

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Communal narcissism, self-motives, and work effort

OARA PRUNDEANU*

*Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Department Psychology,
“Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, Romania*

SIMONA A. POPUȘOI

*Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Department Psychology,
“Alexandru Ioan Cuza” University of Iași, Romania*

Abstract

Communal narcissists amplify their prosocial traits and consider themselves saintly individuals. However, communal narcissistic self-enhancement can foster or block one's willingness to be actively involved in the workplace or in solving tasks by making a systematic effort. The present study explored the relationship between communal narcissistic features (i.e., present, and future-related thoughts), self-motives (i.e., self-leadership, power-seeking, and desire for fame), and work effort among a convenience sample composed of university students (N = 489). We analyzed three parallel mediation models to assess the indirect effect of communal narcissistic features on work effort via self-motives. Results indicated that communal narcissism positively correlated with self-motives and work effort. Moreover, communal narcissistic and present-future-related thoughts had similar indirect associations with work effort through self-leadership strategies, desire for power, and fame. The relationship between communal narcissistic features, self-motives, and work effort can have important implications for organizations, which were discussed.

Keywords

communal narcissism; leadership; power; fame; work effort

Introduction

Work effort represents a central construct when analyzing various ways to improve organizational outcomes. Also, to attract and retain employees to enhance performance at work, organizations should pay more attention to individual differences. Researchers have defined effort in several ways, which has led to a lack of consistency and clarity regarding the conceptualization of work effort (De Cooman et al., 2009). In their meta-analytic

review, Iddekinge, Arnold and Lievens (2022) explained that effort can be understood as a direct outcome of motivation, highlighting three key components of work effort, namely what individuals work on, how hard they work and how long they persist in the task. Work effort “captures the behavioral energy that motivation represents cognitively, which is then translated into an accomplished output” (De Cooman et al., 2011, p. 301-302). Therefore, work effort can be situated between motivation and performance (De Cooman et

* Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Oara Prundeanu, Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, Toma Cozma Street No. 3, 700554, Iași, Romania.
Tel. +40 746 112 926. E-mail: oaraprundeanu@yahoo.com

al., 2009). Thus, work effort represents a determinant of future performance because an individual who puts more effort into a job will increase his/her chances of obtaining a good performance. In this paper, we operationalize work effort as the behavioral manifestation of work motivation, considering the effort direction (i.e., what an individual wants to do by choosing a strategy), effort intensity (i.e., how hard an individual works to implement the chosen behavior or strategy) and effort persistence (how long an individual tries to work in order to implement the strategy) (Iddekinge et al., 2022).

The importance of effort as a performance-enabling mechanism could be highlighted in relation to certain aspects related to the personality traits. For example, self-confidence and the trust of being successful can increase narcissistic individuals' effort and improve their performance (Roberts et al., 2019). Empirical support suggests that individuals high in narcissism are workaholics, engaged in their work (Falco et al., 2020), and have a strong desire to be successful at work because they can overtly display their abilities (Clark et al., 2010). Some authors explained that narcissistic individuals are highly motivated to obtain outstanding performance only when self-enhancement opportunities are visible (Wallace & Baumeister, 2002). On the other hand, Sudha & Shahnawaz, (2020) found that narcissism was negatively related to task performance and teamwork dimensions of performance. Thus, the relational pattern between narcissism and work performance can produce inconsistent results due to the dynamic self-regulatory processes and different performance indicators measured.

There has been relatively little research on the underlying mechanisms that can explain the relationship between communal narcissism and work effort. Most previous research on narcissism and work outputs has been concerned with agentic narcissism (Judge LePine & Rich, 2006; Sudha & Shahnawaz, 2020). However, communal narcissism may be more relevant to possible positive benefits resulting from the desire of individuals to self-enhance in communal domains. Although theoretically similar, agentic and communal narcissism enables

individuals to self-enhance and hold unrealistically positive self-views, the underlying motivational processes and the functions served through behavior may manifest differently. Some studies have assessed the relationship between narcissism and the willingness of individuals to engage in prosocial behaviors, along with the factors that lead to these motivations (Fatfouta & Schröder-Abé, 2018; Konrath, Ho & Zarins, 2016). For example, Naderi (2018) found that communal narcissists consider pro-environmental actions as communal means that serve their self-directed motives, but when they perceive the actions as a threat to their self-interest, they do not engage anymore in pro-environmental actions. Furthermore, communal narcissistic traits can increase daily life pro-environmental behavior for predominantly egoistic reasons but not for altruistic ones (Kesenheimer & Greitemeyer, 2021). Other results indicated that communal narcissism was unrelated to objective prosociality but was related to higher subjective prosociality (Nehrlich, Gebauer, Sedikides & Schoel, 2019).

This present study contributes to the field by exploring the mechanisms that underlie the relationship between communal narcissism and work effort. Specifically, we want to investigate how self-motives (i.e., self-leadership, power-seeking, and desire for fame) as process variables can mediate the relationship between communal narcissistic characteristics and the effort individuals put into their work. To our knowledge, previous studies have not investigated present and future-related thoughts of communal narcissism and their relationship to work effort. Thus, we sought to expand existing research by analyzing the two-dimensional concept of communal narcissism (i.e., present versus future-oriented thoughts) to the preferences for using specific self-enhancement strategies. Also, following the recommendations of Roberts and Woodman (2017), we wanted to extend the understanding of the effects of other relevant personality traits on work effort, moving beyond the Big 5.

Theory and Hypothesis

Communal narcissism and work effort

The agency-communion model of narcissism (Gebauer, Sedikides, Verplanken & Maio, 2012) postulated that there are two types of grandiose narcissism: agentic and communal. Both forms of narcissism (i.e., agentic, and communal) are based on global, exaggerated self-assessments of their importance, their justification in their relationships with others, and their desire to have power. Agentic narcissists make global self-evaluations to self-enhance their agentic attributes, while communal narcissists hold the same self-evaluations but base them on unduly self-enhancing their communal attributes (see Gebauer & Sedikides, 2018 for review). This less investigated form of narcissism - communal narcissism - is of interest given that it manifests in an exaggerated view of oneself regarding morality, prosociality, kindness, and other aspects of the communal domain. Thus, communal narcissism can be defined as grandiose self-views manifested in the communal domain (Rogoza & Fatfouta, 2019). Communal narcissism “possess the same core self-motives as agentic narcissists (i.e., grandiosity, esteem, entitlement, power), but satisfy these self-motives through communal means” (Gebauer et al., 2012, p. 855). Thus, a typical communal narcissist would consider himself the most helpful, caring and understanding person, an amazing listener who can be extraordinarily trustworthy. Žemojtel-Piotrowska and her colleagues (2016) proposed that self-enhancement tendencies can express grandiose views of the present self or as optimistic, unrealistic fantasies about the future. Their reasoning is based on the fact that in the communal domain, optimistic future views are difficult to accomplish because they are vague and subjective. Therefore, claiming future accomplishments in the communal domain can be much more convenient for communal narcissistic individuals (Žemojtel-Piotrowska et al., 2016).

On the other hand, adopting short-term social motives stimulates narcissistic individuals to function and persist in different

social situations (Sheldon, Sedikides, Ntoumanis, Corcoran & Titova, 2020). Starting from the unidimensional measure proposed by Gebauer et al. (2012), Žemojtel-Piotrowska and her colleagues (2016) analyzed communal narcissism through the manifestation of present-focused and future-focused communal self-thoughts. The first dimension (i.e., present-focused communal self-thoughts) refers to the general beliefs about moral superiority and exceptionality compared to others. In contrast, the second one (i.e., future-focused communal self-thoughts) refers to grandiose fantasies about the desire to change the world and the capacity to influence others at a large-scale, highlighting instead the desire for fame and worldwide recognition (Žemojtel-Piotrowska et al., 2016). There are different correlates of present and future communal narcissism, which emphasizes the empirical need to differentiate both factors in explaining the dynamics of communal narcissists (Martin, Jin, O’Connor & Hughes, 2019). Moreover, depending on the temporal perspective adopted, people differ in the extent to which they feel they own or want to possess status and the extent to which they desire each (Neel, Kenrick, White & Neuberg 2016).

Studies have shown that the performance of narcissistic individuals depends on the self-enhancement opportunity for glory allowed by a particular situation or work task (Roberts et al., 2019; Roberts, Woodman & Sedikides, 2018). For example, Wallace and Baumeister (2002) suggested that people with high levels of narcissism would likely invest more effort in situations where they believe an opportunity for personal glory exists. In this way, the increasing effort and engagement in resolving a task maximizes the chances of gaining desired attention from others and brings social success. Moreover, narcissistic individuals are willing to make a more significant effort when others can identify their performance. Woodman and his colleagues (2011) found evidence that narcissists increase their on-task effort when they are aware that their performance has greater identifiability. While the effects of agentic narcissism on performance in various tasks have been relatively constant (i.e., invest more effort when the opportunity of glory appears or when

greater identifiability exists), the mechanisms that favor the involvement and work effort of people with communal narcissistic tendencies are still poorly understood. The relationship between communal narcissism and work effort is likely to be mediated by individual factors such as self-leadership, power seeking or desire for fame. Furthermore, this relationship can be prone to prefer temporal trajectories in which narcissistic people are cognitively anchored (e.g., present, and future communal narcissism-related thoughts).

In addition, as attention-seeking behaviors and celebrity positions have become increasingly promoted and rewarded in society especially in the communal domain (Murphy, 2021), it is useful to determine whether these elements have anything to do with the willingness to really make an effort or it is just an interface that only catches the attention of others. Furthermore, narcissistic tendencies manifested in the stage performance arena are related to self-leadership capacity and power-seeking. Narcissistic individuals use several behavior-focused strategies (e.g., self-goal setting) or constructive patterns of thinking (e.g., visualizing successful performance) in order to maintain an inflated self-view and to influence themselves to actively enhance their narcissistic esteem (Furtner, Rauthmann & Sachse, 2011). The activation of different strategies manifests according to the motivation of narcissistic individuals to get ahead (Sedikides & Campbell, 2017), to emerge as leaders (Brunell et al., 2008), or to climb in formal hierarchies and persistently pursue status (Grapsas, Brummelman, Back & Denissen, 2020). Narcissism predicted higher self-promotion and a greater desire for status and power (Nevicka & Sedikides, 2021), and the interaction between narcissism and power leads to overconfidence (Macenczak, Campbell, Henley & Campbell, 2016). However, narcissistic people can manifest changes in the effort they put in at work or in a certain task if the opportunities for personal glory are more salient (Roberts et al., 2019). The increased motivation to appear socially desirable in order to gain the acceptance of others and the need to achieve power and fame describe the characteristic interpersonal style of individuals with narcissistic tendencies

(Raskin, Novacek & Hogan, 1991). Thus, we aim to investigate whether the relationship between communal narcissism and work effort can be explained by self-leadership, desire for fame, and power-seeking.

Self-leadership, narcissism and work effort

People possess internal self-control systems and mechanisms that allow them to engage in self-evaluation processes to manage their activities (Manz, 1986). Self-leadership refers to “a comprehensive self-influence perspective that concerns leading oneself toward performance of naturally motivating tasks as well as managing oneself to do work that must be done but is not naturally motivating” (Manz, 1986, p. 589). Houghton and Neck (2002) proposed that self-leadership skills can be analyzed through the lenses of three general categories, namely behavior-focused strategies, natural reward strategies and constructive thought pattern strategies. According to the authors, behavior-focused strategies (e.g., self-observation, self-goal setting, self-reward, self-correcting feedback, and practice) have the role of increasing individual awareness and involve the management of behaviors for pleasant or unpleasant tasks. Natural reward strategies refer to the individual focusing on enjoyable aspects of a task or activity by changing perceptions or including pleasant features. Constructive thought pattern strategies refer to the individual capacity to identify and change dysfunctional beliefs by using positive self-talk and mental imagery of successful future performance. Furtner and his colleagues (2011) found that narcissism significantly correlates with global self-leadership and its categories, namely self-goal setting, self-observation, natural reward strategies, and constructive thought patterns (i.e., visualizing successful performance and evaluating beliefs and assumptions). Communal domains are frequently promoted in society therefore, they represent a field suitable for narcissistic individuals to show-off and gain social capital. Thus, we expect communal narcissism will be positively correlated with self-leadership, given that communal narcissism manifests itself mainly through socially desirable

behaviors in communal domains (e.g., world poverty, charity) and self-leadership is a process through which people influence themselves to obtain the motivation necessary to behave and perform in desirable ways.

Moreover, self-leadership can involve dualistic elements, such as a need to balance the challenge and the routine, the self-development and the relations with others, work and non-work, thus, “leading oneself means keeping a capacity to handle and sustain complementary and potentially conflicting demands (Pina e Cunha, Pacheco, Castanheira & Rego, 2017, p. 484). Hence, individuals characterized by narcissism may face such dualities. For example, narcissistic individuals seek to exploit and manipulate others to self-enhance and maintain their grandiose self-views (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). When these possibilities are blocked, they may activate certain self-leadership strategies for the purpose of intrapersonal and interpersonal self-regulation, which may have positive benefits on work outcomes. Several studies revealed positive associations between self-leadership and work-related outcomes (Goldsby, Goldsby, Neck, Neck & Mathews, 2021; Neck & Houghton, 2006; Stewart, Courtright & Manz, 2011). Self-leadership can be applied to improve daily tasks, challenges, and most of professionals' work, therefore, it enhances work effort (Amundsen & Martinsen, 2015). Goldsby and his colleagues (2021) stated that self-leadership manifests when the individual takes ownership of the work's subjective experience. Self-leadership has a positive relationship with work engagement (Knotts & Houghton, 2021), with commitment to the organization and overall work performance (Inam, Ho, Sheikh, Shafqat & Najam, 2021). Therefore, we expect that individuals with high self-leadership traits will put more effort into their work.

Power seeking, narcissism and work effort

The self-enhancement of communal narcissists is driven by the need for power (Gebauer et al., 2012). We previously highlighted that agentic and communal

narcissists possess strong motives to validate their self-perceived grandiosity, entitlement, and power but they differ in how they satisfy these needs. Giacomini and Jordan (2015) pointed out the fact that there is a disagreement between Paulhus and John's (1998) model and the agency–communion model of narcissism (Gebauer et al., 2012). In this regard, the first mentioned model postulated that the need for approval enhances communal narcissistic bias, whereas the need for power does not, while the second model suggests that communal narcissists are driven to self-enhance in communal domains by agentic needs, such as the need to validate a sense of power. Furthermore, Giacomini and Jordan (2015) found that validating a sense of power moderated the relationship between communal intentions and self-enhancement tendencies. More specifically, communal narcissistic individuals tend to be more helpful when their sense of power is threatened, but when was validated, they behave less communally. Moreover, need for power and need for autonomy mediated the relationship between narcissism and other variables (Campbell, Foster & Finkel, 2002). Therefore, given that the relational pattern between agentic and communal narcissism with pursuit of power is relatively similar in the aforementioned studies we expect communal narcissism will be positively correlated with power seeking. Further, a sense of power gives individuals the authority to make decisions that they consider important for their performance, leading to higher levels of work engagement (Rana, 2015). Considering that need for power can be a good motivator in developing a greater sense of responsibility and targeting specific goals (McClelland & Burhnam, 2006), power seeking should be positively related to work effort.

Desire for fame, narcissism and work effort

Past research highlighted that people with narcissistic tendencies seek to pursue extrinsic goals, such as fame or status, but not intrinsic goals of relationships and community (Abeyta, Routledge & Sedikides, 2017; Sedikides, Hart, Cisek & Routledge, 2013).

Thus, to enhance their social status and to promote their self-importance and specialness (Sedikides et al., 2013), narcissistic individuals are attracted to external rewards (e.g., material wealth and fame). Greenwood, Long and Dal Cin (2013) suggested that narcissistic individuals seek the recognition and elite status that fame confers and consider that future fame is more realistic. Thus, the interest in fame alongside with increased appeal of visibility and status makes narcissistic individuals to spend more time engaged in fame fantasy (Greenwood et al., 2013). Moreover, fame is associated with social recognition, richness, professional success, and attractive appearance, highly promoted extrinsic goals which people automatically associate with personal happiness (Gountas, Gountas, Reeves & Moran, 2012). Whilst, without a sustained effort and a continuing influx of positive experiences, individual well-being is likely to diminish very early (Sheldon et al., 2010).

Previous research examined the associations between agentic narcissism and fame interest. For example, Southard and Zeigler-Hill (2016) analyzed whether the two forms of pathological narcissism (i.e., grandiose, and vulnerable) are associated with fame interest dimensions. The authors obtained an interesting pattern of results, slightly different from those obtained by Maltby (2010). Grandiose narcissistic individuals desire a celebrity lifestyle, consider that are suitable for celebrity status, intensively crave for fame, but are not actually doing something to become famous (Southard & Zeigler-Hill, 2016). Interestingly, grandiose narcissism was positively associated with the altruistic dimension of fame, while Maltby (2010) did not find a significant association between narcissism and an altruistic desire for fame.

Communal narcissistic individuals get their superiority by exacerbating their prosocial traits, they tend to report being more altruistic, interested in moral values and outraged at unfairness, even though their self-views are not always found in their expressed behavior (Yang et al., 2018). To our knowledge, no research has examined how communal narcissistic features may relate to desire for fame. Starting from the results of the

previously mentioned studies, we expected that communal narcissism and its forms (i.e., present, and future related thoughts) will be positively related to desire for fame. Narcissistic individuals are attracted to extrinsic pursuits that can bring them wealth (Abeyta et al., 2008) and are strongly motivated to approach desirable outcomes (Foster & Trimm, 2008). Desire for fame can reflect a view of hard-working (i.e., work hard all day to be famous) (Maltby et al., 2008), so it can represent a force that mobilizes narcissists to put in more effort into their work.

Hypotheses

Drawing on previous empirical research and theoretical arguments, our study investigates the mediating role of self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame in the relationship between communal narcissism dimensions (i.e., present, and future-related thoughts) and work effort. We expect that communal narcissism dimensions will have a positive effect on work effort through the increase of self-leadership, desire for power and fame. Thus, we hypothesized that:

Hypothesis 1: Communal narcissism will be positively associated with work effort.

Hypothesis 2: Self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame mediates the relationship between overall communal narcissism and work effort.

Hypothesis 3: Self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame mediates the relationship between present-focused communal self-thoughts and work effort.

Hypothesis 4: Self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame mediates the relationship between future-focused communal self-thoughts and work effort.

Method

Participants and procedure

The sample was comprised of 489 participants ($Mage = 24.38$; $SD = 7.03$, range 18 – 65 years) from the North-Eastern part of Romania. From the total sample, 338 were woman (69.1%), most participants were undergraduate students (87.7% bachelor's degree studies and 52,8% enrolled in their third year of study) and were from an urban

area (61.1%). Only 195 participants (39.9%) declared that they are presently employed. We used a snowball sampling technique to identify other participants among the personal acquaintances of students. Students were instructed to identify among personal acquaintances at least two people with a minimum age of 18 years and send them a link to an online questionnaire form in exchange for course credits. All the participants received information about the aim of the study (i.e., analysis of the relationships between several individual variables and work behavior), their rights to withdraw from the study any time and were ensured about the confidentiality of their answers. The participants were told that completing the questionnaires does not pose physical risks, psychological or social discomfort and that all the information they will provide is confidential and will be used only to analyze, at the individual level, the relationships between different psychological variables. Also, the participants received information about the average time for completing the questionnaires (approximately 15 min.).

Measures

Communal narcissism. The 16-item Communal Narcissism Inventory (CNI; Gebauer et al., 2012) was used to assess grandiose self-thoughts in the communal domain (e.g., I am going to bring peace and justice to the world). Participants were asked to rate how well each statement described them using a 7-point scale, where 1 - *strongly disagree* and 7 - *strongly agree*. We used the bifactor model of CNI proposed by Žemojtel-Piotrowska and her colleagues (2016), and from the total scale items, we calculated two dimensions: Present related thoughts and Future related thoughts. The scale has good reliability with Cronbach's alphas ranged from .79 to .90 (see Table 1).

Self-leadership. Self-leadership was assessed using the Revised Self-Leadership Questionnaire (RSLQ; Houghton & Neck, 2002). The RSLQ includes 35 items grouped in nine sub-scales that represent three primary self-leadership dimensions: 1) Behavior focused (e.g., I establish specific goals for my

own performance), 2) Natural reward (e.g., I seek out activities in my work that I enjoy doing) and 3) Constructive thought (e.g., I visualize myself successfully performing a task before I do it). Answers were given on a 5-point Likert scale (between 1 = *totally disagree* and 5 = *totally agree*). The instrument showed good internal reliability (see Table 1).

Power seeking. To measure power seeking we used the Romanian validated version of the International Set of Personality Items (Iliescu, Popa & Dimache, 2015) from Tellegen's Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (MPQ; Tellegen, 1982 apud Iliescu et al., 2015). Power seeking scale includes 10 items measuring aspects of social potency, such dominance, persuasion or liking to be in charge (e.g., Have a natural talent for influencing people; Can talk others into doing things). Participants were asked to rate how well each statement described them using scales from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 5 (*totally agree*). A total score was calculated to create an index of power seeking and the internal reliability was good (see Table 1).

Desire for fame. Desire for fame was measured using a six-item scale developed by Gountas and his colleagues (2012). The scale comprises common subjects related to desire for fame and perceived benefits of social status (e.g., I would like to be famous celebrity because it would give me a higher social status), power and influence (e.g., I would like to be famous because other people would perceive me as having more power and influence), improved lifestyle, celebrity rivalry, and increased happiness (e.g., If I were famous, I would be happier). Items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). The scale showed good internal reliability (see Table 1) thus a total score was calculated to create an index of desire for fame.

Work effort. Work effort was assessed using Work Effort Scale (WESC; De Cooman, De Gieter, Pepermans, Jegers & Van Acker, 2009), a short, self-report 10-item scale. The scale captures the field of commonly agreed on aspects of work effort: persistence (e.g., I do not give up quickly when something does not work well), direction (e.g., I do my best to

do what is expected of me), and intensity (e.g., I put a lot of energy into the tasks that I commence). The items of the scale refer to different aspects related to the willingness to work in general or to engage in certain tasks and for this reason, where appropriate, we have adapted the items and added the alternative to the workplace or at school. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with each statement using scales from 1 (*not at all*) to 7 (*very much*). Items were summed to calculate a work effort index, and the internal reliability was good (see Table 1).

Lastly, several items that tap into different socio-demographics information were addressed, such as age, gender, studies level, residence, and employment status.

Results

Preliminary analyses and associations among the main study variables

Measures related to normality or nonnormality of distributions are under-reported in published literature (Cain et al., 2017). Some authors suggested that “a normal distribution of data cannot be assumed simply on the basis of the robustness of parametric statistics, and that it needs to be checked prior to proceeding with the selected statistical test” (Blanca et al., 2013, p.3). Skewness and kurtosis represent normality measures that should be reported routinely along with other summary statistics (Cain et al., 2017; Hopkins & Weeks, 1990). Because the influence of skewness and kurtosis on statistical tests should be carefully considered, we tested all the variables for normality, considering the range values for Skewness and Kurtosis, namely ± 1 (Lei & Lomax, 2005). Summary statistics for all the variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. *Descriptive statistics of the main study variables*

	Alpha	Mean inter-item correlation	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skewness (<i>SE</i>)	Kurtosis (<i>SE</i>)
Communal narcissism	.90	.37	66.72	14.17	-.04 (.11)	.31 (.22)
CN Present thoughts	.79	.39	30.81	5.66	-.43 (.11)	.50 (.22)
CN Future thoughts	.89	.54	25.22	8.74	.20 (.11)	-.14 (.22)
Self-leadership	.93	.29	87.36	12.88	-.52 (.11)	.68 (.22)
SL Behavior focused	.86	.28	63.41	9.74	-.47 (.11)	.43 (.22)
SL Natural reward	.67	.29	16.16	2.76	-.43 (.11)	.34 (.22)
SL Constructive thought	.89	.40	36.26	6.92	-.69 (.11)	.41 (.22)
Power seeking	.89	.45	33.27	8.32	-.32 (.11)	-.03 (.22)
Desire for fame	.92	.66	17.35	6.62	.02 (.11)	-.88 (.22)
Work effort	.91	.51	30.30	5.11	-.80 (.11)	.83 (.22)

Note. CN = communal narcissism; SL = self-leadership. *N* = 489.

Table 2. *Inter-correlations between study variables*

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Communal Narcissism	-											
2. CN Present thoughts	.83 ^{***}	-										
3. CN Future thoughts	.86 ^{***}	.49 ^{***}	-									
4. Self-leadership	.46 ^{***}	.41 ^{***}	.38 ^{***}	-								
5. SL Behavior focused	.43 ^{***}	.37 ^{***}	.36 ^{***}	.97 ^{***}	-							
6. SL Natural reward	.46 ^{***}	.45 ^{***}	.33 ^{***}	.61 ^{***}	.49 ^{***}	-						
7. SE Constructive thought	.40 ^{***}	.36 ^{***}	.33 ^{***}	.83 ^{***}	.74 ^{***}	.54 ^{***}	-					
8. Power seeking	.44 ^{***}	.32 ^{***}	.39 ^{***}	.31 ^{***}	.28 ^{***}	.34 ^{***}	.28 ^{***}	-				
9. Desire for fame	.37 ^{***}	.24 ^{***}	.40 ^{***}	.25 ^{***}	.24 ^{***}	.21 ^{***}	.23 ^{***}	.39 ^{***}	-			
10. Work effort	.35 ^{***}	.38 ^{***}	.21 ^{***}	.49 ^{***}	.47 ^{***}	.48 ^{***}	.37 ^{***}	.37 ^{***}	.09 [*]	-		
11. Age	.04	.07	-.00	-.05	-.04	.01	-.09 [*]	.03	-.11 [*]	.11 [*]	-	
12. Gender	.07	.06	.07	.12 ^{**}	.14 ^{**}	.00	.06	-.09 [*]	.03	-.01	-.02	-

Note. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$; $N = 489$; CN = communal narcissism; SL = self-leadership. All gender correlations represent point biserial coefficients (gender was coded with 0 for men and 1 for women).

Zero-order correlations showed that both overall communal narcissistic and its dimensions (i.e., present, and future thoughts) were positively and significantly correlated with self-leadership dimensions, power seeking, desire for fame and work effort. Regarding the socio-demographic variables, age was positively and significantly associated with work effort and negatively correlated with desire for fame. Also, results indicated that women score higher on self-leadership, while men score higher on power seeking (see Table 2).

Furthermore, preliminary analysis of employment status differences indicated that employed participants scored significantly higher on work effort, while unemployed ones scored significantly higher to desire for fame (see Table 3). No significant differences were found between employed and unemployed participants regarding communal narcissism (present and future-related thoughts), self-leadership dimensions and power seeking.

Table 3. *Differences on communal narcissism, self-leadership, power seeking, desire for fame and work effort according to working status*

	Employed (<i>N</i> = 195)	Unemployed (<i>N</i> = 294)	<i>t</i>
	M (<i>SD</i>)	M (<i>SD</i>)	
Communal narcissism	66.91 (13.46)	66.60 (14.64)	-.23
CN Present thoughts	31.02 (5.35)	30.67 (5.86)	-.66
CN Future thoughts	25.09 (8.73)	25.30 (8.76)	.25
Self-leadership	87.08 (13.44)	87.55 (12.52)	.39
SL Behavior focused	63.15 (10.15)	63.58 (9.46)	.47
SL Natural reward	16.42 (2.74)	15.98 (2.76)	-1.72
SL Constructive thought	35.72 (7.53)	36.62 (6.47)	1.36
Power seeking	34.10 (8.12)	32.72 (8.42)	-1.79
Desire for fame	16.61 (6.73)	17.84 (6.51)	2.01*
Work effort	31.61 (4.61)	29.44 (5.25)	-4.68***

Note. * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$; CN = communal narcissism; SL = self-leadership.

Mediation analyses

The resulted pattern of correlations suggested that individuals higher in communal narcissism tend to put more effort into work, meaning the first hypothesis was supported by the data. In addition, the search for power, the components of self-leadership and the desire to have fame determine them to put more effort into work. Thus, we used self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame as potential mediators of the influence of communal narcissism dimensions on work effort, while controlling for age, gender, and employee status. We decided to control the previously stated variables given their relationship to the outcome variables and the proposed mediators. We performed three mediation analyses using the PROCESS

macro (Hayes, 2018) for IBM SPSS to test the hypothesized mediation models. PROCESS uses a nonparametric approach to examine the statistical significance of the mediation effects, through a bootstrap resampling process to generate 95% bootstrap confidence intervals (CI). In estimating 95% CI, 5000 resamples were used and CIs that did not include zero indicated significant mediation.

The first mediation analysis tested the mediation effect of self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame of the relation between overall communal narcissism and work effort, while controlling for age, gender, and employee status (see Figure 1). Communal narcissism was significantly related to work effort ($B = .12$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.0990, .1580]), indicating that higher communal narcissism was associated with

higher work effort. Communal narcissism was significantly related to self-leadership ($B = .41$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.3448, .4882]) which was significantly related to work effort ($B = .16$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.1308, .1964]). Communal narcissism significantly predicted power seeking ($B = .26$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.2227, .3156]), which significantly predicted work effort ($B = .14$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.0886, .1937]). Finally, communal narcissism was significantly related to desire for fame ($B = .17$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.1392, .2161]) which

was significantly related to work effort ($B = -.09$; $p < .01$; 95% CI [-.1587, -.0326]). After analyzing the indirect effects, self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame significantly mediated the relationship between communal narcissism and work effort (see Table 4). The direct relation between communal narcissism and work effort became weaker but remained significant. Thus, the second hypothesis was partially supported by the data.

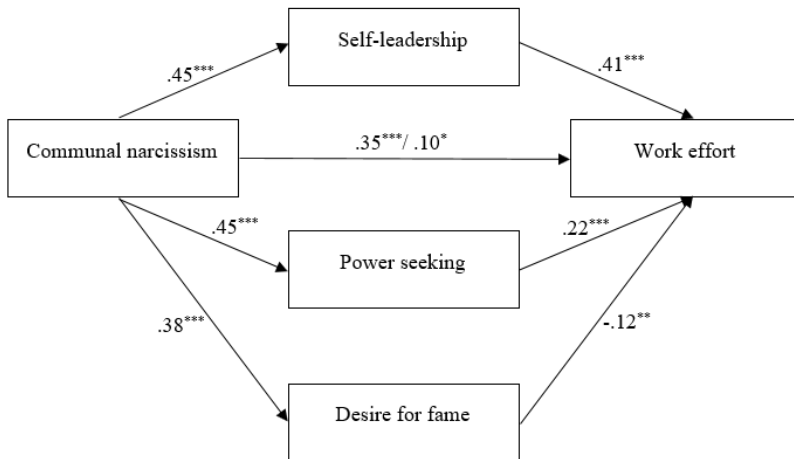


Figure 1. The mediation paths from communal narcissism to work effort, through self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame while controlling for age, gender, and employee status.

Note. Path values represent standardized coefficients. The first effect value between communal narcissism and work effort (the value before the slash) shows the total effect of communal narcissism on work effort, and the second effect value (the value after the slash) shows the direct effect of communal narcissism on work effort, while controlling for mediators. ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

The second mediation analysis tested the mediation effect of self-leadership, power seeking, desire for fame of the relation between the present related thoughts (PRT) dimension of communal narcissism and work effort, while controlling for age, gender, and employee status (see Figure 2). PRT was significantly related to work effort ($B = .34$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.2721, .4181]), indicating that higher communal narcissistic PRT was associated with higher work effort. PRT was significantly related to self-leadership ($B = .93$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.7474, 1.1164]) which was significantly related to work effort ($B = .15$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.1221, .1863]). PRT significantly predicted power seeking ($B = .48$; $p < .001$;

95% CI [.3584, .6060]), which significantly predicted work effort ($B = .14$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.0896, .1904]). Finally, communal narcissistic PRT was significantly related to desire for fame ($B = .29$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.1964, .3979]) which was significantly related to work effort ($B = -.09$; $p < .01$; 95% CI [-.1546, -.0322]). After analyzing the indirect effects, self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame significantly mediated the relationship between communal narcissistic PRT and work effort (see Table 4). The direct relation between communal narcissistic PRT and work effort became weaker but remained significant. The third hypothesis was partially supported by the data.

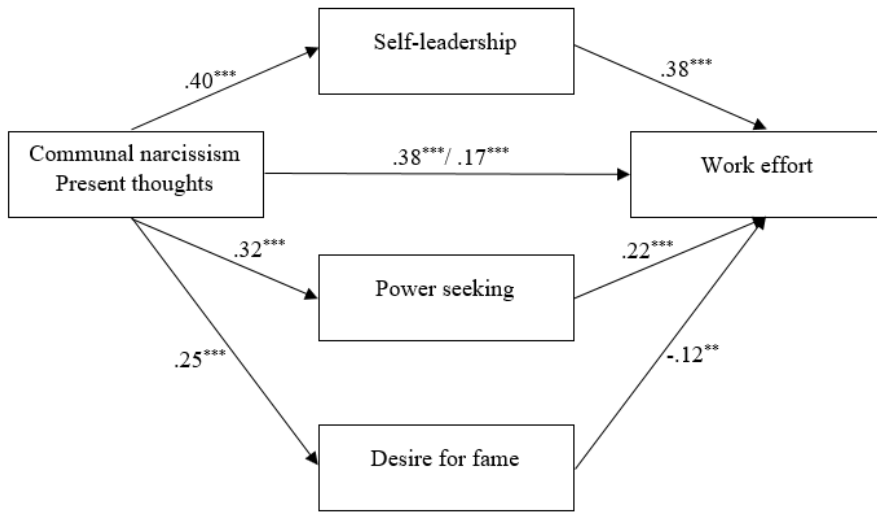


Figure 2. The mediation paths from communal narcissism PRT to work effort, through self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame while controlling for age, gender, and employee status.

Note. Path values represent standardized coefficients. The first effect value between communal narcissism PRT and work effort (the value before the slash) shows the total effect of communal narcissism PRT on work effort, and the second effect value (the value after the slash) shows the direct effect of communal narcissism PRT on work effort, while controlling for mediators. $** p < .01$; $*** p < .001$

Further, we tested the indirect effects of communal narcissistic future related thoughts (FRT) on work effort through self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame while controlling for age, gender, and employee status (see Figure 3). The results revealed that communal narcissistic FRT was significantly related to work effort ($B = .12$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.0734, .1734]), indicating that higher communal narcissistic FRT was associated with higher work effort. Communal narcissistic FRT was significantly related to self-leadership ($B = .54$; $p < .001$; 95% CI

[.4272, .6696]) which was significantly related to work effort ($B = .18$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.1482, .2121]). Communal narcissistic FRT significantly predicted power seeking ($B = .38$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.3104, .4649]), which significantly predicted work effort ($B = .16$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.1117, .2157]). Moreover, communal narcissistic FRT was significantly related to desire for fame ($B = .30$; $p < .001$; 95% CI [.2456, .3685]) which was significantly and negative related to work effort ($B = -.07$; $p < .05$; 95% CI [-.1384, -.0097]).

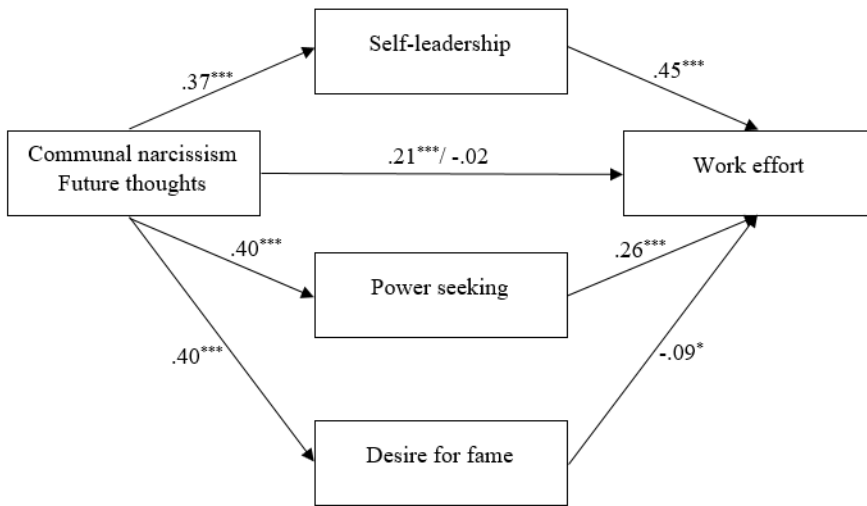


Figure 3. The mediation paths from communal narcissism FRT to work effort, through self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame while controlling for age, gender, and employee status.

Note. Path values represent standardized coefficients. The first effect value between communal narcissism FRT and work effort (the value before the slash) shows the total effect of communal narcissism FRT on work effort, and the second effect value (the value after the slash) shows the direct effect of communal narcissism FRT on work effort, while controlling for mediators. * $p < .05$; *** $p < .001$

After analyzing the indirect effects, the 95% bootstrap confidence interval (CIs) for the mediators did not contain the zero value (see Table 4), thus the mediated effect of self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame was significant. Finally, the direct relation between communal narcissistic FRT and work effort failed to yield the significance level. In conclusion, the fourth hypothesis was partially supported by the data.

Discussion

The aim of this research was to examine the associations (via self-motives) between communal narcissism and work effort. Results indicated that communal narcissism and both forms (i.e., PRT and FRT) are positively related to work effort. Congruent with our hypotheses, both forms of communal narcissism were positively related to self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame. We tested three separate mediational models to explain the effect of communal narcissism

on work effort, through self-motives. The relationship between communal narcissistic PRT and work effort was mediated by self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame. Also, the relationship between communal narcissistic FRT and work effort was mediated by the self-motives.

The correlational pattern between communal narcissistic types and global self-leadership was relatively similar. Both forms correlated positively with self-leadership strategies, namely behavioral skills, natural reward, and constructive thought patterns. Consistent with previous research (Furtner et al., 2011), our results further evidence that communal narcissists can actively use self-regulation strategies to achieve their goals. For example, by using behavior-focused strategies, individuals identify certain behaviors that can be enhanced or eliminated (Houghton & Neck, 2002). Thus, narcissistic individuals pursue the best sources to gain admiration and when it no longer offers them the desired benefits, they move to another source.

Table 4. *The indirect effects of communal narcissistic dimensions (overall, present, and future related thoughts) on work effort through self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame while controlling for age, gender, and employee status*

Mediators	Communal narcissism				Communal narcissism PRT				Communal narcissism FRT			
	Point estimate	SE	95% lower	95% upper	Point estimate	SE	95% lower	95% upper	Point estimate	SE	95% lower	95% upper
Total	.08	.01	.0629	.1169	.18	.02	.1305	.2389	.13	.02	.0988	.1828
Self-leadership	.06	.01	.0479	.0910	.14	.02	.0995	.1923	.09	.01	.0696	.1323
Power seeking	.03	.00	.0231	.0538	.06	.01	.0388	.1002	.06	.01	.0412	.0893
Desire for fame	-.01	.00	-.0299	-.0058	-.02	.01	-.0508	-.0090	-.02	.01	-.0447	-.0027

Note. PRT = present-related thoughts; FRT = future-related thoughts.

Also, when the search for admiration fails, narcissistic individuals seek elsewhere to satisfy their cravings for grandiosity (Baumeister & Vohs, 2001). This behavior management reinforces desirable outcomes, while protecting individuals from unsuccessful results.

Moreover, communal narcissistic individuals use natural reward strategies (e.g., incorporating pleasant features into certain task or activity). Previous studies suggested that narcissistic individuals are motivated by extrinsic rewards (Abeyta et al., 2017), but sometimes they can experience fluctuations or search for intrinsic goals, depending on the support offered in the social environment (Sedikides, Ntoumanis & Sheldon, 2019). For example, Morf, Weir and Davidov (2000) identified the situations in which narcissistic individuals become intrinsically motivated and engage in activity in the absence of external reinforcement – only when ego goals were made salient, not when provided with mastery-focused goals. Further, communal narcissists used constructive thoughts pattern strategies (e.g., positive self-talks, mental imagery of successful performance). According to the dynamic self-regulatory processing model (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001), the self-knowledge component plays a central role (cognitive self and valence statement) because it represents the current self-view of the narcissist, manifested through mental representations such appraisals, possible future selves, life ideals and goals. In addition, narcissistic individuals benefit from the use of imagery (Roberts, Callow, Hardy, Woodman & Thomas, 2010) and their positive appraisals of certain competition situations along with their trust in their own capabilities makes them use psychological skills effectively (Roberts, Woodman, Hardy, Davis & Wallace, 2013).

Communal narcissism, power seeking and desire for fame correlated positively, thus, communal narcissistic individuals fantasize about achieving fame and desire to validate their power. Gentile (2011) explained that narcissistic individuals desire for fame it is due to the perceived opportunity to be public evaluated and praised for their performance. Further, grandiose narcissists are attracted to fame appeal (e.g., visibility, status, or access

to important places) (Greenwood, McCutcheon, Collisson & Wong, 2018). Moreover, fame allows narcissistic individuals to display socially promoted external markers of success (e.g., material wealth, access to exclusive services, excessive promotion, attractive partners) to receive attention and manifest superiority. Past research provided evidence that celebrities have higher rates of narcissism (Young & Pinsky, 2006), but the mechanism of occurrence has not yet been established - celebrities have high levels of narcissism prior to becoming famous or develop narcissistic tendencies with their career success over time. Thus, “for narcissists, fame represents the ultimate confirmation of their inflated self-views” (Gentile, 2011, p. 404). Furthermore, power over others allows them to engage in favorable situations to improve their social status. These findings are in line with past studies that indicated that grandiose narcissists have a strong need for power and strategically seek status (Giacomin, Battaglini & Rule, 2018; Zeigler-Hill, McCabe, Vrabell, Raby & Cronin, 2018).

The results support the positive influence of communal narcissism on work effort, mediated by different self-motives. Overall communal narcissism is related to self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame, and all these self-motives mediate its effect on work effort. First, all self-motives mediated the relationship between global communal narcissism, its dimensions (i.e., PRT and FRT) and work effort. Thus, communal narcissistic individuals use self-leadership strategies and have a high desire to obtain power, both making them to invest more effort into work. Desire for fame was a significant mediator and this relational pattern was present in all three mediation models. These results are consistent with previous findings showing that narcissistic individuals manifest fame interest (e.g., want a celebrity lifestyle, consider that are suitable to be famous) but do not actually work to become famous (Southard & Zeigler-Hill, 2016). We can explain this result by the fact that they may consider themselves worthy of fame because they are unique, therefore they do not have to make an effort in this regard. Also, grandiose narcissism was linked

with popularity at first sight in previous studies (Back, Schmukle & Egloff, 2010; Leckelt et al., 2020), therefore they “taste” fame for a short time in the social contexts without engaging efforts in this regard.

Narcissism was analyzed in the context of performance (Zhang, Roberts, Woodman & Cooke, 2020), and the results of previous studies indicated that the effort of narcissistic individuals fluctuates depending on the opportunity for glory identified (Roberts et al., 2018). Previous studies highlighted that narcissism was positive associated with work engagement dimensions of vigor and dedication in employees with average levels of workload (Falco et al., 2020) and with enjoyment of work (Andreassen, Ursin, Eriksen & Pallesen, 2012). The key mechanisms that lead narcissists to effortful engage in work play a central role, especially when we are interested in motivating employees. Therefore, narcissistic self-motives can play the role of a catalyst that increase narcissistic work effort. In this paper we highlighted the fact that the desire to fame does not necessarily lead to a higher effort from individuals with narcissistic communal tendencies, but the desire to power does. In addition, the use of various self-leadership strategies, such as selecting the right behaviors and eliminating those that do not bring the desired results and focusing on pleasant aspects of the task, along with a positive thinking pattern, makes communal narcissists to increase their efforts into work.

Congruent with agentic-communal model (Gebauer et al., 2012) we brought evidence to the fact that both forms of narcissism (i.e., agentic, and communal) manifest similar core self-motives (e.g., desire for power and fame) in order to self-enhance and eventually to engage in work. Thus, the need to achieve their goals (e.g., maintaining a grandiose self-esteem, gaining social admiration, taking credit for positive outcomes, demonstrating superiority over others) makes narcissistic individuals to allocate their behavioral and cognitive resources towards specific work contexts. As Campbell and Foster (2007) mentioned, “as long as this system is operating effectively – the skills are available, the strategies are working, and the social environment is cooperative – the narcissist

feels good” (p. 122) and we might add that it can also produce workplace positive benefits.

Furthermore, we analyzed the original unifactorial structure of Communal Narcissism Inventory (Gebauer et al., 2012) and the bifactorial model proposed by Žemojtel-Piotrowska et al., (2016). As previous studies in this area are scarce regarding the analysis of the relations between communal narcissism dimensions, self-motives, and work outcomes, we brought evidence related to the two times perspectives of narcissistic thoughts. Our results suggested that present and future-related self-thoughts manifested a similar correlational pattern with work effort. Thus, the present communal self-thoughts manifested through beliefs about general moral superiority in comparison with others, makes communal narcissists to increase their work efforts. Similarly, communal future self-thoughts, beliefs in own capacity to influence other people and fantasizing with world-changing achievements increase the level of work effort made by communal narcissists. In conclusion, the results indicated that self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame represent a good mechanism that accounts for the impact of communal narcissism on work effort.

Even though we managed to bring evidence on the mediation mechanism of communal narcissism on work effort, our results should be interpreted with care given the limitations of the study. First, the main limitation is related to the use of self-report instruments. Second, even though we used a heterogeneous sample, composed by employed and unemployed participants, future studies should investigate peers' perceptions of communal narcissistic individuals' work effort in organizational contexts using a round robin design. Third, narcissistic individuals tend to self-inflate, thus, it is possible that self-inflation occurred when participants answered to the self-reported measures. Also, future research may seek to investigate deeper the mediating role of the desire for fame in the relationship between communal narcissism and work effort. Access to fame can block individuals from making systematic work effort and this can have implications for individual motivation or performance. Finally, given that most participants were

undergraduate students, this may limit the generalizability of our findings.

We need to build a solid foundation of knowledge to understand the influence of narcissism on work outcomes (Campbell et al., 2011). Our results highlight the case in which communal narcissistic individuals can provide positive benefits, such as high work effort. Some authors highlighted the need to rehabilitate personalities considered difficult or malevolent in order to encourage compliance with institutional norms or rules (Fennimore, 2021). Aligning organizational goals with the personal motivations of people with narcissistic tendencies could lead to obvious benefits in terms of engagement in work tasks. On the other hand, it is important to carefully observe employees who seem very cooperative and willing to help because it is possible that they efficiently manage communal impressions. Narcissists seek social job resources to build in organization a social network (i.e., communal behavior) that admire their attributes (i.e., agentic goal) (Roczniewska & Bakker, 2016). Also, when dealing with communal narcissism in organizational context we should reduce the negative consequences of individuals' narcissistic desirable behaviors by promoting a collaborative environment with specific assessment criteria for performance. Highly individualized and competitive work environments can provide a fertile ground for narcissistic people to successfully use their strategies for manipulating and exploiting those around them. On the other hand, if the manifestations of narcissists appear in the communal domain, they could be used with the aim of building efficient work teams, motivated to obtain victories in terms of group tasks.

The results of this study have implications regarding recruitment. Organizations want to hire people who are prosocial, concerned, and attentive to those around them, who offer unconditional support and help to their colleagues. However, communal narcissists present themselves in a socially desirable manner, putting a lot of emphasis on their desire to help the people around them, being at the same time confident in their own strength and showing proof of morality and kindness.

Therefore, they could be selected very quickly due to these qualities. However, their work effort may fluctuate depending on their ability to implement self-leadership strategies and to gain power over others, the desire to have fame making them select only those activities they consider opportune for receive glory.

In conclusion, the present study examined whether the relationship between communal narcissistic features and work effort can be partially explained by several self-motives (i.e., self-leadership, power seeking and desire for fame). Our results showed that communal narcissistic PRT and FRT had similar indirect associations with work effort, through self-leadership strategies, desire for power and fame. The mediation models help to clarify the underlying mechanisms between communal narcissism and work effort, highlighting the fact that communal narcissistic individuals possess the same core-self motives as agentic narcissists. The work effort of individuals with communal narcissistic tendencies can lead to prosocial differences and various organizational benefits. Individuals with strong communal motives become more strongly involved in relational aspects in order to cultivate and maintain their socially desirable manifestations.

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