

Intelligence and Interpersonal Functioning in Youth and Young Adults with Varying Levels of Psychopathic and Callous-Unemotional Traits

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INTRODUCTION

- Traditionally, individuals with psychopathic traits are understood to be more cold and unemotional than charismatic and social
- The Triarchic Model of Psychopathy lists boldness, meanness, and disinhibition as the three primary factors (Drislane et al., 2015).
- Callous-unemotional (CU) traits are understood to be a developmental precursor to psychopathy (Frick, 2009). CU traits are embodied by an absence of guilt, remorse, and the expression of superficial emotion. These traits designate a group of antisocial youth who are especially sever, stable, and aggressive (Frick & Ray, 2014).
- Successful psychopathy is a term applied to individuals who have psychopathic traits but are non-antisocial (Steinert et al, 2017). Interpersonal functioning is an important distinction between successful and unsuccessful psychopathy (Fix & Fix, 2015).
- Intelligence has been studied as a moderator and a component of psychopathic traits.
- Spatial intelligence impairments are correlated with the emergence of antisocial behavior because recognition, attention, facial expressions, and nonverbal orientation are negatively impacted. Studies have found severe spatial intelligence impairments in adults, and there have been similar findings in youth with CU traits (de Tribolet-Hardy et al., 2013).

The Current Study

- H1: Youth and young adults with high levels of CU traits and psychopathy and a high intelligence would have greater interpersonal functioning than those with high levels of CU traits and psychopathy but low intelligence.
- H2: This relation would be particularly true for abstract intelligence.

METHODS

Participants

- 30 young and young adults who had been referred for therapy at South Community, Inc.
- Age range: 12-21; Mean age: 16.67
- 76.67% Caucasian, 13.67% African-American, 10.0% Mixed/Biracial
- Highest level of parental education: 26.67% High School Graduate/GED, 20.0% Some College, 20.0% Associate's Degree, 13.34% Some High School, 6.67% Technical/Vocational Training, 6.67% Bachelor's Degree, 6.67% Master's Degree

Measures

- Triarchic Psychopathy Measure (TriPM)
- Inventory of Callous-Unemotional Traits (ICU)
- Shipley Institute of Living Scale – Second Edition (Shipley-2)
- Interpersonal Reactivity Index (IRI)

Procedure

- Read aloud to participant by a researcher
- Done in an interview-like format at South Community, Inc.

RESULTS

Bivariate Correlations

- TriPM and ICU correlated positively with each other
- TriPM and ICU correlated negatively with the IRI
- Shipley-2 Total, Shipley-2 Verbal, and Shipley-2 Abstract correlated positively with each other
- TriPM, ICU, and IRI did not correlate with the Shipley-2 Total, Shipley-2 Verbal, or Shipley-2 Abstract

2X2 ANOVAS:

TriPM X Shipley-2 Total

- Main effect for TriPM was significant, $F(1,21) = 5.512, p = .029$
- Main effect for Shipley-2 Total was not significant, $F(1,21) = 1.030, p = .322$
- Interaction effect was not significant, $F(1,21) = 2.56, p = .125$

TriPM X Shipley-2 Verbal

- Main effect for the TriPM was significant, $F(1,21) = 5.304, p = .032$
- Main effect for the Shipley-2 Verbal was not significant, $F(1,21) = 1.024, p = .323$
- Interaction effect was not significant, $F(1,21) = .174, p = .681$

TriPM X Shipley-2 Abstract

- Main effect for the TriPM was significant, $F(1,21) = 5.845, p = .025$
- Main effect for the Shipley-2 Abstract was not significant, $F(1,21) = .546, p = .468$
- Interaction effect was not significant but approached significance, $F(1,21) = 3.820, p = .064$

ICU X Shipley-2 Total

- Main effect for the ICU was significant, $F(1,21) = 25.150, p = .000$
- Main effect for the Shipley-2 Total was not significant, $F(1,21) = .007, p = .936$
- Interaction effect was not significant, $F(1,21) = .218, p = .645$

ICU X Shipley-2 Verbal

- Main effect for the ICU was significant, $F(1,21) = 27.297, p = .000$
- Main effect for the Shipley-2 Verbal was not significant, $F(1,21) = .153, p = .700$
- Interaction effect was not significant, $F(1,21) = 2.501, p = .129$

ICU X Shipley-2 Abstract

- Main effect for the ICU was significant, $F(1,21) = 24.864, p = .000$
- Main effect for the Shipley-2 Abstract was not significant, $F(1,21) = .038, p = .847$
- Interaction effect was not significant, $F(1,21) = .124, p = .728$

Results of 2X2 ANOVA Between TriPM and Shipley-2

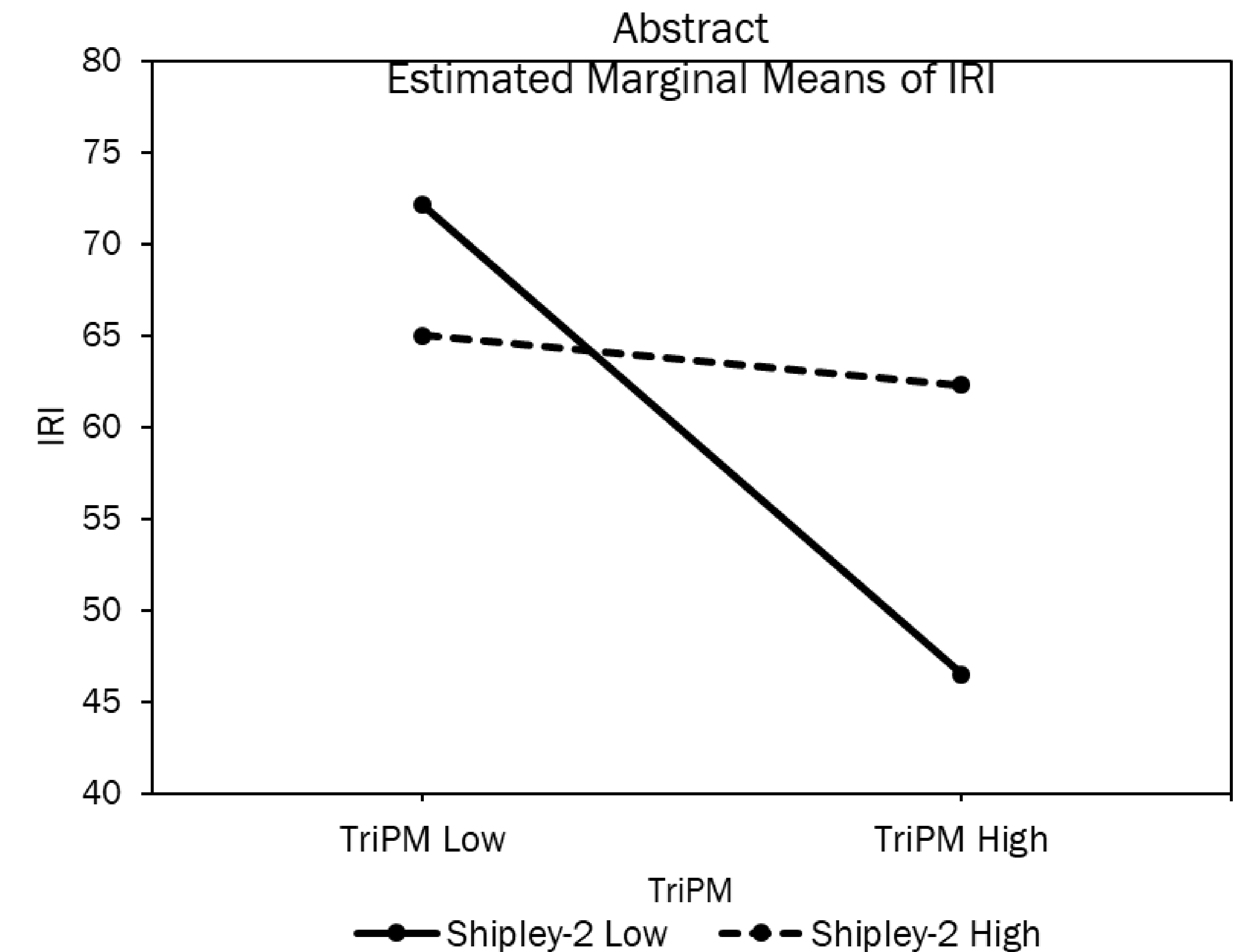


Figure 1: Interaction between psychopathic traits and abstract intelligence on interpersonal functioning

DISCUSSION

- The findings indicate that interpersonal functioning is the same in youth and young adults with high levels of psychopathic or CU traits and high intelligence in comparison to youth and young adults with high levels of psychopathic or CU traits but low intelligence.
- There was not a statistically significant difference between findings for abstract and verbal intelligence, but the interaction between the TriPM and Shipley-2 Abstract approached significance. The level of abstract intelligence may be a moderating variable for the level of interpersonal functioning in psychopathic individuals.
- Inverse correlation between psychopathy and interpersonal functioning
- Strengths of the study include:
 - Age range accounts for varying levels of development
 - Two measures used for maladaptive personality traits (TriPM and ICU)
- Limitations of the study include:
 - TriPM, ICU, and IRI are self-report
 - Small sample size
- Future research is necessary to expand on these findings and can specifically look at the subscales of boldness from the TriPM and uncaring from the ICU.