Determining the contribution of perfectionism and perceived social support to predict the students' psychological well-being

Alireza Kakavand
Department of psychology, Assistant professor, Imam Khomeini International University, Iran
ali.reza_kakavand@yahoo.com

Shadi Pak Andish
Graduate of Clinical psychology, Department of psychology, Kish international Branch, Islamic Azad University, and Kish Island, Iran
Corresponding author: shadipakandish@yahoo.com

Abstract
This study aimed to determine the contribution of perfectionism and perceived social support in predicting the students' psychological well-being. This research could objectively be the type of applied research and in respect of how to collect data can be known as a descriptive study at the correlational type. For the present study, all students of Islamic Azad University of Urmia in the academic year 94-93 are statistical population; which include 8270 people (1,652 non-associate bachelor's degrees, 6476 bachelor's degree and 142 college diploma) from students of this university. The sample size of the study, which was selected by multistage cluster sampling, according to plant formula \(N > 50 + 8M\) was calculated. According to the probable omissions, finally, 188 students were selected as sample group. Data were analyzed using multiple linear regressions. The results showed that positive perfectionism and social support subscales have a significant relationship with psychological well-being at 5%, and positive coefficients of positive perfectionism and social support in the fact indicate that with the increase of these factors, also the psychological well-being increases. Also, results showed that the negative perfectionism subscale has a significant negative relationship (at 5%) with psychological well-being.

Keywords: perfectionism, perceived social support, psychological well-being.
Introduction

In the twenty-first century, the psychology realized that a man should spend his intellectual energy for the positive aspects of his experience (and Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Because in the beginning, psychology focused on negative emotions such as anxiety and depression rather than positive emotions, therefore scientific documents were more about suffering than pleasure (Myers, 2000). However, today, research is increasingly growing about well-being and positive psychology (Kashdan et al., 2006). Now there are various definitions of psychological well-being. Bradburn (1969) have a basic definition of psychological well-being which caused to increase the knowledge and awareness about positive and negative emotions (Edwards and Stein, 2008). Bradburn believed that the positive and negative emotions have negative correlation and these complex relationships between them stay the association between the positive and negative emotions, but these two always are together and the balance between them is the concept of happiness. We can define psychological well-being in terms of human development and understanding of life challenges, furthermore the psychological well-being can be operational in many ways, just it depends that we want to theorize for which of the aspects of life (Wood, Joseph and the Maltby, 2009).

Main elements of psychological well-being include the spirituality (Palant and Lae, 2003), personal growth and development, satisfaction of life, happiness (Argyle, Martin and Lu, 1995), positive relationships with others, self-acceptance, meaningful, compatibility and to dominate over environment, self-following, optimism (Saraphino, 2006) and purpose in life. Today, the psychological well-being not only a lack of psychological trauma, but being the positive aspects of performance such as positive mood, purpose in life and social cooperation are as goals (Case, 2007; quoted in Khuda Bakhsh and Kayani, 1392).

One of the structures that have been developed in recent years and researchers have studied the relationship between it and other variables, is perfectionism. Ellis (1975) was the first cognitive-behavioral theorist who described perfectionist. He defined perfectionism as one of the twelve basic illogical believes, which causes the psychological distress. He believed that perfectionism is acceptation of this belief at person that he should be fully competent, capable, and intelligent. Ellis described the perfectionism the people who have the primary purpose for the progress and success in life. The perfectionism's view is that incompetence in anything is an indication of incompetence and worthless of person. He also said that the purpose of perfectionism to believe that a solution is always accurate, complete and correct for humanitarian problems and if this complete solution is not found, therefore it would be disastrous. He propounded that self-dissatisfaction and low self-respect are as key features of perfectionism.

Perfectionism is accompanied by illogical belief, which is associated with anxiety and depression. Felt and Hoyt (2002) investigated the relationship between illogical belief and dimensions of perfectionism, which are self-oriented perfectionists, other-oriented and community-oriented. Illogical belief is associated with feeling and may be the largest factor for the emotional distress. Illogical belief includes: high self- expectation, the need for social approval, a readiness to blame, reactions of helplessness, worry too much, avoid to face difficulties, dependence, helplessness and need for complete solutions (Felt and Hoyt, 2002). Besr et al. (2008) studied the perfectionism and cognitive, sentiment and self-respect and physiological reactions in situations of performance. The result showed that experience of
spontaneous ideas with perfectionism is accompanied by spontaneous negative thoughts, negative mood reactions and low self-respect. High community-oriented perfectionism participants experienced the increase in negative mood, anxiety and low self-respect level as a result of the negative performance feedback or poor performance. Also their heart rate increased and they have low self-respect.

Besharat et al. (2009) investigated the relationship between perfectionism and mental health in a sample of students and concluded that positive perfectionism with psychological well-being has positive relationship and with psychological distress has negative relationship. The results also showed that negative perfectionism is negatively related with psychological well-being and has positive relationship with psychological distress.

Meanwhile, family and friends play an important role in encouraging the person to achieve health goals; their helping is the most important component of social support. Social support is defined as: any stimulus that will help the development of supported person's goals (Kaplan, 1979, quoted by Di Matteo, 1991, the translation of Mousavi Asl et al., 2009). Also, the perceived social support affects the mental health (Riahi et al., 1999) and the first variable in this study that its relationship to psychological well-being is investigated, is the perceived social support.

Ghaedi and yaghobi (2008) examines the relationship between perceived social support dimensions and dimensions of well-being in girls and boys students. The results showed that in addition to the similarities, gender differences were observed in the relationship between perceived social support and dimensions of well-being. So that some aspects of perceived social support dimensions have better prediction for well-being in boys than girls, while others predict well-being of girls is better than boys.

According to the above, psychological well-being is influenced by different factors. Therefore, understanding these factors in improving the mental health of the society has the great importance. Since, in the current situation of our society, people's psychological well-being has high importance for both they and community, therefore, it is important to understand the factors affecting it. So this was an incentive for researchers to pay attention to the important role of these variables, and all variables were examined and contribution of each to predict psychological well-being was determined. So the most important question of this research is whether can predict psychological well-being based on perceived social support and perfectionism?

**Research Methodology**

This research could objectively be the type of applied research and in respect of how to collect data can be known as a descriptive study at the correlational type. For this study, all students of Islamic Azad University of Urmia in the academic year 94-93 were as statistical populations; which included 8270 people (1,652 non-associate bachelor's degrees, 6476 bachelor's degree and 142 college diploma) from students of this university. The sample size of the study, which was selected by multistage cluster sampling scheme, according to plant formula (N>50+8M) was calculated. Given a possible reduction, 188 students were finally selected as the sample group.
Research Tools

The Scale of Perceived Social Support

The multidimensional scale of perceived social support is a 12-item tool that has been provided by Zimet et al (1988) from three sources: family, friends and important life people to evaluate perceived social support. The multidimensional scale of perceived social support measures the amount of social support perceived by subjects in each of the mentioned areas and has three subscales of a family (items 3-4-8-11), Friends (items 6-7-9-12), and significant other (items 1-2-5-10). In this test responses were 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (almost disagree), 4 (no idea), 5 (almost agree), 6 (agree), 7 (strongly agree). The scale is a short, simple tool and affected time, and for this reason it has been used in many studies. Psychometric properties of the multidimensional scale of perceived social support has been studied on different samples. The sample in the last study consisted of 154 college students (122 females and 32 males) with an age-mean of 26.5 years. The mean total score 5.58 (SD=1.07), for the family subscale 5.31 (SD=1.46), for the friends subscale 5.50 (SD=1.25), and for significant other subscale 5.94 (SD=1.34) has been.

Reliability: The multidimensional scale of perceived social support has a good internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the total of the test is 0.91 and the coefficient for its subscales range from 0.90 to 0.95.

Validity: The multidimensional scale of perceived social support has a good factor and simultaneous validity. Because it has a negative correlation with depression and diseases of coronary heart blood vessels in type A. In addition, the authors of the scale have stated that the validity of this test is also desirable, because it has no correlation with Marlowe Crohn's Social Desirability Scale. In this study, Cronbach's alpha value 0.85 has been obtained.

The Scale of Positive and Negative Perfectionism

According to Short et al (1995), this scale has 40 questions that 20 questions and 20 questions evaluate positive perfectionism and negative perfectionism, respectively. Questions were presented in Likert scale format on a scale from 1 to 5 in two positive and negative measures. In each of scales, the lowest and highest score of the subject is 20 and 100, respectively. The scale was translated by Besharat (2003) in Persian. He used Cronbach's alpha method to determine its validity in a sample of 212 of students. In the mentioned study, Cronbach's alpha coefficients for subscales of positive and negative perfectionism, a total of subjects, female students, and male students are equal to 0.9, 0.87, 0.89, and 0.86, respectively. This indicates the high internal consistency of the scale.

Reef's Psychological Well-being Scale

In recent decade, a tendency to examine health positive aspects has increased. In the past decade, Reef and Keyes suggested psychological well-being model, which was extensively studied by researchers. Psychological well-being is a multi-component concept and includes the following:

1. Self-acceptance: It means a positive attitude towards self and self-acceptance of different aspects such as good and bad characteristics, and a positive feeling about former life.
2. **Positive relation with others**: A sense of satisfaction and intimacy with people and understanding the importance of these dependencies.

3. **Autonomy**: A sense of independence and influence on life events and the active role in behaviors.

4. **Environmental mastery**: A sense of mastery over the environment, controlling outdoor activities and utilizing effective from the opportunities.

5. **Purpose in life**: Having a purpose in life and believe that his/her present and past life is significant.

6. **Personal growth**: A sense of steady growth and access to new experiences as a being with potential talents.

Reef to measure these structures, i.e. psychological well-being scales, designed questionnaires of 20-item, 14-item, 9-item, and 3-item. After the primary studies, the original version of psychological well-being scales, which have 84 items, was provided. Then, versions of 54-item and the short form of 18-item was designed. The short version of the questionnaire evaluates main six components of psychological well-being model, and thus has six subscales (Each subscale consists of three items). In this questionnaire, which has provided for adults, the subject in a 6-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree through 6=strongly agree) must determine to what extent which agree or disagree with each of the items.

**Reliability**: The internal consistency coefficient for the scales of the short form 18-item of psychological well-being scale as well as the internal consistency of a total of the test has reported about 0.70. In this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.71.

**Validity**: Evidence related to convergent validity of psychological well-being test indicate that six factors of psychological well-being with life satisfaction, self-esteem and creativity have a positive relationship, and with depression, chance and external control source have a negative relationship.

Khanjani et al. (2014) examined the factor structure and psychometric properties of the short form (18-item) of Reef's psychological well-being scale on female and male students. They have reported that results of one-group confirmatory factor analysis showed that in a total of the sample and in both genders, the six-factor model of this scale (self-acceptance, environmental mastery, a positive relation with others, having a purpose in life, personal growth, and independence) has a good fit. The internal consistency of this scale using Cronbach's alpha for six factors of self-acceptance, environmental mastery, positive relation with others, having a purpose in life, personal growth and independence as well as for a total of the scale were equal to 0.51, 0.76, 0.75, 0.52, 0.73, 0.72, and 0.71, respectively. Overall, the results indicate that the 18-item form of Reef's psychological well-being scale to measure psychological well-being of girls and boys in the Iranian sample is a useful tool.
Findings

The descriptive findings of research variables are shown in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table1. The descriptive findings of research subscales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived social support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive perfectionism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative perfectionism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological well-being</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using statistical methods, first using Kolmogorov-Smirnov's statistical test were tested normality of the data to determine the type of statistical methods (parametric, non-parametric), and in case of normality of the data is established one of the most important assumptions of parametric tests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table2. One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived social support</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

According to the results of Table2 and the significant levels obtained, each of research variables that is larger than 0.05, the data for all variables is normal.

To examine the hypothesis which of the aspects of perfectionism and social support can play an important role in predicting psychological well-being, was used multiple linear regression method. Thus, after confirming the assumptions of regression, this method to answer the question was used that whether the components of perfectionism and social support can predict psychological well-being. The first test is general model. In fact, researcher model is confirmed, if at least one of the predictive variables of study has a significant impact on variable criteria. The null hypothesis and hypothesis 1 is as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
H_0 : \beta_1 = \beta_2 = ... = \beta_5 = 0 \\
H_1 : \beta_i \neq 0 \quad \forall \text{ one } i \text{ for } i = 1,2,3,4,5
\end{align*}
\]
Table 3. Regression Results for perfectionism factors and social support on psychological well-being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>R² adj</th>
<th>sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>2059.64</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>686.55</td>
<td>9.15</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remaining</td>
<td>13806.71</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>75.04</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>15866.36</td>
<td>187</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As seen in table significant amount is less than 0.05, and shows the significance of the regression model, that means at least one of the predictor variables on criterion variables were significant effect.

Index R² (coefficient of multiple determinations): This index indicates that a few percentages of the criterion variable changes are explained by the predictor variables. In other words, a few percent of predictor variables have ability on the value of the dependent variable. In this study, value of R² is equal to 0.13, meaning that perfectionism factors and social support have 13% ability to predict psychological well-being, and the remaining 87% is related to other factors.

Index R²adj (coefficient of adjusted determination): This index ability to predict the dependent variable investigated by predicted variables in the population. In fact, with a little modification, the sample extends to the whole population.

The value of this coefficient is 0.12, in other words the components of perfectionism and social support have 12 percent ability to predict psychological well-being.

Considering the significance of the model, must now be examined which one of the coefficients is not zero, in other words which variable or variables in the model have a significant effect. To this end, the t-test is used.

Table 4. Coefficients of standard, non-standard and t Statistics for variables entered into the regression equation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor variable</th>
<th>Regression coefficients</th>
<th>t Statistics</th>
<th>sig</th>
<th>Significance level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Unstandardized</td>
<td>Standardized</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant value</td>
<td>64.80</td>
<td>8.61</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive perfectionism</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative perfectionism</td>
<td>-0.31</td>
<td>-0.20</td>
<td>-2.87</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social support</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>-2.33</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the results table shows sub-scales of positive perfectionism and social support has a significant relationship with psychological well-being in 5% level, and being positive coefficients of positive perfectionism and social support actually represents is that with the
increase these factors, the amount of psychological well-being increases. The results also showed sub-scale of negative perfectionism and psychological well-being has a significant negative relationship in 5% level.

**Discussion and conclusion**

The results of regression analysis showed that psychological well-being by the Positive and Negative Perfectionism is predicted. In fact, positive perfectionism creates rational and realistic expectations regarding the capabilities and limitations of individual, that this realism with limited expectations in various fields helps individuals to not impose strict criteria and objectives of the unattainable on their own. Positive perfectionism enjoyed efforts and competition for supremacy and perfection. Also psychological well-being by perfectionism will be reverse prediction. Negative perfectionists believe that need to achieve very high measures and that they will not accept mistakes and failures. But since to this very high measures cannot reach because being their unrealistic, therefore, become suffering from stress, depression and anxiety and decreases the level of self-esteem and life satisfaction in them. These people cannot enjoy their severe efforts even if they succeed, because they often devalue their successes. Finally, all these factors reduce their psychological well-being. This finding is consistent with results of Besharat, Habibnejad and Geranmayeh Poor (2009) Vebser, Felt and Houit (2008).

The results also show that subscale of important people in social support for psychological well-being has a significant effect on the level of 5%, and being positive the coefficient reflects in fact that increasing this factor, the psychological well-being increases. These results are consistent with the findings Dai, Livingston, (2003); Martinez et al., (2002); Ghaedi and Yaghoubi, (2008) regarding the relationship between perceived social support and psychological well-being.

These findings can be explained in the framework of social protection shield theory. Based on this approach, social support through protecting the person is effective against negative effects of high stress on the health of person, and protective role has for the person when they are severe stress. Conditions are poor stress, provided little protection. The protection least is carried out in two ways. The first way is cognitive evaluation. When a person is faced with a very stressful situation, such as the financial crisis, those who have high social support, stress does not assess this position to benefit as much as those with less support. Those who have high social support might think one of those who know can help him, so feels less stress and stressful situation will not assessed. The second option involves modifying response to the position where is evaluated the stressful. One of consequences for the desirable perceived social support is psychological well-being. The relationship between social support and psychological well-being has been widely studied. Many studies have shown that enjoying the desirable social support, the person leads physical health and well-being (Robert and Gottlieb, 1997; Ryan and Deci, 2005). Therefore it can be said that regardless of stress, social support is useful in any case to health, because people have more social support than their sense of belonging and self-esteem and a positive attitude that arises in such a situation can be useful for psychological well-being of the individual.

Among the limitations of this study, many questions of a questionnaire that resulted in lack of cooperation a number of students in the sample and the result became a long process of study. Given to the research findings show that perceived social support variable, an important role
plays in predicting subjective well-being of students, efforts to promote subjective well-being of students requires the types of social support in students. Because if a student not receive social support from important people in your life, be able to obtain support from university and friends space. It is suggested that researchers in the field, the role of moderator variables such as economic situation and social class studied in the relationship between perfectionism and psychological well-being variables. Also, it is suggested that researchers using tools and methods such as interviews or clinical observation of sample qualitatively studied in terms of perfectionism and psychological well-being variables.
References


