

Narcissistic Personality Features and Ageism: the Mediating Role of needs Social Status, Power, and Belonging

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Abstract

The associations between narcissistic personality features and intergenerational tension and ageism were examined, as well as whether these associations were mediated by needs for power, social status, and belonging to accompany these behaviours.

Method

The participants in this research were 814 people from Iran, of whom 380 were male (46.7%) and 434 were female (53.3%). The age range of the participants was from 17 to 58 years, with an average of 30.22 and a standard deviation of 9.30. We used five questionnaires: the short form of the Five-Factor Narcissism Inventory, the prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism scale (SIC), Need for Power, Need for Social Status, and Need to Belong.

Results

The results showed that different aspects of narcissism are related to prescriptive intergenerational tension, ageism, and needs for power, social status, and belonging. Also, the results showed that the need for status, power, and belonging as a moderating variable moderated the relationship between different types of narcissism and intergenerational prescriptive ageism and its subscales, and the role of the need for belonging played a stronger role in this study.

Conclusion

These findings emphasize that different aspects of narcissism are related to prescriptive intergenerational tension, ageism, and needs for social status, power, and belonging. The findings of the present study have important practical implications because they emphasize the importance of narcissistic personality traits on intergenerational tension and psychological needs such as the need for social status and the need for power in the elderly.

Keywords: elderly; narcissism; needs social status; power and belonging; intergenerational tension; ageism

Introduction

Narcissism is a trait characterized by a sense of specialness and is present in all people to some extent (Malkin, 2017). It can be said that narcissism exists on a spectrum in everyone, and if its amount is high, it is a sign of a disorder (Malkin, 2017; Fan et al., 2010; Webber, 2016). Narcissism is characterized by self-aggrandizement (Morf, Horvath, Torchetti, 2011; Thomaes et al., 2016). Narcissists maintain and enhance their self-image through self-regulation (Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001; Campbell and Green, 2007). Narcissists modulate their responses to rewards and threats (Campbell & Campbell, 2009; Thomaes and Sedikides, 2016). They attribute their successful outcomes to their own desires and ignore the

negative aspects of their actions (Campbell and Foster, 2007; Lahey et al., 2008). At the same time, narcissists ignore negative feedback (Kernis & Sun, 1994; Morf, Horvath, Torchetti, 2011). In fact, in the minds of narcissists, when perceived threat increases, they self-regulate in a more risky manner (Jordan & Audia, 2012). Narcissistic self-regulation has been described as "risk-taking is better than regret" (Morf & Horvath, 2010), a strategy that can lead to poor decision-making. Evidence suggests that people with higher narcissism do not make profitable decisions (Sedikides & Campbell, 2017), they gamble and lose money (Campbell, Goodie & Foster, 2004; Lahey et al., 2008), they make volatile investments in the stock market (Foster, Shenese & Goff, 2009; Foster

et al., 2011), and they have higher risk-taking (Buelow & Brunell, 2014; Brunell & Buelow, 2015). The extraverted, combative, and neurotic aspects of narcissism also have positive indirect associations with risk-taking in specific life domains, via a competitive social worldview (Beigi & Zeigler-Hill, 2021). Narcissists are prone to impulsive shopping (Cai et al., 2015). They are more likely to be angry on the road and drive angrily (Britt & Garrity, 2006). They consume more alcohol (Wood, 2010). They tend to be more warmongering (Mohammad Beigi, 2025). Narcissism is also associated with distrust and, in some ways, lower social trust (Mohammad Beigi & Zeigler-Hill, 2021). There are two distinct forms, or models, or phenotypes of narcissism: grandiosity, which refers to an exaggerated self-image accompanied by a belief in one's own superiority, and vulnerability, which refers to an excessive fear of being harmed by others, which is associated with unrealistic expectations of the environment and hostile attitudes (Jauk et al., 2022). Narcissism may manifest itself as grandiosity or vulnerability, depending on the personality and temperamental characteristics of the individual (Rogoza et al., 2022). There are two different forms of narcissism with different reactions. The first type of narcissism is grandiose narcissism, which refers to an exaggerated self-image accompanied by a belief in one's own superiority, and the second type is vulnerable narcissism, which refers to an excessive fear of being hurt by others. These people have unrealistic expectations of their surroundings and are accompanied by hostile attitudes (Jauk et al., 2022). Despite the differences in the types of narcissism, both types of narcissism share a common trait of feeling privileged and superior and disregarding others (Rogoza et al., 2022). Narcissism has a multidimensional structure (Krizan & Herlache, 2018; Miller et al., 2021). Another classification or leveling distinguishes specific elements of both grandiose and vulnerable forms of narcissism and describes a spectrum of narcissism (Krizan & Herlache, 2018). Within this spectrum, narcissism includes three specific facets: (1) agentic (self-enhancing, self-aggrandizing), (2) antagonistic (self-reactive and hostile), and (3) neuroticism (hypersensitivity and social withdrawal) (Rogoza, 2025). Each aspect is different in terms of both its personality underpinnings and the goals it pursues (Back et al., 2013; Rogoza, Cieciuch & Strus, 2022). Characteristics of individuals with functional narcissism, which is a component of grandiose narcissism, include assertiveness, personal charm, belief in one's own brilliance, and self-improvement (Grapsas et al., 2020). Characteristics of individuals with neurotic narcissism, which is a component of vulnerable narcissism, include anxiety, hypersensitivity, shame, and shyness (Rogoza et al., 2022). Characteristics of individuals with antagonistic narcissism are common to both and are characterized by arrogance, aggression, entitlement, and exploitation of others for personal gain (Back et al., 2013; Rogoza, Cieciuch, & Strus, 2022). Agentic narcissism is associated with greater extraversion; antagonistic narcissists are also less agreeable, and neurotic narcissists are more neurotic (Rogoza, Rogoza & Wyszynska, 2016). Narcissism includes self-importance, self-love, and exaggerated self-esteem (for reviews see Campbell, Brunell, & Finkel, 2006; Morf & Rhodewalt, 2001). Narcissism consists of three components: self, interpersonal relationships, and self-regulation strategies. First, the narcissistic self is characterized by positivity, "specialness" and uniqueness, pride, a sense of entitlement, and a desire for power and self-esteem. Second, narcissistic relationships are characterized by low levels of empathy and emotional intimacy. Narcissistic relationships are often multiple and superficial and can range from exciting and attractive to manipulative and exploitative. Third, narcissistic strategies are used to maintain their exaggerated self-esteem. Narcissists seek opportunities for

attention and admiration, brag, steal credit from others, and play games in relationships (Campbell et al., 2011). When narcissists succeed in this task, they feel good—they have high self-esteem and positive life satisfaction (Sedikides et al., 2004). When they fail, they exhibit aggression and sometimes anxiety and depression (Bushman & Baumeister, 1998; Miller, Campbell, & Pilkonis, 2007). According to self-regulation models, narcissists focus on how different parts of the self, their motivations, relationships, and self-regulatory strategies, dynamically interact and communicate to guide the narcissist's behavior. The narcissist's self is typically arrogant, and they view themselves as better than they are. This arrogance is more likely to be in agentic domains (such as power, status, physical attractiveness, and creativity) than in collectivist domains (such as caring, empathy, and concern). (Campbell et al., 2007; Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002). The motivations of narcissists include self-enhancement (i.e., the desire to increase or maintain one's positive self-esteem), a sense of entitlement (Campbell et al., 2004), a need for power (Carroll, 1987), an approach to situations, and thrill-seeking to avoid failure and avoid anxiety (Foster & Trimm, 2008). Self-regulatory strategies used by narcissists to enhance self-enhancement include a sense of entitlement, maintaining power, and social status. These strategies include attention-seeking and bragging (Buss & Chiodo, 1991), fame-seeking (Young & Pinsky, 2006), finding attractive romantic partners (Campbell, 1999), and selfish orientations (Campbell et al., 2000).

Psychological Needs

Most contemporary theories of motivation assume that individuals initiate and persist in behaviors to the extent that they believe these behaviors will lead to desired outcomes or goals (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Lewin (1936) and Tolman (1932) were among the pioneers of this theory, which has encouraged researchers in the field of motivation to examine the psychological value that individuals attribute to goals (e.g., Kasser & Ryan, 1996; Vroom, 1964). Researchers in the field have also examined individuals' expectations about goal attainment (e.g., Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978; Bandura, 1989; Rotter, 1966) and the mechanisms that guide individuals toward the goals they choose (e.g., Carver & Scheier, 1998). The concept of needs was once widely used in psychology to organize the study of motivation. Although various definitions of needs have been proposed, the concept of needs defined the content of motivation and provided a fundamental basis for energizing and directing action. However, from about the 1960s, a dramatic shift toward cognitive theories led to the rejection of the concept of needs and its replacement by the concept of goals as the dominant motivational concept (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Narcissism and Need for Power

In colloquial language, the terms power and influence are often used interchangeably (e.g., Henderson, 1981), but the two terms are distinct (e.g., Bell, 1975; Bierstadt, 1950; Cartwright, 1965; Lasswell & Kaplan, 1950; Minton, 1972; Parsons, 1963; Wrong, 1979). In short, influence is the potential to influence the outcomes of others, while power is the ability to influence those outcomes (Minton, 1972). According to Collins and Raven (1969), social power is potential and social influence is actual. Power is based on the ability to manipulate positive and negative punishments, and influence occurs in relationships that aim to influence the actions of others in the absence of such punishments (Bell, 1975). Influence is persuasive while power is coercive. We voluntarily submit to influence, while power requires submission (Bierstadt, 1950). Other

authors have also associated power with the ability to repeatedly and intentionally impose one's will on others (e.g., Blau, 1964). According to McClelland (1961), the need for power is one of the three basic types of human motivation (along with the need for achievement and the need for affiliation). The need for power can be divided into two distinct motivations: personalized power and socialized power (e.g., McClelland 1970, 1975, Winter 1973). The need for power can be expressed in both negative ways (personalized power) and positive ways (socialized power). In the negative way, it can be expressed through aggressive and antisocial behaviors, or power motivations can be expressed through more benevolent and prosocial actions (McClelland 1970, 1975; Winter 1973). People with a high need for power influence others and overtly seek to establish their own prestige, status, and authority. People with a high need for power tend to be more active, assertive, and controlling in their interactions with others (Jha, 2010). McClelland and Boyatzis (1982) argued that the need for power is important because it reflects an individual's desire to influence others. A wide range of research has shown that people with narcissistic traits are interested in power (e.g., Mohammad Beigi & Zeigler-Hill, 2024; Brunell et al., 2008; Grapsas et al., 2022; Rogoza et al., 2016; Zeigler-Hill & Dehaghi, 2023). Narcissists desire control and superiority over others (Grijalva et al., 2015; Nevicka et al., 2011). In the extended agency model, the desire for power is manifested at both intrapsychic and interpersonal levels (Campbell & Foster, 2007). According to Carrol and Gillen (1987), narcissists are psychologically motivated to have power and often think about wanting power over others (Raskin & Novacek, 1991; Raskin, Novacek & Hogan, 1991). Interpersonally, narcissists are skilled at strategies to maintain their power and strive to be superior to others (Locke, 2000; Locke & Heller, 2017). In the study by Mohammad Beigi and Zeigler-Hill (2024), results showed that narcissism was associated with a desire for power and romantic burnout in couples. Overall, these results suggest that a desire for power may help explain the associations that antagonistic narcissism and neurotic narcissism have with romantic burnout, while extraverted narcissism may actually protect, to some extent, from the experience of romantic burnout. In other research, there is a clear relationship between narcissism and a desire for power, and power motives also play a subtle role in the perpetration of domestic violence (Zeigler-Hill et al., 2026). Narcissists gravitate toward situations where they can demonstrate their power (Steffens & Haslam, 2022) and seek to satisfy their desire to control others by arranging their environment the way they like (Glad, 2002; Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006).

Narcissism and Need for Social Status

The extent to which an individual or group is respected or admired by others is defined as "social status" (e.g., Ridgeway & Walker, 1995). Social power is defined as the asymmetric control over valuable resources in social relationships (Blau, 1964, 1977; Dépret & Fiske, 1993; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Status can take many forms, including economic, political, informational, and social (Sorokin, 1927). Social status refers to a state of high social status and interpersonal influence (Bourdieu, 1984). Social status is awarded to individuals based on the possession of characteristics (e.g., competence, generosity) that are considered ideal by other members of their social group (Wegener, 1992). To the extent that an individual's unique place in a group is perceived by others to give them a better place in decision-making (Anderson et al., 2001). Individuals with high social status are both more respected and have more influence over group decision-making and are also valued for their affiliation and support (e.g.,

Bourdieu, 1984; Ridgeway, 1991; Wegener, 1992). Humans care about their relative position in society. Social hierarchies, social classes, or social stratifications exist in every society, and their importance varies from one society to another. Different societies value status differently. When such status is achieved through hard work and legitimate means, it is good and positive. Status can also be achieved through corruption or theft or through illegitimate means, which is not good. Status can also be achieved through rent-seeking, fraud, cheating, theft, or corruption (Amegashie, 2024). Charness, Masclet and Villeval (2014) point out the negative effects of status seeking in their research. The pursuit of social status can have a negative side effect on others (Congleton, 1989; Fershtman, Murphy & Wiess, 1996; Frank, 2005). That humans care about social status has been studied and recognized since Smith (1759), Mill (1849), and Veblen (1899) and has been confirmed in research (e.g., Anderson, Hildreth & Howland, 2015; Clark, Frijters & Shields, 2008; Luttmer, 2005; Bontan & Perez-Truglia, 2022; Ridgeway, 2019). The poorer or more unequal a society is, the stronger the return to higher status and the stronger the incentive to gain status through illegitimate means, which in turn leads to greater poverty and inequality (Amegashie, 2024). Researchers also suggest that the desire for status may be related to wealth or income (Kahneman and Deaton, 2010; Clark, Frijters & Shields, 2008; Davis and Wu, 2019). Status, as a source of power and prestige, can be a means to wealth (Cole, Mailath, & Postlewaite, 1992). Status seeking is an important motivation for narcissists (e.g., Grapsas et al., 2020; Jonason & Zeigler-Hill, 2018; Kroencke et al., 2023; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2018; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2019). Narcissists have higher but unstable self-esteem (Bosson et al., 2008). The extended agency model (Campbell & Foster, 2007): Narcissists seek out situations where they can defend their ego, building their self-esteem through social prestige and status (Sedikides et al., 2002; Horton & Sedikides, 2009). Narcissists engage in a variety of interpersonal activities that can enhance their interpersonal status (Campbell, 1999). They seek approval and admiration (Chatterjee & Hambrick, 2007). Narcissists are sensitive to cues and signals that are relevant to their status (Grapsas, Kyriazi & Dufner, 2024). They carefully and consciously search their environment for opportunities to be admired and noticed (Baumeister & Vohs, 2001; Campbell et al., 2000; Grapsas et al., 2020). They like to be given the highest respect (Mahadevan, Gregg, & Sedikides, 2019; Mishra & Kray, 2022; Zitek & Jordan, 2016). Research has shown that narcissists are more likely to perceive and engage in status conflicts (Bendersky & Hays, 2012), especially when there is a disagreement about who is more highly ranked (Xu & Benson, 2024), and they also respond with defensive and dominant behaviors (McGregor et al., 2023; Zeigler-Hill et al., 2021).

Narcissism and Need to Belong

One of the fundamental human motivations is the need to belong, which is necessary for psychological well-being and the development of identity and social functioning (Allen et al., 2022; Baumeister & Leary, 1995). A strong and high sense of belonging is associated with higher psychological adjustment, and a lower sense of belonging is associated with loneliness, depression, and social withdrawal (Allen et al., 2021; Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Malone, Pillow & Osman, 2012). Given the important role of social belonging in psychological adjustment, identifying personality-related factors, especially narcissism, that shape social belonging has become a focus of attention in psychology (Zheng et al., 2026). All normal people desire to be accepted and belong to social groups, but individuals vary in the intensity of their desire for acceptance and belonging (Kelly, 2001). People who desire social acceptance pay

attention to information that helps them strengthen their connections with others (Pickett, Gardner, & Knowles, 2004). People who have a high need for belonging also sometimes interpret social situations in a way that helps them feel like they belong (Carvallo & Pelham, 2006). Research by Baumeister and Leary (1995) emphasizing the importance of the need for belonging in understanding human behavior, research (Mark et al., 2013) found that a high need for affiliation may be associated with a degree of insecurity about the likelihood of achieving acceptance and belonging. To the extent that acceptance by others is never guaranteed and is often weak, people with a high drive for acceptance and belonging may live with latent anxiety even when their need for acceptance and belonging is currently being met. In other words, it may be difficult to have a high need for approval without worrying about their social connections. Furthermore, most people who score low on the need for affiliation are only relatively “low” on the motivation for belonging. Objectively, most people with low scores actually have a relatively strong desire for acceptance. In research by Leary, Koch, and Hechenbleikner (2001), it was also shown that people who score high on the need for belonging may experience stronger negative emotions when they believe they are not accepted. The need to belong is a natural human trait, and all normal people have some degree of desire to be accepted. This feeling helps to form relationships that generally promote their well-being, and all normal people have some degree of desire to be socially accepted. (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). However, the relationship between the need for belonging and characteristics of various personality disorders suggests that people with high and low scores may be prone to maladaptive interpersonal patterns (Mark et al., 2013). Numerous studies have been conducted on the relationship between the need for affiliation and show differences between individuals. For example, Pickett et al. (2004), in a study, showed that people who score high in the need for affiliation are more accurate in interpreting the emotions of others from their tone of voice and facial expressions. They are also more sensitive to the friendliness and lack of friendliness among the people they work with (Rego, Souto, & Cunha, 2009). They think differently about their personal experiences with discrimination than people who score low on the need for affiliation (Carvallo & Pelham, 2006). People who are high in the need for affiliation are less likely to forgive others for their mistakes, even though forgiveness can repair social bonds and promote acceptance, contrary to expectations (Barnes et al., 2010). People who are high in the need for affiliation also deal with loneliness and lack of social connections differently than people who score low on the need for affiliation. Not only do they feel lonelier (Mellor et al., 2008), but they also talk to themselves more when they are alone than people who score low on the need for affiliation (Reichl, Schneider & Spinath, 2013). People with a high need for affiliation have stronger extra social connections to media figures, which may protect them from negative feelings associated with loneliness (Gardner, Pickett & Knowles, 2005; Greenwood & Long, 2009). Other research has linked the need for affiliation to the experience of regret (Morrison, Epstude, & Roese, 2012), deception detection (Kelly, Tee, & Ferry, 2005), alcohol use (Litt, Stock, & Lewis, 2012), and other behaviors (see Leary & Kelly, 2009). In short, despite the fact that all normal people desire acceptance and membership in groups, this is related to a number of factors. Narcissists have an instrumental view of social relationships, and their goal is to gain personal benefits such as social status rather than fostering intimate and meaningful connections (Gruda et al. 2021, 2022; Gruda and Hanges 2023). Some studies report a negative association between narcissism and belonging-related constructs (Ojanen, Findley & Fuller, 2012), others show no significant relationship (Findley and Ojanen, 2013)

or even a small positive correlation (Zeigler-Hill, Vrabell, McCabe, 2019). A strong sense of belonging is often essential for self-esteem because of the security it provides and is rooted in group acceptance. Group membership can fulfill a wide range of needs, including belonging and self-esteem (Greenaway et al., 2015).

Ageism

The term "generation" refers to a group of people who were born during a common time period and, due to their close age, shared the same general life experiences, such as important historical events (see Eyreman & Turner, 1998; Mannheim, 1970). Proponents of generational theory have argued that such shared life experiences translate into attitudes, beliefs, and a coherent sense of group identity, and membership in a generational group is often cited as an explanation for observed or experienced differences between individuals of different ages (Rudolph & Zacher, 2015). One reason people cling to the concept of generational differences is that generational groupings provide convenient groupings for classifying and understanding age complexities (Kooij et al., 2008; Pitt-Catsouphes, Matz-Costa, & James, 2012; Schwall, 2012; Sterns & Doverspike, 1989). Age stereotypes are assumptions that people make about what others might think about their social group (Vorauer, Main, & O'Connell, 1998). Ageism is a multifaceted construct that has been described in various ways. (Iversen, Larsen & Solem, 2009). The world's population is aging rapidly, and life expectancy is steadily increasing (Verhage et al., 2021). Ageism is defined as stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination based on age that affects people throughout their lives (World Health Organization, 2018). This discrimination can be directed towards others (“other-oriented ageism”) or towards oneself (“self-oriented ageism”) (Levy, 2009). Ageism occurs at three levels: macro, meso, and micro (Ayalon & Tesh-Romer, 2018). Ageism is expressed primarily in negative ways (World Health Organization, 2018). Negative ageism, in addition to showing limitations and perceptions of age, contributes to the internalization of negative stereotypes (Levy, 2009). Destructive effects of ageism include barriers to employment and career advancement (Ng & Feldman, 2012) and receiving inadequate or degrading medical care (Wyman, Shiovitz-Ezra & Bengel, 2018). Financial insecurity and negative media stereotypes (Guterman, 2022; Loos & Ivan, 2018; Liddy, 2023) have been linked to reduced health and well-being, including a higher risk of mortality (WHO, 2018). In discussing ageism, it is necessary to distinguish between “institutional age-based norms,” “perceived ageism,” and “overt ageism” (Madva, 2025; Mantel, 2025). According to Madva (2025) and Mantel (2025), Chronological age can be used as a practical basis for policies related to health, safety, or operational capacity, and such criteria do not necessarily reflect bias or discriminatory intent. For example, restrictions on driving for older people may be based on regulatory, safety, or social considerations rather than bias (Nguyen, Brown & Keay, 2025). Overt ageism refers to stereotypes or discriminatory behaviors toward people based on age, such as dismissing older people as incompetent or considering younger people untrustworthy (Swift, Abrams & Lamont, 2019). Perceived ageism refers to the subjective interpretation of age-related situations as discriminatory, such as interpreting the denial of opportunities or services as unfair treatment based on age (Madva, 2025; Mantel, 2025). Ageism is stereotyping, prejudice, or discrimination against others because of their age (Ayalon & Tesch-Römer 2017). Ageism is both objective and harmful if people are placed in situations where they are treated unfairly because of their age (Bratt et al. 2018; Vauclair et al. 2015; Vogt Juan, 2007). In addition to denying older people

the opportunity to grow, negative perceptions of aging also become entrenched and internalized as people age, becoming self-fulfilling prophecies (Levy 2009; Kornadt et al., 2020). Perceived ageism is an important risk factor for health and well-being in old age (Kornadt et al., 2021). Vauclair and colleagues (2015) showed that perceived ageism predicts individuals' health more than other variables, such as social capital. Perceptions of mental aging play a central role in personal development, health, and well-being across the lifespan (Kornadt et al. 2020). North and Fisk (2012, 2013) have distinguished between descriptive and prescriptive age stereotypes. They argue that descriptive age stereotypes involve expectations about what older people typically "do," whereas prescriptive age stereotypes involve what older people "should do," particularly regarding the use, sharing, and depriving themselves of valuable resources (North & Fisk, 2012, 2013). North and Fisk (2012, 2013) have described three distinct prescriptive dimensions that younger people are likely to endorse: (1) active sequencing of enviable positions and influence; (2) minimizing passive consumption of shared resources; and (3) maintaining age-appropriate symbolic identities. In general, prescriptive stereotypes define normative expectations for behavior that are referred to others, and disregarding or violating these expectations can lead to intergenerational conflicts. For example, if older people delay retirement and remain in the workforce beyond their legal retirement age, younger workers may perceive a violation of prescriptive norms of succession, consumption, and identity. It is also possible that these ideas operate in both directions (Rudolph & Zacher, 2015).

Overview and predictions

The aim of the present study was to examine the possibility that narcissism is associated with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. On the other hand, the aim was to examine the role of needs, social status, power, and belonging as mediating variables because needs, social status, power, and belonging may play a crucial role in understanding many narcissistic attitudes and behaviors. This is important because there is relatively limited knowledge about the relationship between needs, social status, power, and belonging and intergenerational tension.

The aim of this approach was to gain a comprehensive and detailed insight into the relationship between needs, social status, power, and belonging and intergenerational tension and its dimensions. We focused our current efforts on investigating whether needs for social status, power, and belonging mediate the associations between narcissistic personality features and prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism.

We formulated the following hypotheses for the present study:

We expect antagonistic narcissism to be associated with prescriptive intergenerational tension, ageism, and its dimensions. Moreover, we expect the associations between antagonistic narcissism and prescriptive intergenerational tension ageism to be mediated by a highly needs social status, power, and belonging. We expect extraverted narcissism to be associated with prescriptive intergenerational tension, ageism, and its dimensions. Moreover, we expect the associations between extraverted narcissism and prescriptive intergenerational tension ageism to be mediated by a highly needs social status, power, and belonging. We expect neurotic narcissism to be associated with prescriptive intergenerational tension, ageism, and its dimensions. Moreover, we expect the associations between neurotic narcissism and prescriptive

intergenerational tension ageism to be mediated by a highly needs social status, power, and belonging.

Methods

Participants and Procedure

The participants in the research were 814 people from Iran, of whom 380 were male (46.7%) and 434 were female (53.3%). The age range of the participants was from 17 to 58 years, with an average of 30.22 and a standard deviation of 9.30. In women, the age range is between (17 to 57) with a mean of 31.26 and a standard deviation of 9.42. In men, the age range is between (18 to 58) with a mean of 29.02 and a standard deviation of 9.04. The economic situation of the participants in this study was as follows: very bad = 3.8%, bad = 19.3%, moderate = 57.6%, good = 17.1%, and very good = 2.2%. The data collection was done online through social media. Participants were contacted, mostly via WhatsApp and Telegram, and the objectives of the research were explained to them. After expressing their consent, a link to the questionnaires (for narcissism, prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism, and global and needs social status, power, and belonging) designed in Google Forms software was sent to them. The three online self-report questionnaires were carefully translated from the original English version under the supervision of linguists.

Measures

Narcissism scale

The short form of the Five-Factor Narcissism Inventory (Glover et al., 2012; Sherman et al., 2015) was used to assess extraverted narcissism (16 items; e.g., "I get lots of enjoyment from entertaining others" [$\alpha = .78$]), antagonistic narcissism (32 items; e.g., "I'm pretty good at manipulating people" [$\alpha = .77$]), and neurotic narcissism (12 items; e.g., "I feel awful when I get put down in front of others" [$\alpha = .71$]). Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement with each statement using a scale that ranged from 1 (disagree strongly) to 5 (agree strongly). Based on the present research, Cronbach's alphas were $\alpha = .83$ for extraverted narcissism, $\alpha = .80$ for antagonistic narcissism, and $\alpha = .76$ for neurotic narcissism.

Need for Social Status.

The Need for Social Status Measure (Flynn et al., 2006) was used to assess the need for social status (8 items; e.g., "I care about how positively others view me"; $\alpha = 0.77$). The present research, Cronbach's alphas, was (8 items; $\alpha = .85$).

Need for Power.

The Need for Power Scale (Bennett, 1988) was used to assess the need for power (13 items; e.g., "I enjoy planning things and deciding what tasks each person should do"; $\alpha = 0.91$). The present research, Cronbach's alphas, was (13 items; $\alpha = .31$).

Need to Belong.

The Need to Belong Scale (Leary et al., 2013) was used to assess the need to belong (10 items; e.g., "I want other people to accept me"; $\alpha = 0.76$). The present research, Cronbach's alphas, was (10 items; $\alpha = .67$). prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism scale: (SIC)

The SIC contains 20 items and three subscales: Succession, Identity, and Consumption. Although prior scales focus mainly on what older people

allegedly “are” (descriptive stereotypes), the current analysis centers on the role of more controlling, “should”-based, prescriptive beliefs. This approach proposes three prescriptive dimensions that younger generations are particularly likely to endorse: active Succession of enviable positions and influence, (2) age-appropriate, symbolic Identity maintenance, and (3) minimizing passive shared-resource Consumption. The Succession subscale contains eight items, an example item from this scale is, “It is unfair that older people get to vote on issues that will impact younger people much more.” The Identity subscale contains five items, an example from this scale is, “Older people shouldn’t even try to act cool.” The Consumption subscale contains seven items, an example from this scale is, “Older people shouldn’t be so miserly with their money if their younger relatives need it.” All of the items on the SIC are measured on a 6-point scale, where 1 = strongly disagree and 6 = strongly agree. Items on the scale are averaged to give an overall score of prescriptive stereotype endorsement. North and Fiske (2013) found that the SIC prescriptive ageism scale had strong reliability (.91) as well as strong divergent and convergent validity. In addition, they found that the SIC significantly predicted ratings of warmth and competence for violating targets. In this investigation, the SIC scale also achieved high internal consistency ($\alpha = .93$). (North & Fiske, 2013). The present research, Cronbach’s alphas for the subscales (categories) are as follows: Succession subscale was (items8; $\alpha = .71$); identity subscale was (items5; $\alpha = .83$); consumption subscale was (items7; $\alpha = .54$) and total prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism scale was (20 items; $\alpha = .77$).

Data analysis

Our hypotheses were consistent with an indirect effects model, such that the associations that antagonistic, extraverted, and neurotic narcissism had with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism were believed to be explained, at least in part, by the need for social status, the need for power, and the need to belong. This led us to conduct a series of mediation analyses using model 4 of the PROCESS macro developed by Hayes (2022), in conjunction with SPSS Version 27, which uses a bootstrap resampling process that was repeated 10,000 times to generate a 95% percentile bootstrap confidence interval (CI) for each direct and indirect association. We conducted a series of mediation analyses to examine whether narcissistic personality facets would be positively associated with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism, which, in turn, would be linked to indicators of social status, power, and belonging as potential mediators. More specifically, each aspect of narcissism served as a predictor of prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism in its own mediation analysis with needs, social status, power, and belonging as potential mediators. To enhance interpretability, we analysed each narcissistic facet separately rather than including them all in a single model, due to concerns about multicollinearity and the substantial overlap among these facets. Although we used mediation analyses to explore potential pathways among the variables, we emphasize that our data are cross-sectional and correlational in nature; therefore, we do not infer causality from these results.

Result

Descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations:

The descriptive statistics and zero-order correlations are presented in Table 1.

As shown in the M-column (Table 1), the mean for total in the antagonistic narcissism scale was $M = 88.63$, $SD = 14.28$, extraverted narcissism scale was $M = 51.65$, $SD = 10.24$ and neurotic narcissism scale was $M = 36.61$, $SD = 7.46$. The mean for men in the antagonistic narcissism scale was $M = 90.87$, $SD = 13.72$, extraverted narcissism scale was $M = 52.03$, $SD = 9.67$ and neurotic narcissism scale was $M = 36.06$, $SD = 6.84$. The mean women in the antagonistic narcissism scale was $M = 86.67$, $SD = 14.48$, extraverted narcissism scale was $M = 51.30$, $SD = 10.71$ and neurotic narcissism scale was $M = 37.09$, $SD = 7.95$. the mean “intergenerational-tension ageism” is ($M = 62.02$, $SD = 11.35$).

Also, the means of the subscale’s “consumption” ($M = 20.65$, $SD = 4.83$), “succession” ($M = 30.42$, $SD = 5.99$), and “identity” ($M = 10.95$, $SD = 4.97$) are given. Moreover, the mean of men’s “intergenerational-tension ageism” was ($M = 64.29$, $SD = 11.22$). Also, the means of the subscales for men “Consumption” ($M = 21.35$, $SD = 4.99$), “Succession” ($M = 31.04$, $SD = 6.29$), and “Identity” ($M = 11.91$, $SD = 5.16$) are given. The mean for women for “intergenerational-tension ageism” was ($M = 60.03$, $SD = 11.11$). Also, the means of the subscales for men “consumption” ($M = 20.04$, $SD = 4.60$), “succession” ($M = 29.88$, $SD = 5.67$), and “identity” ($M = 10.11$, $SD = 4.65$) are given. As the results show, the mean scores of intergenerational tensions in women were lower than the mean scores of men in both the total test score and the subscales. According to these results, intergenerational tension towards the elderly is less among women than among men.

The mean for total in the need for power scale was $M = 40.98$, $SD = 4.76$, need for social status scale was $M = 39.97$, $SD = 8.66$, and need to belong scale was $M = 30.42$, $SD = 5.71$. The mean for men in the need for power scale was $M = 40.88$, $SD = 4.80$, need for social status scale was $M = 39.05$, $SD = 8.71$, and need to belong scale was $M = 30.65$, $SD = 5.96$. The mean for women in the need for power scale was $M = 41.07$, $SD = 4.72$, need for social status scale was $M = 40.77$, $SD = 8.54$, and need to belong scale was $M = 30.21$, $SD = 5.49$. The correlations between antagonistic narcissism with consumption (0.28), succession (0.27), identity (0.28) and prescriptive intergenerational-tension (0.38) were positive and significant. The correlations between extraverted narcissism with succession (0.25) and prescriptive intergenerational-tension (0.09) were positive and significant and with identity (-.12) was negative and significant. Also, with consumption (0.02) was not significant. The correlations between neurotic narcissism with succession (0.10) was positive and significant, but with consumption (-.01), identity (-.02) and prescriptive intergenerational-tension (0.04) were not significant. The correlations between antagonistic narcissism with need for power (.22) and need to belong (.20) were positive and significant. But with need for social status (.03) was not significant. The correlations between extraverted narcissism with need for power (.42), need for social status (.49) and need to belong (.12) were positive and significant. The correlations between neurotic narcissism with need for social status (0.36) and need to belong (.43) were positive and significant. But, with need for power (-.06), was not significant. The correlation between need for power with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism, (.05) and consumption (.00) were not significant and with identity (-.13) was negative and significant. Also, with succession (0.20) was positive and significant. The correlation between need for social status with succession (.25) was positive and significant. But, with prescriptive intergenerational-tension (-.12), consumption (-.16), and identity (-.43) were negative and significant. The correlation between need to belong with prescriptive intergenerational-tension (.18), consumption (.16) and

identity (.19), were positive and significant. But with succession (.05) was not significant. The correlation coefficient of need for power, need for social status and need to belong with antagonistic narcissism, extraverted

narcissism, neurotic narcissism, and prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism and its dimensions was calculated separately for women and men. The results are given in Table 1

Table 1: Intercorrelations and Descriptive Statistics

		G	M	Sd	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Antagonistic Narcissism	T	88.63	14.28										
		M	90.87	13.72										
		W	86.67	14.48										
2	Extraverted Narcissism	T	51.65	10.24	.50**									
		M	52.03	9.67	.52**									
		W	51.30	10.71	.49**									
3	Neurotic Narcissism	T	36.61	7.46	.12**	.14**								
		M	36.06	6.84	.14**	.13*								
		W	37.09	7.95	.13**	.16**								
4	Consumption	T	20.65	4.83	.28**	.02	-.01							
		M	21.35	4.99	.27**	.02	.05							
		W	20.04	4.60	.26**	.01	-.04							
5	Succession	T	30.42	5.99	.27**	.25**	.10**	.36**						
		M	31.04	6.29	.26**	.27**	.13*	.32**						
		W	29.88	5.67	.25**	.23**	.10*	.38**						
6	Identity	T	10.95	4.97	.28**	-.12**	-.02	.39**	.10**					
		M	11.91	5.16	.28**	-.14**	.05	.29**	-.00					
		W	10.11	4.65	.24**	-.13**	-.06	.46**	.17**					
7	Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism	T	62.02	11.35	.38**	.09*	.04	.78**	.72**	.65**				
		M	64.29	11.22	.40**	.10	.12*	.76**	.70**	.59**				
		W	60.03	11.11	.335**	.07	.01	.80**	.74**	.70**				
8	Need for Power	T	40.98	4.76	.22**	.42**	-.06	.00	.20**	-.13**	.05			
		M	40.88	4.80	.24**	.41**	-.11*	.06	.27**	-.13*	.12*			
		W	41.07	4.72	.21**	.43**	-.03	-.04	.13**	-.12**	-.00			
9	Need for Social Status	T	39.97	8.66	.03	.49**	.36**	-.16**	.25**	-.43**	-.12**	.31**		
		M	39.05	8.71	.03	.49**	.29**	-.09	.34**	-.41**	-.04	.34**		
		W	40.77	8.54	.06	.50**	.40**	-.20**	.19**	-.44**	-.17**	.28**		
10	Need to Belong	T	30.42	5.71	.20**	.12**	.43**	.16**	.05	.19**	.18**	-.08*	.08*	
		M	30.65	5.96	.165**	.13*	.45**	.14**	.02	.16**	.15**	-.04	.10	
		W	30.21	5.49	.22**	.10*	.44**	.16**	.08	.21**	.20**	-.12*	.08	

Note: *p < .05; **p < .01. T= Total (men and women, N= 814), M= men, N= 374 W= women, N= 409

*p < .05; **p < .01

Parallel multiple mediation analyses of narcissism dimensions (aggressive narcissism, extraverted narcissism, neurotic narcissism) were calculated by testing the intergenerational tension ageism scale and its dimensions (consumption, Succession, identity) and the need for belonging. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table2. Results of the parallel multiple mediation analyses

Associations with mediators of Narcissism	Antagonistic Narcissism		Extraverted Narcissism		Neurotic Narcissism	
	coeff	LLCI- ULCI	coeff	LLCI- ULCI	coeff	LLCI- ULCI
Narc.→ Need for Power	.07***	(.05, .09)	.19***	(.16, .22)	-.04	(-.08, .01)
Narc.→ Need for Social Status	.02	(-.02, .06)	.41***	(.36, .46)	.41***	(.34, .49)
Narc.→ Need to Belong	.08***	(.05, .11)	.06**	(.03, .10)	.33***	(.28, .38)

Narc.→ Consumption (Total)	.09***	(.07, .12)	.01	(-.02, .04)	-.01	(-.05, .04)
Narc.→ Consumption (Direct)	.10***	(.07, .12)	.01	(-.03, .04)	-.01	(-.05, .04)
Narc.→ Need for Power → Consumption	-.00	(-.01, .00)	-.00	(-.02, .01)	-.00	(-.00, .00)
Narc.→ Consumption (Total)	.09***	(.07, .12)	.01	(-.02, .04)	-.01	(-.05, .04)
Narc.→ Consumption (Direct)	.10***	(.07, .12)	.06**	(.02, .10)	.03	(-.01, .08)
Narc.→ Need for Social Status → Consumption	-.00	(-.01, .00)	-.05	(-.07, -.03)	-.04	(-.06, -.02)
Narc.→ Consumption (Total)	.09***	(.07, .12)	.01	(-.02, .04)	-.01	(-.05, .04)
Narc.→ Consumption (Direct)	.09***	(.06, .11)	.00	(-.03, .03)	-.06*	(-.11, -.01)
Narc.→ Need to Belong → Consumption	.01	(.0022, .0132)	.01	(.0024, .0164)	.06	(.0328, .0812)
Narc.→ Succession (Total)	.11***	(.08, .14)	.15***	(.11, .18)	.08**	(.03, .14)
Narc.→ Succession (Direct)	.10***	(.07, .13)	.12***	(.08, .16)	.09***	(.04, .15)
Narc.→ Need for Power → Succession	.01	(.0062, .0215)	.03	(.0087, .0462)	-.01	(-.02, .00)
Narc.→ Succession (Total)	.11***	(.08, .14)	.15***	(.11, .18)	.08**	(.03, .14)
Narc.→ Succession (Direct)	.11***	(.08, .14)	.10***	(.05, .14)	.01	(-.04, .07)
Narc.→ Need for Social Status → Succession	.00	(-.00, .01)	.05	(.0287, .0692)	.07	(.0495, .0925)
Narc.→ Succession (Total)	.11***	(.08, .14)	.15***	(.11, .18)	.08**	(.03, .14)
Narc.→ Succession (Direct)	.11***	(.08, .14)	.14***	(.10, .18)	.08*	(.02, .14)
Narc.→ Need to Belong → Succession	.00	(-.01, .01)	.00	(-.00, .01)	.00	(-.02, .03)
Narc.→ Identity (Total)	.10***	(.08, .12)	-.06***	(-.09, -.03)	-.01	(-.06, .03)
Narc.→ Identity (Direct)	.11***	(.09, .14)	-.04*	(-.08, -.00)	-.02	(-.07, .03)
Narc.→ Need for Power → Identity	-.02	(-.02, -.01)	-.02	(-.04, -.00)	.01	(-.00, .01)
Narc.→ Identity (Total)	.10***	(.08, .12)	-.06***	(-.09, -.03)	-.01	(-.06, .03)
Narc.→ Identity (Direct)	.10***	(.08, .12)	.06**	(.02, .09)	.10***	(.06, .14)
Narc.→ Need for Social Status → Identity	-.00	(-.02, .01)	-.12	(-.14, -.09)	-.11	(-.14, -.09)
Narc.→ Identity (Total)	.10***	(.08, .12)	-.06***	(-.09, -.03)	-.01	(-.06, .03)
Narc.→ Identity (Direct)	.09***	(.07, .11)	-.07***	(-.10, -.04)	-.09***	(-.14, -.04)
Narc.→ Need to Belong → Identity	.01	(.0046, .0155)	.01	(.0037, .0209)	.07	(.0482, .0958)
Narc.→ Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism (Total)	.30***	(.25, .35)	.10*	(.02, .17)	.06	(-.04, .17)
Narc.→ Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism (Direct)	.31***	(.26, .36)	.09*	(.00, .17)	.07	(-.04, .17)
Narc.→ Need for Power → Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension	-.01	(-.02, .00)	.01	(-.03, .04)	-.00	(-.02, .00)
Narc.→ Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension (Total)	.30***	(.25, .35)	.10*	(.02, .17)	.06	(-.04, .17)
Narc.→ Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension (Direct)	.31***	(.26, .36)	.21***	(.13, .30)	.15**	(.04, .26)
Narc.→ Need for Social Status → Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension	-.00	(-.01, .00)	-.12	(-.16, -.08)	-.09	(-.13, -.05)
Narc.→ Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension (Total)	.30***	(.25, .35)	.10*	(.02, .17)	.06	(-.04, .17)
Narc.→ Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension (Direct)	.29***	(.23, .34)	.07	(-.00, .15)	-.07	(-.18, .05)
Narc.→ Need to Belong → Total prescriptive intergenerational-tension	.02	(.0057, .0308)	.02	(.0062, .0415)	.13	(.0793, .186)

Note: Narc. Stands for Narcissism. "coeff" stands for the standardized regression coefficients, which are presented along with 95% confidence intervals in parentheses; LLCI and ULCI respectively represent the Lower and the Upper Limit Confidence Intervals. * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$. In a mediation model, the direct effect represents the relationship between an independent variable (X) and a dependent variable (Y) that is not explained by a mediator variable (M). The total effect encompasses the combined influence of both the direct effect of X on Y and the indirect effect of X on Y through the mediator M. Essentially, the total effect is the overall relationship between X and Y, while the direct effect is the specific relationship that remains when the mediator's influence is removed.

Due to the large number of variables in the study, only the data on intergenerational-tension ageism are reported below, and the remaining results of the parallel multiple mediation analyses on the subscales of the intergenerational-tension ageism scale (Consumption, Succession, Identity) with other variables are presented in Table 2.

Antagonistic narcissism

These analyses revealed that antagonistic narcissism ($a = .07$, $SE = .01$, $t = 6.36$, $p = .00$, 95% CI [.05, .09]) was not significant associations with need for power.

Need for power ($b = -.09$, $SE = .08$, $t = -1.08$, $p = .28$, 95% CI $[-.24, .07]$) had negative significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism ($c' = .31$, $SE = .03$, $t = 11.72$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.26, .36]$) had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism ($c = .30$, $SE = .03$, $t = 11.77$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.25, .35]$) had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, antagonistic narcissism ($b = -.01$, CI $[-.02, .01]$) was not indirectly significant associated with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for power. Because this path of influence cannot be claimed as definitively different from zero and the bootstrap confidence interval straddles zero. These analyses revealed that antagonistic narcissism ($a = .02$, $SE = .02$, $t = .86$, $p = .39$, 95% CI $[-.02, .06]$) was not significant associations with need for social status.

Need for social status ($b = -.17$, $SE = .04$, $t = -4.23$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[-.26, -.10]$) had negative significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism ($c' = .31$, $SE = .03$, $t = 12.01$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.26, .36]$) had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism ($c = .30$, $SE = .03$, $t = 11.77$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.25, .35]$) had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, antagonistic narcissism ($b = -.00$, CI $[-.01, .00]$) was not indirectly significant association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for social status. Because this path of influence cannot be claimed as definitively different from zero and the bootstrap confidence interval straddles zero. These analyses revealed that antagonistic narcissism ($a = .08$, $SE = .01$, $t = 5.69$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.05, .11]$) had positive significant associations with need to belong.

Need to belong ($b = .22$, $SE = .07$, $t = 3.29$, $p = .001$, 95% CI $[.09, .34]$) had positive significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism ($c' = .29$, $SE = .03$, $t = 10.96$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.24, .34]$) had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism ($c = .30$, $SE = .03$, $t = 11.77$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.25, .35]$) had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, antagonistic narcissism ($b = .02$, CI $[.01, .03]$) had positive significant indirectly association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need to belong. Because this indirect effect is statistically different from zero, as revealed by a 95% bootstrap confidence interval that is entirely above zero.

Extraverted narcissism

These analyses revealed that extraverted narcissism ($a = .19$, $SE = .01$, $t = 13.07$, $p = .000$, 95% CI $[.16, .22]$) had positive significant associations with need for power. Need for power ($b = .04$, $SE = .09$, $t = .42$, $p = .68$, 95% CI $[-.14, .22]$) was not significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism ($c' = .09$, $SE = .04$, $t = 2.05$, $p = .04$, 95% CI $[.00, .17]$) had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism ($c = .10$, $SE = .04$, $t = 2.45$, $p = .01$, 95% CI $[.02, .17]$) had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, extraverted narcissism ($b = .01$, CI $[-.03, .04]$) was not indirect significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for power. Because this path of influence cannot be claimed as definitively different from zero and the bootstrap confidence interval straddles zero. These analyses

revealed that extraverted narcissism ($a = .41$, $SE = .03$, $t = 15.88$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.36, .46]$) had positive significant associations with need for social status. Need for social status ($b = -.29$, $SE = .05$, $t = -5.53$, $p = .000$, 95% CI $[-.39, -.18]$) had negative significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism ($c' = .21$, $SE = .04$, $t = 4.87$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.13, .30]$) had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism ($c = .10$, $SE = .04$, $t = 2.45$, $p = .01$, 95% CI $[.02, .17]$) had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, extraverted narcissism ($b = -.12$, CI $[-.16, -.07]$) was not indirectly significant association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for social status. Because this path of influence cannot be claimed as definitively different from zero and the bootstrap confidence interval straddles zero.

These analyses revealed that extraverted narcissism ($a = .06$, $SE = .02$, $t = 3.29$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.03, .10]$) had positive significant associations with need to belong.

Need to belong ($b = .34$, $SE = .07$, $t = 4.93$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.20, .48]$) had positive significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism ($c' = .07$, $SE = .04$, $t = 1.90$, $p = .06$, 95% CI $[-.00, .15]$) was not significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism ($c = .10$, $SE = .04$, $t = 2.45$, $p = .01$, 95% CI $[.02, .17]$) had positive significant total association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, extraverted narcissism ($b = .02$, CI $[.01, .04]$) had positive indirect significant association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need to belong. Because this indirect effect is statistically different from zero, as revealed by a 95% bootstrap confidence interval that is entirely above zero.

Neurotic narcissism

These analyses revealed that neurotic narcissism ($a = -.04$, $SE = .02$, $t = -1.74$, $p = .08$, 95% CI $[-.08, .00]$) had negative significant associations with need for power.

Need for power ($b = .12$, $SE = .08$, $t = 1.47$, $p = .14$, 95% CI $[-.04, .29]$) was not significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism ($c' = .07$, $SE = .05$, $t = 1.25$, $p = .21$, 95% CI $[-.04, .17]$) was not significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism ($c = .06$, $SE = .05$, $t = 1.16$, $p = .25$, 95% CI $[-.04, .17]$) was not significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, neurotic narcissism ($b = -.00$, CI $[-.02, .00]$) was not indirectly significant association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for power. Because this path of influence cannot be claimed as definitively different from zero and the bootstrap confidence interval straddles zero.

These analyses revealed that neurotic narcissism ($a = .41$, $SE = .04$, $t = 10.84$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[.34, .49]$) had negative significant associations with need for social status. Need for social status ($b = -.21$, $SE = .05$, $t = -4.28$, $p = .00$, 95% CI $[-.30, -.11]$) was not significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism ($c' = .15$, $SE = .06$, $t = 2.62$, $p = .01$, 95% CI $[.04, .26]$) was not significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism ($c = .06$, $SE = .05$, $t = 1.16$, $p = .25$, 95% CI $[-.04, .17]$) was not significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, neurotic narcissism ($b = -.09$, CI $[-.13, -.05]$) was

not indirectly associated with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for social status. Because this path of influence cannot be claimed as definitively different from zero and the bootstrap confidence interval straddles zero.

These analyses revealed that neurotic narcissism ($a = .33$, $SE = .02$, $t = 13.74$, $p = .00$, 95% CI [.28, .38]) had positive significant associations with need to belong. Need to belong ($b = .39$, $SE = .08$, $t = 5.18$, $p = .00$, 95% CI [.24, .54]) had positive significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism ($c' = -.07$, $SE = .06$, $t = -1.19$, $p = .24$, 95% CI [-.18, .05]) was not significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism ($c = .06$, $SE = .05$, $t = 1.16$, $p = .25$, 95% CI [.04, .17]) was not significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, neurotic narcissism ($b = .13$, CI [.08, .19]) had positive indirect significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need to belong. Because this indirect effect is statistically different from zero, as revealed by a 95% bootstrap confidence interval that is entirely above zero.

Discussion

This study investigated whether distinct aspects of narcissism—aggressive, extraverted, and neurotic—are associated with the ageism of prescriptive intergenerational tension in a sample of Iranian society. On the other hand, the aim was to examine the role of social needs, status, power, and belonging as mediating variables. We found correlations between antagonistic narcissism with consumption, succession, identity and prescriptive intergenerational-tension were positive and significant. The correlations between extraverted narcissism with succession and prescriptive intergenerational-tension were positive and significant and with identity was negative and significant. Also, with consumption was not significant. The correlations between neurotic narcissism with succession was positive and significant, but with consumption, identity and prescriptive intergenerational-tension were not significant. The correlations between antagonistic narcissism with need for power and need to belong were positive and significant. But with need for social status was not significant. The correlations between extraverted narcissism with need for power, need for social status and need to belong were positive and significant. The correlations between neurotic narcissism with need for social status and need to belong were positive and significant. But, with need for power, was not significant. The correlation between need for power with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism, and consumption were not significant and with identity was negative and significant. Also, with succession was positive and significant. The correlation between need for social status with succession was positive and significant. But, with prescriptive intergenerational-tension, consumption, and identity were negative and significant. The correlation between need to belong with prescriptive intergenerational-tension, consumption and identity were positive and significant. But with succession was not significant. In a study conducted by Zeigler and colleagues, it was found that different aspects (extroverted narcissism, combative narcissism, neurotic narcissism) were related to the need for social status, belonging, and power, but their relationship to these needs was different, which results indicate similarities and differences in relation to the psychological needs that characterize these narcissistic personality traits. (Zeigler-Hill & Mohammad Beigi, 2023). The results of this study are consistent with previous research, considering that it examines the relationship between personality dimensions and

intergenerational tension. In a study conducted by Mohammad Beigi and Saberi (2026), it was found that there is a relationship between aspects of narcissism and intergenerational tension and dangerous social worldviews, and dangerous social worldviews moderated this relationship. Another study showed that there is a relationship between aspects of narcissism and intergenerational tension with justice and injustice, and injustice as an influential variable moderated this relationship. (Mohammad Beigi and Saberi, in press). Also, in other studies, it was found that there was a relationship between personality traits of impulsivity and psychopathy and intergenerational tension. (Mohammad Beigi and Saberi, 2025; Mohammad Beigi and Saberi, in press).

Antagonist narcissism

We found antagonistic narcissism was not significant associations with need for power. Need for power had negative significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, antagonistic narcissism was not indirectly significant associated with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for power.

Given the importance of the results, we should point out that you can see in Table 2. Need for power as a moderating variable moderated the relationship between antagonistic narcissism and succession, and role of need for power was significant. We found antagonistic narcissism was not significant associations with need for social status. Need for social status had negative significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, antagonistic narcissism was not indirectly significant association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for social status. We found antagonistic narcissism had positive significant associations with need to belong.

Need to belong had positive significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Antagonistic narcissism had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, antagonistic narcissism had positive significant indirectly association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need to belong. In explaining the results of this study, according to the theory of self-determination, which actually examines why people engage in various activities (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and refers to the power of determination and authority by the individual in his own affairs (Hatfield, 2017). Humans like to be self-determiners and play a greater role in making choices and shaping the world around them. This important motivational factor also refers to a set of skills that help people prioritize their wants and needs (Ryan & Deci, 2020). In general, self-determining behavior refers to voluntary actions that enable an individual to act as a primary agent in their own life, maintaining and enhancing their quality of life (Wehmeyer & Schwartz, 1997). Self-determination is also defined as the ability to identify and achieve goals based on self-knowledge and self-worth (Field & Hoffman, 1994). Given that people with narcissistic traits

have an exaggerated and exaggerated self-concept and high levels of agentic traits such as intelligence, power, and dominance (e.g., Brown & Zeigler-Hill, 2004; Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002) narcissists also have higher extraversion and lower agreeableness (Miller & Campbell, 2008) and given that various studies have shown that the relationship between narcissism and feelings of agency is deep and rooted (Campbell et al., 2007; Campbell, Rudich, & Sedikides, 2002; Sedikides et al., 2004). And on the other hand, given that the basis of self-determination theory is formed by basic psychological needs that are considered as the energy necessary to help actively engage with the environment, develop skills and grow healthy (Desi & Ryan, 2011). According to this theory, people choose the best things to do and implement decisions, evaluate and improve the results of affairs (McCollin & Obiakor, 2010). Therefore, young people tend to use this motivational factor to achieve their goals. In this regard, they may face challenges with older people who usually have resources and power and start intergenerational tension with them to achieve their desires and satisfy their needs and even leave them aside.

Extraverted narcissism

We found extraverted narcissism had positive significant associations with need for power. Need for power was not significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, extraverted narcissism was not indirect significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for power.

We found extraverted narcissism had positive significant associations with need for social status.

Need for social status had negative significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism had positive significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism had positive significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, extraverted narcissism was not indirectly significant association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for social status. Given the importance of the results, we should point out that you can see in Table 2.

Need for power as a moderating variable moderated the relationship between extraverted narcissism and succession, and role of need for power was significant. Need for social status as a moderating variable moderated the relationship between extraverted narcissism and succession, and role of need for social status was significant. We found extraverted narcissism had positive significant associations with need to belong. Need to belong had positive significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism was not significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Extraverted narcissism had positive significant total association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, extraverted narcissism had positive indirect significant association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need to belong. Social identity theory claims that individuals derive part of their self-concept from membership in groups, which become vital sources of self-esteem and identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Belonging to a group can be a key component of an individual's self-concept. Belief in one's own

superiority and belonging to a group, such as young people who see themselves as more capable, stronger, and smarter, can serve as a source of self-esteem by satisfying the need for group affiliation and providing individuals with a stable and idealized identity related to their own group.

According to this theory, when power, financial resources, and influence are held by elders who do not belong to the group of elders, it often causes fundamental insecurities in young people, causing them to gravitate toward their own peer group and distance themselves from the elders. This reliance on and dependence on peer groups may weaken authentic social belonging by intensifying defensiveness, especially among individuals with low self-esteem (Osborne et al., 2019), and it causes young people to engage in compensatory behaviors and try to compete and antagonize the elderly, increasing intergenerational tension and their differences with the elderly over resources and benefits.

Neurotic narcissism

We found neurotic narcissism had negative significant associations with need for power. Need for power was not significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism was not significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism was not significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, neurotic narcissism ($b = -.00$, CI $[-.02, .00]$) was not indirectly significant association with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for power. We found neurotic narcissism had negative significant associations with need for social status. Need for social status was not significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism was not significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism was not significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, neurotic narcissism was not indirectly associated with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need for social status. Given the importance of the results, we should point out that you can see in Table 2. Need for social status as a moderating variable moderated the relationship between neurotic narcissism and succession, and role of need for social status was significant.

We found neurotic narcissism had positive significant associations with need to belong. Need to belong had positive significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism.

Neurotic narcissism was not significant direct associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Neurotic narcissism was not significant total associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. Also, neurotic narcissism had positive indirect significant associations with prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism through the need to belong. In explaining these results, the self-regulatory model (Campbell et al., 2011) focuses on how different components of narcissism interact to drive narcissistic behavior. According to this model, self-regulatory strategies are used by narcissists in relationships, especially to enhance and magnify themselves, to justify themselves, to maintain power and social status, etc. Since narcissism has been associated with pride, self-esteem, or excitement when achieving self-regulatory goals (e.g., Sedikides et al., 2004; Tracy et al., 2009). And it is associated with anger and aggression when failing to achieve self-regulatory goals (e.g., Rhodewalt & Morf, 1998) With this introduction, young people who are high in narcissism and have a higher need for power, social status, and belonging need to be able to win in competition

with older people who have higher resources, power, and status, and to advance and regulate the authority of affairs according to their own opinion. And because they encounter an obstacle called the elderly in this regard and fail in some way, they begin to react against the elderly. These behaviors, which are usually accompanied by anger and aggression, create intergenerational tensions with the elderly over resources, status, and other issues.

Conclusion

This study had interesting and valuable results that provide a thought-provoking perspective. The results showed that different aspects of narcissism are related to prescriptive intergenerational tension, ageism, and needs for social status, power, and belonging. One of the interesting and controversial results of this study was that needs, status, power, and belonging as a moderating variable moderated the relationship between different types of narcissism and prescriptive intergenerational tension, ageism, and its subscales, and role of need to belong was significant. Need for power as a moderating variable moderated the relationship between antagonistic narcissism and extraverted narcissism and succession, and role of need for power was significant. Also need for social status as a moderating variable moderated the relationship between extraverted narcissism and neurotic narcissism and succession, and role of need for social status was significant. Also, the findings of the present study have important practical implications because it primarily emphasizes the importance of narcissistic personality traits on intergenerational tension with the elderly, and then emphasizes psychological needs such as the need for social status, the need for power, and the need to belong as psychological realities of individuals, and also emphasizes the relationship narcissistic personality traits with these needs. The results of this study showed that psychological needs are related to intergenerational tension.

Young people enter into challenges with adults to have their psychological needs met because, according to the theory of intergenerational tension, older people have more status, resources, and influence, and young people enter into challenges with adults in order to be able to achieve their psychological needs, find themselves, find their status and influence, and in a way become the owner of the necessary identity and resources, and in fact, intergenerational tension arises between them. Therefore, providing conditions for young people in which their basic psychological needs are addressed and directed, while not harming the elderly as a valuable segment of society, can be effective in promoting the physical, mental, and future health of young people and the elderly.

These findings emphasize the importance of considering specific aspects of narcissism and examining the role of needs for social status, power, and belonging and the specific psychological and social mechanisms that each can affect ageism and prescriptive intergenerational tension ageism in young people. One limitation of this study was the limited focus on prescriptive intergenerational-tension ageism. It is important that other related issues (such as religious, cultural, social, ethnic, and economic factors) be examined more carefully in future studies. Another limitation of this study was that, due to the design of this study, it was not possible to examine causality between the variables studied. Future studies may provide a better understanding of the causal links between these variables by using experimental manipulations or longitudinal approaches. A third limitation of this study was that we focused exclusively on data collected

from self-report questionnaires, which may have biased the responses of participants, which could have affected the results of the study.

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