Representation A Structural Model about Relationship between Perfectionism and Attachment Styles, Irrational Beliefs and Self-Esteem

[1]Mohammad Esmail Ebrahimi [*]; [2]Ali Delavar, [3]Hasan Ahadi , [4]Farhad Jomehri

[1]PhD Student, Science & Research Branch, Islamic Azad University (IAU), Tehran, Iran
[2]Department of Psychology, Alameh Tabatabie University, Tehran, Iran
[3]Department of Psychology, Alameh Tabatabie University, Tehran, Iran
[4]Department of Psychology, Alameh Tabatabie University, Tehran, Iran

Summery

The aim of this research was the presentation of an analytic model about relationship between perfectionism and attachment styles, irrational beliefs and self-esteem according to Albert Ellis's theory among the students of Islamic Azad University of Hamadan. For this aim a correlation design is used that inspects step by step and rout analysis methods. The present study draws a distinction between two different kinds of perfectionism, positive and negative. Subjects consisted of 391(271 female and 120 male) students from the same university. The results of step by step regression and rout analysis show that all three variables (attachment style, irrational belief and self-esteem) have relation with positive and negative perfectionism and share in forecasting their variance. Also such variables can distinguish positive and negative perfectionism very well. In other words, regarding positive perfectionism, 27 percent of the whole variance is explained by avoiding attachment style, irrational beliefs and self-esteem. Regarding negative perfectionism, avoiding attachment style, ambivalent attachment style, irrational beliefs, self – esteem and positive perfectionism factors forecast 56 percent of whole variance of negative perfectionism. Finally, the results show that attachment style, irrational belief and self – esteem which contain three rational – emotive – behavioral factors in Albert Ellis's theory can predict positive and negative perfectionism variances, and distinguish them.

Key Words: *positive and negative perfectionism, attachment style, irrational beliefs, self-esteem, rational-emotive- behavioral theory.*

1. Introduction

It is over a century that perfectionism has been known, however, there is no universally accepted definition of "perfectionism". Despite the diverse conceptualization of the construct, it has been generally agreed that perfectionism is a personality construct characterized by the striving for flawlessness and setting high standards [1]. Historically, perfectionism was viewed as one-dimensional, Characterized by its negative features. For instance, early researchers such as Ellis [2] tended to emphasize the association between perfectionism and dysfunctional thoughts, feelings and psychopathology. More recently, however, increasing evidence has emerged to support a multidimensional view of perfectionism, in which both positive and negative aspects are incorporated. In this context, the model developed by Hewitt and Flett [3] encompasses the source and direction of perfectionism. In their Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS), they identify three dimensions, namely "Self-oriented perfectionism", "Socially-prescribed perfectionism" and "Other-oriented perfectionism". "Self-oriented perfectionism" refers to setting high personal standards for one to achieve. "Socially-prescribed perfectionism" refers to the perceived high expectations from significant others. "Other-oriented perfectionism" refers to setting high expectations for significant others to achieve. Another instrument of the same name was developed

---

[*] Corresponding author. Tel.: +98-912-282-7792
E-mail address: V.Khalkhali@iau-malayer.ac.ir

by Frost, Martin, Lahart and Rosenblatt [4]. The Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (FMPS) Measures six dimensions, namely, "Concern over mistakes", "Doubts about actions", "Parental expectations", "Parental criticism", "Personal standards" and "Organisation". Greater primary definitions suppose perfectionism as a state of inefficient. These primary definitions suppose perfectionism as a negative character which has relation ship with inefficiency and pathology. Hamacheck [5] was the first who adopts different methods and makes a distinction in various kinds of perfectionism. He inspects perfectionism in two dimensions: normal and abnormal.

Hamacheck knows perfectionism as persons who become happy when they achieve their goals. But abnormal perfectionism is not satisfied with their Proceed. In addition abnormal perfectionism usually can not find their personal standards proceeds and this reduces their self-esteem [6]. Stoeber and Otto [7] believe that after thirty years since Hamacheck's division, a lot of evidence exists that proves there are two kinds of basic perfectionism. They believe that perfectionism is not surely negative and it rather can be positive. Despite a lot of research in the field of perfectionism a lot of issues remaintoreply to perfectionism etiology. Another criticism entering fulfilling research about perfectionism is that more models are done with instruments. Shafran, Cooper and Fairburn [8] believe that researches had less emphasis on providing models about perfectionism and most of recent definitions have more relationship with instruments rather than models. For this reason, it is preferred to interfere rational – emotive-behavioral factors for each character that exists in a person. Furthermore, another goal is to represent analytic model for the negative and positive perfectionism.

Albert Ellis [9] described perfectionism as one out of twelve essential irrational beliefs that lead to psychological distress. He describes perfectionism in this way: ((acceptance the belief that an individual must be completely worthy, fit, intelligent and in all affairs maybe forerunner instead of the belief that a person accepts himself as an imperfect creature, i.e., a creature confronts with humans public limitations, and is capable of being a sinner)). He says that exact meaning of perfectionism is having this belief that exists as a correct, complete and exact solution for humans' difficulties, and if this solution is not fulfilled completely, it will be a disaster. Eileen Drilling [10] believes that Ellis's theory can be successful in explanation and theory of perfectionism. In her opinion, this theory can recognize perfectionism behaviors, thought and emotions that are with it .Early studies have shown that perfectionism has a relationship with them [For instance, 11, 12].

In the study, it is tried to understand if these three variables (Attachment styles, irrational beliefs and self-esteem) can predict perfectionism variance and also if they can discriminate positive and negative perfectionism or not.

2. Method
2.1. Participants and Procedure
Responses were obtained from 391 students (271 female and 120 male) aged between 18 and 45 years (male: M= 22.25, SD =2.49; female: M= 21.14, SD =2.40) from Islamic Azad University of Hamadan. Participants have been chosen from basic science, technical engineering and human sciences departments. In the next stage from 13 fields, some students have been randomly to complete questionnaires. One researcher conducted the data collection in quiet classroom conditions, following a standard protocol/standard set of instructions. Prior to data collection, the students were briefed on the purpose of the questionnaire. In addition, it was emphasized to the students that there were not any right or wrong responses and that they should answer honestly. The participants were also be given the option to withdraw from the study at any point in time without negative repercussions. The questionnaires were completed anonymously to protect the confidentiality of the students.
2.2. Measures
Positive and Negative Perfectionism. The PANPS is a 40-item self-report inventory designed By Terry-Short et al. [13] to assess the levels of Positive and Negative Perfectionism—two Constructs that distinguish between _normal_ and _neurotic_ perfectionism. Participants

Responded to a 5-point Likert type scale with anchors of strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), don't Know (3), agree (4), and strongly agree (5), with the instructions for completion identical to those in the Terry-Short et al. [13] study. Scores for Positive Perfectionism (PP) and Negative Perfectionism (NP), each with 20 questions, can range from 20 to 100, with higher values indicating greater Positive and Negative Perfectionism, respectively.

Adults' attachment scale (AAQ). This scale was made by Hazen and Shaver [14]. This scale has 21 questions in Likert 5-degree measures.

Jones Irrational beliefs test (IBT). This was made by Jones [14]. This test is formed by 10 subscales and the related measure.

Cooper smith's self- esteem scale. This scale has 4 subscales that contain social, family, personal and educational areas in 58 questionnaires. It also has an overall score.

3. Results

In table 1 and 2 step by step regression results are shown about the relation between Independent variables (attachment styles, irrational beliefs, and self-esteem) and dependent variables (positive and negative perfectionism).

Table 1. . Stepwise regression for positive perfectionism. In first step irrational beliefs was interned in model. In second step ambivalent attachment style and finally secure attachment style was interned

	P	t	df	R^2	R	β
Irrational Beliefs	0.000	-5.63	1	0.07	0.27	-0.287
Irrational Beliefs	0.000	-6.51	2	0.15	0.39	-0.309
Ambivalent attachment		5.96				0.283
Irrational Beliefs		-6.63	3			-0.313
Ambivalent attachment	0.000	5.82		0.16	0.41	-0.277
Secure attachment		2.04				0.113

Table 2. Stepwise regression for negative perfectionism. In first step ambivalent attachment was interned in model. in second step avoidant attachment style and finally irrational beliefs was interned

	P	t	df	R^2	R	β
Ambivalent attachment	0.000	11.65	1	0.26	0.51	0.514
Ambivalent attachment	0.000	9.15	2	0.34	0.58	0.407
Avoidant attachment		6.84				0.304
Ambivalent attachment		10.45				0.438
Avoidant attachment	0.000	7.36	3	0.42	0.65	0.307
Irrational Beliefs		-7.29				-0.286

In the first step, the irrational beliefs variable was entered in to the model that explains 7 percent of the positive perfectionism variance. So this variable has significant relationship with positive perfectionism. In second step,ambivalent attachment variable was entered into the model .This variable together with the last variables can explain 15 percent of the positive perfectionism variance.So this factor also has significant relationship with positive perfectionism. In the third step, secure attachment was entered into the model.These variables and other dependent variables can predict 16 percent of positive perfectionism variance. Consequently, the last variable can only support 1 percent of the positive perfectionism variance. According to the results of table 2 in the first step of regression, ambivalent attachment style was entered which predicts 26 percent of negative perfectionism variance. So this variable has significant relationship with the negative perfectionism. In the second step, avoiding attachment style was entered into the model that predicts 34 percent of perfectionism variance with the previous variable. This factor has significant

relationship with negative perfectionism too. In the third step, an irrational belief was entered into the model that predicts 42 percent of the positive perfectionism variance with two previous variables. So this factor has significant relation with negative perfectionism. Rout analysis result:
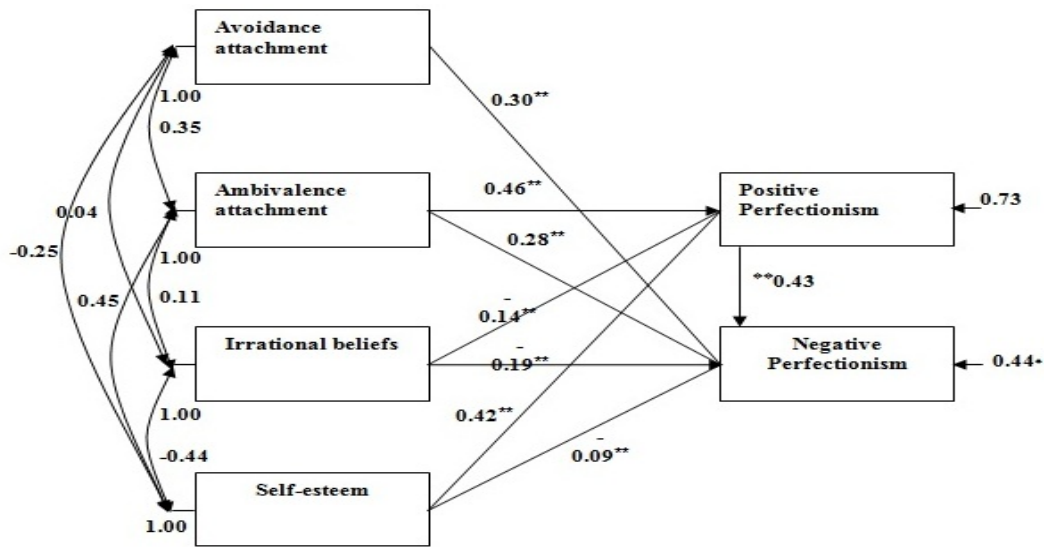

Fig. 1. Hypothesized model for the relationship between perfectionism and attachment styles, irrational beliefs and self-esteem.

In Figure 1 results are shown. A structural equation produced by rout analysis is as follows:
Positive: 0.46 ambivalent – 0.14 ibs+0.42 self-esteem

Error var = 0.73 R^2=0.27
Negative = 0.43 positive+0.03 avoidance + 0.28 ambivalence – 0.19 ibs – 0.09 self-esteem
Error var = 0.44 R^2=0.56
RMSEA=0.000, RMR=0.005, GFI=1.00, AGFI= 1.00

4. Discussion

The results of step by step regression and the route analysis show that secure attachment style do not have significant relationship with positive perfectionism. This result is consistent with Mirzadeh and Rice [15], but the same with Neumunster's findings [16]. Probably, the individuals secure attachment style will organize perfectionism tendency with lesser probability than other attachment style because they have positive view about themselves and others. In reality this can explain the fact that the individuals with secure attachment style do not feel any obligation to try more than their limits to achieve a special goal.So they do not feel any need to restrain to superiority of upper level standards.

The second hypothesis of the research is prediction of relationship between positive perfectionism and self-esteem which was confirmed. This result is the same as the results of Rice, Deborah and Mirzadeh [17]; Ashby and Rice [18]; Grzegorck, slany, Franz and Rice [19]. It can be said, in explaining this finding, that self – esteem is an index that a person understands his/her importance.

The third hypothesis of this study predicts the relation between negative perfectionism and avoiding attachment style which was confirmed too, like Bartholomew and Horrowithz's finding [20]. In explaining this finding, it can be said that children who have responsible observant, can clued that they are valuable and lovely. On the other hand, there are children who have ignored interests by parents and other observant can conclude that they are worthless and from negative patterns of themselves. Such people will develop avoiding attachment style. In addition to know

themselves worthless, they do not know other people reliability and they try to be acceptable by achieving other people's high level aims and standards [16].

The fourth hypothesis of the study forecast the significant positive relation between negative perfectionism and ambivalent attachment style which has been proved too. In truth, maladjustment perfectionism is created when parents do not serve child's needs. So such children try to be perfect and achieve parent's love and acceptance. This behavior style can lead to depression and perfectionism [18].

5. Conclusion

Eileen Drilling [10] believes that Ellis's theory can be successful in explanation and theory of perfectionism. Early studies have shown that perfectionism has relation with thoughts, emotion and behaviors [For instance, 11, 12]. The results show that Ellis's theory (REBT) can explain and distinguish negative and positive perfectionism.

Acknowledgment

References

1. Flett, G.L. Hewitt, P.L. (2002). *Perfectionism and maladjustment: an overview of theoretical, definitional and treatment issues.* In G.L. Flet & P.L. Hewitt (Eds), perfectionism: theory, research and treatment (pp.5-32).Washington DC, USA: APA.-

2. Ellis, A. (1962). *Reason and emotion in psychotherapy.* New York: Lyle Stuart.

3. Hewitt, P.L., Flett, G.L. (1991b). *Dimensions of Perfectionism in unipolar depression.* Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 100, 98-101.

4. Frost, R. O & Marten, P. A., Lahart, C. & Rosenblate, R. (1990). *Then dimensions of perfectionism.cognitive therapy and research*, 14,444_468. .

5. Hamachek, D.E. (1978). *Psychodynamics of normal and neurotic perfectionism.* Psychology: Journal of human behaviors, 15, 27-33.

6. Egan, S. (2005). *An Investigation of Positive and negative perfectionism.* Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in psychology, faculty of psychology, Curtin University of technology human research.

7. Stoeber, J., & Otto, K. (2006). *Positive conceptions of perfectionism: approaches, evidence, challenges.* Personality and social psychology review, 10, 295-319.

8. Shafran,R., Cooper, Z.,&Fairburn,C.G.(2002).*Clinical Perfectionism: cognitive – behavior analysis.* Behavior research and therapy, 40, 773-791.

9. Ellis, A. (1987). *Anger: How to live with and without it.* Secauens, N, and J: cited press.

10. Eileen &Drilling. (2002). *REBT perfectionism work book.Hazelden Information& Educational services.* Center city, Minnesota.

11. Parker, W.D. (1997). *An empirical typology of perfectionism in academically talented children.* American Educational Research Journanal, 34,545_562.

12. Davis, C. (1997). *Normal and neurotic perfectionism in eating disorders: an interactive model.* Interactive Journal of Eating disorders, 22,421_426.

13. Terry-Short, L.A.Owens, R.G.,Salde. P.D.,&Dewey, M.E. (1995*). Positive and negative Perfectionism.* Personality and individual differences, 18, 663-668.

14. Hasse, A.M., Prapavessis, H.(2004). *Assessing the factor structure of positive & negative perfectionism.* Journal of personality and individual differences, 36, 1725-1740.

15. Mirzadeh, S.A. & Rice, K.G. (2000). *Perfectionism, attachment, and adjustment.* Journal of counseling psychology, 47, 238-250.

16. Neumeister, K.L.S. (2002*).Perfectionism in gifted college student: family in fluencies and implications for achievement.* Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of doctoral of philosophy in psychology, university of atens.

17. Rice,K,G. Deborah,v.Mirzadeh,C.(2006). *Cognitive- Effective mediators of perfectionism and college student adjustment.* Journal of personality and individual differences.vol 40.463-473.

18. Ashby, T.S, & Rice, K.G. (2002). *Perfectionism, dysfunctional attitudes, and self-esteem: a structural equations analysis.* Journal of counseling and Development, 80, 197-203.

19. Grzegorek, J.L. Slany, R.B., Franze, S., & Rice, K.G. (2004). *Self-criticism, dependency, self-esteem and grade point average satisfaction among clusters of perfectionists and non- perfectionists.* Journal of counseling Psychology, 51, 192-200.

1. 20. Bartholomew, K., & Horowitz, L.M. (1991). *Attachment styles among young adults*: *A test of four category model.* Journal of personality and social pesychologyu.61, 226-244.