

Nothing ventured nothing gained: Strong associations between reward sensitivity and two measures of Machiavellianism.

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Abstract

Recent theoretical work on the Life History Theory and empirical findings on Machiavellism suggest that Machiavellian subjects are motivated to acquire short-term benefits and prioritize situations with high potential rewards. Accordingly, in our study, we investigated the associations between reward/punishment sensitivity and Machiavellianism with self-report measures. Moreover, as a first attempt, we investigated the correlates of Machiavellianism and the behavioral preference for rewards with IOWA Gambling task (IGT). The results showed robust positive associations of Machiavellian characteristics with Sensitivity to Reward, and a moderately negative correlation with Sensitivity to Punishment. This finding was further supported by IGT: Machiavellians tended to make reward-oriented decisions.

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