Studying the Relationship between Degree and Dimension of Perfectionism with Depressions, Anxiety and Academic Performance of High School Students in Tehran

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ABSTRACT

Background: This Study surveys the relationship between degree and dimensions of perfectionism with Academic performance, depression and anxiety amongst high school students. Objectives: The objective of this study is considering the relationship between degree and dimension of perfectionism with Academic performance, depression and anxiety of high school students. Method: 217 students were selected by poly clustering method. Data were analyzed by using research method from the kind of Pierson correlation and step by step Regression method. Also, for studying Regression meaning fulness, the unilateral variance analyzing method was used. Findings: Perfectionism of student has a positive relationship with Academic performance and anxiety of them, and it has a negative relationship with their depression. Conclusion: Amongst perfectionism dimensions, only self centrism perfectionism has a negative and meaningful relation with academic performance. Self centrism perfectionism and socio centrism perfectionism are predictors of students’ depression and anxiety.

Key words: Introduction

Tendency to perfection or perfectionism exists in the id or entity of all humans and is considered a positive synrasy, because it produces a kind of energy that results in development and success of a person. But the trend of achieving perfection amongst all humans doesn’t proceed positively. It can be said that perfectionism has benefit for the person only to the time that he has a relation with himself and it is used for activating capacities aptitudes. When tendency to perfection is used with competition and preceding of others only for the sake of getting their confirmation and satisfaction, it gets negative dimension or in other words neurotic. Perfectionism is considered a kind of hard emphasis in doing each step of work or the need to produce a production or presenting services without any defect and fault [1]. In general, perfectionism is as the persist tendency of the person to establish perfect and unachievable standards and trying to fulfill them (Brenz, 1980), which is accompanied with critical self-evaluations from personal performance [2]. From the traits of perfectionism persons, we can denote gathering high and very hard standards [2], and in belief of Brenz, the thought of “All or None”. Or in other words dichotomous thinking can be named [3].

Such persons have a high self-controlling power; this self-controlling is unusually including restricting pleasurable activities which don’t have a direct relation with the special case and following the aim [4]. One of the other important traits of perfectionist persons is delaying in performing duty(s). For some of these persons, the fear of defeating in achieving their aims and standards is so noxious that, they delay performing their duty. Deny doing in half of the way, or completely avoid performing it [4].

Fruid with an one dimensional looking at perfectionism, for the first time pointed to the traumatic role of perfectionism. Some of the sighted persons believe that perfectionism is a two dimensional [2] or even multi-dimensional agent. The dimensions of perfectionism express multi essence of intra individual, and socialism of perfectionism. These dimensions are: self centrism perfectionism, other centrism perfectionism and socio centrism perfectionism.

Self centrism perfectionism is characterized by tending to establish unrealistic standards for it self; concentrating on defeats and failures in performance and careful self supervising [3]. This form of
perfectionism is the nearest dimension to the agent which often has been known as perfectionism.

Other centrism perfectionism, expresses the tendency of the person to have excessive expectations from others and critical evaluation of them.

In this situation, the perfectionist person takes a collection of standards for himself, that by them he evaluates the persons of his environment, and for example it is very important for him that the person who associates with him, has the same behavioral and opinional standards.

And socio centrism perfectionism is applied to feeling the necessity of taking into account the standards and providing ordered expectations from the side of important persons to get confirmity [3].

This dimension of perfectionism points to a kind of understanding that a person has from others, such as this belief that others impose unrealistic expectations on him (her), evaluate him seriously and force him because of his completeness and undefaultness [4].

The relation of perfectionism with important variables such as academic performance, depression and anxiety, has been taken into consideration by many researchers. Prospering perfectionism thoughts, in one hand solely results in school drop out, because perfectionism standards only are satisfied by doing their jobs and getting superior or 100% results [3].

They aren’t content with this matter that their performance is better than their same ages, and they have done their duty completely, but they gain complete satisfaction, when they do the duty completely and without any fault.

For this reason, it is possible that for the sake of fearing of hot achieving to their goal, they don’t accept their responsibility absolutely, or leave in in half the way, and for this reason they are faced with drop out school; on the other hand, perfectionism is possible to result in drop out school by creating depression and anxiety indirectly. The effect of depression and anxiety on performance decreasing and decreasing academic performance has been proven by many researchers. The present research tries to declare the present relations between perfectionism, depression, anxiety and academic performance of high school students.

It is believed that high sensitivity and emphasis on others evaluations of them selves which are considered as fundamental parameters of negative perfectionism, have a relation with the growth and continuity of anxious states [5].

And so, because the selected goals are not suited with their capability, the possibility of defeating in achieving their goals increases. The perfectionist persons even if reach their goals success fully, their problem exists and continues, because in this case they may devaluate their presented goals and evaluate their success unimportantly, and without any value. For this reason, the background of getting depression is ready for them [6].

Sadler and Sax surveyed the effect of high perfectionism on depression in their researches. In view of these researchers, perfectionism and educational delaying both have importance in explaining depression of experiments.

Felt in another research (1992) has studied the relations between individual differences in perfectionism and delaying among 131 students (56 men and 57 women), who completed self centrism, other centrism and socio centrism dimensions, and also completed public and collegial standards.

The subjects also completed the gradings of delaying (such as fear of defects, antipathy of work).

Analyzing of correlation revealed that socio centrism perfectionism dimension strongly relates with both kind of delays; I mean public delaying and individual delaying. Fear of defeating widely and meaning fully correlated with all dimensions of perfectionism [7]. Sadler and Doglas [8] executed poly dimension perfectionism, educational delaying and depression standards on 150 university students (B.A and M.A).

Analyzing of data showed that different kinds of perfectionism including: self centrism, other centrism, socio centrism and delaying structure, each of them individually and meaningfully correlate with depression. The research which was performed on standards showed that socio centrism perfectionism has a relation with degrees of excitement worrying, including depression and anxiety such as low educational development [9].

In surveying the relation between educating children’s attitudes, personality model A, perfectionism, and parents’ dogmatism, and examination’s anxiety and educational performance of boys’ students.

This result achieved that there is a meaningful relation between parents’ child educating attitudes with exam’s anxiety of students. There is a meaningful relation between parents’ personality typ A, with students’ anxiety of exam. There is no meaningful relation between parents’ perfectionism and exam’s anxiety [10]. Beshart [11] by studying the dimensions of perfektionism in students suffering from: depression (17 daughters, and 8 boys), developed anxiety (12 daughters, 7 boys), and a control group (29 daughters, 15 boys), resulted that depressed patients with higher levels of self centrism perfectionism, differentiate from the two groups of anxious subjects and normal ones; and patients with higher levels of socio centrism perfectionism differentiate from the two groups of depressed subjects and normal subjects.

Method:

The research method is from the kind of correlation. The selected sample has been chosen by
using random selecting method and multi stage clustering method, in this way that at first one region (regions) was selected randomly among the 20th regions of Tehran’s educating and training system.

Then by using multi stage clustering sampling, among pall of the high schools in the regions, two high schools (daughters’ and boys’) were selected randomly, and among the first grades of each high school, three grades were selected randomly. Finally 220 students (110 daughters and 110 boys) were considered to perform the questionarie, that for the case of being imperfect, the related information of 3 of them, the information of 217 of them were analyzed.

The tool used for measuring rate and dimensions of perfectionism of the students was multi dimensional perfectionism standards; for measuring depression, depression standard of back was used; and for measuring anxiety, kocle’s standard of anxiety was used. So for measuring academic performance of students, the average of the students’ marks in four grades in two four weeks term for self centrism perfectionism was 0/84, for other centrism perfectionism it was 0/82 and for socio centrism it was 0/80, which is the sign of high reexamining reliability in relation with Iranian standard form.

Back’s Depression Standard:

This standard has 21 items and traits such as: mood, pessimism, fearing-feel, unsatisfaction, guilt-feel, hate of self, self-torment attitudes, withdrawal of society, undetermination, disorder in body’s image, laziness in work, getting tired and anorexia are included and by measuring it we can perform measuring this group of subject characteristics [12].

Test’s reliability is about 0/90 by cutting in two half method, and it is about 0/75 by retesting method. Each question is graded on a 4 graded standard (from 0 to 30). The maximum of all of the grades is 63.

Kotel’s Anxiety Standard:

This standard has 40 questions and the main grade is in the form of a level grade about whole anxiety, which shows patient’s situation in a scope of 11 parts standard, which is related to the group which the subject belongs to it. The grades which the subjects get can variate from 0 to 80.

This standard in Iran has been performed by Mansour and colleagues, using a sample including 244894 people and in the range of 18 – 30 years old, and the results have been similar to foreign researches.

Findings:

In order to survey the relation between perfectionism and academic performance, depression and anxiety, after getting the results of each test, data were analyzed using Pierson’s correlation coefficent.

| Table 1: Correlation matrix between perfectionism, depression, anxiety variables and academic performance. |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                | Perfectionism   | Anxiety         | Depression      | Academic Performance |
| Academic Performance            | 0/-157 **       | 0/131           | 0/-0141         | 1                  |
| Depression                     | 0/0403 **       | 0/585 *         | 1               |                    |
| Anxiety                        | 0/-244 **       | 1               |                 |                    |
| perfectionism                  | 1               |                 |                 |                    |

* P ≤

| Table 2: Correlation matrix between perfectionism dimensions variables, depression, anxiety and academic performance. |
|---------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
|                                | Socio Centrism Perfectionism | Other Centrism Perfectionism | Self Centrism Perfectionism | Anxiety | Depression | Academic Performance |
| Academic Performance            | -0/080           | -0/111           | -0/182           | -0/-0131 | -0/-041 | 1 |
| Depression                     | 0/353            | 0/224            | 0/365            | 0/585    | 1      |    |
| Anxiety                        | 0/371            | 0/253            | 0/369            | 1        |        |    |
| Self Centrism Perfectionism    | 0/405            | 0/420            | 1                |          |        |    |
In the other section, all of these research. Econer and Econer [13] in a research have any congruent with the finding of present research. Doglas [8] and Felt’s [2] findings. Also, findings about the relation between perfectionism and academic performance is congruent with Sadler, Sax’s findings [7], and it is in congruent with Sadler, Doglas [8] and Felt’s [2] findings.

Table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other Centrism</th>
<th>0.420</th>
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<tr>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
<td>1</td>
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Table 2:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Socio Centrism</th>
<th>1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perfectionism</td>
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</table>

On the basis of achieved results in Table 1 and 2, at first findings are described and in the next section we will declare these results:

1- Correlation between perfectionism and academic performance is: $\gamma = 0$, which this quantity is meaningful at the level of $P \leq$. On the basis of this result we can say that there is a reverse relation between perfectionism and academic performance, and whatever the quantity of perfectionism goes up and increases, the quantity of academic performance decreases and vice versa.

2- Correlation between perfectionism and depression is: $\gamma = 0$, that this quantity is meaningful at the level of $P \leq$. In the other words, by virtue of direct relation between these two variables, we can say that whatever perfectionism of students goes up, their depression increases at the same level.

3- Correlation between perfectionism and anxiety variables is: $\gamma = 0$, and it is meaningful at the level of $P \leq$. It means that whatever the quantity of the students’ perfectionism goes up, the quantity of their anxiety, so, goes up.

4- Correlation between academic performance of students and self centrism perfectionism, other centrism and socio centrism is: $-0, -0$ and $-$, which at the level of $P \leq$, all of these correlations has a reverse relation with academic performance. It means that whatever the quantity of each kind of perfectionism increases, the quantity of academic performance decreases. But amongst perfectionism dimensions, only self centrism perfectionism doesn’t have a meaningful relation with academic performance.

5- Correlation between depression and self centrism perfectionism, other centrism perfectionism and socio centrism perfectionism is: $0, 0$ and $0$, which these three ones are meaningful at the level of $P <$. In fact, we can conclude that, whatever the quantity or degree of perfectionism dimensions goes up, so the degree of anxiety increases.

Discussion and Concluding:

The result achieved from this research in relation with each dimension of perfectionism (self centrism, other centrism and socio centrism) and academic performance is congruent with Sadler and Sax’s findings [7], and it is in congruent with Sadler, Doglas [8] and Felt’s [2] findings.

Also, findings about the relation between dimensions of perfectionism and depression don’t have any congruent with the finding of present research. Econer and Econer [13] in a research resulted that socio centrism perfectionism has the most relation with depression and suicide. Also chang [14] in his research showed that there is a relation between depression, socio centrism perfectionism and self centrism perfectionism. Beshart [2], so, showed in his research that depression orderly has relation with high levels of self centrism perfectionism and socio centrism perfectionism.

So, the findings of present research, regarding the relation between dimensions of perfectionism and anxiety, based on the subject that among dimensions of perfectionism, socio centrism perfectionism has the most relation with anxiety, is congruent with Howit, Flet and Beshart’s findings.

If we suppose collecting high level standard which are, out of reach and beyond people’s ability as one of the aspects of perfectionism, fear of defeating and evaluating others negatively, can result in anxiety and defeat, and so failure in obtaining those objects will lead to depression.

Anxiety and depression can have negative effect on academic performance. It seems that self centrism perfectionism by having traits such as irrelevant compulsion, keeping high personal standards, “All or None” thinking, and powerful motivation for being better than others, more than the other two dimensions of perfectionism (other centrism and socio centrism) has negative effect on academic performance. Such a relation is so applicable about depression. Unflexible personal and rigorous expectations and fanatical evaluations from performance which is of the traits of self centrism perfectionism, cause that this dimension of perfectionism have has the most relation with depression. The meaningful relation that there is between socio centrism perfectionism and anxiety can be expressed in this way that in fact, perfectionist persons are always angry about this matter that whether they can answer to others expectations?

Or if they fail in the way of reaching their goals, or making a mistake, how would others think about them? About perfectionist standards, it can be said that, fear of un achieving the teachers and parents’ expectations and their negative evaluation, and the matter that they may not be considered a good standard or child any more, by making a mistake in the field of studying, causes them to spend their time continually in a mood of anxiety and anger.

References