

PERFECTIONISM, EATING BEHAVIOURS AND AFFECT IN OVERWEIGHT WOMEN

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Introduction: Knowledge about the mechanisms underlying the relationship between perfectionism and eating behaviors in overweight/obese women is very scarce.

Objectives: To investigate the relationship between perfectionism, eating behaviors and affect in overweight women.

Methods: The Portuguese validated versions of the Eating Disorders Examination Questionnaire/EDEQ, the Multidimensional Perfectionism Questionnaire and the Profile of Mood States were administered to an outpatient sample of 276 women (Mean age=43.85±11.89; Mean BMI=32.82±5.43) attending a weight loss treatment in a public hospital.

Results: Correlations between Social Prescribed Perfectionism/SPP and EDEQ total (T) and its dimensional scores (Weight and Shape Concern and Dissatisfaction/WSCD, Eating Concern/EC, Restraint) were all moderate ($r > .30$) and significant ($p > .001$). Self-Oriented Perfectionism/SOP was also significantly correlated with EDEQ-T, WSCI and Restraint ($r = .20$). Positive affect/PA was negatively correlated and Negative affect/NA was positively correlated with all EDEQ dimensions ($r > .25$; $p > .001$). SPP, but not SOP, was significantly correlated with PA ($r = -.27$) and NA ($r = .34$). Participants with high ($>M+SD$) vs. low ($<M-SD$) SOP and SPP had significantly higher means in EDEQ-T, WSCI, EC and Restraint (all $p < .001$). Linear regression showed that SPP, PA and NA were predictors of EDEQ-T and WSCI; SPP and NA were predictors of EC; NA was the unique predictor of Restraint (all $p < .001$). Controlling for NA/PA, SPP still being a significant predictor of all EDEQ, WSCD and EC, accounting for significant increments of variance (4.4%, 2.9% and 4.3%, respectively; $p < .001$).

Conclusions: As in studies with other type of samples, SPP is related to disordered eating in overweight women.