

Fear of Failure and Perfectionism in Young Adults

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ABSTRACT

“Fear of failure is a motive to avoid failure in evaluative situations based on anticipatory shame upon failure” (Atkinson, 1957). “Perfectionism is a personality disposition characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting exceedingly high standards of performance accompanied by overly critical evaluations of one’s behavior” (Hewitt & Flett, 1991). Relationship between fear of failure and perfectionism was examined. Data was collected from 200 young adults from Hyderabad using purposive and snowball sampling methods. Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (Conroy et al., 2002) and Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (Hewitt & Flett, 2004) were used. Data was analyzed using t-test and correlation. Results show a significant positive correlation between fear of failure and perfectionism. Interventions to help reduce Fear of Failure and Perfectionism can be developed.

Keywords: *Fear of Failure, Perfectionism*

In today’s competitive world competition, in one form or another exists from the very beginning. In school, students compete to be ranked the first in class; young adults and adults compete to be better than others in their careers or life in general. According to the theory of psychosocial development (Erikson, 1959), the individuals who fall under the ages 18-30 are in the stage of young adulthood as in this stage they are competing against others to establish themselves as successful students and professionals. At the minimum level this race can be seen as a competition to attain success and be better than the others, and at a higher level it can also be seen as a race for survival. To be better and surpass others or to avoid failure, they aim for perfection.

According to achievement motivation theories, “Fear of failure is a motive to avoid failure in evaluative situations based on anticipatory shame upon failure” (Atkinson, 1957; McClelland et al., 1953). Fear of failure can be described as a fear that causes one to avoid failure as it may lead to emotions of shame and humiliation. Individuals assume that they would fail and

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Received: May 30, 2017; Revision Received: June 14, 2017; Accepted: June 30, 2017

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hence experience shame, so the best possible solution is to avoid the situation altogether. Fear of failure causes individuals to avoid taking part in achievement related tasks (Elliot & Sheldon, 1997). Fear of failure involves assessing the threat in evaluative situations that are capable of failure. Such situations activate cognitive schemas in our brain, which are related to unpleasant consequences of failing (Conroy, 2004).

The five kinds of fear of failure identified (Conroy, 2004) are (i) fear of experiencing shame and embarrassment, which is related to a belief that one will always experience shame in evaluative situations which will lead to embarrassment; (ii) fear of devaluing one's self-estimate, which is related to a belief that one does not have the ability to control over his performance; (iii) fear of important others losing interest, which is related to a belief that if one fails, others will lose interest in them and hence they will lose their social value; (iv) fear of having an uncertain future, which is related to a belief that due to present failures, one loses future opportunities and (v) fear of upsetting significant others, which is related to the belief that as a result of failure important others will disapprove of their actions and lose affection towards them. Fear of failure is said to be caused by faulty parent-child relationship as mothers who punished their children for failure but showed a neutral response to success have children with a high level of fear of failure (Teevan, 1983). Fear of failure can make athletes anxious, scared, tense, stressed, upset, worried, trigger physiological responses and also increase negative affect and cognition. In sports fear of failure is perceived as performance oriented (not performing well) or outcome oriented (losing) by athletes (Lavalley et al., 2009). Fear of failure related beliefs predict the scores of socially prescribed perfectionism better than the other two dimensions of perfectionism, i.e. other oriented perfectionism and self oriented perfectionism and vice versa (Conroy et al., 2007).

According to Sagar and Stoeber (2009), there exists an association between fear of failure and perfectionism. "Perfectionism is a personality disposition characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting exceedingly high standards of performance accompanied by overly critical evaluations of one's behavior" (Frost et al., 1990; Hewitt & Flett, 1991). Perfectionism is seen to be inherent in one's personality. It is the way the individual deals with or views any situation. Individuals with high levels of perfectionism aim to be perfect, moreover aim to avoid mistakes of any kind. They evaluate their own behavior and achievements. They set extremely high standards of performance for themselves, with no room for mistakes. According to Hewitt et al., (1991), there are three kinds of perfectionism; "self-oriented perfectionism (i.e., unrealistic standards and perfectionistic motivation for the self), other-oriented perfectionism (i.e., unrealistic standards and perfectionistic motivations for others), and socially prescribed perfectionism (i.e., the belief that significant others expect oneself to be perfect)".

Self Oriented Perfectionism is where the individual sets high and unrealistic standards of perfectionism for themselves. Upon failure, the individual may harshly criticize himself or herself. The motivation for perfectionism is inherent and specific to self only. Some individuals take pride in their work and are high achievers. Such individuals can be regarded

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as normal perfectionists as they allow themselves to make reasonable mistakes depending on the situation they are in. They allow themselves to be inaccurate at times. However, there are some individuals who are rarely satisfied with their performance. They usually have no tolerance for their own mistakes and are overly critical of themselves. Such individuals are regarded as neurotic perfectionists as they are driven by a fear of failure and their main concern is to avoid mistakes (Chang, 2014). It was found that the scores of self-oriented perfectionism, in children, were associated with the worry or overexcitability (Guignard et al., 2012). Other Oriented Perfectionism is where an individual expects others to be perfect in what they do. The major concern for the individual here is not the perfectionism of the individual himself, but rather the perfectionism in others around him. The individual expects the people around him to be perfect and flawless, any mistake by others is not acceptable to the individual. Individuals with Other Oriented Perfectionism not only have high expectations from others, but also set high standards of performance for others. Socially Prescribed Perfectionism is where individuals strive to be perfect only due to the belief that important others expect them to be perfect. This belief motivates the individual to be perfect and avoid mistakes. It has been found that individuals with socially prescribed perfectionism are always pressured by the beliefs and standards set for them by others (Hewitt et al., 1991). In a study conducted on children, it was found that the scores of socially prescribed perfectionism were associated with the social concern (Guignard et al., 2012). It has been seen that socially prescribed perfectionism is significantly associated with procrastination. Specifically the link between procrastination and socially prescribed perfectionism was found to be greater in males (Flett et al., 1992). Perfectionism has also been seen as adaptive and maladaptive. Planning and organization of work to attain perfection is considered as adaptive perfectionism and concern over failure and mistakes is considered as maladaptive perfectionism (Elison, & Partridge, 2012). It was also found that both of these, adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism, could coexist in the same individual (Wigert et al., 2012). Both of these types are pertinent to body dissatisfaction (Wade & Tiggemann, 2013) and anxiety (Guignard et al., 2012). It was also found that Perfectionism is related to self-conscious emotions like shame and guilt (Tangney, 2002), stress coping and burnout (Schwenke, 2012), moral values, virtues and judgment (Yang et al., 2015).

Fear of Failure and Perfectionism are related to achievement motivation. When an individual is motivated to achieve something, he aims to be perfect in whatever he does. With the motivation to achieve, the individual may also have an inherent fear of failure. This fear may not necessarily be destructive but may help the individual attain perfection. Fear of failure is mainly associated with socially prescribed perfectionism (Conroy et al., 2007). Keeping in mind the previous studies, the present study focuses on analyzing the relationship between the two variables.

Research Questions

1. Is there a difference between men and women (18-27 years) in the levels of Fear of Failure and Perfectionism?

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2. Is there a difference between the two age groups (18-22 and 23-27 years) in the levels of Fear of Failure and Perfectionism?
3. Is there a relationship between Fear of Failure and Perfectionism in men and women in the two age groups (18-22 and 23-27 years)?

Objectives

1. To determine whether there are any differences in the levels of Fear of Failure and its five dimensions- Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Upsetting Important Others- and Perfectionism and its three dimensions- Other Oriented Perfectionism, Self Oriented Perfectionism and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism, between
 - a. men and women (18-27 years)
 - b. men and women (18-22 years)
 - c. men and women (23-27 years)
 - d. the two age groups (18-22 and 23-27 years)
 - e. the two age groups (18-22 and 23-27 years) in women
 - f. the two age groups (18-22 and 23-27 years) in men
2. To observe whether there is any relationship between Fear of Failure and its five dimensions- Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Upsetting Important Others- and Perfectionism and its three dimensions- Other Oriented Perfectionism, Self Oriented Perfectionism and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism in,
 - a. men (18-27 years)
 - b. women (18-27 years)
 - c. the age group- 18-22 years
 - d. the age group- 23-27 years
 - e. the total sample (18-27 years)

Hypotheses

1. There will be a difference in the level of Fear of Failure and its five dimensions- Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Upsetting Important Others- and Perfectionism and its three dimensions- Other Oriented Perfectionism, Self Oriented Perfectionism and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism, between
 - a. men and women (18-27 years)
 - b. men and women (18-22 years)
 - c. men and women (23-27 years)
 - d. the two age groups (18-22 and 23-27 years)
 - e. the two age groups (18-22 and 23-27 years) in women
 - f. the two age groups (18-22 and 23-27 years) in men

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2. There will be a relationship between Fear of Failure and its five dimensions- Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Upsetting Important Others- and Perfectionism and its three dimensions- Other Oriented Perfectionism, Self Oriented Perfectionism and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism,
 - a. men (18-27 years)
 - b. women (18-27 years)
 - c. the age group- 18-22 years
 - d. the age group- 23-27 years
 - e. the total sample (18-27 years)

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This is a quantitative study with Fear of Failure and its dimensions- Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of having an Uncertain Future and Fear of Upsetting Important Others, as the Independent Variables and Perfectionism with its dimensions Other Oriented Perfectionism, Self-Oriented Perfectionism and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism as the Dependent Variable. It has a correlational, between groups design.

Sample

The sample for the present study consists of 200 young adults. The sample is divided into two age groups, Group one-18-22 years (students) and Group two-23-27 years (employed individuals), with 50 men and 50 women each. 22.04 years is the mean age of the sample (women: 21.82 and men: 22.15). In both the age groups the number of men is evenly distributed over the years. 50% of the women are 19 years old in Group one- 18-22 years and almost 50% of the women are 23 years old in Group two- 23-27 years. The sample was collected from the metropolitan city of Hyderabad using Purposive and Snowball sampling techniques.

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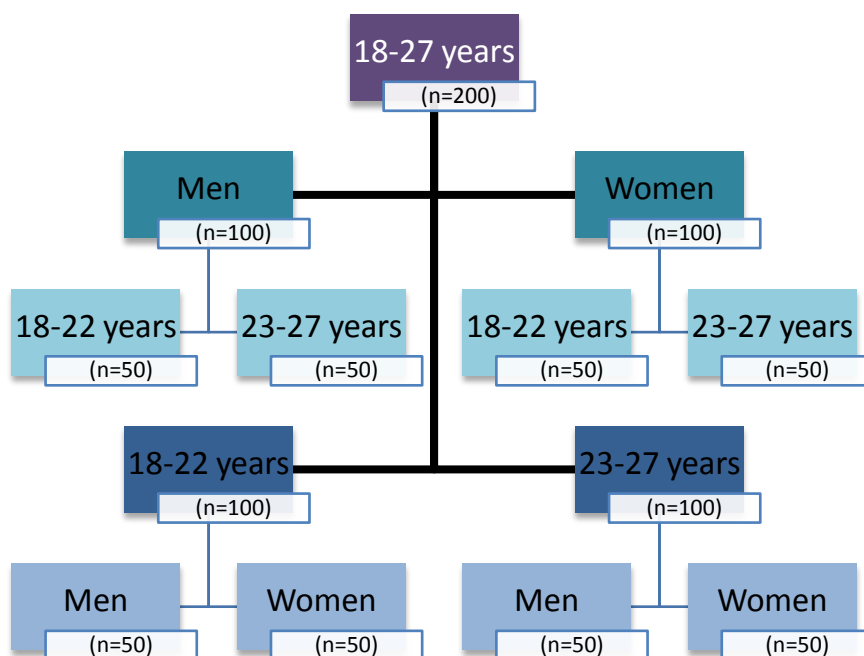


Figure 1 shows the division of the sample.

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Age: 18-27 years	College dropouts
Group one (18-22 years): Undergraduate and Post graduate students	Students who have taken a gap year
Group two (23-17 years): Employed individuals	Individuals employed part time
Residents of Hyderabad	Self-employed individuals
Indian nationals	Individuals with known Physical or Psychological Illness

Figure 2 shows the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the sample.

Instruments

Questionnaires used in this research were:

1. **Demographic Sheet:** Participant’s details such as their age, gender, nationality, employment status and education were taken.
2. **The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory by David E. Conroy (2002):** The 25-item multidimensional measure of cognitive-emotional-relational appraisals is associated with fear of failure. It measures beliefs associated with aversive consequences of failure. The PFAI comprises of five dimensions or subscales of fear of failure- Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment (FSE- 7 items), Fear of Devaluing one’s Self Estimate (FDSE- 4 items), Fear of Important Others Losing Interest (FIOLI- 5 items), Fear of having an Uncertain Future (FUF- 4 items) and Fear of Upsetting Important Others (FUIO- 5 items). The responses for the scale are on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from ‘believe 100% of the time’ (5) to ‘do not believe at all’ (1). Each item begins with either “When I am failing” or “When I am not succeeding”. Participants rated how strongly they believed each consequence was likely

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to happen to them after failure in competition, scores were computed by averaging across items. Reliability for the PFAI subscales range from FSE: 0.80, FDSE: 0.74, FUF: 0.80, FIOLI: 0.81, FUIO: 0.78, FF: 0.91 and the test-retest reliability $> \square 0.80$.

- 3. Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale by Hewitt and Flett (1991, 2004):** It is a 45-item scale that includes three subscales- Other Oriented Perfectionism, Self-Oriented Perfectionism, and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism. It is a seven-point Likert-type scale. It ranges from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (7). Higher scores on the scale are indicative of higher levels of perfectionism. There was adequate internal consistency of the three subscales, with Cronbach alphas of 0.86 for Self-Oriented Perfectionism, 0.87 for Socially Prescribed Perfectionism, and 0.82 for Other Oriented Perfectionism. The test-retest reliability of the subscales is 0.88 for Self-Oriented Perfectionism, 0.75 for Socially Prescribed Perfectionism, and 0.85 for Other Oriented Perfectionism.

Procedure

The measures were selected and arrangements were made for data collection. The questionnaires along with the Demographic Sheet were prepared. The researcher identified the individuals who meet the criteria for the sample and rapport was established with them. It was brought to the participants' notice that their participation in the study was purely voluntary and confidentiality would be maintained throughout the study. The participants were requested to sign an 'Informed Consent Form'. The participants were instructed to fill in the details in Demographic Sheet. Instructions for the two questionnaires were given and they were asked to respond to the items. No fixed time limit was set. However, the participants were expected to finish it within 20 minutes.

Statistical Analysis of Data

Participants' responses were scored according to the manuals and IBM SPSS version 24 was used for data analysis. The statistical treatments of the scores were done and Means and Standard Deviations of Fear of Failure along with its five dimensions and the Perfectionism along with its three dimensions were calculated. For testing the significant difference in the groups, age and gender, a *t*-test was conducted. To determine whether there was any significant correlation between Fear of Failure along with its five dimensions and the Perfectionism along with its three dimensions, Pearson's Product Moment Correlation was used.

RESULTS

Table 1 showing mean, standard deviation and *t* values for Fear of Failure (GFF) and its dimensions, Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment (FSE), Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate (FDSE), Fear of having an Uncertain Future (FUF), Fear of Important Others Losing Interest (FIOLI) and Fear of Upsetting Important Others (FUIO) and Perfectionism (P) and its dimensions, Self Oriented Perfectionism (SOP), Other Oriented Perfectionism (OOP) and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism (SPP).

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	Women			Men			18-27			18-22			23-27			18-27		
	18-22	23-27	t	18-22	23-27	t	18-22	23-27	t	Women	Men	t	Women	Men	t	Women	Men	t
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)		Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	
FSE	2.68 (0.98)	2.56 (0.85)	0.69	2.72 (0.96)	2.8 (0.95)	0.41	2.7 (0.970)	2.6843 (0.91)	0.18	2.68 (0.98)	2.72 (0.96)	0.2	2.56 (0.85)	2.8 (0.95)	1.36	2.62 (0.92)	2.76 (0.95)	1.08
FDSE	2.51 (0.94)	2.5 (0.87)	0.05	2.65 (0.9)	2.7 (0.92)	0.27	2.58 (0.91)	2.6025 (0.9)	0.15	2.51 (0.94)	2.65 (0.9)	0.78	2.5 (0.87)	2.7 (0.92)	1.13	2.5 (0.9)	2.68 (0.9)	1.36
FUF	1.21 (0.92)	1.17 (0.66)	0.28	1.08 (1.41)	1.41 (0.99)	1.73	1.15 (0.89)	1.29 (0.84)	1.13	1.21 (0.92)	1.08 (0.87)	0.72	1.17 (0.66)	1.41 (0.99)	1.42	1.17 (0.79)	1.24 (0.94)	0.44
FIOLI	2.26 (1)	2.34 (0.96)	0.42	2.56 (0.94)	2.86 (1)	1.52	2.41 (0.97)	2.604 (1.01)	1.35	2.26 (1)	2.56 (0.94)	1.58	2.34 (0.96)	2.86 (1)	2.65**	2.3 (0.97)	2.71 (0.97)	2.99**
FUIO	2.89 (0.93)	2.58 (0.77)	1.83	3.01 (0.77)	3.1 (0.84)	0.51	2.95 (0.85)	2.84 (0.84)	0.96	2.89 (0.93)	3.01 (0.77)	0.69	2.58 (0.77)	3.1 (0.84)	3.21**	2.73 (0.86)	3.05 (0.8)	2.69**
GFF	2.31 (0.71)	2.23 (0.59)	0.63	2.41 (0.72)	2.57 (0.75)	1.12	2.36 (0.72)	2.4042 (0.69)	0.41	2.31 (0.71)	2.41 (0.72)	0.66	2.57 (0.75)	2.23 (0.59)	2.55*	2.27 (0.65)	2.49 (0.74)	2.23*
SOP	74.08 (14.51)	74.9 (12.15)	0.3	69.52 (16.19)	73.38 (15.21)	1.22	71.8 (15.47)	74.14 (13.72)	1.13	74.08 (14.51)	69.52 (16.19)	1.48	74.9 (12.15)	73.38 (15.21)	-0.55	74.49 (13.32)	71.45 (15.74)	1.47
OOP	54.46 (8.96)	58.36 (13.65)	1.68	58.3 (9.37)	59.34 (7.91)	0.59	56.38 (9.32)	58.85 (11.11)	1.7	54.46 (8.96)	58.3 (9.37)	2.09*	58.36 (13.65)	59.34 (7.91)	0.43	56.41 (11.65)	58.82 (8.64)	1.66
SPP	58.06 (11.73)	58.72 (8.7)	0.31	61.6 (8.41)	61.42 (8.58)	0.1	59.83 (10.31)	60.07 (8.7)	0.17	58.06 (11.73)	61.6 (8.41)	1.73	58.72 (8.7)	61.42 (8.58)	1.56	58.39 (10.28)	61.51 (8.45)	2.34*
P	186.6 (25.11)	191.98 (25.35)	1.06	189.42 (24.8)	194.14 (23.02)	0.98	188.01 (24.87)	193.06 (24.12)	1.45	186.6 (25.11)	189.42 (24.8)	0.56	191.98 (25.35)	194.14 (23.02)	0.44	189.29 (25.25)	191.78 (23.92)	0.71

Note: *p<0.05, **p< 0.01

Table 1 shows no significant difference in the levels of General Fear of Failure and its dimensions (Fear of experiencing shame and embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and Fear of Upsetting Important Others) and Perfectionism and its dimensions (Self Oriented Perfectionism, Other Oriented Perfectionism and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism), between the two age groups (18-22 years and 23-27 years), in men, in women and in the total sample.

There is a significant difference between men and women (18-22 years) in the levels of Other Oriented Perfectionism. However, there is no significant difference in the levels of General Fear or Failure and its dimensions (Fear of experiencing shame and embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and Fear of Upsetting Important Others) and Perfectionism and its dimensions (Self Oriented Perfectionism and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism), between women and men in the age group 18-22 years.

There is a significant difference in the levels of Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure, between women and men in the age group 23-27 years. However, there is no significant difference in the levels of dimensions of Fear of Failure- Fear of experiencing shame and embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate and Fear of having an Uncertain Future, and Perfectionism and its dimensions (Self Oriented Perfectionism and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism), between women and men in the age group 23-27 years.

There is a significant difference in the levels of Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others, General Fear of Failure and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism, between women and men, in the total sample (18-27 years).

Table 2 showing correlation between Fear of Failure (GFF) and its dimensions, Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment (FSE), Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate (FDSE), Fear of having an Uncertain Future (FUF), Fear of Important Others Losing Interest (FIOLI) and Fear of Upsetting Important Others (FUIO) and Perfectionism (P) and its

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dimensions, Self Oriented Perfectionism (SOP), Other Oriented Perfectionism (OOP) and Socially Prescribed Perfectionism (SPP).

	SOP					OOP					SPP					P				
	Women	Men	18-22	23-27	Total	Women	Men	18-22	23-27	Total	Women	Men	18-22	23-27	Total	Women	Men	18-22	23-27	Total
FSE	0.07	-0.08	0.11	-0.17	-0.01	0.14	0.05	0	0.21*	0.11	0.37**	0.24*	0.3**	0.34**	0.32**	0.26**	0.04	0.19	0.12	0.16*
FDSE	0.01	-0.1	-0.13	0.01	-0.06	0.14	0.08	0.02	0.21*	0.12	0.3**	0.11	0.187	0.28**	0.23**	0.19	0	0	0.21*	0.1
FUF	-0.04	0.01	-0.01	-0.02	-0.01	0.13	0.1	-0.02	0.23*	0.12	0.14	0.15	0.16	0.13	0.15*	0.1	0.1	0.04	0.14	0.1
FIOLI	0.07	-0.02	0.1	-0.14	0	0.18	0.06	0.11	0.16	0.14*	0.4**	0.24*	0.28**	0.44**	0.35**	0.28**	0.09	0.22*	0.15	0.19**
FUIO	0.02	0.03	0.05	-0.02	0.01	0.05	0.22*	0.03	0.25*	0.14*	0.13	0.32**	0.15	0.35**	0.24**	0.09	0.21*	0.1	0.23*	0.15*
GFF	0.04	-0.04	0.03	-0.09	-0.02	0.18	0.12	0.03	0.27**	0.16	0.38**	0.26**	0.28**	0.41**	0.33**	0.26**	0.11	0.15	0.22*	0.18**

Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$

Table 2 shows no significant correlation between Self Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure in men, in women, in the age group 18-22 and 23-27 years and in the total sample (18-27 years).

There is no significant correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure in women. There is a significant positive correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of Upsetting Important Others in men. However, there is no significant correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and General Fear of Failure in men.

There is no significant correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure in the age group 18-22 years. There is a significant positive correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure in the age group 23-27 years. However, there is no correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, in the age group 23-27 years.

There is a significant positive correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and Fear of Upsetting Important Others in the total sample. However, there is no correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and General Fear of Failure along with dimensions, namely, Fear of Experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing One's Self Estimate and Fear of having an Uncertain Future in the total sample.

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There is a significant positive correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and General Fear of Failure in women. However, there is no significant correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of having an Uncertain Future and Fear of Upsetting Important Others in women. There is a significant positive correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure in men. However, there is no significant correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of Devaluing One's Self Estimate and Fear of having an Uncertain Future in men.

There is a significant positive correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, General Fear of Failure in the age group 18-22 years. However, there is no correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Upsetting Important Others in the age group 18-22 years. There is a significant positive correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others, General Fear of Failure in the age group 23-27 years. However, there is no correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of having an Uncertain Future in the age group 23-27 years.

There is a significant positive correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure in the total sample.

There is a significant positive correlation between total Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and General Fear of Failure in women. However, there is no significant correlation between total Perfectionism and dimensions of fear of failure, namely, Fear of Devaluing One's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future and Fear of Upsetting Important Others in women. There is a significant positive correlation between total Perfectionism and Fear of Upsetting Important Others in men. However, there is no correlation between total Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing One's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and General Fear of Failure in men.

There is a significant positive correlation between Perfectionism and Fear of Important Others Losing Interest in the age group 18-22 years. However, there is no correlation between Perfectionism and General Fear of Failure and other dimensions, namely, Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing One's Self Estimate, Fear of

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having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Upsetting Important Others in the age group 18-22 years. There is a significant positive correlation between Perfectionism and Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Upsetting Important Others, General Fear of Failure in the age group 23-27 years. However, there is no correlation between Perfectionism and Fear of Experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest in the age group 23-27 years.

There is a significant positive correlation between total Perfectionism and General Fear of Failure along with dimensions, namely, Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and Fear of Upsetting Important Others in the total sample. However, there is no correlation between total Perfectionism and Fear of Devaluing One's Self Estimate and Fear of having an Uncertain Future in the total sample.

DISCUSSION

There is a significant gender difference in the levels of Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure in the total sample (18-27 years) and also in the age group 23-27 years but not for the age group 18-22 years. Men and Women scored higher in Fear of Upsetting Important Others of all the other dimensions of fear of failure. Men score higher in Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure compared to women. The same phenomenon was also observed in a study conducted by Sagar et al. (2011). Level of fear of failure may be higher in men because of higher societal expectations on men in terms of financial success as compared to women. There is no significant difference in the levels of General Fear of Failure and its dimensions between the age groups, 18-22 years and 23-27 years in the total sample. This indicates that there is no difference in the level of Fear of Failure in an individual as age transformation takes place. As an individual progresses from age 18 to 27, the level of his fear of failure remains the same. This may be because; it is around 40 years of age when fear of failure doesn't really matter to an individual as by then they had already achieved the objective of their life. During the 20's and 30's, individuals are still establishing their individuality and in the process may have the same level of fear. However, in the age group 23-27 years, women show higher levels of General Fear of Failure. Indian workforce consists of fewer women, especially in the urban setting (Catalyst, 2015), which increases the need to prove themselves and be successful in a male dominant arena. This pressure to be successful may increase the fear of failure in them. It was also found that fear of failure was reported more in women than men (Li and Prevatt, 2010).

There is a significant difference in the levels of Socially Prescribed Perfectionism in the total sample between men and women. A higher level of Socially Prescribed Perfectionism is found in men as they may aspire to be perfect due to the beliefs and pressures of the society. Men are considered as the primary care takers of the family and are expected to be financially stable. They are expected to mask their emotions, they succumb to the pressure of the society and hence they tend to have higher socially prescribed perfectionism. There is a significant difference in the levels of Other Oriented Perfectionism in the age group 18-22 years between

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men and women. Men having higher levels of Other Oriented Perfectionism than women, means that men expect others to be perfect which could be a reaction to other's expectations of perfectionism from themselves. Especially, in the age group 18-22 years, during which period and are not exposed to the real world. Their parents or important others are still responsible for them and so expectations of perfectionism from others is high. But as they grow old, they have to fulfill all the responsibilities they once expected from others. This may lead to the decrease in other oriented perfectionism.

There is a significant positive correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and dimensions of fear of failure, namely, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and Fear of Upsetting Important Others in the total sample. These variables are concerned with other people in the individual's life. Though there is very less literature supporting this phenomenon, a previous study conducted found correlation between these variables (Conroy et al., 2007). It was also stated that though beliefs about the consequences of failing did not enhance Other Oriented Perfectionism predictions, it is possible that other beliefs of an individual (e.g. involving narcissism) may be relevant (Hewitt, Flett & Turnbull, 1992). There is a significant positive correlation between Other Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure in the age group 23-27 years. Individuals in this age group would have just acquired new responsibilities, which bring about life changes. Fear of failure in fulfilling the responsibilities may develop. This is not the case with individuals in the age group 18-22, as they do not have as many responsibilities.

There is a significant positive correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of having an Uncertain Future, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, Fear of Upsetting Important Others and General Fear of Failure in the total sample. Socially Prescribed Perfectionists focus on other people's expectations for one's performance (Conroy et al., 2007). As individuals strive to be perfect because of other people's expectations, there is a constant fear of failure. Correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear or Failure, along with its dimensions, has been found earlier in different studies as well (Conroy et al., 2007; Sagar & Stoeber, 2009). However, it has been stated that it is unlikely for Socially Prescribed Perfectionism alone to bring about Fear of Failure in individuals. The levels of Other and Self Oriented Perfectionism also play a role. Moreover other factors like self-affirmation also play a role (Conroy et al., 2007). Significant positive correlation was found between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest, General Fear of Failure in the age group 18-22 years. Significant positive correlation was also found between Fear of Important Other Losing Interest and Perfectionism in this age group. During the student life, individuals aim for perfection as their parents and the society expects them to fulfill their duty as a student and be perfect which may lead to a fear of experiencing shame and embarrassment if they do not succeed. Individuals in this age desire to fulfill the expectations of parents and fit

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in with the peer group, hence they aim for perfectionism and avoid failure. As the individual grows old, the pressures from family and peer group decrease. There is a significant positive correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of Devaluing One's Self Estimate and Fear of Upsetting Important others in the age group 23-27 years. This may be because as individuals aim for perfection due to the expectations of others, they also develop a fear of negative evaluation due to which they devalue their own self-estimate. They aim for perfectionism as others expect them to be perfect; therefore they fear that they would upset their important others if they fail to be perfect.

There is a significant positive correlation between total Perfectionism and General Fear of Failure and its dimensions, namely, Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and Fear of Upsetting Important Others in the total sample that is 18-27 years old women and men. When individuals aim to be perfect, it is natural for them to fear failure. Fear of Failure arises due to the need to be perfect. A significant positive correlation exists between Perfectionism and Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Upsetting Important Others, General Fear of Failure in the age group 23-27 years. Most of the individuals in this age group are at the start of their career. Failure at the beginning of their career disrupts their plans. They believe that they do not have total control over their performance (Fear of Devaluing One's Self Estimate) that may lead to upsetting important others; and therefore aim for perfection.

Significant positive correlations exist between Other Oriented Perfectionism and Fear of Upsetting Important Others; Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of Upsetting Important Others; Perfectionism and Fear of Upsetting Important Others in men. Failure in being perfect according to the society's expectations is assumed to upset their significant others. As men fear upsetting their important others they feel the need to be perfect. By being perfect they could avoid upsetting others. There is a significant positive correlation between Socially Prescribed Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Devaluing one's Self Estimate, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and General Fear of Failure; Perfectionism and Fear of experiencing Shame and Embarrassment, Fear of Important Others Losing Interest and General Fear of Failure in women. As women aim to be perfect due to the pressure on them from the society, they fear experiencing shame and embarrassment hence aim to be perfect in order to avoid experiencing shame and embarrassment.

The main finding of the study is that there is a significant positive correlation between Fear of Failure (and its dimensions) and Perfectionism, mainly socially prescribed perfectionism.

Implications

The finding of the present study can be useful to develop an intervention for people with either high levels of fear of failure or socially prescribed perfectionism, as there exists a strong positive relationship between the two variables.

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Limitations and Future Directions

The present study was conducted in the metropolitan city of Hyderabad. A sample covering other cities of India could be taken. A random sampling technique could be used to make generalizations. A cross-cultural study could be conducted to understand the cultural differences between various countries with regards to the variables. The sample of the study included individuals from the age group 18-27 years. The study could be conducted on a different age group.

Acknowledgments

The author appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interests: The author declared no conflict of interests.

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How to cite this article: Sunkarapalli G, Agarwal T (2017), Fear of Failure and Perfectionism in Young Adults, *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, Volume 4, (3), DIP:18.01.131/20170403, DOI:10.25215/0403.131