

THE PREDICTIVE POWER OF MACHIAVELLIANISM, EMOTIONAL  
MANIPULATION, AGREEABLENESS, AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE ON  
COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIORS

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requirements for the degree of

Master of Science

by

RYAN L. WALTERS

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I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY Ryan L. Walters ENTITLED The Predictive Power of Machiavellianism, Emotional Manipulation, Agreeableness and Emotional Intelligence on Counterproductive Work Behaviors BE ACCEPTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF Master of Science.

---

David LaHuis, Ph.D.  
Thesis Director

---

Gary Burns, Ph.D.  
Thesis Co-Director

---

David LaHuis, Ph.D.  
Graduate Program Director

---

Debra Steele-Johnson, Ph.D.  
Chair, Department of Psychology

Committee on  
Final Examination

---

David LaHuis, Ph.D.

---

Gary Burns, Ph.D.

---

Debra Steele-Johnson, Ph.D.

---

Barry Milligan, Ph.D.  
Vice Provost for Academic Affairs  
Dean, Graduate School

## **Abstract**

Walters, Ryan L. M.S. Department of Psychology, Wright State University, 2021.

### **The Predictive Power of Machiavellianism, Emotional Manipulation, Agreeableness and Emotional Intelligence on Counterproductive Work Behaviors**

Characteristics of Machiavellian individuals include a propensity to manipulate and deceive others, making them susceptible to committing counterproductive work behaviors (Deshong et al., 2014). Machiavellians endorse emotional manipulation as a tactic to achieve desirable outcomes, and experience deficits in emotional intelligence and agreeableness (Austin et al., 2007). The purpose of my study is to examine Machiavellianism and emotional intelligence and their relationships to counterproductive work behaviors. I collected survey results via Amazon MTURK with a sample of 153 participants. Bivariate correlation analyses show that Machiavellianism positively predicted Emotional Manipulation and negatively predicted Emotional Intelligence. Emotional manipulation was found to partially mediate the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors. I also found that higher levels of Agreeableness intensified the positive relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors while finding no interaction effect between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence based on Agreeableness.

**Key Words:** Machiavellianism, Emotional Intelligence, Counterproductive Work Behaviors, Dark Triad, TEIQue

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## The Predictive Power of Machiavellianism-and Emotional Intelligence on Counterproductive Work Behaviors

Deviant behavior and interpersonal manipulation in the workplace can have deleterious effects for both individual workers and for the entire organization. One example of workplace manipulation happened at Enron when company executives decided to fool shareholders into believing a new headquarters had been built in Houston, Texas (Boje, Gardner & Smith, 2006). The executives carried out this scheme by having a fake trading floor built inside a vacant building. The fake trading floor contained stock monitors and employees paid to look like busy analysts. The ruse was a success, and the shareholders were none the wiser. This act of deception took some degree of interpersonal manipulation and emotional intelligence to make it work.

Emotional intelligence and Machiavellianism are important to study because of the amount of damage a Machiavellian individual can cause to other individuals, groups, and organizations. Machiavellian individuals are more likely to commit counterproductive work behaviors than non-Machiavellians (DeShong et. al, 2014). Individuals who are high in Machiavellianism tend to endorse interpersonal manipulation as a legitimate strategy for getting ahead (Christie & Geiss, 1970). In the workplace, emotionally intelligent Machiavellians are more likely to commit acts of workplace deviance than those who are high in Machiavellianism alone (Cote et. al, 2011). For these reasons, it is important to study Emotional Intelligence and Machiavellianism together. Some researchers have considered a potential “dark” side of Emotional Intelligence (Austin et. al, 2007; Cote et. al 2011). Austin and colleagues (2007) concluded that Emotional Intelligence and Machiavellianism are negatively correlated, but further research is necessary in the area of dark emotional intelligence. There is currently a

dearth of research on the intersection of Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence. Thus, the purpose of my study is to examine the relationships between Machiavellianism, Emotional Intelligence, and Counterproductive work behaviors.

### **Machiavellianism and Dark Personality Traits**

Dark personality constructs have become increasingly popular in the field of Psychology. The most popular set of dark constructs is the Dark Triad (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). The Dark Triad is comprised of three distinct constructs: Psychopathy, Narcissism, and Machiavellianism. People with these traits are often cold, callous, and manipulative and have a general lack of regard for the feelings of others. Psychopathy is characterized by poor impulse control, pathological lying, and a lack of remorse for misdeeds. Narcissistic people tend to have a grandiose sense of self, a sense of entitlement, and a tendency to lash out when their egos are threatened. Machiavellians tend to be amoral and see their distasteful tactics as a means of obtaining goals. Though all three Dark Triad traits are worthy of study, the main focus of this paper will be on Machiavellianism due to the interpersonally manipulative nature of Machiavellian individuals.

### **Origins of Machiavellianism**

The term “Machiavellianism” refers to Nikkolo Machiavelli, the author of a book called *The Prince* (1531/1961). Machiavelli wrote the book to instruct the new leader of Florence on how to obtain and hold political and military power. Throughout the 26 chapters of the book, Machiavelli described different ways to keep others in line by manipulating them. These means of keeping others in line included soft tactics and hard tactics. Often, soft tactics include kind words and ingratiation whereas hard tactics include bullying or threatening others. Machiavelli wrote that cunningness and deceit can be positive traits that lead to more effective leadership.



## Measures of Machiavellianism

There are several ways to measure Machiavellianism, and this section contains some of the more commonly used measures. Three scales that are especially noteworthy to understand the development of the measurement of Machiavellianism are the Mach-IV Scale (Christie & Geiss, 1970), the Organizational Machiavellianism Scale (Kessler et al., 2010), and the Machiavellian Personality Scale (Dahling, Whitaker & Levy, 2009).

**Mach-IV scale.** Christie and Geiss (1970) were the first to use Machiavellianism as a psychological construct. Their Mach-IV scale remains one of the most widely used measures for Machiavellianism. The scale contains two major facets: amoral manipulation and cynical beliefs about motivations of others. Amoral manipulation is a pragmatic selfishness, in which Machiavellian people will use others to achieve personal goals. The cynical beliefs facet of the Mach-IV reflects the tendency of Machiavellian individuals to believe that the world is inherently unjust, corrupt, and lacking morality. The Mach-IV remains one of the most widely used measures of Machiavellianism. However, researchers have criticized the Mach-IV for having poor reliabilities, having items that contain emotionally laden language, and only capturing two dimensions (Dahling, Whitaker & Levy 2009). One example of a poorly written item is “people suffering from incurable diseases should have the choice to be put to death painlessly.” This item has nothing to do with Machiavellianism and has little face validity.

**The Organizational Machiavellianism Scale.** An alternative to the Mach-IV is the Organizational Machiavellianism Scale (OMS) (Kessler et. al 2010). Kessler and colleagues developed this scale in response to the shortcomings of the Mach-IV scale noted by Dahling and colleagues (2009). Kessler and colleagues developed the OMS by taking 91 passages from *The Prince* (1531/1961) and re-writing them to satisfy a workplace context. The OMS has three

facets: maintaining power, management practices, and manipulateness. The maintaining power facet and manipulateness facets are similar to their analogs in other scales, the only difference being the items reflecting a workplace context. The Management Practices dimension reflects the practices that supervisors use to communicate with subordinates in a way that advances the supervisor's interest. An example item from the management practices facet is "employees should be watched with an eye of suspicion because it is natural for people to desire power." This facet of the OMS closely resembles the cynical beliefs facets in other Machiavellianism scales.

**Machiavellian personality scale.** Dahling and colleagues (2009) developed the Machiavellian Personality Scale (MPS) as a remedy for the Mach-IV's shortcomings. The MPS contains four facets: desire for power, desire for control, amorality, and distrustful attitudes towards others. An example item from the desire for power facet is, "I want to be rich and powerful someday." Machiavellians with a desire for power are going to seek to bolster their status and obtain promotions to higher positions in organizations. Those who have a high desire for control would agree with the item "I enjoy dominating my interpersonal interactions." The distrustful attitudes facet reflects a generally pessimistic outlook towards the intentions of others, and a Machiavellian believes that others almost always act out of self-interest. A sample item from this facet is "People are only motivated by personal gain." The amorality facet reflects a Machiavellian individual's lack of consideration for moral principles when acting. When weighing the merits of an action, a Machiavellian will default to self-interest rather than morality. A sample item from this facet is "I am willing to be unethical if it will help me succeed." In total, the MPS contains sixteen items.

## **Summary**

In this study, I used the Machiavellian Personality Scale to measure Machiavellianism. I chose this scale because of its relative parsimony compared to other scales, its relatively high reliability, and the lack of shortcomings relative to the Mach-IV. I will not use the Organizational Machiavellianism Scale because the purpose of this study is to examine Machiavellianism as a general personality trait rather than behaviors that are specific to the workplace.

## **Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors**

Counterproductive work behaviors are behaviors that are intended purposefully to cause harm to others or organizations (Spector & Fox, 2005). Examples of counterproductive work behaviors include working while intoxicated, theft, poor attendance, interpersonal manipulation, and interpersonal aggression (Wu & Lebreton, 2011). Researchers have found that personality traits, especially five-factor model traits are predictive of counterproductive work behaviors (DeShong et al., 2014). Whereas there is an extensive literature on counterproductive work behaviors and relationships between the five-factor model and counterproductive work behaviors, there is a less research on Machiavellianism and counterproductive work behaviors.

In a review of extant literature on aberrant personality traits and counterproductive work behaviors, Wu and Lebreton (2011) highlighted a current debate regarding traditional methods of using personality to predict counterproductive work behaviors. Researchers believed that the Dark Triad constructs of Machiavellianism, Psychopathy, and Narcissism offered a chance to expand the amount of variance explained in counterproductive work behaviors (Wu & Lebreton, 2011).

Wu and Lebreton (2011) hypothesized that Machiavellians would be more likely than non-Machiavellians to engage in counterproductive work behaviors when personal goals are impeded, especially aggressive actions such as destruction of property and interpersonal aggression. The researchers hypothesized that Machiavellians would engage in more covert forms of counterproductive work behaviors such as spreading rumors and gossip. Finally, Wu and Lebreton (2011) hypothesized that time would moderate the relationships between Machiavellianism and counterproductive work behaviors. Though they did not gather data on these hypotheses, Wu and Lebreton (2011) encouraged future research to test these hypotheses, which may be relevant to my current study.

In another study, DeShong, Grant and Mullins-Sweatt (2014) compared the Five-Factor model to the Dark Triad in terms of predicting counterproductive work behaviors. DeShong and colleagues (2014) hypothesized that the Five-Factor model would be more parsimonious in predicting counterproductive work behaviors than a combination of the Five-Factor Model and the Dark Triad. The researchers found that Machiavellianism had small but significant correlations with interpersonal ( $r = .18$ ) and organizational ( $r = .29$ ) counterproductive work behaviors. However, the five-factor model facets of agreeableness and conscientiousness were more highly correlated than Machiavellianism with interpersonal and organizational counterproductive work behaviors with both agreeableness and conscientiousness being moderately negatively correlated. Neuroticism correlated positively with organizational counterproductive work behaviors. The researchers concluded that the most parsimonious model of predicting counterproductive work behaviors was a model including only the Five-Factor model facets of agreeableness and conscientiousness.

While Machiavellianism may not be the strongest predictor of counterproductive work behaviors, it is worthy of study particularly due to the damage that Machiavellian individuals can cause to the organizations that employ them. People high in Machiavellianism are more likely to engage in various strategies of economic opportunism (Sakalaki, Richardson, & Thepaut, 2007). Sakalaki and colleagues (2007) stated that Machiavellian individuals are often *homo economicus* or rational economic actors due to their ability to maximize personal gain using defection strategies in trust games in which they are given a choice to either cooperate with partners or defect. The study found that Machiavellians are more likely to distrust economic partners and hold cynical attitudes about the motivations of others. Due to their engagement in economic opportunism and defection strategies, it is reasonable to think that Machiavellianism has a role to play when predicting counterproductive work behaviors.

Emotional manipulation is the use of underhanded interpersonal strategies to manage the emotions of others in order to produce desirable outcomes for the individual. Emotional manipulation can implement soft tactics such as paying compliments to others to win favor, or the use of anger and aggression to shape the behavior of others (Austin et al., 2007). Emotional manipulation and Machiavellianism share many similar qualities, mainly the endorsement of interpersonal manipulation to impact the behavior of others. Whereas Machiavellian individuals are likely to engage in counterproductive work behaviors targeting the organization as acts of economic opportunism or retaliation, counterproductive work behaviors targeting individuals might both be direct and a product of their emotional manipulation. Based on this research, I hypothesized that individuals higher in Machiavellianism would be more likely to engage in emotional manipulation, replicating the findings of Austin et al. (2007). I also tested the relationship between Machiavellianism and counterproductive work behaviors to replicate past

findings (DeShong et al., 2014). As an extension of prior research, I examined emotional manipulation as a potential mediator between Machiavellianism and counterproductive work behaviors.

**Hypothesis 1a:** Machiavellianism will be positively correlated with emotional manipulation.

**Hypothesis 1b:** Machiavellianism will be positively correlated with counterproductive work behaviors.

**Hypothesis 2:** Emotional manipulation will mediate the relationship between Machiavellianism and counterproductive work behaviors.

### **Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional Intelligence as a concept did not gain prominence until the 1990s. The concept can be traced back to 1920 when Thorndike wrote about “Social Intelligence” in an issue of *Harper’s Magazine* (Landy, 2005). Social Intelligence referred to the ability to perceive emotion and manage the emotions of others. Both facets remain important in modern measurements of Emotional Intelligence. In 1983, Gardner proposed multiple types of intelligence, one of which is interpersonal intelligence. Interpersonal intelligence, according to Gardner, is used by professions such as therapists and salespeople. Interpersonal intelligence is defined as “the ability to discern and respond to the motivations of others (Gardner & Hatch, 1989). An example of an individual who has high Interpersonal Intelligence would be a therapist who is able to accurately perceive emotions of clients and adjust his treatment strategies accordingly.

## **Modern Conceptualizations of Emotional Intelligence**

As it is currently known, Emotional Intelligence became prominent in 1990 after Salovey and Mayer (1990) wrote a paper on this topic. Emotional Intelligence is defined as:

“A set of skills hypothesized to contribute to the accurate appraisal and expression of emotion in oneself and others, the effective regulation of emotion in self and others, and the use of feelings to motivate, plan, and achieve in one’s life.”

Mayer and Salovey are proponents of an ability-based model for Emotional Intelligence. The ability-based model uses questions with correct and incorrect answers. For example, test takers might be asked to review photos of faces and correctly identify the emotion being displayed. For Mayer and Salovey (1990), these answers are developed by a panel of experts. Emotional Intelligence in this model is seen more as an ability, similar to cognitive ability, than as a personality trait. Critics of this approach have stated that the measurement of Emotional Intelligence as an ability may be confounded by general mental ability because of the test having correct and incorrect answers (Landy, 2005). As an alternative, Petrides (2007) introduced Trait-based Emotional Intelligence. Instead of measuring Emotional Intelligence with correct or incorrect answers, Trait-based Emotional Intelligence focuses on surveying behavioral tendencies. Petrides (2007) argues that survey measures parse apart Emotional Intelligence and general mental ability because it does not depend on correct or incorrect answers. In the Trait-based model, Emotional Intelligence is seen as a trainable skill rather than an inherent ability. These types of Emotional Intelligence will be covered more in depth below.

**Ability-based emotional intelligence.** As discussed earlier, Ability-based Emotional Intelligence is measured by administering a test with right and wrong answers. The Ability-based model contains four major facets: perceiving emotion, using emotion to facilitate thought,

understanding emotion and managing emotion in self or others (Mayer, Salovey, Caruso & Sitarenios, 2003). An example of measurement for Ability-based Emotional Intelligence would be showing a subject pictures and judging that person on how accurately she is able to perceive the emotions on the faces of the people in the pictures. Ability-based Emotional Intelligence is typically measured by the MSCEIT (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test) (Mayer et al., 2003).

**Trait-based emotional intelligence.** Trait-based Emotional Intelligence differs from Ability-based Emotional Intelligence in two major ways. The first is the survey measure being used instead of tests that have correct and incorrect answers. In this regard, Trait-based Emotional Intelligence is more similar to a personality trait measuring behavioral tendencies than a cognitive ability measuring knowledge about emotions. Another major difference between Ability and Trait-based Emotional Intelligence is that the Trait-based model sees Emotional Intelligence as an attribute that can be boosted through training, unlike the Ability-based model which sees Emotional Intelligence as a stable ability. The most popular method of measurement for Trait-based Emotional Intelligence is the TEIQue (Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire), a psychometrically robust self-report measure with moderately high reliability shows incremental validity above and beyond Five-Factor personality traits and general affect when predicting work-based outcomes (Perez, Petrides & Furnham, 2005). The test predicts outcomes that are relevant to Industrial/Organizational Psychology such as job performance, organizational commitment and responses to workplace stressors. The relevance of this test to organizational outcomes justifies further study into a potential “dark” emotional intelligence.



## **Emotional Intelligence and Job Performance**

An important reason to study this topic hinges on its practical implications, especially for personnel selection. General mental ability or *g* remains the most powerful predictor of job performance (Schmidt & Hunter, 2004). If Emotional Intelligence provides incremental validity beyond *g*, it would be worthy of study. Emotional Intelligence might be applicable to job performance at the individual, organizational, and occupational levels. For example, an emotionally intelligent lawyer might be more apt at perceiving and managing emotions of clients, judges, witnesses, and juries. This ability to perceive and manage emotions could make this lawyer more effective at her position and therefore boost job performance.

Cote and Miners (2006) tested a model of cognitive and emotional intelligence and their relationships to job performance. They found that Emotional Intelligence can blunt the negative effects of low *g* on job performance, meaning that emotionally intelligent individuals with low general mental ability will outperform their less emotionally intelligent counterparts. An interaction effect between *g* and emotional intelligence was found. As general mental ability increased, the effect of emotional intelligence on job performance decreased. Those who were high in *g* tended to have higher job performance regardless of emotional intelligence. This finding is important because it provides evidence of the compensatory nature of emotional intelligence on job performance. Another potential research direction might be to look at different types of jobs and how much emotional intelligence matters. For example, workers in the service industry might have a higher need for emotional intelligence than those who work in factory settings.

In a study of employees in the hospitality industry, Lee and Ok (2012) found that emotional intelligence blunted the effects of emotional dissonance, i.e., the gap between one's

true feelings and the feelings that one must present to customers, on job satisfaction. The researchers found that emotional intelligence predicts job satisfaction among hotel employees, with emotionally intelligent employees reporting higher job satisfaction than their less emotionally intelligent counterparts. As will be discussed further below, this suggests that emotional intelligence might blunt the effects of Machiavellianism on employee outcomes. That is, while they might want to manipulate others, emotional intelligence might lead to a better understanding of the social dynamics and cause them to curb their natural tendencies.

Finally, researchers have linked Emotional Intelligence to other work behaviors. Miao, Humphrey, and Qian (2017) found connections between emotional intelligence and both organizational citizenship behaviors and counterproductive work behaviors across studies in a meta-analysis. While ability based emotional intelligence showed weak relationships with both organizational citizenship behaviors ( $\rho = .13$ ) and counterproductive work behaviors ( $\rho = .00$ ), trait-based measures were more strongly correlated with both types of organizational behavior ( $\rho$ 's = .47 and -.33, respectively). Beyond being correlated with counterproductive work behaviors, several other studies have indicated that emotional intelligence is a moderator of counterproductive behavior relationships (Bibi, Karim, & Din, 2013; Krishnakumar, Hopkins, & Robinson, 2017; Zhang, Redfern, Newman, & Ferreira-Meyers, 2016). For example, Zhang et al. (2016) found that emotional intelligence buffered the negative relationship between customer social stressors and counterproductive work behaviors in call center representatives.

Based on this research, I hypothesized that emotional intelligence would be negatively related to counterproductive work behavior. Additionally, because emotional intelligence moderates effects on counterproductive work behaviors, I proposed that emotional intelligence

would moderate the relationship between Machiavellianism and counterproductive work behaviors.

**Hypothesis 3:** Emotional intelligence will be related negatively to counterproductive work behaviors.

**Hypothesis 4:** Emotional intelligence will moderate the relationship between Machiavellianism and counterproductive work behavior. Specifically, the positive relationship between these variables will decrease as Emotional Intelligence scores increase.

### **Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence**

According to Cote and colleagues (2011), there is mixed evidence regarding the relationship between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence. Cote and colleagues (2011) observed an interaction effect between Machiavellianism and Emotional-Regulation knowledge. Subjects who scored high in both Machiavellianism and Emotional-Regulation knowledge were more likely to engage in interpersonal deviance than those who were high in only Machiavellianism. This finding suggests that there may be a sub-population of Machiavellians who are more capable of regulating their emotions. This group of Machiavellians should be better theoretically at interpersonal manipulation due to their ability to perceive emotions in others and take advantage of situations. In organizational settings, this group may be more likely to successfully manipulate peers and supervisors and climb the organizational ladder more quickly than those who lack that specific combination of traits.

In another experiment, Austin and colleagues (2006) examined whether a “dark side” of Emotional Intelligence exists. One difficulty with measuring Emotional Intelligence is that the current measurements of the construct focus mainly on helping behaviors and other positive traits. Due to this possible positive bias, the negative relationship between Machiavellianism and

Emotional Intelligence ( $r = -.22$ ) might not accurately portray the true relationship (Austin et. al 2006). Austin and colleagues concluded that more study on the topic is necessary.

Nagler and colleagues (2014) reviewed relationships between each facet of the Dark Triad and ability-based emotional intelligence. Due to the cold, callous nature of Machiavellians, the researchers hypothesized a relationship between Machiavellianism and social skills as measured by the Social Skills Inventory (Riggio & Carney, 2003). The researchers hypothesized that Machiavellianism would be negatively related to all facets of the Social Skills Inventory. The researchers found that Machiavellianism related negatively to all facets of the Social Skills Inventory with the exception of the Social Control facet. The Social Control facet of the Social Skills Inventory measures an individual's ability to present one's self and manage impressions. Machiavellianism was found to be highly correlated ( $r = .55$ ) with Emotional Manipulation. Austin and colleagues (2007) used a 10-item scale to measure emotional manipulation. An example of an item from the Emotional Manipulation Scale is "I can use my emotional skills to make others feel guilty."

The observed negative correlation between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence may be moderated by Agreeableness (O'Connor & Athota, 2013). Generally, Machiavellians are lower in Agreeableness than the general population, which may in turn drive the negative correlation between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence. According to O'Connor and Athota (2013), the negative correlation between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence disappears when Agreeableness is controlled for.

Taking these studies in account, I developed two hypotheses and two research questions about the relationship between emotional intelligence and Machiavellianism. The first hypothesis and the research question focused on the relationship between emotional intelligence and

Machiavellianism with Hypothesis 1 seeking to replicate the findings of Austin and colleagues (2007). The second hypothesis and research questions sought to replicate and extend the work of O'Connor and Athota (2013) by examining whether the Big Five trait of agreeableness plays a role in the relationship between emotional intelligence and Machiavellianism. Specifically, these analyses focused on whether the relationship between emotional intelligence and Machiavellianism is spurious due to agreeableness or whether the relationship between these variables depends on one's level of agreeableness.

**Hypothesis 5:** Emotional Intelligence scores will be negatively correlated with Machiavellianism scores.

**Hypothesis 6:** Agreeableness will moderate the relationship between emotional intelligence and Machiavellianism. Specifically, this negative relationship will become weaker as Agreeableness scores increase.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

This study used a sample from Amazon MTurk. The sample consisted of working adults from a wide variety of occupational backgrounds. Table 1 presents demographic information for participants. The sample contained 78 male, 57 female and one participant that did not disclose gender identity. The ethnic makeup of the sample was 71% Caucasian, 16% African American, 3.7% Hispanic, 8.1% Asian and 1.3% other race/ethnicity. The mean sample age was 35.48 years old with a standard deviation of 10.12 years. The sample age range runs from 21 to 69 years of age.

## **Procedure**

I posted a survey containing items to measure Counterproductive Work Behaviors, Emotional Intelligence, Emotional Manipulation and Machiavellianism to Amazon's Mechanical Turk and paid each participant to complete the full survey. The survey began with an informed consent page and a reminder to answer each item honestly. The survey contained demographic information as well as a space for each participant to type their job title. Participants then filled out questionnaires containing items for Machiavellianism, Agreeableness, Emotional Manipulation, Emotional Intelligence and Counterproductive Work Behaviors.

## **Measures**

**Counterproductive work behavior.** I measured counterproductive work behaviors by using the Bennett-Robinson Workplace Deviance scale (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). The scale contains twelve items on organizational deviance and seven items on interpersonal deviance. One example of an organizational counterproductive work behavior is "worked on a personal matter at work." An example of an interpersonal counterproductive work behavior is "cursed a coworker while at work." The internal reliabilities of organizational and interpersonal counterproductive work behaviors are .81 and .78. The response format included seven options, with a 1 indicating no engagement in that behavior and a 7 indicating daily participation. For workplace deviance scale items, see Appendix A.

**Emotional intelligence.** To measure emotional intelligence, I used the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short form or TEIQue-SF (Petrides, 2009). The TEIQue-SF is a 30-item inventory that covers five different facets of Emotional Intelligence. The facets are Adaptability, Emotionality, Self-Control, Sociability and Well-Being. The reliability of the global Emotional Intelligence measure is .88. A sample item from this scale is "Expressing my

emotions with words is not a problem for me.” I used a five-point response format with options ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.” For list of items, see Appendix B.

**Emotional manipulation.** To measure Emotional Manipulation, I used the Emotional Manipulation Scale (Austin et al., 2007). The scale contains 41 items and three facets: emotional manipulation, poor emotion skills and concealment. The first facet contains items about emotional manipulation. An example item is “I know how to embarrass someone to keep them from behaving in a certain way.” The second facet contains items about poor emotion skills. An example item is “I feel I lack emotional skills.” The third facet contains items about concealment. An example item is “When someone has made me upset or angry, I tend to conceal my feelings.” The internal reliabilities of emotional manipulation, poor emotion skills and concealment are .88, .66, and .73 respectively (Austin et al., 2007). The response format included seven options ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” For a list of items, see Appendix C.

**Agreeableness.** I measured agreeableness with a 10-item inventory from the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP) that measures different dimensions of the Five-Factor Model (Goldberg et al., 2006). The scale contains ten items for each for the facets of Openness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism. However, I only used the items for agreeableness. I used a five-point response format with options ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” An example of an item for agreeableness is “I have a good word for everyone.” The internal reliability for Agreeableness is .83 (Austin et al., 2007).

**Machiavellianism.** I measured Machiavellianism using the Machiavellian Personality Scale (Dahling, Whitaker & Levy, 2009). The scale contains sixteen items and four facets. The facets are cynical attitudes towards others, amoral manipulation, desire for power, and desire for

wealth. An example item for cynical attitudes is “People will do what they can to get ahead.” An example item to measure amoral manipulation is “I am willing to tell lies to others if it suits my goals.” Example items for power and desire for wealth are “I enjoy dominating interpersonal interactions” and “I want to be rich and powerful someday” respectively. The reliability of the sixteen item Machiavellian Personality Scale is .82. The reliabilities for the facets of amorality, desire for status, desire for power and distrust of others are .83, .72, .70 and .75 respectively. I used a five-point response format with options ranging from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree” for each item. For my study, I focused on the global measure of Machiavellianism because of an interest in the relationship between Machiavellianism as a general personality trait. For full list of items, see Appendix D.

## **Results**

Table 2 presents the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of study variables. Hypotheses 1, 3, and 5 were tested with correlation coefficients. Hypothesis 2 was tested with bootstrapped confidence intervals of the indirect effect via the processr package (White, 2018). Hypotheses 4 and 6 were tested with moderated regression.

As shown in Table 2, correlation coefficients between all variables were statistically significant. In Hypothesis 1a, I predicted a positive relationship between Machiavellianism and Emotional Manipulation. This hypothesis was supported with a statistically significant correlation between levels of Emotional Manipulation and Machiavellianism ( $r = .81, p < .001$ ). Similarly, Hypothesis 1b predicted a positive correlation between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors and was supported by a statistically significant relationship between the two variables ( $r = .62, p < .001$ ).



Hypothesis 2 predicted that Emotional Manipulation would mediate the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors. I tested this using several steps. First, I tested for a direct effect of Machiavellianism on Counterproductive work behaviors. This relationship was significant,  $b = .99$  ( $SE = .14$ ), 95% CI = .66-1.26. Next, I examined the indirect effect of Machiavellianism on Counterproductive Work Behaviors through Emotional Manipulation using bootstrapping. This was significant,  $b = .75$ , 95% CI = .50 – 1.07. In addition, the direct effect of Machiavellianism became statistically nonsignificant when controlling for Emotional Manipulation,  $b = .25$  ( $SE = .19$ ), 95% CI = -.07 – .62. Taken together, these results suggested that Emotional Manipulation fully mediate the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors, supporting Hypothesis 2.

I predicted with Hypothesis 3 that Emotional Intelligence would be negatively related to Counterproductive Work Behaviors; this hypothesis was supported,  $r = -0.48$ ,  $p < .001$ . Results suggested that those with higher self-reported Emotional Intelligence were less likely to engage in Counterproductive Work Behaviors than those who reported lower levels of Emotional Intelligence.

In Hypothesis 4, I stated that Agreeableness would moderate the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive work behaviors such that higher levels of Agreeableness will/fix weaken the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behavior. When regressing Counterproductive Work Behaviors onto Machiavellianism and Agreeableness, the interaction term was not significant,  $b = -0.21$  (0.14),  $p = .14$ , indicating no moderation effect was present.

I predicted in Hypothesis 5 that Emotional Intelligence would negatively relate to Machiavellianism. This hypothesis was supported,  $r = -.48$ ,  $p < .001$ . This suggested that those

in the sample who reported higher levels of Emotional Intelligence were less likely to endorse Machiavellian tendencies and behaviors reflected in the survey.

In Hypothesis 6, I stated that Agreeableness would moderate the relationship between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence such that higher Agreeableness scores would weaken the negative relationship between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence. This was not supported. Though the interaction term between Machiavellianism and Agreeableness was significant,  $b = -0.26$  ( $SE = .08$ ),  $t = .56$ ,  $p = .001$ , it was in the opposite direction of the hypothesized relationship. The relationship between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence was not significant at Agreeableness levels one standard deviation below the mean,  $b = -.03$  ( $SE = .07$ ),  $t = -.035$ ,  $p = .12$ , but the relationship was significant at one standard deviation above the mean,  $b = -.46$  ( $SE = .10$ ),  $t = -4.52$ ,  $p < .001$ . These results indicated that when Agreeableness increased, Machiavellianism became increasingly predictive of Emotional Intelligence scores with Machiavellianism negatively predicting Emotional Intelligence scores.

## **Discussion**

In an organizational context, Machiavellianism is worthy of study due to a tendency for employees with Machiavellian tendencies to advance within organizations at higher rates than those with fewer Machiavellian tendencies (Spurk, Keller & Herschi, 2016). This trend makes it possible that Machiavellian employees are overrepresented in positions of power and authority within organizations where deception and interpersonal bullying to suit individual goals can greatly damage an organization due to the decisions of those individuals impacting wider ranges of the workforce. One goal of the present study was to identify the place of Emotional Manipulation in the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work

Behaviors. Another aim is to find whether the traits of Agreeableness or Emotional Intelligence may impact the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors.

According to Dahling, Whitaker and Levy's (2009) model of Machiavellianism, people that engage in Machiavellian behaviors operate amorally with only self-serving goals in mind. Machiavellians might not seek out interpersonal manipulation for its own sake, but they do not allow moral principles of honesty or fairness towards others to stand between themselves and their goals. Similarly, Austin et al.'s (2007) emotional manipulators employ a use of both soft and hard tactics to elicit desirable perceptions of themselves or desirable behavioral responses from their targets. The results of the present study showed a very high correlation between Machiavellianism and Emotional Manipulation, replicating the prior findings of Austin et al (2007). More specifically, this high correlation is caused by the shared properties of indifference towards others, goal-oriented behaviors and use of calculated interpersonal strategies to obtain personal goals with little consideration for the benefit of other individuals or organizations that the subject may belong to. My results showed a very robust positive correlation between Machiavellianism and Emotional Manipulation, replicating the findings of Austin and colleagues (2007).

An aim of this study is to identify Emotional Manipulation as an avenue by which Machiavellians carry out Counterproductive Work Behaviors against others. I hypothesized a mediated relationship by which Machiavellian tendencies lead to an increased propensity to use Emotional Manipulation that is measurable in the form of Counterproductive Work Behaviors. The results supported the hypothesized mediation, where the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors became non-significant when accounting for Emotional Manipulation. In this theoretical framework, Emotional Manipulation

is a favored tool for Machiavellians to carry out their agendas within organizations, perhaps a real-world example faithful to Machiavelli's original writing. Furthermore, this finding adds to the prior research by DeShong et al. (2014) by being the first to consider Emotional Manipulation as a mediating variable between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors. This finding in the present study indicates that Emotional Manipulation may be one of the favored methods for carrying out Counterproductive Work Behaviors in the workplace for individuals with Machiavellian tendencies.

The Five-Factor facet of Agreeableness may be thought of as a direct contradiction to the main components of Machiavellianism. Where Machiavellians are scheming, individualistic, cynical and ready to harm others to suit personal goals, those with tendencies towards Agreeableness are cooperative, compassionate, and ready to see the best in others. Our results found a very strong negative correlation between Machiavellianism and Agreeableness, which supports conventional wisdom and prior literature concerning the relationship of the two variables (Dahling, Whitaker & Levy, 2009).

A more meaningful question addressed by the present study is to what extent Agreeableness strengthens or weakens the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive work behaviors. My results found a non-significant interaction term between Machiavellianism and Agreeableness when predicting Counterproductive Work Behaviors, meaning that there is not support for a theoretical framework where higher tendencies towards Agreeableness diminish the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors. Machiavellian individuals tended engage in more Counterproductive Work Behaviors regardless of their level of Agreeableness.

Another aim of the present study is to investigate the role of Emotional Intelligence with Machiavellianism, Emotional Manipulation and Counterproductive Work Behaviors. Trait Emotional Intelligence as described by Perez, Petrides and Furnham (2005) is a self-reported ability of an individual to recognize and regulate emotions in one's self and others. This construct has some intuitive overlap with Machiavellianism and Emotional Manipulation in the regard that all of these constructs involve perceiving and managing the emotions of others. However, prior literature has found a robust negative relationship between Emotional Intelligence and both dark constructs. The results of the present study found very strong negative relationships between Emotional Intelligence and both Machiavellianism and Emotional Manipulation. These results suggest that Machiavellians and Manipulators are actually very poor at actually perceiving and managing the emotions of others and use other mechanisms to elicit desired responses from others.

I tested a possible moderating relationship between Machiavellianism and Agreeableness when predicting Emotional Intelligence. My hypothesis stated that as Agreeableness levels increased, the strong negative relationship between Machiavellianism and Emotional Intelligence would soften. My results found a significant interaction effect between Machiavellianism and Agreeableness predicting Emotional Intelligence, such that as Machiavellianism levels increased, the relationship between Agreeableness and Trait Emotional Intelligence weakened. Simply put, for individuals higher in Agreeableness, Trait Emotional Intelligence and Machiavellianism are negatively related, but this relationship is not significant for individuals with lower levels of Agreeableness. Though the interaction was significant, it was in the opposite of the hypothesized relationship and therefore did not support Hypothesis 6.

## Limitations

The first limitation of the present study is the number of subjects that were eliminated post data-collection for failing the attention checks. Roughly half of my MTURK sample data was not usable, and nearly one third of that unusable data was generated by subjects who did not answer any questions. It may be worth exploring whether this occurred because of the nature of conducting surveys online.

Correlational designs are limited in scope because of their inability to infer cause to findings. Though we were able to confirm all of our hypotheses with the exception of Hypothesis 4, we are unable to infer cause due to a lack of temporal precedence. We are able to tell where covariation between our measures occurs, but lack to the ability to determine how or why those covariations occur. If there is a way to create temporal precedence in a laboratory it may be a superior option to MTURK surveys for inferring causality, however most of these constructs are based on individual personality differences which would make this a difficult task.

Self-report data also has its own limitations due to social desirability bias, carelessness when responding and other sources of bias that may cause a subject to answer inaccurately. Self-serving biases are especially pertinent when asking subjects about counterproductive work behaviors they may or may not have committed. We took steps to address some of these concerns, namely adding attention checks to three of our question blocks in our MTURK survey. Additionally, we ensured participants that answers would be kept confidential and any personal identifying information would be removed.

Another shortcoming of the present study comes from multicollinearity concerns, as some of the constructs measured are very similar to one another. For example, Emotional Manipulation and Machiavellianism are nearly perfectly positively correlated with one another.

The use of Trait-Based Emotional Intelligence in this study is also sure to meet some criticism by researchers who favor Ability-Based Emotional Intelligence measures. It is possible that the results found in this study will not match because Ability-Based tests for Emotional Intelligence see it as a competency whereas the Trait-Based survey questions used in this study captured the participants' beliefs about their competencies when recognizing and regulating emotions in themselves and others.

### **Future Research**

The biggest improvement upon the current study would be to use a survey method that poses less risk of large swaths of unusable data. When gathering survey data, there are obvious tradeoffs between representativeness of the general population and response rates. A common example of this is deciding whether to recruit undergraduates for course credit, a method likely to yield better response rates, or risk lower response rates in order to obtain a more representative sample by using sites like Amazon MTURK.

Future studies should also explore the unexpected result showing that Machiavellianism became more negatively predictive of Emotional Intelligence as Agreeableness scores increased. It would be helpful to explain why Machiavellianism does not seem to predict Emotional Intelligence when Agreeableness is one standard deviation below the mean.

In order to build on the finding that Emotional Manipulation mediated the relationship between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors, it may be helpful to find other variables to add to the model and perhaps future studies could add Emotional Intelligence to the model to see how it adds to that mediated relationship.

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## Tables and Graphs

Table 1

*Gender and Ethnic breakdown of sample*

	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Other	Total
Male	56	12	2	7	1	78
Female	41	9	3	4	0	57
Total	97	21	5	11	1	135

Note: Final count of gender and ethnicity statistics after screening out participants with unusable data and failed attention check answers.

Table 2

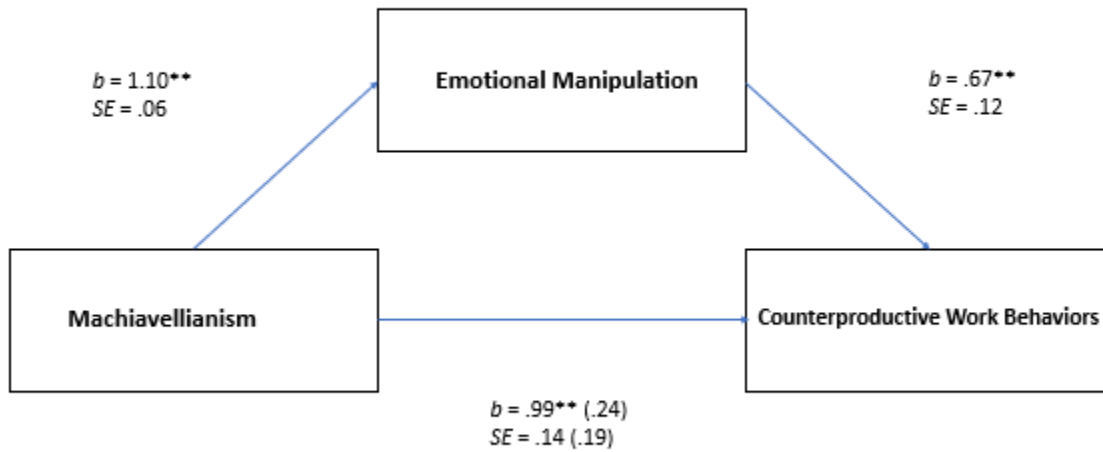
*Means, Standard Deviations and Correlation Table*

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. EI	3.73	0.71				
2. Agree	3.91	0.81	.57**			
3. Mach	2.64	0.82	-.48**	-.54**		
4. CWB	2.13	1.31	-.49**	-.48**	.62**	
5. EM	3.57	1.17	-.56**	-.55**	.81**	.70**

Note: M and SD are used to signify Mean and Standard Deviation. EI = TEIQUE Emotional Intelligence, Mach = Machiavellianism, Agree = Agreeableness, CWB = Counterproductive Work Behaviors, EM = Emotional Manipulation

Figure 1

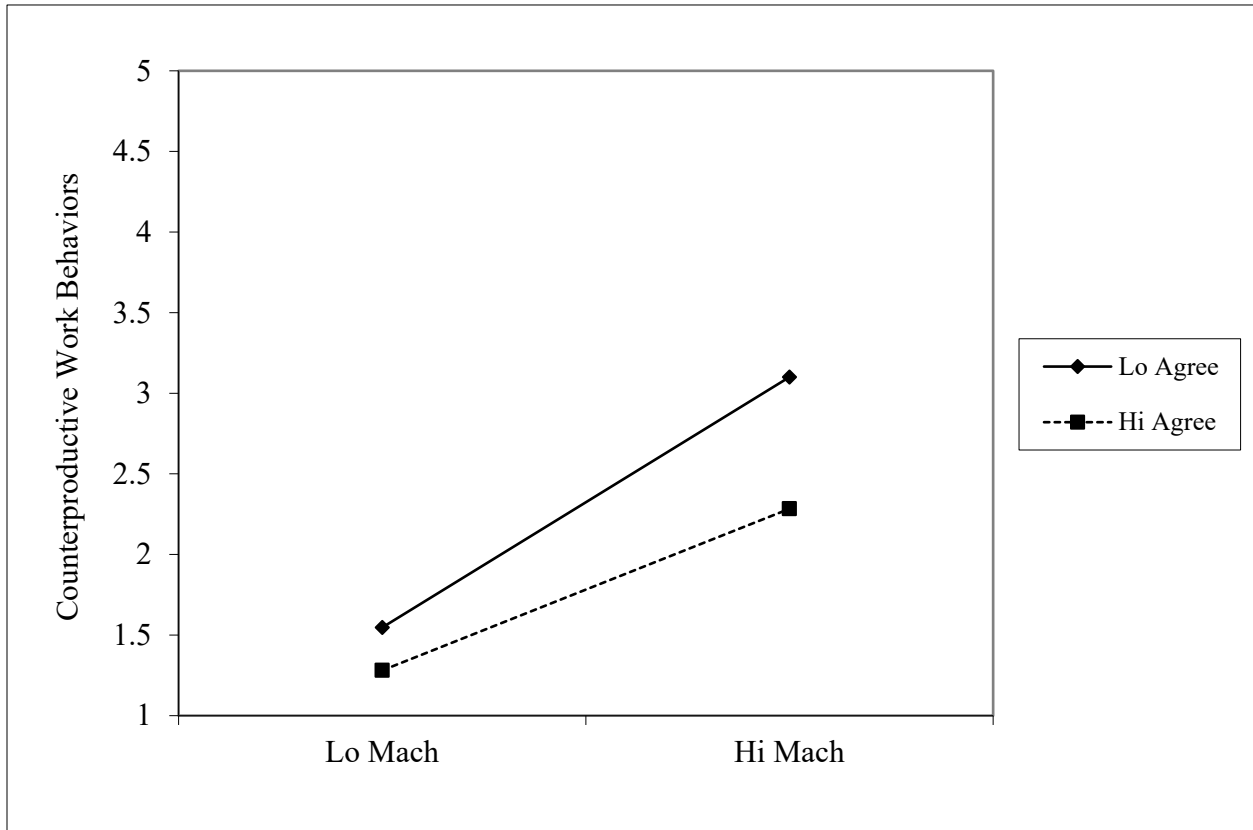
*Mediation Diagram for Hypothesis 2*



Note: Unstandardized regression coefficients used. The Unstandardized Regression for the path between Machiavellianism and Counterproductive Work Behaviors when controlling for Emotional Manipulation in parenthesis.

Figure 2

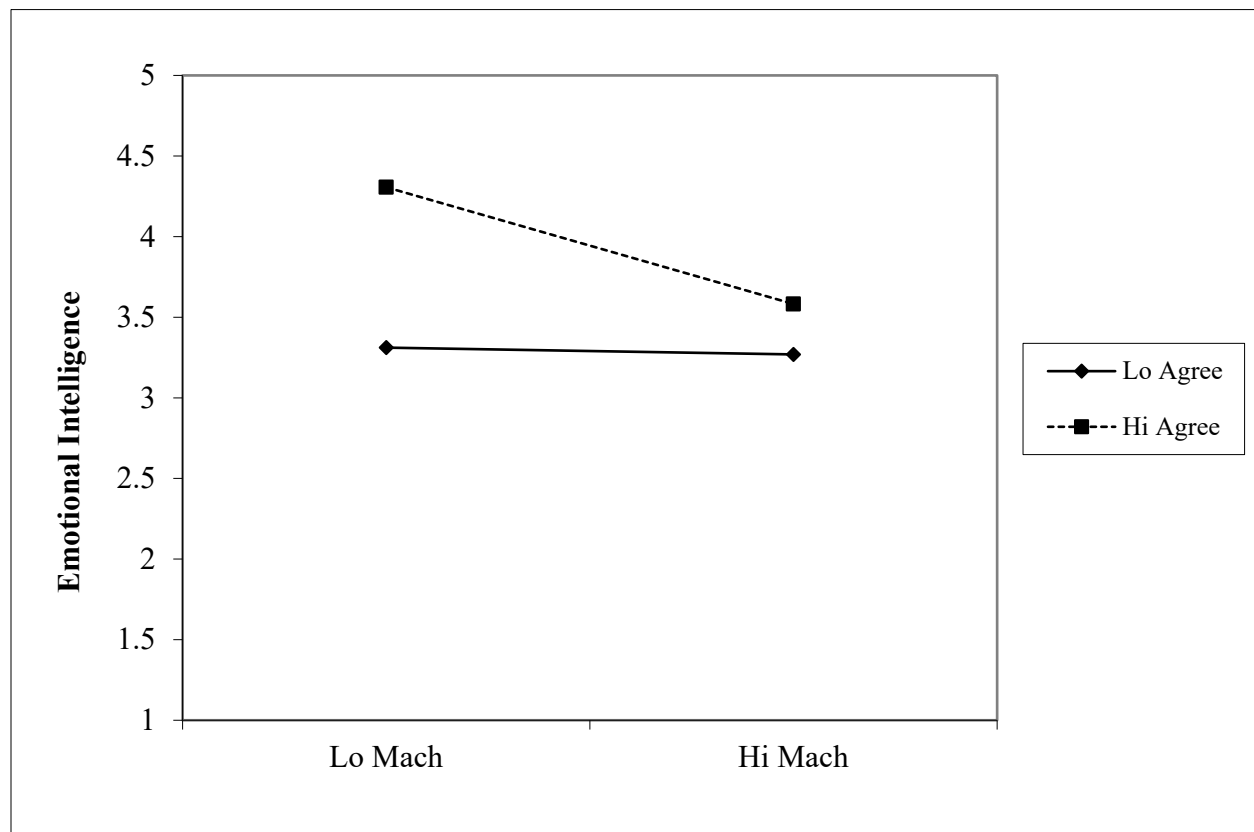
*Interaction of Machiavellianism and Agreeableness when predicting Counterproductive Work Behaviors*



Note: Mach is an abbreviation for Machiavellianism and Agree is an abbreviation for Agreeableness.

Figure 3

*Interaction between Machiavellianism and Agreeableness when predicting Emotional Intelligence*



Note: Mach is an abbreviation for Machiavellianism and Agree is an abbreviation for Agreeableness.



## Appendices

Item Number	Appendix A: The Bennett-Robinson Workplace Deviance Scale
1	Worked on a personal matter instead of work for your employer
2	Taken property from work without permission
3	Spent too much time fantasizing or daydreaming instead of working
4	Made fun of someone at work
5	Falsified a receipt to get reimbursed for more money than you spent on business expenses
6	Said something hurtful to someone at work
7	Taken an additional or longer break than is acceptable at your workplace
8	Repeated a rumor or gossip about your company
9	Made an ethnic, religious or racial remark or joke at work
10	Came in late to work without permission
11	Littered in your work environment
12	Cursed at someone at work
13	Called in sick when you were not
14	Told someone about the lousy place where you work
15	Lost your temper while at work
16	Neglected to follow your boss's instructions
17	Intentionally worked slower than you could have worked
18	Discussed confidential company information with an unauthorized person
19	Left work early without permission
20	Played a mean prank on someone at work
21	Left your work for someone else to finish
22	Acted rudely toward someone at work
23	Repeated a rumor or gossip about your boss to coworkers
24	Made an obscene comment at work
25	Used an illegal drug or consumed alcohol on the job
26	Put little effort into your work
27	Publicly embarrassed someone at work
28	Dragged out work in order to get overtime

Item Number	Appendix B: Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire Short Form
1	Expressing my emotions with words is not a problem for me
2	I often find it difficult to see things from another person's perspective
3	On the whole, I'm a highly motivated person
4	I usually find it difficult to regulate my emotion
5	I generally don't find life enjoyable
6	I can deal effectively with people
7	I tend to change my mind frequently
8	Many times, I can't figure out what emotion I'm feeling
9	I feel that I have a number of good qualities
10	I often find it difficult to stand up for my rights
11	I'm usually able to influence the way other people feel
12	On the whole, I have a pretty gloomy perspective on most things
13	Those close to me often complain that I don't treat them right
14	I often find it difficult to adjust my life according to the circumstances
15	On the whole, I am able to deal with stress
16	I often find it difficult to show my affection to those close to me
17	I'm normally able to "get into someone's shoes" and experience their emotions
18	I normally find it difficult to keep myself motivated
19	I'm usually able to find ways to control my emotions when I want to
20	On the whole, I'm pleased with my life
21	I would describe myself as a good negotiator
22	I tend to get involved in things I later wish I could get out of
23	I often pause and think about my feelings
24	I believe I'm full of personal strengths
25	I tend to "back down" even if I know I'm right
26	I don't seem to have any power over other people's feelings
27	I generally believe that things will work out fine in my life
28	I find it difficult to bond well, even with those close to me
29	Generally, I'm able to adapt to new environments
30	Others admire me for being relaxed

Item Number	Appendix C: Emotional Manipulation Scale
1	I know how to embarrass someone to stop them from behaving in a particular way
2	I know how to make another person feel uneasy
3	I know how to play people off against each other
4	I know how to make someone feel ashamed about something that they have done in order to stop them from doing it again
5	I know how to “wind up” my close family and friends
6	I can use my emotional skills to make others feel guilty
7	I can make someone feel anxious so that they will act in a particular way
8	I can pay someone compliments to get into their “good books”
9	I am good at reassuring people so that they’re more likely to go along with what I say
10	I sometimes pretend to be angrier than I really am about someone’s behavior in order to induce them to behave differently in the future
11	I can simulate emotions like pain and hurt to make others feel guilty
12	If someone has done something to upset me, I think it is acceptable to make them feel guilty about it
13	I sometimes use displays of anger as a method of controlling others’ behavior
14	I can offer words of encouragement and reassurance to a friend to get them to do something I want
15	In order to avoid a deadline or other commitment, I would consider exaggerating a minor personal problem
16	I think it is wrong to use emotional means such as acting distressed or angry to get others to change their behavior
17	I am not very good at motivating people
18	I feel that I lack emotional skills
19	I’m not very good at changing someone’s mood, even if doing so would make them more likely to behave in a way that I want them to
20	I am not very good at giving positive encouragement to others
21	If a friend upsets me I sometimes sulk for a while so s/he can see how much they’ve hurt me
22	When someone has made me upset or angry, I tend to downplay my feelings
23	When someone has made me upset or angry, I often conceal my feelings
24	I often conceal feelings of anger or distress from others
25	I don’t believe in telling others about my problems – I keep them to myself

Item Number	Appendix D: Machiavellianism Personality Scale
1	I am willing to be unethical if I believe it will help me succeed
2	I am willing to sabotage the efforts of other people if they threaten my goals
3	I would cheat if there was a low chance of getting caught
4	I believe that lying is necessary to maintain a competitive advantage over others
5	The only good reason to talk to others is to get information that I can use for my benefit
6	I like to give the orders in interpersonal situations
7	I enjoy being able to control the situation
8	I enjoy having control over other people
9	Status is a good sign of success in life
10	Accumulating wealth is an important goal for me
11	I want to be rich and powerful someday
12	People are only motivated by personal gain
13	I dislike committing to groups because I don't trust others
14	Team members backstab each other all the time to get ahead
15	If I show any weakness at work, other people will take advantage of it
16	Other people are always planning ways to take advantage of the situation at my expense