
PERSEVERATIVE NEGATIVE THINKING MEDIATES THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERFECTIONISM AND NEGATIVE AFFECT

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Introduction: Perfectionism has been associated to Perseverative Negative Thinking [PNT]. Both are transdiagnostic processes. PNT (in the form of worry and rumination) is a prime candidate when investigating negative components of perfectionism (Macedo et al., 2013).

Objectives: To investigate if PNT mediates the relationship between perfectionism and negative affect [NA].

Methods: 344 university students (68.4% girls) were evaluated using Portuguese validated versions of the Perseverative Thinking Questionnaire (two subscales: 'Repetitive Thought' [RT] and 'Cognitive Interference and Unproductiveness' [CIU]), Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale, Profile of Mood States and Perceived Stress Scale, with an additional item to evaluate perceived social support [PSS]. Only variables significantly correlated with the outcomes [NA] were entered in the hierarchic multiple regression models. Mediation analyses using Preacher and Hayes bootstrapping methodology were performed.

Results: Perceived Stress [PS] ($\beta=.245$), PSS ($\beta=-.257$), Self-Oriented Perfectionism [SOP] ($\beta=-.126$), Self-Prescribed Perfectionism [SPP] ($\beta=.122$; $p=.011$), Concern over Mistakes [CM] ($\beta=.102$), Doubts about Actions [DA] ($\beta=.115$) and CIU ($\beta=.110$) were significant predictors (all $p<.05$) of NA. Controlling for PS and PSS, the perfectionism variables still predict depression, accounting for a significant increment of 16.7% ($p<.01$). The CIU, introduced in the model after the Perfectionism variables, significantly increments the NA variance in 1.6% ($p<.01$). CIU was a total mediator in the relationship between SOP and NA (IC95% .025-.229) and a partial mediator in the relationship between SPP (.176-.456), CM (.142-.855), DA (.143-.863) and NA.

Conclusion: PNT potentiates the relationship between negative perfectionism and NA. Positive perfectionism is associated with NA, only in the presence of PNT.