



# **Machiavellianism, Career Success, Pro-social Behaviour and Guilt at Work Place**

**ABSTRACT  
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**Keywords: Machiavellianism, Career Success, Pro-social Behaviour, Guilt, lawyers, personality**

The main purpose of the research is to understand Machiavellianism, career success, pro-social behaviour, and guilt in India in context of lawyers. Personality plays a significant role in understanding workplace behaviors. One of the personality traits, Machiavellianism (dark trait), is regarded important in organizational context. The role of situational factors has the greatest impact on Machiavellianism, and it projects both positive and negative outcomes at workplace. Individuals with Machiavellian personality traits often prefer professions that offer monetary success, leadership roles, status & prestige, autonomy & flexibility as these factors according to them provide benefits in the long run. Machiavellians also have high needs of achievement and high external locus of control. People with Machiavellian tendencies may choose to work in professions such as management, marketing & sales, and legal.

The sample used in study were lawyers from five courts of Delhi – Supreme Court, High Court, Saket Court, Patiala Court, and Tis Hazari. Total sample size of study is 305. The sampling technique used in the study was non-probability (purposive sampling). The permission to collect data was taken from the department and a consent form was signed prior to commencement of the research. The participants were given the instructions regarding the study and all the questions were answered in case of any query. The respondents were assured of complete confidentiality.

The variables used in the study were Machiavellianism, career success, pro-social behavior, and guilt in lawyers. Machiavellianism was the independent variable and career success, prosocial behaviour and guilt were the dependent variables. Machiavellianism was important the context of organizations in understanding leadership roles, unethical behaviors, and careers and performance, job satisfaction, forming interpersonal relationships and helping attitudes etc. Individuals with high Machiavellian tendencies were more prone to indulge in counterproductive work behavior. Machiavellianism was measured using the Machiavellianism Personality Scale (MPS) scale given by Dahling et al., 2009.

Career success is measured in terms of subjective and objective aspects of achievement and progress of an individual through an organization or occupation. Career success was a way for people to fulfill their needs of achievement and power as it improved one's quantitative as well as qualitative life. Objective career success was mostly concerned with the extrinsic, measurable and quantifiable attainments such as pay, promotions, hierarchical/occupational status. Subjective career success indicates a long term satisfaction that spreads beyond job satisfaction. Career success was measured using objective career success and subjective career success. Objective career success was measured by the annual income of income of lawyers, and subjective career success was measured using the Career Satisfaction Scale (CSS) was given by Greenhaus, et al. (1990), a subjective measure that captures employees' perceptions of their satisfaction.

Prosocial behavior is defined as behavior which is voluntary through which people benefit others and exhibiting behavior that benefits one or more other people, such as providing assistance to an older adult crossing the street. Being prosocially motivated

might be an advantage in some organizations; it could be a liability in others. The authors propose not only that time spent on task performance is more important than time spent on organizational citizenship behaviour in determining career outcomes (i.e., performance evaluation, salary increase, advancement speed, promotion) in an outcome-based career outcomes. Prosocial behaviors were measured using the Prosocial Tendencies Measures (PTM) by Carlo & Randall, (2002).

Guilt is a self-conscious emotion primarily involved the self and to be able generate a self-evaluation based on one's own as well as others' standards and elicited preventive measures. Guilt proneness is a strong indicator of experiencing negative and unpleasant about personal and private transgressions, the tendency to repair or engage in reparative behaviors to attend to the transgression. Guilt proneness is regarded as an essential trait in understanding morality and moral behaviours. Guilt was used measured using the guilt 8- item subscale of Guilt and Shame Proneness (GASP) by Cohen et al. (2011).

The first hypothesis stated that there will be a significant difference between low Machiavellianism and high Machiavellianism in lawyers on career success. The findings of the current study did not reveal any statistical significant difference on objective and subjective career success for low and high Machiavellianism in lawyers. Hence, the current study failed to accept the first hypothesis.

The second hypotheses stating that there would be significant difference between the scores of low and high Machiavellianism in lawyers on prosocial behavior. The analyses revealed a significant difference on prosocial behaviour and two sub scales of prosocial behavior: altruism and public between low Machiavellianism and high

Machiavellianism individuals. No significant differences were observed between low Machiavellianism and high Machiavellianism on anonymous, direct and compliant prosocial behaviours. Overall prosocial behaviour was high for lawyers in high Mach group, altruism was high for lawyers in low Mach group and public prosocial behaviour was high for high Mach group lawyers. The current study has partially accepted the second hypothesis.

The third hypotheses stating that there would be a significant difference between the scores of low and high Machiavellianism in lawyers on guilt. The findings of the current study revealed that guilt, negative behavior evaluation and guilt repair was low for individuals with high Machiavellian traits in lawyers than low Machiavellian traits and thus the third hypothesis was accepted.

The fourth hypothesis stated that there would be a significant relationship between career success and Machiavellianism in lawyers. The correlation analysis findings did not suggest any relationship between Machiavellianism and career success (objective career success and subjective career success) and failed to accept the hypothesis.

According to the fifth hypothesis there would be a significant relationship between prosocial behavior and Machiavellianism in lawyers. The correlation analysis findings suggested that Machiavellianism correlated positively with prosocial behavior, negatively with altruistic prosocial behavior, positively with emotional prosocial behavior negatively and positively with public prosocial behaviour. No significant relationship was observed between Machiavellianism and anonymous, direct and compliant prosocial behaviours, and thus partially accepted the fifth hypothesis.

According to the sixth hypothesis there would be a significant relationship between guilt and Machiavellianism in lawyers. Machiavellianism is found to be moderately and negatively correlated with guilt, negative behavior evaluation, and guilt repair and thus the sixth hypothesis was accepted.

According to seventh hypothesis there would be a significant effect of Machiavellianism on career success. Machiavellianism did not predict objective career success and subjective career success and thus failed to accept the hypothesis.

According to eighth hypotheses, Machiavellianism would significantly predict prosocial behavior in lawyers. The findings of the study revealed the Machiavellianism positively predicted prosocial behaviour, negatively predicted altruism, positively predicted emotional prosocial behaviour, and positively predicted public prosocial behaviour. No significant effect was observed by Machiavellianism on anonymous, direct and compliant prosocial behaviours, and thus partially accepted the hypothesis.

According to ninth hypotheses, Machiavellianism predicted guilt in lawyers. The findings of the study revealed the Machiavellianism negatively predicted guilt, negative behaviour evaluation and guilt repair tendencies and thus accepted the hypothesis.

To conclude, the findings did not reveal any significant differences on low and high Machiavellianism lawyers for career success. There was no association found between Machiavellianism and career success in lawyers. On measuring prosocial with Machiavellianism, the results reported significant difference on altruistic prosocial behaviors and public prosocial behaviors between low and high Machiavellian lawyer respondents. High Machiavellian individuals were low on altruism and high on public

prosocial behaviour. No significant differences were observed between low Machiavellianism and high Machiavellianism on anonymous, dire and compliant prosocial behaviours. A significant relationship also established between emotional, altruistic and public in lawyers. Machiavellianism revealed a negative association with altruism, and positive association with emotional and public prosocial behaviour. Machiavellianism positively predicted emotional and public prosocial behavior, and negatively predicted altruism. No significant relationship was observed between Machiavellianism and anonymous, dire and compliant prosocial behaviours. Machiavellianism showed a negative association with guilt, guilt repair and negative behaviour evaluation and predicted guilt, guilt repair and negative behaviour evaluation negatively.