the Bond University Human Research Ethics Committee. Ethics application number RO1525.
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