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**THE IMPACT OF PERFECTIONISM ON RISK TAKING
ATTITUDE IN A SAMPLE OF LEBANESE
POPULATION**

THESIS RELEASE FORM

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL AND
BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
PSYCHOLOGY AT HAIGAZIAN UNIVERSITY**

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April 27, 2010

Date: April 27, 2010

Haigazian University

THE IMPACT OF PERFECTIONISM ON RISK TAKING ATTITUDE IN
A SAMPLE OF LEBANESE POPULATION

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THE IMPACT OF PERFECTIONISM ON RISK TAKING ATTITUDE IN
A SAMPLE OF LEBANESE POPULATION

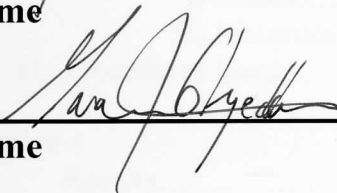
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I dedicate my work to the memory of my beloved uncle,

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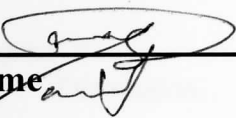

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With a deep breath, I express my sincere thanks to my advisor Dr Hanine Hout for her support and never ending guidance. She is a loving professor whom I would never be able to repay for her care, efforts and constant encouragement.

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I want to thank my parents for their sleepless nights at my desk throughout my academic years, for their loving, caring, great efforts and moral support.

I would like also to share these happy moments with my brother, Raffi, for being my source of inspiration. I shall also remember my brother's wife, Nadia for the pride she holds on me.

Finally, I would like to thank all whose direct and indirect support helped me completing my thesis.

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Abstract

The Impact of Perfectionism on Risk Taking Attitude in a Sample of Lebanese Population

A research was conducted to test the relationship between perfectionism and risk taking. The study investigated the negative correlation between perfectionism and risk taking and examined the participants' high expectation scores on the dart board game prior to playing. The study also investigated the participants' low satisfaction scores post performance on the dart board game.

A convenient sample of 170 students and employees, completed several measures, including the Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale and Domain Specific Risk Taking Scale. Further participants hit 15 throws on the dart board game and rated their expectation and performance satisfaction scores on a 0-100 scale. Results showed that there is negative correlation between perfectionism and risk taking. However the results did not substantiate the initially hypothesized relationship for the second hypothesis; there was no significant relationship between perfectionism and participant satisfaction scores on the actual score. Finally, analysis displayed that there was a positive correlation between perfectionism and frequency of distance changes. Implications of the results were discussed and directions for future research were proposed.

Background of the Study

The tremendous pressure to be perfect: perfect holiday package tours, perfect career, perfect salary, perfect wedding party, perfect couple, perfect children, the best decision made, perfect performance, even a "Perfect Bride" program on TV! Men and women are bombarded with the ideas of perfectionism, an all or nothing mindset. In this perfectionistic fantasy world, the perfectionist sets high standards; he/she is never satisfied with his/her performance or achievements and even has rigidity for changes.

Also on the other hand, parents today have high standards for their children, expect the highest achievements, apply harsh rules and push their children towards educational

The Impact of Perfectionism on Risk Taking Attitude in a Sample of Lebanese Population

Introduction

Perfectionists believe that perfection can and should be attained in everything and that anything less than perfect is unacceptable. In fact research on perfectionism has increased exponentially over the past two decades (Flett & Hewitt, 2005).

Different researchers have reviewed the various definitions, measures of perfectionism and its positive and negative aspects (Terry-Short, Owens, Slade & Dewey, 1995), whereas clinicians have focused on the debilitating effects of perfectionism and its linkage with interpersonal problems, parenting styles, psychopathologies and resolution to decisions (Frost, 1990, Flett & Hewitt, 2004).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between perfectionism and risk taking attitudes. Perfectionists differ from nonperfectionists in the way they set standards, their level of performance satisfaction and their resolution to decision making involving risk taking and uncertainty.

Background of the Study

The tremendous pressure to be perfect: perfect holiday package tours, perfect career, perfect salary, perfect wedding party, perfect couple, perfect children, the best decision made, perfect performance, even a “Perfect Bride” program on TV! Men and women are bombarded with the ideas of perfectionism, an all or nothing mindset. In this perfectionistic fantasy world, the perfectionist sets high standards; he/she is never satisfied with his/her performance or achievements and even has rigidity for changes.

Also on the other hand, parents today have high standards for their children, expect the highest achievements, apply harsh rules and push their children towards educational

successes. The child strives hard to satisfy the demands of his/her parents, teachers and important others and puts high standards and unrealistic goals to get the approval of others, whilst on the other hand avoiding situations where the risk is evident. It is significant to remark, that no two variables are more influential to the climate and flow of new ideas than creativity and risk-taking. Being creative involves taking chances and risks. And while a child is under close scrutiny and criticism, this will lead to risk aversive behavior and lack of creativity, or even to personality disorders, since perfectionism is a major diagnostic criterion for one DSM-IV-TR diagnosis, and it has been hypothesized to play a major role in a wide variety of psychopathologies (Hewitt & Flett, 1991).

Statement of the Problem

Research on perfectionism and its effect as a personality trait in the field of psychology has burgeoned in the last decade. Of all the positive qualities of the idea of being a perfectionist, the aspects of risk taking, expectations, setting standards and decision making are in congruent with perfectionism. For several reasons perfectionists differ with the way they set standards, their satisfaction with their performance and their approach to risk taking situations from those with low perfectionistic traits. A large body of studies supports the hypothesis that perfectionists set high standards, are rigid in their decision making, avoid changes and are less satisfied with their performance than non perfectionists (Frost, 1990).

So the question is: does perfectionism in conjunction with satisfaction, expectation and decision making scores relate to the risk taking trait?

disorder. The disorders considered included anxiety disorders, mood disorders, impulse-control disorders and substance-use disorders. Mental disorders are common in Lebanon, with a prevalence equivalent to that in Western Europe; however the number of Lebanese people receiving treatment is much lower than in Western countries (Karam et al, 2006).

More specifically, the researcher hypothesized the following:

1. There will be negative correlation between scores on the perfectionism scale and those on the risk taking scale.
2. Participants who score high on the perfectionism scale will tend to set high expectation scores on the game.
3. There will be negative correlation between participant scores on the perfectionism scale and their satisfaction scores with achieved scores on the dart board.
4. There will be negative correlation between scores on the perfectionism scale and number of distance changes from the dart board.

The Professional Significance of the Study

By examining the relationship of perfectionism to risk taking attitude, this study will be addressing the relationship and importance of perfectionism and risk taking attitude in the Lebanese youth population. Taking into consideration that many Lebanese parents are demanding, apply harsh parenting styles, have high expectations of their children in addition to being over protective, one can assume that the Lebanese children would suffer from a range of maladaptive traits, such as social anxiety, depression, suicidal ideation, addiction, interpersonal problems, career decision making difficulties, eating disorders, low self esteem, procrastination, risk aversive behaviour and many others.

An epidemiological survey in Lebanon showed that 17% of the population surveyed between September 2002 and September 2003 met criteria for at a 12-month DSM-IV-TR disorder. The disorders considered included anxiety disorders, mood disorders, impulse-control disorders and substance-use disorders. Mental disorders are common in Lebanon, with a prevalence equivalent to that in Western Europe; however the number of Lebanese people receiving treatment is much lower than in Western countries (Karam et al, 2006).

Through this study it would be beneficial to shed light on perfectionism and its impact on risk taking perception for the well being of the Lebanese youth. Moreover, the exploration of perfectionism and risk taking attitude might answer some of the questions about the Lebanese parenting style, in regard to parental expectation and criticism.

The study may produce meaningful results on the perception of the importance of playing games and taking chances of winning and losing, because games can test the response of the player and sharpen the reflex and judgment time, as well games train the brain to function better and faster (Nickerson, 2008).

Finally, the Lebanese specifically university students, may gain awareness into the manner of perfectionism and risk taking traits, as well as become aware of the negative impacts of adopting perfectionistic attitudes and risk taking behavior in everyday life situations, such as studying, decision making and having fun.

Overview of Methodology

This study is a quantitative study that relied on an experiment and correlational analyses. Self-report measures, dart board game scores, the participants' expectation scores prior to the game, the self rating on the satisfaction scale after the game as well as the scores on the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale and Domain Specific Risk Taking Scale were used as data for this study.

A correlational bivariate analysis was used to examine the association between the perfectionism trait in relation to risk taking attitude. Further, correlational bivariate analysis was used to measure expectation, satisfaction scores in relation to risk taking and perfectionism.

The subjects were asked to do the following tasks in this order: 1) Fill out both scales, 2) set their expectation scores on dart board game, 3) play on the dart board by throwing 15 darts and rate their performance satisfaction of their actual score.

Expectation

In the case of certainty, expectation is considered the most likely to happen. An

Delimitations

It is evident that research in this area is sparse at present and there could be various delimitations. The wide age range of the sample could be an obstacle in defining the relationship between perfectionism and risk taking traits in the Lebanese, since there is a negative correlation between age and risk taking. Secondly, the dart board as an instrument to measure perfectionism wasn't the best. Thirdly, the sampling method of the study was a method of convenient sampling which constituted hospital employees and university students. Taking into considerations the above mentioned limitations, it is important to replicate the study to establish generalizability.

Perfectionism

In psychology, perfectionism is a personality trait in which a person and should be attained. In its

Definitions of key Terms

of that work or output that is anything less than perfect is

Authoritarian Parenting Style

Authoritarian parents have a strong focus on discipline and setting limits with less emphasis on expressions of parental love. They expect much of their child, but do not explain the reasoning for the rules or boundaries; they are unresponsive to children's needs, they expect children to comply with their demands and no questions asked, and failure to follow such rules usually results in punishment (Van Wagner, 2009).

It is engaging in any activity with an uncertain outcome. The risk taking behaviour is the

participation in behaviours that contain or at least are seen to contain a significant

Darts Game

It is a traditional pub game, commonly played in the United Kingdom. In the standard game, the dartboard is hung so that the bull's-eye is 1.73m from the floor, and the line behind which

the throwing player must stand is generally 2.37m from the face of the dartboard measured horizontally (W. J., 2004).

Expectation

In the case of certainty, expectation is what is considered the most likely to happen. An expectation is a belief that is centralized on the future and may or may not be realistic. A less advantageous result gives rise to the emotion of disappointment asserts Lazarus (1991).

Indecision

Inability or failure to reach to a decision or an uncertainty resulting from a wavering two or more possible courses of action. It is the state of vacillation or irresolution (Merriam-Webster, 2003).

Perfectionism

In psychology, perfectionism is the belief that perfection can and should be attained. In its pathological form, it is a belief that work or output that is anything less than perfect is unacceptable. Lexically, it is defined as the state of flawlessness, an exemplification of supreme excellence, an unsurpassable degree of accuracy or excellence, Merriam Webster (2003).

Risk Taking

It is engaging in any activity with an uncertain outcome. The risk taking behaviour is the voluntary participation in behaviours that contain or at least are seen to contain a significant degree of risk. It is the accepting of the need for change and taking the behavioural steps that will result in that change (Dohman et al, 2005).

Satisfaction

Is the act or the state of being satisfied; contentment, gratification of desire. It is the contentment in possession and enjoyment; repose of mind resulting from compliance with its desires or demands (www.brainyquote.com).

Well Being

Is a positive indicator of basic satisfaction with oneself and one's existence or life satisfaction (Huebner, 2001). Well being is a good or satisfactory condition of existence; a state characterized by health, happiness, and prosperity, (www.dictionary.reference.com).

Theoretical Literature

In a positive form, perfectionism can provide energy which leads to great achievements; whereas perfectionism fused with a punishing attitude towards one's own effort can paralyze the imagination, kill the spirit and so handicap performance that an individual may fulfil the promise of an early talent (Roedell, 1984).

The literature reviews tend to emphasise the unhealthy aspects of perfectionism and its correlations with personality traits.

Previous research with Adler, (as cited in Biran and Reese, 2007) stated that the striving for perfection is a normal and innate aspect of human development, "the striving for perfection is innate in the sense that it is a part of life, a striving, an urge, something that without which life would be unthinkable" (Biran & Reese, 2007, p.28).

On the other hand, general assessment of perfectionism has been characterized as an overly self critical to judge the self against excessively high standards (Frost, Marian, Labart

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Since the intent of the present study was on measuring essentially the possible connection between a perfectionistic trait and a risk taking attitude, and further the setting of high expectations on the game and satisfaction affect on their actual scores of performance, the researcher had to explore the available literature on issues and constructs such as parental criticism and expectation, concern over mistakes, while highlighting the aspects in relation with risk taking trait. The measurement and definition of perfectionism to be discussed are: definition and measurement, perfectionism and psychopathology, perfectionism and risk taking, perfectionism and parenthood, perfectionism and university students, perfectionism and decision making, playing games and finally the risk taking attitude.

Theoretical Literature

In a positive form, perfectionism can provide energy which leads to great achievements; whereas perfectionism fused with a punishing attitude towards one's own effort can paralyze the imagination, kill the spirit and so handicap performance that an individual may fulfil the promise of an early talent (Roedell, 1984).

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On the other hand, general assessment of perfectionism has been characterized as an overly self critical to judge the self against excessively high standards (Frost, Martan, Lahart

& Rosenblate, 1990). Perfectionism is usually regarded as a vulnerability factor for later pathology (Blatt, 1995). Some dimensions of perfectionism are clearly related to OCD symptomatology (concern and doubts about mistakes) whereas others are not (other oriented perfectionism), (Frost & Steketee, 2002).

Early theories conceptualized perfectionism as a unidimensional personality style (Burns 1980 & Pacht 1984). Yet, recent research has advanced our understanding of the multidimensional nature of this construct (Hewitt, Flett & Wendy, 1991). The validity of such multidimensional approaches has been supported by correlational studies using self report assessments (Frost et al 1990).

An influential research in the literature review that is essential to be discussed is the importance of personality traits of three types of perfectionism (Hewitt & Flett 1996 as cited by McGarvey 1999). Firstly, it has been hypothesized that with self-oriented perfectionism the person sets high standards and uses them to evaluate his/her own performance and emphasises his/her own achievements. Self-oriented perfectionism is associated with excessive self criticism, unrealistic expectations, feeling of worthlessness, need of additional information before making decisions, and finally is related to depressive symptoms and dysphoria.

Secondly, the other-oriented perfectionism is associated with relationship problems, poor marital satisfaction, sexual dissatisfaction, anger towards others, authoritarianism and dominance. These perfectionists set unrealistic standards for significant others, place importance on other people being perfect and stringently evaluate others, (McGarvey, 1996). Other and self-oriented perfectionism are both associated with narcissism, antisocial and histrionic subscales (McGarvey, 1996).

Thirdly, the socially prescribed perfectionism is correlated significantly with measures of demand for approval of others, fear of negative evaluation and locus of control. They believe

that others have unrealistic standards for them, evaluate them stringently, and exert pressure on them to be perfect.

Taking into consideration that self-oriented and social-oriented perfectionists set high standards and use them to evaluate their own performance, in this study it was hypothesized that the participants' expectation scores is measured prior to the game as to determine the high standards set by the participants on the dart board game.

On the other hand, Hamachek (1978) introduced the existence of Normal and Neurotic perfectionism. He theorized that normal perfectionists set high goals and feel free to be less precise as the situation permits. They feel good about their accomplishment, and accept minor mistakes. According to Hamachek (1978) "positive perfectionists strive for high standards resulting in feelings of accomplishment and satisfaction," (Hamachek, 1978, p.28). On the contrary, the neurotic perfectionist has an extremely limited range of acceptable performance and never feels his/her efforts are good enough. Similarly, Hollander, (1965), Frost, Marten, Lahart, and Rosenblate, (1990) have theorized that neurotic perfectionists are concerned about what they do wrong, rather than what they do is correctly. Even more, they never rejoice in their work. Whereas normal perfectionists find satisfaction in their work, which enhances their self esteem. Based upon the literature, in this research, hypothesis three examined the satisfaction score of participants in their achieved score on the dart board game, in order to investigate if there was any significant relation between satisfaction score and Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS).

Slaney created the "Almost Perfect Scale" (1996), which constitutes 4 variables: standards and order, relationships, anxiety and procrastination. The scale differentiates between adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism. He hypothesized that both types rate high in standards and orders, but maladaptive rates high in anxiety and procrastination.

Further, he theorized that adaptive perfectionists strive for goals that are attainable, while maladaptive perfectionists strive for goals that are unrealistic and strive for superior performance. These people have immense fear of criticism, concern about making mistakes, overemphasis on order, and desiring complete admiration. They develop self-centeredness, lack of social interest, because they fear defeat. Adaptive perfectionists strive towards perfectionism that benefits all whereas maladaptive strive for personal growth (Szymanski's diary), as cited in Goldberg, (2009). According to psychologists Dellas and Gaier (1973) in their review on creativity and risk taking, they stated that creative individuals have less fear than the average person of making mistakes, social disapproval or the anxiety of separateness.

Taking into consideration the above mentioned maladaptive perfectionistic traits and risk taking aspect, the first hypothesis examines the relation between perfectionistic and risk taking trait, hereby reflecting on parental criticism and concern over mistakes.

A further concept that comprises the component of perfectionism trait (Rheume et al. 2000) is that perfectionism can be categorized also under two descriptive categories: the functional, and the dysfunctional perfectionists.

Study results show that dysfunctional perfectionists score high on obsessive compulsive behaviour scale than the functional perfectionists. Moreover, functional perfectionists were more occupied about solving the problem than the quality of their performance, conversely to the dysfunctional perfectionists, (Frost, 2002).

Finally, Frost et al. (1990) emphasized problematic aspects of perfectionism in their development of six subscales in their Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale; (Personal Standards, Concerns About Mistakes, Parental Criticism, Parental Expectations, Doubts About Actions, and Organization). It is important to add here that F-MPS is gaining popularity for use in assessing perfectionism in clinical samples and non clinical samples.

Empirical Research

Perfectionism and Psychopathology

Historically, perfectionism has been associated with a variety of clinically relevant problems (Hewitt, 1991). Perfectionism is considered as a major diagnostic criterion for one Diagnostic Statistical Measurement-IV-TR diagnosis, and it has been hypothesized to play a major role in a wide variety of psychopathologies (Frost, 1990).

Theory and evidence suggest that perfectionism and personality pathology commonly co-occur and that perfectionistic behaviour influence the development and the sequelae of personality pathology (Bruch, 1981).

Only recently researchers have started to investigate the role of perfectionism and it has been admitted in the field of psychology as a trait. Perfectionism has been assessed in many ways; it has been found to be related to depression (Burns, 1980; Frost & Marten, 1990; Hewitt & Flett 1991, 1991; Pacht, 1984), chronic pain (Liebman, 1978; Van Houdenhove, 1986), Coronary Disease (Pacht, 1984; Smith & Brehm, 1981), eating disorders (Symanski, 1995; Cooper, Cooper & Fairburn, 1985; Minarik & Ahrens, 1996; Mizes, 1998), Procrastination (Ferrari, 1992; Flett, Blakenstein, Hewitt, & Koledin, 1992), Anxiety (Flett, Hewitt & Dyck, 1989) and suicide (Burns, 1980; Hewitt, Flett, & Turnbull-Donavan, 1992), (Hewitt, 2006).

In plenty of studies it has been found that socially oriented perfection is linked to personality disorders. For instance as Paul Hewitt (1992), found a strong association between socially oriented perfectionism and paranoid subscale, whereas Flett (1996) associated perfectionism with a variety of psychological adjustment problems, from greater loneliness, shyness, fear of negative evaluation, lower self esteem and to less constructive thinking.

In the context of the present study, it is important to note that research by Juster (1996) showed that Social phobia patients scored higher on subscales assessing Concern over Mistakes, Doubts about Actions, and perceived Parental Criticism of the MPS scale. Correlational analysis confirmed that the concern over mistakes and doubts about actions subscales of the MPS were consistently associated with greater social anxiety, trait anxiety, and general psychopathology (Juster, 1996). Based upon the previous studies mentioned above, hypothesis one of this study will show that a negative correlation exists between perfectionism and risk taking trait.

Mallinger and DeWyze's (1992) describe perfectionists as having obsessive personality types. Perfectionists are obsessive individuals who need to feel in control all the time to protect themselves and ensure their own safety. The authors doubt if perfectionists even enjoy their leisure time as joyful activities are considered burdens for them (Mallinger, 1992). This provides context for the third hypothesis, which hypothesizes that those who score high on perfectionism scale will have low satisfaction scores on the actual dart board.

Finally, it is significant to note and crucial to state that Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (APA, 1994) emphasises the importance of perfectionism to Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder. Mallinger (1992), states that individuals who showed high obsessive-compulsive tendencies reported being significantly more perfectionistic than individuals who showed lower obsessive-compulsive tendencies. Even more, Panic Disorder was associated with moderate elevations on the Concern over Mistakes and Doubts about Actions subscales of the MPS scale, Anthony (1998).

With regard to the parental upbringing and various personality disorders with perfectionism, and considering the fact that 57% of the sample of the present study is university students, it is crucial to consider and review another factor in depth perfectionism in university students.

Perfectionism and University Students

There is a considerable amount of studies done among university students in the literature on several traits with perfectionism.

In retrospect perfectionism with university students, a research has shown that fear of failure component of procrastination was linked broadly with all perfectionism dimensions (Flett, 1992). The aspect of fear of failure is closely related to the fourth hypothesis, which explains participants decide to choose the distances less often to throw the darts, in order to avoid failure and also this hypothesis explains perfectionists' rigidity in their decisions.

A recent study on the relationship between perfectionism and life satisfaction among American youth and Croatian students (Gilman & Ashby, 2003) found that adaptive perfectionists reported higher self-satisfaction than either maladaptive perfectionists or non-perfectionists across many life domains. The Croatian group was chosen given the decades-long war experiences suffered by its youth. The country's debilitating economic, social, and occupational constraints have forced the Croatian students to follow higher education and to impose stricter admission standards among students, which in turn have led to greater emphasis on achievement and academic outcomes (Knezevic & Ovsenik, 2001). The findings suggested that what may be problematic for youth, regardless of culture, was not the setting of high personal standards per se, but an unwillingness to accept the inevitable fact that such standards will not be constantly met. Based upon the Lebanese living through long years under political turmoil and occupational and economic constraints, the present research hypothesizes that participants set high expectation scores on the dart board game due to student higher ambitions and achievements and secondly due to the parenting style.

There is another interesting study that lends additional support to the importance of the current study because the study has used MPS scale on a sample of Lebanese university students, as in this research. The study was done in 2005 on Lebanese students of the AUB

and UK students on the influence of perfectionism, self esteem and self efficacy on self handicapping in studying in relation to individualism and collectivism (Pulford, Johnson and Awaida, 2005).

By self handicapping process, Urdan and Midgley (2001) explain that some people intentionally hinder their own performance if they feel uncertain of their ability to succeed and fear failure, and that involves strategies of externalization so that an individual can excuse failure and internalize success. Considering the fact of fear of failure, the present study's fourth hypothesis claims that participants who score high on MPS scale will change less often their distances due to fear of failure.

Further, Higgins, Snyder, and Berglas (1990) suggested that self-handicappers are mostly concerned with safeguarding the self and do this through the construction of obstacles to good performance. Hobden and Pliner (1995) suggested that self-orientated and socially-prescribed perfectionists might well self-handicap. Thus, perfectionist's influence on self-handicapping may differ in individualist and collectivist cultures. Lebanon was considered a collectivist culture, and the Lebanese would have higher levels of family integrity and interdependence. The study hypothesized that the British would have higher levels of self-orientated perfectionism than the Lebanese, who would have higher levels of other-orientated and socially-prescribed perfectionism. Moreover, analysis showed that the Lebanese students showed higher levels of all three measures of perfectionism; Self, Other and Social Oriented perfectionism. The Lebanese students were more concerned with striving for high personal standards of perfection than the British students; perhaps because they felt that they must not let down their community, they experience others' expectations of them more strongly than the British students. For both British and Lebanese students, Self-orientated perfectionism scores were negatively associated with Self-handicapping scores, which indicates that perfectionists are less likely to use self-handicapping as a protective mechanism.

Lebanese students tended to score high on measures of self esteem and all forms of perfectionism than the British students. With regard to the higher levels of Socially-prescribed and other-orientated Perfectionism in the Lebanese, the findings can be accounted to the fact that the Lebanese placing more emphasis on family integrity than the British students. As Lebanese students appear to have a closer bond with those around them, it may be that they experience others' expectations of them more strongly than the British students, which in turn results in higher levels of Socially-prescribed Perfectionism as well as increasing their Self-orientated Perfectionism. This theory corresponds with the finding that the Lebanese students have higher levels of Other-orientated Perfectionism than the British participants. The Lebanese students were significantly more perfectionistic than British students, on all MPS subscales; this was not associated with higher levels of self-handicapping overall or lower self-efficacy. The results described above are in agreement with hypothesis number two that predicts positive correlational relationship between MPS scale and participants' expectation scores on the dart board.

With regard to satisfaction, which is one of the variables in this study, an interesting research was done in the context of perfectionists' feedback on performance by Bessers, Flett, and Hewitt, (2004) on 200 students. Students performed a laboratory task of varying levels of difficulty. Participants received either negative or positive performance feedback, independent of their actual level of performance. Analyses of pre-task and post-task measures of negative and positive affect indicated that individuals with high self-oriented perfectionism evaluated highly performance feedback and were in negative affect after performing the task. Also low self-oriented perfectionists who received negative feedback were likely to report decreases in positive affect (Besser et al., 2008).

Further analyses showed that self-oriented perfectionists who received negative feedback responded with a cognitive orientation characterized by performance dissatisfaction, cognitive

rumination, and irrational task importance. Thus it was stated that perfectionism was associated with negative automatic thoughts, negative affective reactions, and lower state self-esteem. Analyses of changes in mood and self-esteem showed generally that participants high in socially prescribed perfectionism had increased levels of dysphoria and anxiety and lower levels of state self-esteem following the experience of negative performance feedback or after having a relatively poor performance (Besser, Flett & Hewitt, 2004).

In line of the reviews on performance feedback, hypothesis three in the current study will provide evidence that as participants score high on MPS scale they will have the tendency to be less satisfied with their total scores on the dart board game.

Researchers have emphasized the studies on perfectionism and university students during the past years. According to the Research Consortium of Counseling and Psychological Services to Higher Education (2003), 26% of women and 21% of men who sought clinical services at college counseling centers reported experiencing perfectionism that was "quite distressing or extremely distressing." This prevalence is consistent with the traditional conceptualization of perfectionism as a maladaptive construct linked to numerous psychological, interpersonal, and achievement-oriented difficulties (Dickinson, 2005). Further, perfectionism was found to be a significant predictor of poor adjustment and elevated levels of psychological distress in college student populations (Rice, Ashby, & Slaney, 1998).

A significant body of empirical work has found another critical factor, the suicidal ideation in university students. Suicidal ideation is one of the symptoms of major depression and bipolar depression. A study was conducted by Hamilton & Schweitzer (2000) in order to assess the relationship between dimensions of perfectionism and suicide ideation in a 450 tertiary student population in Australia. Students completed the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) and the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale. Results showed that the presence of suicide ideation was associated with higher scores on total perfectionism and two

perfectionism dimensions and total GHQ scores. Further, the findings indicate that high levels of perfectionism may be associated with an increased vulnerability to suicide ideation, (Hamilton & Schweitzer, 2000).

With regard to this interrelationship obtained between perfectionism and suicidal ideation and psychological distress, it is essential to reflect upon perfectionism in university students in Lebanon.

Risk Taking

According to Hara Estroff Marano, (2008), perfectionists do not like risks, they avoid change, and tend to worry and ruminate.

Back to the basic and genetics, people have a risk taking instinct, which causes them to deal with any dangerous situations eagerly, and likewise human beings are intrinsic risk takers, who survive and who thrive on risks. Bensimhon (1992) reported in Science Daily (2005). Moreover, Israeli scientists have found a gene known as D4DR that influences people's characteristics. The scientists believe that people who have the gene tend to look for thrills.

Research indicates that the inclination to take high risks might be hard-wired into the brain, related to the arousal and pleasure mechanisms, however this tendency affects one in five people, and mostly young males and which declines with age, (Robert, 2009). A study examined the effects of chronological age, and the profile of household financial risk taking. The findings support the conventional wisdom that risk taking decreases with age. This finding is consistent with households taking less risk in response to decreasing financial security over time, (Jianakoplos & Bernasek, 2006). Even more, the older adults, relative to their younger peers, presented with contralateral prefrontal activity, particularly at the orbitofrontal cortex. Furthermore, stronger activation of the right insula was observed for the

older-aged participants compared to the younger-aged adults, (Lee, Leung, Fox, Gao and Chan, 2008).

Along with these physical reactions, perfectionistic behavior likewise produces physical responses. An interesting research was done to test the hypothesis that perfectionism is an important moderator of the neuroendocrine stress response. Results show that men in stress with higher perfectionism predicting increased neuroendocrine activation. Perfectionism seems to contribute independently to stress-induced bodily responses, including hypothalamus-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis activation, in response to psychosocial stress (Wirtz, 2007).

Studies show that the brain craves for arousal, as Salvador Maddi warns, “high risk takers are easily bored and have hard time to derive meaning and purpose from everyday life, they are out there to seek out challenges”, (Maddi, 1994), cited by Paul Roberts in Men’s Health (1992). This describes the fourth hypothesis; as participants’ MPS scores correlate positively with less change number of distance changes, accordingly participants’ Domain Specific Risk Taking Attitude Scale (DOSPERT) scores correlates positively with high number of distance changes during the dart board game.

Another interesting factor with risk taking trait is how people get confidence after thriving risks, (Bensimhon, cited in Men’s Health, 1992). In this case, people have the best moments when their body or mind is stretched to its limits while they are taking risks. After accomplishing them, they feel very confident. Dr Marvin Zuckerman, psychologist and author of Sensation Seeking describes risk taking as daring to try new approaches or ideas with no predictable control over results or consequences.

Interesting to mention that empirical evidence shows that greater risk taking is associated with personal successes (MacCrimon & Wehrung, 1990 as cited by Weber (2003).

As George Bernard Shaw commented on risk takers, "I believe the reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable man persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on the unreasonable man". Risk takers see the obscure and imagine "the obvious," to construct productively novel solutions, thus leap from the familiar into the unknown. Creative risk-takers are set to disrupt rigid or conventional patterns, to tear down their world in order to rebuild with new vision and construct a new synthesis.

With regard to the fact that risk takers like novelty for a better vision of future, and provided that perfectionists are well known for their rigidity characteristics, the fourth hypothesis in this study was based on the prediction that there will be negative correlation between scores on the perfectionism scale and number of distance changes from the dart board during the game.

With regard to perfectionism and risk taking, Csikszentmihalyi (1982; 1990), explains *Perfectionism and Decision Making* as follows: "The essence of risk (challenges) and competence (skills). Because

Lulia Mihai (2009) stated that, Perfectionists might also have problems with decision making, searching for the one perfect solution to a situation rather than choosing from a variety less perfect possibilities. She further describes the ineffective decision maker as slow to decide and procrastinate. A perfectionist such as, has the strong need to be always right, misses deadlines and can not make complex decisions. As it is hypothesized in the fourth hypothesis, those with high perfectionism scores will have the tendency to have less number of distance changes during their dart board game.

Following hypotheses were studied:

The paradox of using games as a model for life is that games are a part of real life themselves, as well as being self-contained miniature worlds/special situations (Nicholas, 1988). Apropos that perfectionism is pervasive and affects every aspect of life of the perfectionist, including in particular leisure (Blatt, 1995; Slaney & Ashby, 1996).

Consequently, perfectionists may feel less freedom, enjoyment, and involvement in leisure than non-perfectionists (Jeffrey, 1999), considering the fact that the present study constitutes the dart board which is a high leisure activity and at the same time standard directed.

This study hypothesized that perfectionists would differ significantly from nonperfectionists in leisure satisfaction and attitudes, with perfectionists being less satisfied with their leisure activities and having more negative attitudes toward leisure than non-perfectionists, and maladaptive perfectionists being less satisfied with their leisure activities and having more negative attitudes toward leisure than adaptive perfectionists. The participants noted that holding these high standards was frequently problematic for them, sometimes precluding pursuit and/or enjoyment of leisure activities.

With regard to perfectionism and risk taking, Csikszentmihalyi (1982; 1990), explains that behavior is based on the variables of risk (challenges) and competence (skills). Because perfectionists have a high level of personal standards, naturally an exaggerated perception of the risks involved with particular leisure activities and an underrated perception of their own competence is expected. Consequently, they may not be willing to take advantage of opportunities for leisure, because they are afraid they will fail and that the risk of failure is high due to their own inability to perform equivalent to their own standards (Jeffrey, 1999).

In light of the above discussed review of literature, the purpose of this study was to show the existence of a relationship between perfectionism and risk taking as well as a between perfectionism and scores on expectation, satisfaction and choices of distances on the dart board game. More specifically, the following hypotheses were studied:

Hypothesis 1: There will be negative correlation between scores on the perfectionism scale and those on the risk taking scale.

Hypothesis 2: Participants who score high on the perfectionism scale will tend to set high expectation scores on the game.

Hypothesis 3: There will be negative correlation between participant scores on the perfectionism scale and their satisfaction scores with achieved scores on the dart board.

Hypothesis 4: There will be negative correlation between scores on the perfectionism scale and number of distance changes from the dart board.

The Research Context

The research activity covered a two-month period, from February to April 2008, and it took place in two sites: in an office in a hospital in the Beirut area and in a classroom at Halgazian University. For purposes of confidentiality, the hospital name will be preserved.

The Research Participants

The sampling procedure used by the researcher was convenience sampling. The participants were restricted to two sites: those who attended the university and were willing to participate in the study, and those who worked in the hospital. Participants of this research included 97 students (54 females and 43 males) from the university; they belonged to different departments and 74 employees (50 females and 24 males) from the hospital, with various professions; such as lab technicians, doctors, nurses, dieticians, secretaries and pharmacists. The participants belonged to different religious, socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds and their age range varied between 17 and 50.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The General Perspective

As a quantitative study, research reported embodied both experimental and correlational perspectives. Two different measurement scales were used: a nominal scale, to record the sample site name, sex and profession of the subjects and an interval scale to specify how far apart two distances are on the distance measurement on the floor. There was no true zero, and the intervals were equal.

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Instruments Used in Data Collection

Several instruments were used in the data collection process.

Scales

1) Risk Taking: The Domain- Specific Risk-Taking Scale, (DOSPRT by Weber, Blais, and Betz, 2002). The scale has a self-report 40-item inventory that assesses the perceived-risk attitudes, that is how risky each activity/behavior is as a function of its perceived riskiness in five commonly encountered content domains; Ethical (“Having an affair with a married man/woman”), Financial (“Investing 10% of your annual income in a new business venture”) Health/Safety (“Engaging in unprotected sex”), Social (“Disagreeing with an authority figure on a major issue”), and Recreational decisions (“Taking a weekend sky-diving class”). The response scale had 5 points, ranging from ‘1’ to ‘5’, (1=‘Strongly disagree’ to 5=‘Strongly agree’). Mean scores were calculated for each of the risk domains, with higher scores indicating greater risk behaviors. The coefficient alpha range across all items was reported as $\alpha = 0.74$ to 0.83 . Mean scores were calculated for each of the risk domains, with higher scores indicating greater risk behaviors likelihood (Blais, 2006).

2) Perfectionism: The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS; Randy Frost, 1990). This is a 35 item self-report inventory that is designed to measure perfectionism. MPS is composed of five subscales: Concern over Mistakes (“I should be upset if I make a mistake”), Personal Standards (“I set higher goals for myself than most people”), Parent Expectations (My parents set very high standards for me”), Parental Criticism (“I never felt like I could meet my parents’ expectations”), Organization (“Organization is very important for me”), Doubting of Actions (“It takes me a long time to do something right”) . Responses are rated

on a 5-point scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” (1) to “strongly agree” (5). Each of the six subscales is scored by summing the items.

The internal consistency alpha values are the following:

Overall Perfectionism measure = .90, Concern over Mistakes = .88, Personal Standards = .83, Parental Expectations = .84, Parental Criticism = .84, Doubts about Actions = .77, Organization = .93.

The MPS is one of the most commonly employed measures for the assessment of perfection in non-clinical and clinical populations, adolescents and university students. The scale correlates highly with depression, low self esteem, social problems, parental criticism, and phobias of making mistakes.

3) Expectations scale for the target set standards. Setting standards for scores was evaluated by a single question before the game: “How much do you expect to score in this game?” Response will be a single number from 0 to 3000, (Appendix C).

4) Affect. Evaluating their performance satisfaction after the game by a single question: “How satisfied are you with your performance on the dart board game from zero to hundred?” The responses will be a single number from 0 to 100 (Appendix E).

Materials

Game. Adult Dart Board game with 41cm diameter and divided into 3 colors, yellow, black and red, with 6 red and green darts. A tape of 3.43m long was glued on the floor. The distances on the tape were divided into 10 parts, each separated by 27cm and marked by different colors. Participants chose the distances ranging from 1.00m to 3.43m. The score hit by the participant was multiplied by each distance that was chosen; such as if the participant

was standing on the distance 3 (red line), the score was multiplied by three. As the participants got farther away from the dart board his/her score was multiplied by a bigger number respectively (Appendix C). Each distance interval line on the tape was colored in order to facilitate recording the distances on the chart of scores hit.

Log chart of scores

A chart was used firstly to record the participant's expectation score prior to the game, secondly, the scores hit on each throw and finally the total score on 15 hits (Appendix D).

Procedures Used

University participants were asked to participate in an experiment during their break and between sessions through personal contacts and in exchange for extra credit, whereas hospital participants were asked to participate in the experiment via mail and telephone calls at their convenient schedule. All the participants were promised that they would be offered a Lebanese landscape, black and white photo greeting card, after the experiment was completed; also they were assured that confidentiality and anonymity were highly appreciated. They were told that by participating in this study they would be contributing to the success and completion of an MA thesis which was conducted by one of the graduate students.

The study was conducted in a classroom in the university, where the dart board was hung properly on a wall and the participant was alone with the researcher; the same conditions were applied in an office in the hospital.

Firstly, participants were asked to fill in the perfectionism and risk taking scales (without any titles). The questionnaire contained a page which included a general idea about the purpose of the study (in order to avoid biases in certain items of the questionnaire), the basic

instructions, and an e-mail address (in case participants have any questions about the results of the project).

Then each participant was asked to practice on the dart board by trying six throws. On the floor a scale of lines on a tape was marked by different colors from one to ten for the subjects to stand on aim for the board. Each mark of distance was separated from the other mark by 27 centimeters. The first mark was one meter far from the board; consequently the second mark was far from the dart board by one meter and 27 centimeters. Subsequently the third mark was far by one meter and 54 centimeters and so on. The last mark was three meters and 43 centimeters away from the board and which was the tenth and last mark. The following distances were chosen based on the fact that in the standard game of dart board the distance is two meters and 73 centimeters. Each time the subject hit the board the score was multiplied according to the mark that he/she was standing at. Meanwhile the subject chose the distance to hit the dart whenever he/she wanted during the game. For example, if the subject was standing on the second mark, his/her achieved score was multiplied by two and if the subject was standing on the tenth, which was the last line, his/her score was multiplied by ten. Participants were told that they could practice 6 hits prior to the experiment, which eventually consisted of a total of 15 hits. Afterwards, they were asked to set their expectation on the dart board for throwing 15 hits before starting the game. Finally, and after hitting 15 hits, the participant was asked to rate his/her satisfaction on the total score that he/she has accumulated.

Debriefing was done after the final data analysis was performed and it was released via e-mail and personal contact.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of the following study was to assess the relationship between perfectionistic behaviour and risk taking attitude.

Reliability Analysis

Initially, the multidimensional Perfectionism scale and Domain Specific Risk Taking Attitude scales and their subscales were examined for internal reliability.

The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale on all subscales in this study had adequate internal consistency. The alpha coefficients were all above 0.59 and ranged between 0.59 and 0.81, indicating that all scales showed internal consistency, shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Reliability of subscales used in the following study and in the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale:

Subscale	Cronbach alpha in the present study	Cronbach in the F-MPS	N. of items
Concern Over Mistakes	.74	.88	9
Personal Standards	.65	.83	8
Parental Expectations	.67	.84	4
Parental Criticism	.59	.84	4
Doubts over Actions	.59	.77	4
Organization	.81	.93	4

The Cronbach alpha coefficient for the Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (1991) ranged from .77 to .93.

Table 2 shows the internal consistency estimates for the Domain Specific Risk-Taking Attitude Scale, (DOSPERT) for the present study which ranged from .43 to .74. In previous studies, the internal consistency estimates for the DOSPERT (Blais, & Weber, 2006) ranged from .66 to .84.

Notably, the Ethical subscale score was somewhat lower in this study than the original study (Frost, 1991); consequently, it has not been used in the following tests. Consequently, the coefficient alpha range varied from .56 to .74.

		Number	Percentage
Participants' gender	Female	103	39.4
	Male	67	60.6
Sampling pool	University	96	56.5
	Hospital	74	43.5
	Registered nurse	10	5.9

Table 2
Reliability of the Subscales of Risk Taking Scale and the Present Study.

Subscale	Cronbach a Alpha in this study	Cronbach a Alpha in DOSPERT	N. of Items
Social	.56	.70	8
Recreational	.70	.84	6
Financial	.66	.80	8
Health/Safety	.74	.66	10
Ethical	.43	.68	7

1- Sample Descriptive

Participants from Haigazian University and a hospital in Beirut region were recruited through convenient sampling.

The sample comprised of 170 participants (103 females, 67 males) with an age range of 17 to 50. Participants from the hospital belonged to different occupations, such as physicians, nurses, laboratory technicians, pharmacists and administration staff members as well as university students (see Table 3).

Descriptive Statistics of the Current Study

Table 3

Sample Descriptive Statistics		M	SD	Range	
				Min.	Max
Concern Over Mistakes		21.8	6.15	9	38
Participants' gender				Number Percentage	
Organization	Female	9.97	3.37	4	20
	Male	23.32	5.00	7	30
Sampling pool	University				56.5
	Hospital	9.11	3.35	4	20
Parental Expectation					
Personal Standards	Registered nurse		3.53	5	20
	Doctors	7.15	5.17	11	40
Financial					
Health/Safety	Paramedics	8	5.22	8	17
	Administration		7.10	10	46
Recreation		19.26	6.25	7	34
Ethical		13.71	3.90	7	27
Social		26.71	4.87	14	40
Satisfaction		60.76	2.37	10	100
Expectation		1200.88	606.10	100	2500
Actual Score		685.93	373.03	96	2240
N(170)					

2-Scale Descriptive

The means, standard deviations and ranges for all the variables are listed in Table 4.

Hypothesis (1) predicted a negative correlation between Multidimensional Perfection Scale

Table 4 and Domain Specific Risk Taking Attitude Scale (DOSPERT). To test the hypothesis,

Descriptive Statistics of the Current Study

Perfectionism scales were performed. An analysis was conducted using the MPS and

DOSPERT scales.

As expected, there was a negative correlation between Perfectionism and Risk Taking

($r = -.152, p < .05$). Thus we tended not to reject hypothesis number one.

Hypothesis (2)

The second hypothesis predicted a positive correlation between MPS scores and participant

expectation scores on the dart board game. The results revealed that there is no significant

correlation between MPS scores and expectation scores, ($r = -.018, p < .05$).

Additional analysis was done in order to test the above hypothesis; two-tailed test of bivariate

correlations among the 6 subscales of perfectionism scales and expectation score on the dart

board was performed, refer to Table 5.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis (1)

Hypothesis (1) predicted a negative correlation between Multidimensional Perfection Scale (MPS) and Domain Specific Risk Taking Attitude Scale (DOSPERT). To test the hypothesis, a two tailed Pearson correlations coefficient between the total scores on the Risk Taking and Perfectionism scales were performed. An analysis was conducted using the MPS and DOSPERT scales.

As expected, there was a negative correlation between Perfectionism and Risk Taking, ($r = -.152, p < .05$). Thus we tended not to reject hypothesis number one.

Hypothesis (2)

The second hypothesis predicted a positive correlation between MPS scores and participant expectation scores on the dart board game. The results revealed that there is no significant correlation between MPS scores and expectation scores, ($r = -.018, p < .05$).

Additional analysis was done in order to test the above hypothesis; two-tailed test of bivariate correlations among the 6 subscales of perfectionism scales and expectation score on the dart board was performed, refer to Table 5.

Table 5
Correlation Estimates for Expectation Score and Perfectionism Scale

	Doubts about actions	Concern over mistakes	Parental criticism	Personal standard	Organization	Parental expectation	MPS
Expectation							
Pearson Corr.	-.161*	-.160*	-.190*	-.059	-.024	-.081	-.018
Sign.(2-tailed)	.036	.037	.013	.443	.759	.295	.819
N (170)							

*p <.05, two-tailed.

Correlation between expectation and perfectionism scale as displayed revealed an unexpected link between the MPS scale and the participants' expectation scores.

Expectation was significantly and negatively correlated with Parental Criticism, (r= -0.19, p < .05).

Nevertheless, the correlations computed revealed that there was no association between perfectionism and participant performance expectation, thus we tended to reject hypothesis number two.

Finally, although it wasn't the primary goal of this study, it should be noted that further analysis was done to test for mean expectation difference between males and females.

A t-test was conducted, and the results showed that there was a significant difference between female and male expectations score, whereby male expectation scores was significantly higher than female scores on the dart board game, t= 3.62, (df = 168), p = .000. The analysis revealed significant differences with M= 1402.24 and S.D. = 574.75 for females and M= 1069.90 and SD= 592.41 for males.

Hypothesis (3)

Hypothesis (3) predicted a negative correlation between MPS and performance satisfaction scores on participants' achieved scores on the dart board game. The correlational analysis revealed that the participants' performance satisfaction scores were not related to the perfectionism total score. However, there was only one significant negative correlation between the parental expectation subscale scores and the personal satisfaction on the performance of the game, $r = -0.191$, $p < 0.05$, (see Table 6).

Table 6
Correlation Estimates for Satisfaction Scores and Perfectionism Scale

	Doubts Over actions	Concern about mistakes	Parental criticism	Personal standard	Organization	Parental expectation	MPS
Performance							
Satisfaction							
Pearson Corr.	.080	.032	.079	-.061	-.013	-.191*	-.010
Sign.(2-tailed)	.298	.680	.306	.427	.253	.012	.897
N (170)							

* $p < .05$, two-tailed.

Analysis of MPS and satisfaction scores yielded no significant correlations, therefore hypothesis three which predicted that there will be negative correlation between participant scores on the perfectionism scale and their satisfaction scores with achieved scores on the dart board, was rejected.

Finally, additional analysis was computed on MPS and participant performance satisfaction factors using the t-test. Correlations were conducted between 40 participants who scored the highest on the MPS scale and the 40 participants who scored the lowest on the MPS scale. The mean score on performance satisfaction for participants with the highest scores on MPS

was 62.00 (S.D. = 16.943), $N = 40$, and the mean score on performance satisfaction for participants with the lowest scores on MPS was 63.43, ($SD = 17.480$), and $N = 40$.

The findings were striking because there was no significant difference between participants who scored high and those who scored low on the MPS scale on the performance satisfaction, $t = -.347$, $df = 68$, $p = .730$.

The above mentioned results also support the initially mentioned bivariate analysis on MPS and participant performance satisfaction, thus we tend to reject hypothesis number three.

Hypothesis (4)

The hypothesis predicted a negative correlation between scores on the perfectionism scale and frequency of distance changes from the dart board during the game.

In order to test the above hypothesis, a two-tailed test of Pearson correlation coefficient was computed between the variables number of distance changes and MPS scale. Results showed that there was no significant relationship between MPS and participant frequency of distance changes during the game, $r = .140$, $p < 0.05$, (see Table 7).

Similarly an additional bivariate analysis was done between DOSPERT (Domain Specific Risk Taking Adult Scale) and the number of distance changes during the game. Results showed that there was a significant positive correlation between DOSPERT (Domain Specific Risk Taking Adult Scale) and the participant number of distance changes during the game, $r = .153$, $p < 0.05$, (see Table 7).

number four.

Although the correlations were not postulated, they were nevertheless explored between the number of distance changes during the game and the four DOSPERT subscales; recreational, social, health/safety, and financial. The correlational analysis revealed that only the recreation

Table 7
Correlational Estimates Among Major Study Variables

	Perfectionism (MPS)	Risk Taking (DOSPERT)
Number of Changes		
Pearson Correlation.	.140	.153*
Sig. (2 tailed)	.069	.047
N (170)		

*p <.05, two-tailed.

Further computations with t-test were done to check the number of distance changes during the game specifically among participants with low and high MPS scores. Computations were performed to examine the 40 participants who scored the highest on the MPS scale and also computations were conducted to examine the 40 participants with the lowest scores on the MPS scale. A t-test was conducted and the results showed that the mean score for the forty participants who scored high on MPS with distance changes was 3.03 (S.D. =1.917), and the mean was 4.26 (S.D. = 3.062) for part the forty participants who scored low on MPS with distance changes, $t = -2.012$, ($df = 68$), $p = .048$. There was a significant difference between participants with high and low scores on MPS and number of changes during the game, whereby participants with high MPS scores had more number of distance changes during the game than participants with low number of MPS scores. Hence, we tend to reject hypothesis number four.

Although the correlations were not postulated, they were nevertheless explored between the number of distance changes during the game and the four DOSPERT subscales; recreational, social, health/safety, and financial. The correlational analysis revealed that only the recreation

subscale was significantly correlated with high number of changes of distances during the game, ($r = .151$, $p < .005$), (see table 8).

Table 8

Correlation Estimates for Number of Distance Changes and DOSPERT Subscales

	Health/Safety	Finance	Recreation	Social
Number of Distance Changes	.740	.013	.151*	.086
Pearson Correlation	.339	.090	.049	.267
Sig. (2 tailed)				
N (170)				

* $p < .05$, two-tailed.

Noting that there was a positive significant relation between number of distance changes and scores on the recreation subscale, it was necessary to compute further correlations examining the recreational subscale with the MPS scale and the DOSPERT scale.

Subsequently, additional analysis was performed to test the differences between perfectionism and risk taking scale versus recreational subscale of DOSPERT.

The results showed that there was negative significant correlation between MPS and recreation subscale, $r = -.169$, ($p < .05$).

Subsequently and based upon the strong relation between DOSPERT and Recreation subscale, further analysis was done to show the relationship between participant satisfaction score and DOSPERT subscales. The correlational results revealed that there was strong positive significant correlation between Recreation subscale and participant performance satisfaction score with $r = .197$, ($p < .05$), (see Table 9).

Table 9

Correlational Estimates for DOSPERT Subscales and Participant Performance Satisfaction Scores.

	Health/Safety	Social	Recreation	Finance
Satisfaction				
Pearson Correlation	.066	-.040	.197**	.135
Sig. (2 tailed)	.393	.605	.010	.079
N (170)				

*p <.05, two-tailed. **p <.01, two-tailed.

In the end, a supplementary t-test was conducted, in order to examine for the difference in perfectionism trait between males and females. The pattern of the association revealed that there was a significant difference between male and female perfectionism scale, whereby female perfectionism score is higher than male perfectionism score, with mean 106.38, and SD= 16.74, and with mean 99.55 and SD= 16.74 with male participants respectively, $t = -3.03, (df = 168), p = .003$.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between perfectionism and the following variables: risk taking, level of expectation, level of satisfaction over the achieved score and the number of distance changes from the dart board during the game, using a sample of the Lebanese population.

A number of significant correlations emerged. First, individuals who scored high on the perfectionism scale had low scores on the risk taking scale. As Hana Estroff (2008) stated that perfectionists do not like to take risks.

Parenting style is an important factor in the development of perfectionism. Parental criticism plays a crucial role in the development of perfectionism. Consistent parental criticism breaks into the children's subconscious and limits their self-esteem. This way children internalize their parent's beliefs that they are not good enough, that they can never do anything right, (A Tribute to Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung and Alfred Adler, 2009).

Consequently, children quickly learn to adapt to their parents' expectations, adopting pleasing strategies in order to attain their approval. However, children will take for granted, that they will never be good enough for their parents, they tend to withdraw and shut down to avoid risk taking, in order to avoid further criticism. Thus, they may develop a harsh inner critic who judges and blames with constant second-guessing and self-doubting attitude (Sidorowicz, 2009).

Naturally, a child will continue to strive for excellence even though he/she will continue to fall short in the eyes of his/her parents. These are the individuals who become the neurotic perfectionists, (Hamachek, 1978 as cited by Biran & Reese, 2007).

Moreover, studies have shown that the parents of maladaptive perfectionists have been criticised as being critical and demanding with unreasonably high standards and expectations of their children, whereas, parents of adaptive perfectionists have been distinguished as having high standards, being supportive and encouraging (Ghaly, 2008).

Second, there was no positive significant relationship between the MPS scale and the expectation scores on the game, as the second hypothesis predicted. These results were unanticipated and not in congruent with the cited literature review on perfectionism, because perfectionists have high Parental Expectations (Parker 1997, Hewitt 1999 & Ghaly 2008). It might be the case that since the game was new to most of the participants, they couldn't expect high scores.

In contrast, additional analysis of the MPS subscales displayed that subscales, Parental Criticism, Doubts about Actions and Concern over Mistakes were significantly and negatively correlated with the participant expectation scores. These findings must be interpreted that as Parental Criticism, Doubts about Actions and Concern over Mistakes subscale scores increase the expectation scores of the participants decrease. The data further highlighted that there was a negative relationship between the other subscales, (Personal Standards, Organization, Parental Expectation) and participant expectation, however insignificant. Thus, the established link between MPS and the expectation scores is not consistent with the previous studies in which perfectionism has been characterized (Frost, Marten, Lahart & Rosenblate, 1990) as a behavioral tendency to set excessively high performance standards and then to evaluate one's performance in an overly critical manner.

As noted above, possible explanations for such an outcome could be that the dartboard game was not the best instrument to use to test the expectation level. Further, perfectionistic people do not like to spend time on leisure activities and they have less experience in playing games (Jeffrey, 1999) and that is why they set low expectations on the dart board. Another

possibility could be that many of the participants had never tried playing this game; it was something totally new for them, and consequently they set low expectation scores for themselves. According to Blais (2006) people's preferences for risky options reflect a trade off between an option's expected return, which is the expected value and its riskiness. As to Weber (2002), psychological risk return models treat riskiness as a variable that differ between individuals and as a function of content and context, by which it is meant that outcome domain can affect people's choices under risk (Weber, 2002). Consequently, since perfectionists do not like risk taking, they won't appraise any outcome or in this study regarded as high or low actual scores as necessary.

More extensive analysis of the participants on expectation scores and gender led to significant differences between males and females, where females had higher expectations than males. This result is in support of a study done on female and male medical students. The Sixteen Personality Factor Questionnaire (16PF) results have shown that females were more dutiful (Rule-Consciousness), sensitive (Sensitivity), self-doubting and worried (Apprehension), and more organized and self-disciplined (Perfectionism) than males, (Meit, Borges & Early, 2007).

Moreover, the results of a survey conducted in 2009 demonstrated that 38% of women did not feel they met the high standards they set themselves at work, compared with 24% of men. On the other hand, 30% of women felt they were failing to meet the standards they wanted to, compared with 17% of men at home and family life ("Perfectionism Hits Working Women," 2009).

In line with the above mentioned results, additional analysis was done to study perfectionism and gender difference. The results showed that women scored higher on perfectionism scale than men. One can conclude that females, being more organized, more

self-disciplined and more rule –conscious than males, could also have higher expectations of themselves.

Contrary to the literature, perfectionists pay selective attention to their own achievements, criticizing themselves for their mistakes or failures, and moderate their successes. Overwhelmed by anxiety about their future performance, they are unable to enjoy successes, in this study the participants' satisfaction with their accomplishment scores did not correlate significantly with the MPS scores. However, only the Parental Expectation subscale of the MPS correlated negatively with the satisfaction scale, indicating that as Lebanese parents' children performance expectation increases, accordingly the children's satisfaction decrease. The parental high expectations and pressure to achieve, children had already internalized their parents' high expectancy and no matter how high they achieve they feel unsatisfied due to their parents' high expectation image in their subconscious.

Interesting findings also emerged from analysis involving the measures of performance satisfaction and the Recreation subscale in DOSPERT (Domain Specific Risk Taking Adult Scale). The results revealed that there is a positive significant relationship between performance satisfaction and Recreation subscale scores. What we can conclude is that people with a high risk taking trait, enjoy their activities and are satisfied with their accomplishments.

It is essential to highlight while studying perfectionism the association between parenthood and perfectionists. The parents are taking the fun and the play out of their children's childhood; instead they are increasing pressure for success; setting high standards and developing high expectations for their children. In reality, they are pushing their children downhill. With few challenges, children are unable to establish their creative adaptations to the normal changes of life. One of the primary purposes of this thesis was to investigate the

An additional analysis was done between Perfectionism and gender, and results displayed that females have more perfectionistic traits than males. The finding is in accord

relationship between perfectionism and the participants' number of distance changes during the game.

Although most past literature reviews have proposed that perfectionists are rigid and do not like changes, in this study analysis revealed that there was no significant relationship between the MPS scale and the participants' number of distance changes from the dart board during the game. Nevertheless, statistical analyses indicated that participants with low scores on MPS changed their distances less often than participants with high scores on MPS. Thus, it can be said that participants with low scores on perfectionism scale preferred rigidity and avoided distance changes than participants with high scores on perfectionism. This finding corresponds to a previous study that suggests that non perfectionistic students procrastinated more than did the Self Oriented perfectionist participants (Kilbert, Rohling & Saito, 2005).

On the other hand, perfectionists are also renowned for their procrastinations (Mcgarvey, 1997) in relation to ineffective decision making, and spend time on arriving at decisions, while trying incessantly, every option; on the other hand, they also reflect indecisiveness, and rigidity in their decisions, but once they arrived at a decision, they stick to it, knowing that it might not be for their benefit. This is probably why the highest perfectionists changed many times to get to the best distance.

This could be explained as the tendency of perfectionists to wait for all the possible evidence to be available to them to develop a perfect response, product or action. Through indecision and perfectionism, one waits to commit to a task and hopes for more and better information that would provide a better product and outcome, (Stornelli, Flett & Hewitt, 2009). Thus, Perfectionists have problems with decision making, searching for the one perfect solution to a situation, rather than choosing from a variety less perfect possibilities.

An additional analysis was done between Perfectionism and gender, and results displayed that females have more perfectionistic traits than males. The finding is in accord

with the survey done in 2009, which stresses the perfectionism in women as a way of life. Such as 86% of women surveyed said they always or often feel pressure to be perfect in the role of professional. Further, 78% of women indicated that they always or often feel pressure to be perfect in the role of parent/caregiver. Finally, 67% of women expressed that they always or often feel pressure to be fit, healthy, and attractive (Women Suffer More from Perfectionism, May 29, 2009).

In addition, the results showed that Domain Specific Risk Taking Scale (DOSPERT) was significantly and positively correlated with higher number of distance changes, which explains that risk takers like changes and are easily bored (Maddi, 1994) and as a result would like to change distances during the game. With regard to this, it is interesting and worthwhile to quote from Pablo Picasso, who provides his insight concerning creativity: "Every act of creation is also an act of destruction." Only by breaking from conventional ways of thinking, exploring and risk taking can one put together new concepts, approaches and products, through the pursuit of change for change's sake (boredom susceptibility). This variety of sensation-seeking has been related to such risky activities as smoking, drinking, drugs, unsafe sex, reckless driving and gambling.

Risk-taking might be just an expression of a generalized need for activity itself, as is the case with hyperactive individuals, who provide their own stimulation through activity to overcome boredom (Zuckerman, 2000).

The data of this study further highlighted a relationship between the number of distance changes during the game and the Recreation subscale. A consistent finding emerged showing a positive correlation between the Recreation subscale of DOSPERT and the number of distance changes during the game. An explanation that could be accounted for here is that since risk takers do like change and leisure, it is evident that they will have scores on

recreation. The statistical results provided other interesting evidence that needs to be highlighted. Perfectionism is significantly and negatively correlated with the Recreation subscale, which means that as the perfectionism score decreases the participants perceive recreation more of a risk taking trait. The result supports the theoretical studies that perfectionists take less pleasure in leisure activities, (Mallinger, 1992).

On the other hand, using the same assessment method with the Domain Specific Risk Taking Adult Scale (DOSPERT), research found that respondents' degree of risk taking was highly domain-specific, which implies that individuals are not consistently risk-averse or consistently risk seeking across all content domains on the DOSPERT.

Thus, preferences and choices differ because the decision maker likes risk in one domain (e.g recreational risks) and dislikes risks in the other domain (e.g. financial risks). In respect to this study, participants viewed the game as risk taking since there was a negative correlation between MPS and DOSPERT.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Studies

First, and foremost, in a research of this nature there is always a concern about the perceived meaningfulness of the experimental situation. Therefore, replicating these finding through other experiments is essential in order to establish the generalizability of the findings. More specifically, it is highly recommended to test again using games or other risky situations.

On the other hand, though games are regarded as the best instrument to disclose personality traits, including the dart board game, perhaps it is preferable to use the dart board on three participant groups instead of one; the first group are those who haven't played at all, the second group are those who have played a few times and the third group are those who have good experience in playing the dart board. Subsequently, the three groups will be

compared within and between themselves, thus demonstrating the relationships between perfectionism and risk taking with the use of a dart board game. Another alternative would be to construct an activity which is totally new for everybody.

Secondly, researchers must also consider the demographic details within the population, specifically the issue of age. It seems that research shows a significant negative relationship between age on one hand and both risk taking, (Vroom & Bernd, 1971; Jianakoplos, 2006).

Finally, it would be advisable in subsequent research to include multiple measures of perfectionistic traits. Since measures of adaptive and maladaptive perfectionistic traits were not included in this study, it is not possible to determine whether some of the current findings that refer to the low and high scores of perfectionism can apply to the generalization of the study.

Educational and Clinical Implications

This study will help parents, young people, teachers and mental health practitioners in becoming more perceptive participants and readers by being perceptive of the significance of risk taking attitudes and its necessity for survival and psychological well being, further the practice and the importance of preventing future problems associated with unhealthy perfectionistic traits.

Parents, in particular, will become more aware of the disadvantages of over protecting and over scrutinizing their children during their early years of development.

cognitions, affect, self-esteem, and physiological reactions in a performance situation.

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Appendix A

Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your agreement with each statement below. Use this scale from Strongly disagree to Strongly agree

Hello dear participant,

I am Sanan Sdepanian, a graduate student at Haigazian University. I am here to do a study for my MA Thesis in Psychology. There is no risk in participating in the study but your participation will contribute to the awareness of the Lebanese university students of their personality traits and surely will assist me in completing my degree.

I would like you to fill out two questionnaires. There are no right and wrong answers. The questionnaire is anonymous, and be assured that the answers will be kept confidential and won't be disclosed in part or in full to any third party.

Please try to be honest and answer all the questions.

If you have any questions about the results of this study, please do not hesitate to contact me at my email address: Sanan.Sdepanian@yahoo.com

Thank you for your cooperation

Participant number:

Gender: Male Female

Profession/post:

APPENDIX B

Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your agreement with each statement below. Use this rating system from *Strongly disagree*to *Strongly agree*.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

- 1. My parents set very high standards for me.
- 2. Organization is very important to me.
- 3. As a child, I was punished for doing thing less than perfectly.
- 4. If I do not set the highest standards for myself, I am likely to end up a second rate person.
- 5. My parents never tried to understand my mistakes.
- 6. It is important to me that I be thorough competent in everything I do.
- 7. I am a neat person.
- 8. I try to be an organized person.
- 9. If I fail at work/school, I am a failure as a person.
- 10. I should be upset if I make a mistake.
- 11. My parents wanted me to be the best at everything.
- 12. I set higher goals for myself than most people.
- 13. If someone does a task at work/school better than me, then I feel like I failed the whole task.
- 14. If I fail partly, it is as bad as being a complete failure.
- 15. Only outstanding performance is good enough in my family.
- 16. I am very good at focusing my efforts on attaining a goal.
- 17. Even when I do something very carefully, I often feel that it is not quite done right.
- 18. I hate being less than the best at things.
- 19. I have extremely high goals.
- 20. My parents have expected excellence from me.
- 21. People will probably thing less of me if I make a mistake.
- 22. I never felt like I could meet my parents' expectations.
- 23. If I do not do as well as other people, it means I am an inferior human being.
- 24. Other people seem to accept lower standards from themselves than I do.
- 25. If I do not do well all the time, people will not respect me.
- 26. My parents have always had higher expectations for my future than I have.

27. I try to be a neat person.
28. I usually have doubts about the simple everyday things I do.
29. Neatness is very important to me.
30. I expect higher performance in my daily tasks than most people.
31. I am an organized person.
32. I tend to get behind in my work because I repeat things over and over.
33. It takes me a long time to do something "right".
34. The fewer mistakes I make, the more people will like me.
35. I never felt like I could meet my parents' standards.

Strongly Disagree

Strongly Agree

1. Admitting that your tastes are different from those of a friend.
2. Going camping in the wilderness.
3. Betting a day's income at the horse races.
4. Swimming far out from shore on an unguarded lake or ocean.
5. Investing 10% of your annual income in a moderate growth mutual fund.
6. Drinking heavily at a social function.
7. Taking some questionable deductions on your income tax return.
8. Disagreeing with an authority figure on a major issue.
9. Betting a day's income at a high-stake poker game.
10. Having an affair with a married man/woman.
11. Passing off somebody else's work as your own.
12. Going on vacation to a third-world country.
13. Arguing with a friend who has a different opinion on an issue.
14. Going down a ski run that is beyond your ability.
15. Investing 5% of your annual income in a very speculative stock.
16. Approaching your boss for a raise.
17. Going whitewater rafting at high water in the spring.
18. Betting a day's income on the outcome of a sporting event
(e.g., baseball, soccer, or football).
19. Investing 5% of your annual income in a dependable and conservative stock.
20. Engaging in unprotected sex.
21. Revealing a friend's secret to someone else.
22. Driving a car without wearing a seat belt.
23. Investing 10% of your annual income in a new business venture.
24. Taking a weekend sky diving class.
25. Riding a motorcycle without a helmet.

APPENDIX C

Risk Taking Scale

Please circle the number that best corresponds to your agreement with each statement below. Use this rating system from *Strongly disagree*to *Strongly agree*.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree

- 1. Admitting that your tastes are different from those of a friend.
- 2. Going camping in the wilderness.
- 3. Betting a day's income at the horse races.
- 4. Swimming far out from shore on an unguarded lake or ocean.
- 5. Investing 10% of your annual income in a moderate growth mutual fund.
- 6. Drinking heavily at a social function.
- 7. Taking some questionable deductions on your income tax return.
- 8. Disagreeing with an authority figure on a major issue.
- 9. Betting a day's income at a high-stake poker game.
- 10. Having an affair with a married man/woman.
- 11. Passing off somebody else's work as your own.
- 12. Going on vacation to a third-world country.
- 13. Arguing with a friend who has a different opinion on an issue.
- 14. Going down a ski run that is beyond your ability.
- 15. Investing 5% of your annual income in a very speculative stock.
- 16. Approaching your boss for a raise.
- 17. Going whitewater rafting at high water in the spring.
- 18. Betting a day's income on the outcome of a sporting event (e.g., baseball, soccer, or football).
- 19. Investing 5% of your annual income in a dependable and conservative stock.
- 20. Engaging in unprotected sex.
- 21. Revealing a friend's secret to someone else.
- 22. Driving a car without wearing a seat belt.
- 23. Investing 10% of your annual income in a new business venture.
- 24. Taking a weekend sky diving class.
- 25. Riding a motorcycle without a helmet.

- 26. Gambling a week’s income at a casino.
- 27. Choosing a career that you truly enjoy over a more prestigious one.
- 28. Downloading proprietary software from the Internet.
- 29. Reporting a neighbor or friend for some illegal activity.
- 30. Speaking your mind about an unpopular issue in a meeting at work.
- 31. Sunbathing without sunscreen.
- 32. Bungee-jumping off a tall bridge.
- 33. Piloting a small plane.
- 34. Walking home alone at night in an unsafe area of town.
- 35. Eating high cholesterol foods.
- 36. Driving while taking medication that may make you drowsy.
- 37. Moving to a city far away from your extended family.
- 38. Starting a new career in your mid-thirties.
- 39. Leaving your young children alone at home while running an errand.
- 40. Not returning a wallet you found that contains \$200.

Expectation Score	Actual Score
0—3000	

APPENDIX D

Charts of scores on the dart board game, expectation and actual scores.

How satisfied are you with your performance on the Dart Board game from zero to hundred.

Circle the best answer.

Hit	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Orange															
Red*2															
Pink*3															
Purple*4															
Blue*5															
Dark Blue*6															
Green*7															
Brown*8															
Grey*9															
Black*10															
Total															

Expectation Score	Actual Score
0-----30000	

APPENDIX E

How satisfied are you with your performance on the Dart Board game from zero to hundred.

Circle the best answer.

