

Neurotic perfectionism, Impulsiveness, and time management among College Students

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The present study was conducted to assess the relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and Time Management among College Students. The samples were drawn for the study (N=109) included 26 boys and 83 girls of four PUC colleges located in Gulbarga city. It was hypothesized that there would be a significant relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and Time Management. The tools used for the present study were Neurotic Perfectionism Questionnaire (Mitzman, & Dewey, 1994), Barrat Impulsiveness Scale 11 (BIS-11 – Ernest. S. Barratt - 1995), and Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ – Britton, & Tesser, 1991). The data collected were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism and Impulsiveness, and an inversely significant relationship between Impulsiveness and Time Management. No significant relationship was found between Neurotic Perfectionism and Time Management.

Key Words: Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and Time Management.

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1. Introduction

Neurotic Perfectionism

Perfectionism in Psychology is a personality trait characterized by a persons striving for flawlessness and setting excessively high performance standards, accompanied by overly critical self-evaluations and concerns regarding others evaluations. It is best conceptualized as a multidimensional characteristic, as psychologists agree that there are many positive and negative aspects. (D. Hamachek,1978) argued for two contrasting types of perfectionism, classifying people as tending towards normal perfectionism or neurotic perfectionism. Normal perfectionists are more inclined to pursue perfection without compromising their self-esteem, and derive pleasure from their efforts. Neurotic perfectionists are prone to strive for unrealistic goals and feel dissatisfied when they cannot reach them.

Impulsiveness

Impulsiveness has been broadly defined as acting in response to internal or external stimuli with diminished regard to adverse consequences to self or others (Moeller, et al. 2001) or as actions that are poorly conceived prematurely expressed and are unduly risky or inappropriate to the situation often resulting in undesirable consequences (Daruna 1993; Winstanley, et al. 2006).

Time Management

Time Management is a process of planning and exercising consciousness control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency or productivity. It may be aided by a range of skills, tools, and techniques used to manage time when accomplishing specific tasks, projects, and goals complying with a due date.

A time management system is a designed combination of processes, tools, techniques, and methods. To assess the time management of the individuals the Time Management Questionnaire

(TMQ – Britton, B. K., & Tesser, A. 1991) was used.

And the present study concentrates on finding the relationship between the above three variables: Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness, and Time Management among college students. The number of participants for the study includes (N= 109) PUC level, Male and Female students.

2. Theoretical background: neurotic perfectionism

Perfectionism has traditionally been described as the tendency to set high goals or standards for oneself. Generally this is assumed to be a socially desirable trait, resulting in achievement and success in one's endeavors. However, as with many other personality traits, at excessively high levels perfectionism can be quite debilitating, often leading to maladjustment. Early on in the theorizing of perfectionism, a distinction was made between the positive and negative aspects of the construct, which is exemplified in Hamachek's (1978) concept of normal and neurotic perfectionism. While the normal perfectionist is motivated by a desire for improvement, the neurotic perfectionist is motivated by a fear of failure (Hamachek, 1978; Slade & Dewey, 1986; Terry-Short, Owens, Slade, & Dewey, 1995).

According to Hamacheck (1978), neurotic perfectionists set unattainably high standards, without any allowable margin for error, and therefore never achieve satisfaction or pleasure from their endeavors, because, “in their own eyes they never seem to do things good enough” (p.27). Wei, Mallinckrodt, Russell, & Abraham (2004) concluded that maladaptive perfectionism is usually comprised of excessive worrying about failure, and a deep underlying fear of rejection or abandonment. Greenspon (2002, 2008) theorized that neurotic perfectionism results from a developmental environment of conditional approval, where love and acceptance are only ever conditional rewards in exchange for meeting parental demands (Flett, Hewitt, Oliver, & MacDonald, 2002; Rice, Lopez, & Vergara, 2005; Missildine, 1963).

Theoretical backgrounds: impulsiveness

Impulsiveness was defined as the individual's tendency to respond quickly to a given stimulus, without reflectivity and evaluation of the consequences or as a personality dimension that predisposes individuals to precipitate specific consequences related to the conduct problems (Olson and Hoza, 1993; (Sévigny et al., 2003, p.17). Barratt (1983) identified three components of impulsiveness: Attentional (the individual's inability to focus attention), motor (tendency to act on the drive of the moment) and non-planning impulsiveness (tendency to carefully think and plan the future). Barratt and colleagues (Barratt, 1993; Gerbing, Ahadi & Patton, 1987; Patton, Stanford & Barratt, 1995; Stanford & Barratt, 1992) have developed one of the most comprehensive approaches to impulsivity by including information from four diverse perspectives: the medical model, the psychological model, the behavioral model, and the social model.

Dickman (1990) has proposed a two dimensional theory of impulsivity based on an information processing approach to personality. His work stems out of his observation that impulsivity can have positive as well as negative consequences and he differentiates between functional (i.e., the tendency to act with relatively little forethought when such a trait is optimal) and dysfunctional impulsivity (i.e., the tendency to act with less forethought than most people of equal ability when this is a source of difficulty).

Theoretical background: time management

Time is finite. Human beings have only so many hours available in a day to live their lives, accomplish the tasks that they need to accomplish, and enjoy their lives.

Good time management such as setting goals and priorities as well as monitoring the use of time can facilitate productivity and minimize stress, contributing to work effectiveness, maintaining balance and academic success. From this broadened perspective, people can see that the real value of time management is that it enhances their lives in all dimensions. What people gain from time management, in essence, is not more time, but a better life (Britton, B. K., & Tesser, A., 1991; Misra & McKean, 2000).

The pickle jar theory which was developed by Jeremy Wright after his series of studies (Olubor & Osunde, 2007). The pickle jar theory states that activities and responsibilities of people need be balanced using effective time management system. Time is approximately allocated for everything and things fit well where they are expected to fit. This theory is predicated on the fact that individuals have many large priorities in lives such as studies, workload, leisure, family responsibilities, sleep and rest.

Acme Intellects

Operational Definitions

Neurotic Perfectionism

It is a tendency to set unrealistically high personal standards in every situation and to be motivated by an intense need to avoid failure. (Hamachek – 1978).

Impulsiveness

A predisposition towards rapid, unplanned reactions to internal or external stimuli without regard to the negative consequences of these reactions to the impulsive individuals or to others (Moeller, Barratt, Dougherty, Schmitz, & Swann, 2001).

Time Management

Time Management is a process of planning and exercising consciousness control over the amount of time spent on specific activities, especially to increase effectiveness, efficiency or productivity (Macan et, al., 1990).

3. Objectives

- 1) To assess Neurotic Perfectionism of the Participants.
- 2) To assess the Impulsiveness of the Participants.
- 3) To assess the Time Management of the Participants.
- 4) To assess the relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and the Time Management of participants.

4. Research Methodology

Hypotheses

- a) There will be a significant relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism and Impulsiveness among college students
- b) There will be a significant relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism and Time Management among college students.
- c) There will be a significant relationship between Impulsiveness and Time Management among college students.

Population

PUC Students of the PU Colleges in the city.

Sample

109 PUC students of PU college students in the city.

Sample size

The sample size for the present study is 109 in numbers, which includes 26 Boys and 83 Girls College students of Kalaburagi City.

a) Inclusion criteria

PUC students aging from 15-18 and knowing English Language.

b) Exclusion criteria

Students below PUC and above students aging below 15 and above 18 years and who do not know English language.

d) Sampling Method

The sampling method used for this particular study is the convenient sampling.

Method of data collecton

The method used for the present study is survey

1. Tools for data collection

- a) Socio-demographic Data Sheet
- b) Neurotic Perfectionism Questionnaire (NPQ-Mitzamn,S.F., Slade,P., and Dewey,M.E – 1994).
- c) Barratt Impulsiveness Scale 11 (BIS-11 – Ernest. S. Barratt - 1995).
- d) Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ –Britton and Tesser, 1991).

Descriptions of tools

1. Neurotic Perfectionism Questionnaire (NPQ-Mitzamn,S.F., Slade,P., and Dewey,M.E 1994)

This 42-item instrument measures the experiences of perfectionism that have become neurotic or self-defeating to a client. The NPQ is a uni-dimensional measure where items are summed to produce a total scale score. The instrument has excellent internal consistency, with an alpha coefficient of .95 for the total sample of persons with eating disorders and the “real control” group of undergraduates. The NPQ has very good known-groups validity where scores differentiate persons with eating problems from undergraduates with no eating disorders.

2. Barratt Impulsiveness Scale 11 (BIS-11 – Ernest. S. Barratt - 1995)

This 30-item instrument assessment impulsivity as a trait independently of anxiety. The BIS was originally developed in the late 1950s and has been revised eleven times. The BIS: Impulsive Non-Planning (INP: Items 2*,3,5*,8*,11*,14,17*, 20,22*,25,28, and 30), Motor Impulsivity (MI: items 2,6*,9,12,15,18,21,23,26, and 29), and Attention Impulsivity (AI: Items 4, 7*,10*,13*,16,19*,24,and 27). The INP subscale reflects a present orientation and lack of consideration for the future. The reliability of the BIS is first supported with the inclusion criterion that items correlated with total scores and differentiate high from low scores on the total BIS.

The internal consistency of the BIS ranges from .79 to .83 for a number of samples. There is considerable evidence of the validity of the BIS. Scores on the three subscales were moderately correlated, suggesting the subscales are tapping a similar construct. Scores also correlate with a measure of disinhibition, a subscale of sensation seeking behaviours.

3. Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ – Britton, B. K., & Tesser, A., 1991)

This is a 26-items scale to assess the time management. Each scale item had five response categories: 'Always', 'Frequently', 'Sometimes', 'Infrequently' and 'Never'.

Scoring

1. Neurotic Perfectionism Questionnaire (NPQ-Mitzamn,S.F., Slade,P., & Dewey,M.E – 1994)

The scale is scored 1="Strongly disagree" to 5= "Strongly agree". Total scores range from 42 to 210, and a score of 145 or below is a cutting score suggesting little trouble with the problem of self-defeating perfectionism. Higher scores indicate more neurotic perfectionism.

2. Barratt Impulsiveness Scale 11 (BIS-11 – Ernest. S. Barratt - 1995)

The BIS is accompanied with scoring templates, which greatly facilitates the task of scoring. Each item is rated from Rarely/Never (scored as 1) to Almost always/Always (scored as 4). Subscale scores are the summarization of the individual items after reverse-scoring items marked with an asterisk above. Scores range from 12 to 48 for the INP, 10 to 40 for the MI, and 8 to 32 for the AI.

3. Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ – Britton, B. K., & Tesser, A., 1991)

Each scale item has five response categories: 'Always', 'Frequently', 'Sometimes', 'Infrequently' and 'Never'. These were scored from 1 to 5 with a high score indicating a positive attempt at managing time. The response, 'Always' was scored as 1 for items 8, 10, 12 and 15 and as 5 for the remainder of the items.

The range of possible scores was 52 -130 on the 26-item Time Management. Higher values on the scale correspond to better time management practices.

5. Importance of the study

The Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and Time Management have shown a significant role in student's performance in educational settings. The characteristic of Neurotic Perfectionism reveals that the individual has Impulsive nature where only acting on urge is taken place than acting on thought, and acting on one's urge has many disadvantages and problems.

6. Limitation of the present study

a) The sample size drawn for the study was not of equal ratio - girls (83) and boys (26). Hence it was not possible for the researcher to assess the difference between male and female and draw generalizations based on the data available.

b) The researcher did not analyse the data on the basis of age, type of family, birth order, father's and mother's occupation etc. of the subjects. As those factors could have significantly influenced the subjects Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and Time Management.

c) The influence of self-confidence, self-efficacy, self-esteem, and motivation could not be examined by the researcher. All those factors might have influenced the Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness, and Time Management of the students.

7. Data Analysis

Statistical methods used

a) Correlation

This particular statistical method was used to assess the relationship between the variables. In the present study this method of Pearson Product Movement Correlation was used to assess the relationship between the Neurotic Perfectionism & Impulsivity, Neurotic Perfectionism & Time Management and Impulsivity & Time Management among college students.

Results and Discussion

The data obtained from the sample was statistically analyzed and the findings are discussed. The following tables show the scores, analysis, and the findings with interpretation and discussion.

Correlation: Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and Time Management

Table 4:1:1: Mean and St. Deviation scores of the Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and Time Management of Students in the study.

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Neurotic perfectionism	153.23	16.45
Impulsive non-planning	28.25	4.41
Motor impulsiveness	24.13	4.16
Attention impulsiveness	20.00	2.93
Impulsiveness Total	73.04	7.78
Time Management	84.89	7.23

Table :Showing Mean and Standard deviation scores of the Neurotic Perfectionism,

Impulsiveness and Time Management of students in the study. The Mean (153.23) and St. Deviation (16.45) scores refer to High Neurotic Perfectionism of the subjects in the group. The Mean (28.25) and Std. Deviation (4.41) refers to High Impulsive Non-panning of the subjects in the group, the Mean (24.13) and Std. Deviation (4.16) refers to High Motor Impulsiveness of the subjects in the group. The mean score (20.00) & Std. Deviation (2.93) shows High Attention Impulsiveness of the subjects, and the mean score (73.03) & Std. Deviation (7.78) shows high impulsiveness as a whole in the group. The mean score (84.89) & Std. Deviation (7.23) of Time Management refers to Better Time Management of the subjects in the group.

Table 4:1:2: Correlation Scores of the Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and Time Management of Students in the study.

	Neurotic Perfectionism	Impulsive Non-Planning	Motor Impulsiveness	Attention Impulsiveness	Impulsiveness Total	Time Management
Neurotic Perfectionism		.211*	.226*	.155	.334**	.098
Impulsive Non-Planning			.295**	.038	.664**	-.125
Motor Impulsiveness				.025	.654**	-.117
Attention Impulsiveness					.370**	.045
Impulsiveness Total						-.205*
Time Management						

Table 4:1:2: Showing Correlation scores of the Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness with its subscales and Time Management of students in the study. The above table shows positive correlation between Neurotic Perfectionism and Impulsive Non-planning (.211*) at (0.05) level. The table shows positive correlation between Neurotic Perfectionism and Motor Impulsiveness (.226*) at (0.05) level. The above table shows positive correlation between Neurotic Perfectionism and Impulsiveness Total (.334**) at (0.01) level. The above table also shows an Inverse Correlation between Impulsiveness Total and Time Management Total (-.205*) at (0.05) level.

A positive correlation between Impulsive non-planning and Motor Impulsiveness (.295**) at (0.01) level is shown in the table. Impulsive non-planning is also positively correlated with Impulsiveness Total (.664**) at (0.01) level. A positive correlation between Motor impulsiveness and Impulsiveness Total (.654**) at (0.01) level is shown in the table. The table shows a significant positive correlation between Attention impulsiveness and Impulsiveness Total (.370**) at (0.01) level. And the table also shows a significant inverse correlation between Impulsiveness Total and Time Management Total (-.205*) at (0.05) level.

The present study “Neurotic Perfectionism Impulsiveness and Time Management among College Students” was aimed to assess the relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness and Time Management among college students. The findings from the study shown that there is a significant positive correlation between Neurotic Perfectionism and Impulsiveness (.334**) at (0.01) level, which means that higher the scores of Neurotic Perfectionism, higher the scores of Impulsiveness are found and it indicates that subjects set unrealistic high standards for themselves and act more on impulses without even considering any prior thinking before the act. There are various studies that show a correlation between these two variables and conclude that most of the Neurotic Perfectionists found acting on Impulses.

The findings also reveal that there is an Inverse significant Correlation between Impulsiveness and Time Management (-.205*) at (0.05) level, which means that Higher the Impulsiveness scores, lower the Time Management scores are found. It also indicates that subjects, who act on their Impulses as per the perceived unrealistic high standards, fail to recognize the value of time and they just go on wasting the time instead of making the unrealistic high standards into realistic. There are again various studies that have been conducted earlier and so far, most of them found to be supporting this current finding of negative correlation.

There is no significant correlation between Neurotic Perfectionism and Time Management Total found in the study that means for an increased score of Neurotic Perfectionism no increase or decrease of scores of Time Management will take place. So that the time management of the Neurotic Perfectionists cannot be judged as better or poor according to the study.

8. Conclusion

There is statistically a significant positive relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism and Impulsiveness among College Students. There is statistically a significant inverse relationship between Impulsiveness and Time Management among College Students. There is statistically no significant relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism and Time Management among college Students.

9. Recommendations for further study

In view of the limitations highlighted above, the researcher proposes the following recommendations for further studies in future:

- a) The researcher can draw a large population with equal male and female subjects which increases the chances of generalizations of the results more meaningful manner to the study relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness, and Time Management.
- b) Assessment of Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness, and Time Management can be examined with the factors like individual's personality factors, motivational factors, and adjustment ability, etc. which could bring out the results for greater understanding of the subjects.
- c) Also the assessment of relationship between Neurotic Perfectionism, Impulsiveness, and Time Management can be examined with the factors like individual's knowledge, skills, self-efficacy, attitudes, self-esteem and confidence etc.

10. References

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