

Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being among Emerging Adults

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ABSTRACT

Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being lead to different outcomes in an individual's life. Higher levels of Perfectionism can lead to negative outcomes whereas higher levels of Psychological Well-being lead to good outcomes and healthy life. The present study aims to study the variables Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being. The objective of the study is to examine the relationship between Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being among emerging adults. The present study employs a correlational research design. The tools used were Multidimensional Perfectionism scale by Hewitt & Flett and Psychological Well-being scale by Mehrotra S to screen the participants who fall under the age range of 21 to 25. Sociodemographic data was collected to keep a check on the inclusion criteria of the participants consent was taken from the participants. Results show that there is a low negative correlation between Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being among emerging adults.

Keywords: *Perfectionism, Psychological Well-being, PWB*

Perfectionism is not necessarily about being perfect. It can be described as the relentless striving or need of having extremely high standards that can be personally demanding. Perfectionists are usually divided into two types; adaptive and maladaptive. Evidence has been found that both the types of perfectionists have high personal standards, but failing to meet those standards is more stressful for maladaptive perfectionists than adaptive types.

From a traditional view, perfectionism has been widely associated with psychopathology, as well as psychodynamic theory. The emphasis is placed on that perfectionism was considered to be a sign of a neurotic and disordered personality. Individuals with high levels of perfectionistic traits and low levels of perfectionist concerns showed higher agreeableness, self-esteem, academic success. It also showed fewer psychological and somatic issues usually associated with perfectionism such as depression, anxiety, and maladaptive coping mechanisms.

Psychological Well-being (PWB) is quite similar to other terms that refer to positive mental states, such as happiness or satisfaction. It can be said as one's emotional health or overall

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functioning. The concept is complex, and these terms are seen to be widely used, therefore it is just as necessary to define it theoretically and properly.

Perfectionism in India is not a widely researched topic and it surely has its effect on one's psychological well-being as seen in our theoretical framework. Perfectionism affects one's PWB, usually high levels of perfectionism is associated with lower levels of psychological well-being and lower levels of perfectionism is associated with higher levels of psychological well-being. Evidence shows this, although there is a dearth of research conducted in India.

This study tries to bridge this gap by examining the relationship between Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being in India.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kalpana and Nagle (2016) explored the relationship between perfectionism and psychological well-being among college students. The sample size taken was 281 college students (Males=174, Females=107) in the age range of 18-24 years, who participated in the study. The tools used were the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale and Ryff's Scale of Psychological Well Being. Findings revealed that all the three dimensions of perfectionism show significant relationship with all the six dimensions of psychological well-being.

Chang (2006) conducted a study examining the links between perfectionism, stress, and dimensions of psychological well-being in a sample of 265 college students, using Ryff's scale. The results indicated that stress fully mediated the relations between socially prescribed perfectionism and three dimensions of psychological well-being, namely, autonomy, environmental mastery, and purpose in life.

Geranmayepour, S., & Besharat, M. A. (2010) aimed to study the relationship between perfectionism and mental health. The sample consisted of 185 students (92 girls, 85 boys) The tools used were Farsi version of the Positive and Negative Perfectionism Scale and the Mental Health Inventory. Results show that positive perfectionism was positively associated with psychological well-being and negatively associated with psychological distress.

Stoeber, Lalova, Lumley(2020) took 305 participants in their study to examine Perfectionism, Self-compassion and Subjective well-being relationships in a mediation model. A mediation model was tested with data from n=309 participants where they examined 10 self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed perfectionism, examined self-compassion and compassion for others as possible mediators. Results show that all perfectionism SWB relationships were fully mediated by self-compassion.

Sunkarapalli G, Agarwal T (2017) studied the Relationship between fear of failure and perfectionism. The sample size was 200 taken from Hyderabad using purposive and snowball sampling methods. Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale was used. Data was analyzed using t-test and correlation. Findings show a positive correlation between fear of failure & perfectionism.

Oviya. I (2019) studied 100 samples based on a random sampling method of college students using the questionnaires: Brief fear of negative evaluation, Achievement motivation scale, Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale. The results show a significant positive relationship between fear of negative evaluation and perfectionism, as well as achievement motivation and perfectionism.

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Jerine & Pearlene (2020) examined self-critical perfectionism in undergraduate male and female students of South India. The sample was of 214 undergraduate students including 103 males and 111 females. Big Three Perfectionism Scale (BTPS) was used to measure perfectionism. Findings show that there is a significant difference between male and female students on measures of self-critical perfectionism.

Fallahchai (et al.)(2019) studied to evaluate the effect of adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism on psychological well-being using undergraduate as well as Postgraduate students. 668 samples overall were taken and Revised Almost Perfect scale and Ryff's Well-being scale was administered. The results showed that scores of adaptive perfectionist students in the psychological well-being and its sub-scales, were higher than the group of students with maladaptive perfectionism.

Kanten, Yesiltas (2015) studied the positive and negative perfectionism of the variables: psychological well-being, work, emotional exhaustion. Results show that psychological well-being mediates in the relationships between negative perfectionism, positive perfectionism and emotional exhaustion.

Ram, Alison (2005) selected 99 first year tertiary students. Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale was used, along with personality scales, and DASS. The results show that positive perfectionism has a positive relation with the variables academic achievement, achievement motivation, well-being, while negative perfectionism has negative association with these factors.

METHODOLOGY

Research questions

1. Is there a significant relationship between Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being among Emerging Adults?
2. Is there any significant difference in the levels of Perfectionism between men and women among Emerging Adults?
3. Is there any significant difference in the levels of Psychological Well-being between men and women among Emerging Adults?

Objectives:

To examine the relationship between Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being among Emerging Adults.

Hypotheses:

Ho1 There is no significant relationship between Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being among emerging adults.

Ho2 There is no significant difference in the levels of Perfectionism among Emerging Adults.

Ho3 There is no significant difference in the levels of Psychological Well-being among Emerging Adults.

Research Design

Quantitative approach was followed for the study. Correlational study design was used.

Sampling and Techniques

The sample of the present study comprises 62 emerging adults (31 men and 31 women) between the age group 21 to 25 residing in Hyderabad. They were administered the

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questionnaire relevant to the study. Convenience sampling method was used for the present study. The data was collected by using two questionnaires; Multidimensional Perfectionism scale by Hewitt & Flett and Psychological Well-being scale by Mehrotra S and the questionnaires were to be filled by individuals via Google form.

Tools for the study

Multidimensional Perfectionism scale by Hewitt & Flett and Psychological Well-being scale by Mehrotra S.

Description of the tools

1. MPS was developed to measure the level of perfectionism and having 45 items for self-evaluation has three sub-meters: Self-oriented perfectionism, others-oriented perfectionism and socially prescribed perfectionism rated on a likert scale of 7 to 1 from Disagree to Agree. Higher scores on the whole indicate higher perfectionism. Both total scores and three subscale scores can be calculated.
2. PWB-20 was developed at NIMHANS, Bangalore based on Ryff's PWB scale to measure Psychological Well-being and having 20 items for Self-acceptance, Sense of Mastery, Positive Relations, Sense of engagement and growth. Item scores range from 1 to 6 with strongly disagree being given a score of 1 and strongly agree being scored as 6. Item numbers 1, 4, 8, 10,11,12,14,19,20 are reverse scored. Higher scores on the whole indicate higher psychological well-being. Both total scores and four subscale scores can be calculated.

Inclusion criteria:

1. Emerging Adults of age 21-25 were included in the study.
2. Individuals who are unmarried and non-working.
3. Individuals from Postgraduate Social Sciences and Humanities Stream.

Exclusion Criteria:

1. Individuals above the age of 25 and below age 21 were excluded from the study.
2. Individuals who are married and working.
3. Individuals other than students from Postgraduate Social Sciences and Humanities Stream.

Procedure

Convenient sampling method was used for data collection. The informed consent form was given to the participants with all the necessary instructions pertaining to the tools via Google forms. The informed consent had necessary demographic details to be filled mandatorily. Data analysis was done using an independent sample t test. SPSS V20 was used for the purpose of analysis. Ethical consideration was followed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being among Emerging adults. The data was collected through google forms using Multidimensional Perfectionism scale by Hewitt & Flett and Psychological Well-being scale by Mehrotra S. Total sample size was 62 Emerging Adults within the age group of 21-25 residing in Hyderabad. The data was entered into Microsoft Excel and then exported into SPSS 20 for statistical analysis.

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H₀1: There is no significant relationship between Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being among Emerging Adults.

Table 1 Correlation between Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being

N = 62	Perfectionism	Psychological Well-being
Perfectionism		-.237**
Psychological Well-being	-.237**	

Note: **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Pearson Correlation Coefficient was performed to examine the relationship between two variables (i.e) Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being. As shown in Table 1, Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being were found to be moderately negatively correlated, $r(60) = -.237$, $p = .064$ indicating that higher levels of perfectionism were related to lower levels of psychological Well-being. Hence, rejecting the null hypothesis.

Geranmayepour, S., & Besharat, M. A. (2010) found that positive perfectionism was positively associated with psychological well-being and negatively associated with psychological distress. The current study shows a weak correlation perhaps due to the narrowed down sample set but it shows a significant relationship between the variables.

Table 2 Independent t test of Perfectionism among Emerging Adults

Perfectionism	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	df	p-value
Men	31	187.87	30.07	5.40	.496	60	.622
Women	31	191.84	32.88	5.90			

Independent-samples t-test was performed to compare the differences on Perfectionism among Emerging Adults. As shown in Table 2, there was a significant difference in the scores of Perfectionism among men ($M = 187.87$, $SD = 30.07$) and women ($M = 191.84$, $SD = 32.88$); $t(60) = .496$, $p = .622$) indicating that women have higher levels of Perfectionism compared to men. Since p-value is greater than 0.05, we accept the null hypothesis.

Jerine & Pearlene (2020) examined self-critical perfectionism in undergraduate male and female students of South India. Findings show that there is a significant difference between male and female students on measures of self-critical perfectionism. The current study is supported by this indicating that there is a gender difference on levels of Perfectionism.

H₀3: There is no significant difference in the levels of Psychological Well-being between men and women among Emerging Adults

Table 3 Independent t test of Psychological Well-being among Emerging Adults

PWB	N	Mean	SD	SE	t	df	p-value
Men	31	85.61	19.09	3.43	-1.407	60	.165
Women	31	95.81	15.37	2.76			

Note: PWB = Psychological Well being

Independent-samples t-test was performed to compare the differences on Psychological Well-being among Emerging Adults. As shown in Table 3, results show that there was significant difference in the scores of Psychological Well-being among men ($M = 85.61$, $SD = 19.09$) and

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women ($M= 95.81$, $SD= 15.37$); $t(60) = -1.407$, $p = .165$) indicating that women have higher levels of Psychological Well-being than compared to men. Since p -value is greater than 0.05, we accept the null hypothesis.

CONCLUSION

- Results show that there is a low significant negative correlation between the variables (i.e) Perfectionism and Psychological Well-being among Emerging Adults.
- There was a significant difference in the scores of Perfectionisms among men ($M=187.87$, $SD=30.07$) and women ($M=191.84$, $SD=32.88$) indicating that women have higher levels of Perfectionism than men.
- There was a significant difference in the scores of Psychological Well-being among men ($M=85.61$, $SD=19.09$) and women ($M= 95.81$, $SD=15.37$) indicating that women have higher levels of Psychological Well-being than men.

Implications

- The study can be explored in different cultures due to fewer studies conducted so far to understand the findings on different cultures, how and why it differs can be explored.
- Future research conducted can be done on a large population as the present study was narrowed down to a smaller sample size.
- The study can be constructed in a new context by adding different variables other than Psychological Well-being to study and explore the relationship and the differences.
- The sample of the study included Emerging Adults between the age group of 21-25 years. The study could be conducted on a different age group.

Limitations

- As the questionnaire was conducted online, this may have affected the responses of participants resulting in inaccurate responses.
- The sample size of the present study is not vast and has been narrowed down to a particular set of samples.
- Cultural bias may be present, as the study has not been explored in different cultures.
- There is a dearth of evidence in India which is a limitation for the present study as there are fewer literature reviews to support the present study.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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