

Perfectionism and Social Adjustment Among Young Adults from Metropolitan Cities in India

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to find the relation between Perfectionism and Social Adjustment among Young Adults. In the present study, Pearson Correlation, Independent sample t-test, one-way ANOVA were performed. A non-experimental correlational design with a quantitative approach was used in this study. The sample consisted of 165 individuals residing in either of the Metropolitan Cities- Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai. The tools used for this study were Frost's Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale and Weissman's Social Adjustment Scale. Correlation and regression analysis were both employed to evaluate the link and effect of Perfectionism on Social Adjustment. The findings indicated that there was a low positive correlation between Perfectionism and Social Adjustment. The findings also indicated that there are no significant differences based on Perfectionism and Social Adjustment in terms of their gender and occupational status

Keywords: *Perfectionism, Social Adjustment, Young Adults, Metropolitan Cities*

"More recent generations of young people are perceiving higher expectations from their parents and those perceptions are highly correlated with perfectionism – especially socially prescribed perfectionism (which happens to have the largest correlations with mental health problems like depression and anxiety)," Thomas Curran told PsyPost.

Perfectionism is a personality disposition characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting exceedingly high standards for performance accompanied by tendencies for overly critical evaluations (Flett and Hewitt 2002; Frost et al. 1990). The perfectionist has trouble keeping things in proportion or arranging things in order of significance. He might not feel satisfied with a work that was otherwise done successfully because of a minor detail that was overlooked. He rarely concentrates on what is right because he is constantly looking out for what is wrong. He spends his life as though he were an inspector at the end of a manufacturing line because he is so focused on looking for flaws or errors. The perfectionist faces demanding expectations and nagging self-doubts as an adult. His fear of others criticizing him is his fear of being denigrated or condemned (Hollender, 1965).

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A larger number and quality of social connections, as well as more emotional sensitivity and social expressiveness, have all been linked to adaptive perfectionism. Nevertheless, maladaptive perfectionism has been linked to fewer social interactions and leisure activities, as well as a higher frequency of unfavorable social interactions, and lower levels of perceived social support, regardless of the actual support received (Filipkowski KB, et al. 2021).

The degree to which people are accomplishing societally set, developmentally appropriate goals is referred to as social adjustment (Ford, 1982; Zigler & Trickett, 1978). Health status, legal status, academic or occupational status, and socioeconomic position are a few examples of markers of social adjustment. The following psychological statuses may also be used as indicators of social adjustment: social (e.g., peer status), emotional (e.g., self-concept, others' overall impressions), family (e.g., make-up, level of cohesion), and relational (e.g., quality of friendships, frequency of dating) (Cavell, 1990).

The world we live in has progressed to a place of constant competition and a rise in “Hustle Culture”. This has resulted in individuals striving to be more “perfect” and it has also led to changes in their social behavior. The present study is an attempt at trying to understand how the standards of the culture with regards to work quality has affected individuals’ social behavior.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Perfectionism

In a study done by Agarwal, T., & Sunkarapalli, G., in 2017, they found that between women and men in the 18–22 age range, there is no discernible difference in the degrees of perfectionism and its two subtypes—self-oriented perfectionism and socially prescribed perfectionism. Despite their being no discernible gender difference in the subgroups' levels of socially prescribed perfectionism, there is a discernible gender difference in the entire sample. Males score higher on the socially prescribed perfectionism scale on average than women, suggesting that men value perfectionism more than women. This might be because men are under more pressure to succeed in society, particularly in Indian society, where they are viewed as the main providers for the family. They must therefore be safe and steady financially.

In a study by D.S. Molnar et. al., (2006), it was found that the path coefficient between self-oriented perfectionism and health was significant and positive, and the estimate for the path between socially prescribed perfectionism and physical health was significant and negative. The path coefficient between self-oriented perfectionism and positive affect was significant and positive, and the estimate for the path between socially prescribed perfectionism and positive affect was significant and negative.

A study by Erozkhan, A., (2016) looked into the possible relationships between perfectionism and anxiety sensitivity. In this way, anxiety sensitivity was related to worry about mistakes, personal standards, parental expectations, parental criticism, uncertainties about activities, and organization characteristics of perfectionism. These results suggested that young people's sensitivity to anxiety may be related to the six perfectionism qualities. This finding suggests that perfectionism's dimensions significantly influence young adults' anxiety sensitivity.

Social Adjustment

The outcome of a study done by Bhagat, V., et. al., (2015) on working men shows that there was a substantial correlation between the respondents' emotional stability and their ability to fit in socially at work. The goal of this study was to increase understanding among employers and employees about how emotionality affects social adjustment and how it could influence the supportive workplace environment that is crucial for productivity.

In another study by Srivastava, A., and Sinha, M., (1980) the proposed hypothesis was supported by a review of the findings, which also helped to postulate the facts regarding the direction and strength of the relationship between job anxiety and employees' social relationships and adjustment; as job anxiety increases, so does the index of the employees' satisfactory social relations and adjustment. The majority of job-related worries significantly worsen employees' social interactions.

Rice, K. G., Vergara, D. T., and Aldea (2006) explored theories of perceived stress and categorical thinking as mediators and moderators of the relationship between perfectionism and psychological well-being. The findings from a sizable sample of college students (N = 364) showed a strong relationship between perfectionism and the cognitive-affective factors as well as a relationship between perfectionism and the academic, social, and psychological adjustment variables. Each of the cognitive-affective factors was likewise highly correlated with the adjustment indicators, although neither the mediator nor any of the moderator models were fully or even partially supported.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Young Adults who have been residing in Metropolitan Cities- Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata & Chennai since 1 year or more, who fall in the age group of 18-28 years and were unmarried at the time of data collection were chosen as the sample population. The sample size of the current study is 165.

Instruments

Two measures were used in this study,

- 1. The Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (F-MPS)** was used to measure Perfectionism and it is a 35-item scale with four subscales that Frost et al. (1990) developed. A 5-point Likert-type scale with a range of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 is used to rate each response. The F-MPS has been shown to have good internal consistency and convergent validity with other measures of perfectionism in adult population and clinical samples (Frost et al., 1990).
- 2. The Social Adjustment Scale Self-Report (SAS-SR)** developed by Weissman contains 54 questions that measures role performance in six major areas: work as a worker, housewife, or student; social and leisure activities; relationships with extended family; marital roles as a spouse, a parent, and a member of the family unit. However, for the current study, only the following areas were assessed- work as a worker, work as a student, social and leisure activities, relationships with extended family and role as a member of the family unit. The overall mean and role area means were obtained. A higher score indicates impairment for each question on a five-point scale. High internal consistency (mean a coefficient, $r = .74$) and test-retest stability over two time periods were both shown by Edwards et al.

Objectives

1. To assess the relationship between Perfectionism and Social Adjustment.
2. To investigate whether any significant difference exists in young adults' perfectionism based on gender.
3. To investigate whether any significant difference exists in young adults' social adjustment based on gender.
4. To investigate whether any significant difference exists in young adults' perfectionism based on their occupational status.
5. To investigate whether any significant difference exists in young adults' social adjustment based on their occupational status.

Hypotheses

- H₀1- There will be no significant relationship between Perfectionism and Social Adjustment of young adults.
- H₀2- There will be no significant difference in Perfectionism among young adults based on gender.
- H₀3- There will be no significant difference in Social Adjustment among young adults based on gender.
- H₀4- There will be no significant difference in Perfectionism among young adults based on occupational status.
- H₀5- There will be no significant difference in Social Adjustment among young adults based on their occupational status.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows the Pearson Correlation Coefficient between Perfectionism and Social Adjustment

		Social Adjustment
Perfectionism	Pearson Correlation	.379**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	165

Table 1 depicts the relationship between Perfectionism and Social Adjustment. The coefficient value was found to be .379, which suggests that there is a low positive correlation between Perfectionism and Social Adjustment of the sample. Hence, as Perfectionism increases, Social Adjustment also increases.

Table 2 shows independent sample t-test of perfectionism based on the gender

		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Perfectionism	Equal variance assumed	.953	162	.342	2.630

Table 2 shows the results of independent sample t-test that was conducted to find if there were any differences among young adults' Perfectionism based on gender. The t-value was found to be .953 at significant level .342 which is greater than .05. Hence, there is no significant difference obtained in Perfectionism based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states there will be no significant difference in Perfectionism among young adults based on gender is accepted.

Table 3 shows independent sample t-test of social adjustment based on the gender

			t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Social Adjustment	Equal variances assumed		.226	162	.821	.01930

Table 3 shows the results of independent sample t-test that was conducted to find if there were any differences among young adults' Social Adjustment based on their gender. The t-value was found to be .226 at significant level .821 which is greater than .05. Hence, there is no significant difference obtained in Social Adjustment based on gender. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states there will be no significant difference in Social Adjustment among young adults based on gender was accepted.

Table 4 shows One way ANOVA of Perfectionism based on the occupational status

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Perfectionism	Between Groups	183.611	2	91.805	.350	.705
	Within Groups	42477.565	162	262.207		
	Total	42661.176	164			

Table 4 shows the F value and significance level of One way ANOVA conducted for Perfectionism in terms of occupational status. The F value was found to be .350 at significance level .705 which is greater than .05. Hence, there is no significant difference between the groups. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states there will be no significant difference in Perfectionism among young adults based on occupational status was accepted.

Table 5 shows One way ANOVA of Social Adjustment based on the occupational status

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Social Adjustment	Between Groups	1.430	2	.715	2.894	.058
	Within Groups	40.011	162	.247		
	Total	41.441	164			

Table 5 shows the F value and significance level of One way ANOVA conducted for Social Adjustment in terms of occupational status. The F value was found to be 2.894 at significance level .058 which is greater than .05. Hence, there is no significant difference between the groups. Therefore, the null hypothesis that states there will be no significant difference in Social Adjustment among young adults based on their occupational status was accepted.

DISCUSSION

The present study was done on Perfectionism and Social Adjustment among Young Adults from Metropolitan Cities in India. The sample consisted of a total of 165 individuals from four Metropolitan Cities- Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai. The data was collected through google forms. Frost's Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale was used to measure Perfectionism and Weissman's Social Adjustment Scale was used to measure Social

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Adjustment among the sample. The relationship between the two variables was measured and significant differences based on gender and occupational status were also computed.

Pearson Correlational study was done to find the association between Perfectionism and Social Adjustment among the sample. It was found that there is a low positive correlation between the two variables. By performing Regression Analysis, it was found that there is 14.4% prediction of dependency of Perfectionism on Social Adjustment.

Independent sample t-test was also done to investigate if there is a significant difference between Perfectionism of young adults and Social Adjustment of young adults in terms of gender. The sample consisted of two genders- Male and Female. The results showed that there is no significant difference between Perfectionism of young adults and no significant difference between Social Adjustment of young adults in terms of gender.

One way ANOVA was done to investigate if there is a significant difference between Perfectionism of young adults And Social Adjustment of young adults in terms of their occupational status. The sample consisted of individuals with either of the following occupations- Student, Employed or Unemployed. The results showed that there is no significant difference between Perfectionism of young adults and no significant difference between Social Adjustment of young adults in terms of occupational status.

With the world becoming a fast-paced society, the study helps to understand how an individual's Perfectionism can influence their Social adjustment. The results of this study can be put to use especially in the corporate sector. The study will also prove to be of help for workplace counselling. Perfectionism dimensions can individually be studied to understand various aspects and its impact.

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Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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