



Mediating perceived parenting styles–test anxiety relationships: Academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism



Champika K. Soysa^{a,*}, Andrea Weiss^{b,1}

^a Worcester State University, Department of Psychology, 486 Chandler Street, Worcester, MA 01602, USA

^b Uniformed Services University, Department of Medical and Clinical Psychology, 4301 Jones Bridge Road, Bethesda, MD 20814, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 15 August 2013

Received in revised form 14 April 2014

Accepted 9 May 2014

Keywords:

Parenting style

Academic procrastination

Maladaptive perfectionism

Test anxiety

College students

ABSTRACT

We investigated perceived authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles in mothers and fathers, academic procrastination, maladaptive perfectionism, and both affective and cognitive test anxieties using self-reports of 206 undergraduates (women = 160; men = 46). Supporting study hypotheses, academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism concurrently mediated the positive relationship between perceived authoritarian fathering and both affective and cognitive test anxieties, but only maladaptive perfectionism mediated the positive relationship between perceived authoritarian mothering and both affective and cognitive test anxieties. Conversely, supporting study hypotheses, academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism concurrently mediated the inverse relationship between perceived authoritative parenting (in mothers and fathers separately) and both affective and cognitive test anxieties. Our study added to the literature by establishing academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism as concurrent mediators in the relationships between perceived parenting styles and test anxiety, except for perceived authoritarian mothering. These findings could improve academic success and retention efforts among vulnerable undergraduates.

© 2014 Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Researchers have established a positive relationship between controlling parenting styles and child anxiety (McLeod, Wood, & Weisz, 2007; Niditch & Varela, 2012). Investigating the correlates of academic anxiety in particular, Putwain, Woods, and Symes (2010) found a positive association between parental pressure and test anxiety in high-school students, and Greenberger, Lessard, Chen, and Farruggia (2008) found an inverse relationship between parental warmth and achievement anxiety among college students. Together, the preceding research demonstrated a link between perceived parenting practices and anxiety in childhood, adolescence, and emerging adulthood. Researchers have also identified a positive association between academic procrastination and test anxiety (Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Rothblum, Solomon, & Murakami, 1986) as well as a positive relationship between maladaptive perfectionism and test anxiety among undergraduates (Eum & Rice, 2011; Stöeber, Feast, & Hayward, 2009). Examining the debilitating effects of both procrastination and perfectionism, Rice, Richardson, and Clark (2012) found that they predicted psychological distress in college students. Thus far, researchers have not examined academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism in relation to either parenting styles or test anxiety.

Addressing this gap in the literature, we examined academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism as concurrent mediators of the relationships between perceived parenting styles of mothers and fathers and both cognitive and affective test anxieties in college students, from a social-cognitive perspective. In our study, perceived parenting refers to college students' perceptions of the parenting styles of their parents.

1.1. Social cognitive theory

Bandura (1999) suggested that children observe and internalize behaviors exhibited in their environment and the subsequent reactions to those behaviors by others, such as parental figures. He claimed that children base their actions on those internalized models of behavior. Parental behaviors may be the earliest and possibly the strongest source for modeling, internalization, and the creation of outcome expectations for their children's behavior (Huta, 2012). In addition, Huta (2012) discussed how mothers and fathers were differentially influential as role models to their children, suggesting the need to examine individual parenting roles. Given the positive link between perceived parenting and anxiety in childhood (Niditch & Varela, 2012) and emerging adulthood (Greenberger et al., 2008), perceptions of the parenting styles of their parents may influence test anxiety in college students. As Fletcher, Serena Shim, and Wang (2012) stated, the social-cognitive dimensions of environmental context (e.g., parenting styles) and personal factors (e.g., perfectionism) are rarely investigated together regarding undergraduate outcomes. In addition to investigating

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 508 929 8703.

E-mail addresses: csoysa@worchester.edu (C.K. Soysa), andrea.weiss@usuhs.edu (A. Weiss).

¹ Tel.: +1 301 295 9661, +1 301 295 9663.

mediation, our study addressed this theoretical gap in the literature as well, by examining academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism as concurrent personal dimensions that mediate the relationship between perceived parenting styles and college students' cognitive and affective test anxieties.

1.2. Test anxiety

Sarason (1984) established four aspects of test anxiety: worry, test-irrelevant thinking, tension, and bodily reactions. Later, Handelzalts and Keinan (2010) stated that test anxiety is a multidimensional construct that is composed of three facets: cognition (e.g., worry, test-irrelevant thoughts); affect (e.g., emotionality, physiological reactions); and behavior (e.g., study avoidance). Reflecting a parallel conceptualization, debilitating achievement anxiety (Alpert & Haber, 1960) is composed of relatively enduring cognitive and affective facets of test-taking in particular. For example, the affective component referred to nervousness, tiredness from worry, fear, and feeling upset during test-taking. The cognitive component addressed the perceived importance of the exam, memory blocking during the exam, and incomprehension of exam questions at the first reading. Given that the cognitive and affective components addressed test-taking in particular, this conceptualization could represent a domain-specific, trait description of test anxiety. Based on the preceding conceptual similarity between debilitating achievement anxiety and test anxiety, we refer to the former as test anxiety in our study. Following the early description of test anxiety by Alpert and Haber, researchers continued interest in studying test anxiety and its correlates (Putwain & Symes, 2011; Shadach & Ganor-Miller, 2013). Putwain and Symes (2011) found that school children's fear of teacher threat was positively associated with worry and test-irrelevant thinking, both aspects of test anxiety. Shadach and Ganor-Miller (2013) established that undergraduates' perceptions of their parents' over-involvement in academic studies positively predicted test anxiety. They asserted that perceived parental attitudes and behaviors were, therefore, important contributors to test anxiety among college students.

Rothblum et al. (1986), Haycock, McCarthy, and Skay (1998) and Onwuegbuzie (2004) examined the relationship between procrastination and either state or test anxiety in college and graduate students. That is, Rothblum et al. (1986) identified high procrastinators as more likely than low procrastinators to report test anxiety. Later, Haycock et al. (1998) found a positive association between procrastination and state anxiety in relation to completing an important and difficult project by a deadline. Then Onwuegbuzie (2004) found that procrastination was positively associated with test anxiety in graduate students, demonstrating that these phenomena persist even among, as he says, the 'upper echelon' of academic achievers. These researchers did not examine procrastination and test anxiety together with maladaptive perfectionism, or in relation to perceived parenting styles. More recently, Kennedy and Tuckman (2013) reported that procrastination mediated the relationship between academic/social values and school belongingness. Similarly, we propose that academic procrastination may mediate the relationship between perceived parenting styles and both affective and cognitive test anxieties in college students.

While some studies addressed the relationship between academic procrastination and test anxiety, others examined the relationship between maladaptive perfectionism and test anxiety. Stöber et al. (2009) established that maladaptive perfectionism was positively associated with cognitive interference as well as overall test anxiety that included worry, emotionality, cognitive interference, and lack of confidence among college students. Adding to this literature, Eum and Rice (2011) found that maladaptive perfectionism was positively associated with cognitive test anxiety. In addition, Turner and Turner (2011) identified a positive relationship between maladaptive perfectionism and academic worry, an aspect of test anxiety. The preceding studies established a link between maladaptive perfectionism and

aspects of test anxiety, but did not examine these relationships together with academic procrastination or in relation to perceived parenting styles. Just as Fletcher et al. (2012) established perfectionism as a mediator in the relationship between psychologically controlling parenting and achievement goal orientations in college students, maladaptive perfectionism may mediate the relationship between perceived parenting styles and both affective and cognitive test anxieties in a similar population.

1.3. Parental authority styles

In an early differentiation of parenting styles, Baumrind (1971) identified three styles of parental authority: permissive, authoritarian, and authoritative. Her categories were based on two dimensions of parenting: 1) responsiveness or warmth of the parent towards the child, and 2) demandingness, or the setting and enforcing of goals and expectations by parents for children (Reitman, Rhode, Hupp, & Altobello, 2002).

Buri (1991) described the authoritarian parenting style as high on demandingness but low on responsiveness. That is, authoritarian parents set very high goals and expectations for their children and expect them to meet these goals and obey all rules they impose without question or discussion. Authoritarian parents expect obedience and respect from their children because they believe parents should be shown this respect simply for being parents. Buri stated that authoritarian parents are also very low on responsiveness, meaning that they are low on warmth and demonstrations of affection towards their children. On the other hand, Buri described authoritative parents as high on both demandingness and responsiveness. That is, these parents set high goals and expectations for their children, but at the same time, value discussion of those rules and regulations and the reasons they have put them in place. Further, they willingly show affection to their children. The authoritative parenting style seems to be the best in relation to academic achievement in children (Reitman et al., 2002). From a social-cognitive perspective, early childhood environments likely set the stage for children to internalize parental demands and warmth, or lack thereof, as their own cognitive expectancies in relation to academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism.

Researchers have identified a positive association between parental pressure for intellectual development and both worry and test-irrelevant thinking, both components of test anxiety (Putwain et al., 2010). The high demandingness of both authoritarian and authoritative parents may be perceived as a type of parental pressure by their children. If perceived authoritarian and authoritative parenting styles differ in their relationship with affective and cognitive test anxieties, that difference could be due to the presence or absence of parental warmth. In addition, Fletcher et al. (2012) found that perceived psychologically controlling parenting was positively associated with maladaptive perfectionism and goal avoidance in college students. Finally, Miller, Lambert, and Neumeister (2012) reported that authoritarian parenting was associated with lower creativity and greater maladaptive perfectionism. Given these adverse academic outcomes associated with college students' perceptions of parental pressure, psychologically controlling parenting, and authoritarian parenting, we investigated authoritarian or authoritative parenting, academic procrastination, and maladaptive perfectionism, in predicting affective and cognitive test anxieties from a social-cognitive perspective.

1.4. Procrastination

Procrastination has been defined as the needless delay of things one needs to do (Klingsieck, 2013). Recent reviews of procrastination addressed its positive relation with maladjustment (Pychyl & Flett, 2012; Steel, 2007) and the need to examine its manifestation in specific circumstances (Klingsieck, 2013), given that 50% of college students procrastinate consistently and problematically (Day, Mensink, & O'Sullivan, 2000). From a social-cognitive perspective, the high control

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/364784>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/364784>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)