THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY PREFERENCES AND GENDER ON PERFECTIONISM AMONG ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

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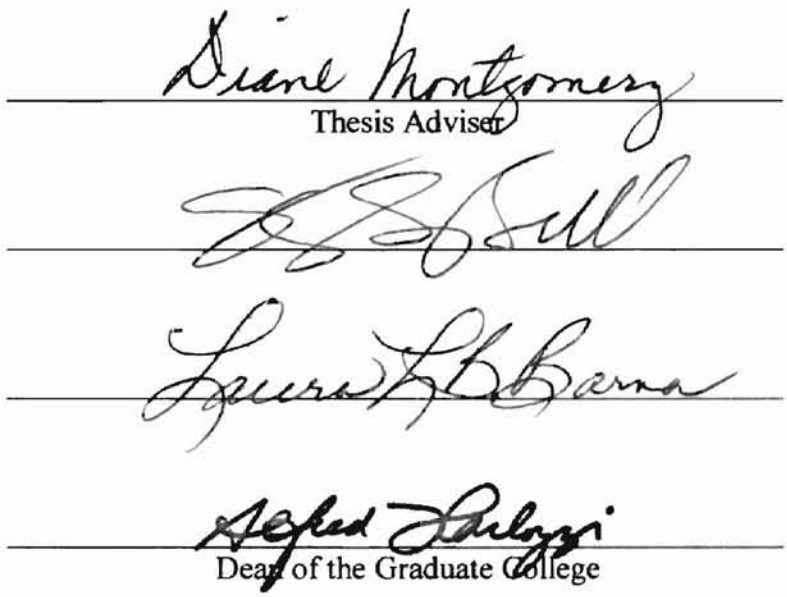

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The elementary school years are when children first begin developing individualized ways of thinking and personality preferences of extroversion and introversion begin (Meisgeier & Murphy, 1987). It is also at this developmental stage that children learn in school that perfectionistic behavior is rewarded (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). Children learn conditional acceptance early in life when other people value them because of how much they achieve and accomplish. As a result, children learn to value themselves on the basis of other people's approval, with their self-esteem contingent upon external standards.

Gender is another factor this study focuses on because girls tend to equate their self-worth with how they look and perfectionism with one's appearance is stressed in our very competitive society. Children strive to be perfect because we live in an achievement-oriented society, which holds perfectionism as a high social value (Eccles & Harold, 1992). Our society emphasizes what you do more than who you are. Children often grow up being compared to each other based upon their accomplishments. The constant tension and worry about always doing one's best creates an array of debilitating problems. This study focuses on the negative aspects of perfectionism which can be debilitating to adults and exceedingly so for children.

Perfectionism

Burns (1980) describes perfectionists as people who compulsively strain toward impossible goals and who measure their self-worth in terms of accomplishment. Pacht (1984) views perfectionism as a striving for nonexistent perfection which keeps people in

disorder and is related with numerous psychological problems. Extreme perfectionism is related to mood swings, stress-related illnesses, school phobia, and depression (Burns, 1980). Dreyfus (1993) describes perfectionism as an attempt to master and control the environment. Adderholt-Eliot (1987) makes the distinction between the pursuit of excellence and perfectionism by describing the pursuit of excellence as doing the necessary research for a term paper, working hard on it, turning it in on time, and feeling good about it. Whereas, perfectionism is doing three drafts of a term paper, staying up two nights in a row, handing in the paper late because it had to be just right, and still feeling bad about it. People who cannot stand making mistakes will likely find themselves working late into the night in order to catch any error and striving to make the product perfect (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992).

Perfectionists cannot tolerate mistakes. Thus, risk-taking is minimized by extreme conformity. Even the slightest flaw is irritating and can produce overwhelming anxiety. A mistake can be perceived as a catastrophe. Perfectionists might even lose sleep worrying about a mistake they made. One way of avoiding error is to procrastinate and postpone decision-making until they get enough facts to guarantee the "right" decision (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). To perfectionists, being wrong isn't something trivial, but a threat to their self-image as a result of previously established conditional acceptance. Fear of failure is at the heart of perfectionism (Hess, 1994). Children who are destined to become perfectionists view perfection as the only fail-safe way to ensure that they won't be vulnerable to such dangers as criticism, embarrassment, anger, or the withdrawal of love by parents and others who play a significant role in their lives (Mallinger &

DeWyze, 1992). Perfectionists avoid these vulnerabilities in order to feel love and belongingness, the social needs described by Maslow (1954).

Our society reinforces perfection. In childhood we learn that being "good" is extremely important. We learn that "good" means being quiet, clean, orderly, disciplined and controlled. The child who is the neatest and cleanest student receives the reward. Thus, we reinforce to children that being compulsive and perfect is a behavior that pays rewards. Schools continue to reinforce these values. Children are taught to color within the lines and are questioned about the "B" earned on an otherwise straight "A" report card. The goal of many schools is conformity, which leads to the perception on the part of the students that controlling the students is a more important priority than learning. Children hear from the media, school, and even from their family that they must always do their best. Advertising encourages us to not feel what we feel, but rather to evaluate the quality of our lives by material wealth. When children live in an environment where there is considerable criticism for mistakes, the child feels anxiety toward the fear of losing approval and love. In order to overcome this anxiety the child puts pressure on himself/herself to perform up to the perceived standard.

When we think of a perfectionist we usually think of a person who works diligently, always staying on task and creating superior products. The differentiation between very high levels of achievable expectations and neurotic strivings can be difficult to distinguish among talented individuals (Parker & Mills, 1996). In the classroom, the perfectionist student is the one who is awarded the highest marks at school and is never a behavior problem. However, this is not always the norm. Many students who are perfectionists have fears of social or academic failure. Perfectionism can have a

stifling influence, especially when combined with immaturity and the limited skills of a young child. These children perceive themselves as failures, feeling they have not met either their own unrealistic expectations or the expectations of adults (Fertig, 1993).

Students who are perfectionists seem to be their own worst enemies as they manipulate themselves into playing psychological mind games, which often lead to depressive thinking. Adderholt-Eliot (1987) describes several mind games perfectionists might unconsciously play with themselves. By putting their self-esteem into what they are trying to achieve, perfectionists' moods fluctuate up and down like a roller coaster, as perfectionists try to fulfill their social needs of self-esteem and belongingness (Maslow, 1954). Perfectionists also play the numbers game where they use extrinsic rewards rather than intrinsic rewards as a measure of their self-worth (Adderholt- Eliot, 1987). They are more concerned with the quantity of achievements rather than the quality. This thinking lends itself to telescopic thinking where an individual analyzes their mistakes and views their goals not yet met with the magnifying end and perceive past achievements with the minifying end (Adderholt–Eliot, 1987). As a result of the perfectionist focusing their time and energy into achieving goals they often have poor social relationships.

Perfectionist students are not satisfied with merely doing well or even doing better than their peers. On the contrary, perfectionist students are only satisfied if they have done a task perfectly (Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1989). Fear of failure, blame, or rejection can be harmful to achievement motivation. People with these fears typically try to avoid achievement situations in which their performance will be judged according to standards of excellence (Adderholt-Eliot, 1987). However, if it is not possible for the perfectionist to avoid this type of situation, they protect their self-esteem either by expressing very low

aspirations that will be easy to fulfill or by expressing impossibly high aspirations that they have no serious intention of fulfilling. Thus, in the school setting many such students become underachievers (Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1989). Perfectionist students are commonly unwilling to volunteer or respond to questions unless certain of the correct answer. They may also demonstrate overly emotional reactions to minor failures that they perceive to be catastrophic. Additionally, perfectionist students may also have low productivity due to either an excessive number of revisions or procrastination (Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1989). Perfectionists are motivated by their fears and experience depression with great intensity (Preusser, Rice, & Ashby, 1994).

Mallinger and DeWyze (1992) believe that scientists will one day discover a specific biological connection to the development of personality styles. Furthermore, they see the cause of obsessiveness due to a predisposition in some people who are either enhanced or minimized by early-life experiences. Mallinger and DeWyze (1992) believe that the children who will become obsessive are "terrified by their awareness of their own vulnerability in a world they perceive as threatening and unpredictable" (p.14). In order to control their environment, perfectionists prefer to follow social norms rather than risk criticism of doing the wrong thing. As children, perfectionists have a reputation of being mature and more serious than their peers are, a personality style that is typically rewarded and encouraged by adults (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992).

Statement of the Problem

Perfectionism is a dysfunctional behavior, which has serious negative effects in student's behavior (Pacht, 1984). Adderholt-Eliot (1989) describes the characteristics of perfectionists, which contribute to debilitating behavior as traits that include the fear of being imperfect and the dread of not living up to others' expectations. When the

perfectionist knows he/she will never be perfect, apathy may result where the action is avoided all together. An even more drastic result is when a person is so horrified of being wrong or not accepted by those with power in the environment that he/she resorts to complete passivity, which is known as paralyzed perfectionism (Adderholt-Eliot, 1987). Additionally, perfectionists usually tend to be workaholics as their acceptance by others is dependent upon their performance (Adderholt-Eliot, 1990). Perfectionists may experience difficulty in their jobs when it comes to delegating, because they strongly believe that in order to have the job done correctly, they alone will have to complete the tasks (Smith, 1990).

Since nothing a perfectionist does is ever perceived as good enough, they may report feelings of dissatisfaction or unhappiness. Perfectionists know that respect and love from others is conditional upon their performance. They may see things as black or white, and all or nothing. They often believe that there is little value in doing things that they cannot do well because not doing well leads to rejection (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). Time is often the enemy of perfectionists since they cannot achieve perfection on schedule. Some perfectionists even have to work longer just to accomplish the same amount as someone who is less perfectionistic (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). Perfectionists limit their world in order to prevent possible imperfections, and to keep from exposing themselves to criticism (Adderholt-Eliot, 1987). The need for approval and perfectionism have common characteristics, such as being overtly dependent, fearful of abandonment, feeling like a failure for not meeting expectations, needing to be outstanding in order to avoid feeling inferior, and feeling ambivalent towards interpersonal relationships (Blatt, Pilkonis, Quinlan, & Shea, 1995). Since perfectionists

set such unrealistic high goals, they experience more failures and with greater intensity (Preusser et al., 1994). It is imperative to identify and provide perfectionistic children with appropriate services in order to avoid these destructive behaviors associated with perfectionism. By knowing which traits, such as gender and introversion or extroversion, are more likely to show high levels of perfectionism, educators can more easily identify perfectionistic students and help them develop healthy attitudes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of personality preferences, specifically introversion and extroversion, and gender on perfectionism. Jung's (1959) theoretical model of psychological type describes patterns of how people perceive information and how they make decisions about that information. The key distinction between introversion and extroversion is whether the focus of one's energy and attention is focused inward or outward (Jung, 1959). Eysenck (1972) describes extroverts as people who get their energy from people and objects outside of themselves, whereas introverts gain energy from within themselves. The extrovert is depicted as being a single-layered personality, while the introvert has a private self and a public self. Silverman (1995) suggests that this reasoning means that introverts try to be perfect in school. Furthermore, it is possible that certain children are born with a combination of temperaments that create a need for an orderly environment (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). Using a personality type indicator and a perfectionism scale, the study assessed elementary students.

Significance of the Study

This study is important in that we will be better able to predict if males or females are more likely to develop perfectionist characteristics. We will also be able to predict if

introverts or extroverts are more likely to acquire perfectionistic traits. Educators and professionals working with children can better understand the social and emotional needs of students and know how to help students with the negative aspects of perfectionism. There is currently limited research on perfectionism among children (Parker & Adkins, 1994). Since children begin developing individualized styles of taking in information during the elementary years, this is a critical age to research the development of perfectionism (Hewitt & Flett, 1991).

The elementary years are important and formative in the development of a healthy lifestyle, self-esteem, and effective coping skills in learning and growth tasks. The theory of psychological type assumes a child will use his/her preferred type and that through this use will develop and strengthen a type preference (Eysenck, 1972). How we perceive the world around us shapes and influences the beliefs we have about life. It can be extremely effective and beneficial for an educator or counselor to discuss healthy ways of setting realistic goals with perfectionistic students. Children who are perfectionistic need adult assistance in developing realistic self-expectations. By developing healthy attitudes at a young age, many dysfunctional behaviors can be avoided. Perfectionism has been linked to significant emotional problems such as anxieties, feelings of failure, guilt, shame, and low self-esteem (Preusser et al., 1994). Studies have also linked perfectionism with depression, anorexia nervosa, obsessive-compulsive personality disorders, Type A coronary-prone behavior, migraines, psychosomatic disorders, panic disorders, and even suicide (Parker & Adkins, 1994).

Perfectionist students can be identified by observing their behaviors and talking with them regarding habits that interfere with participation and performance. Some

children mask their shame and feelings of inadequacy by staying busy achieving goals and appearing perfect to others (Smith, 1990). When assessing for perfectionistic behavior it is recommended that one explore the perceived parental expectations, the student's educational and personal goals, and the range of freedom for self-evaluation (Preusser et al., 1994). Teachers can learn to support and reinforce the success-seeking aspects of achievement motivation while working to reduce unrealistic goal setting. Brophy and Rohrkemper (1989) suggest using intervention methods that involve some form of cognitive restructuring, as the goal should be for the student to gradually be independent. In working away from perfectionism it is important to find authentic self-worth, which does not depend upon self-imposed or socially prescribed expectations, and to develop more gratifying ways of thinking (Preusser et al., 1994). By changing the perfectionists' outlook from extrinsic rewards to an internal locus of control, one will change from looking at the product to reflecting upon their process.

This study is beneficial to educators and counselors, as well as other pertinent professionals in the field of education, in better understanding the affective needs of elementary students. It raises awareness regarding the problems students face and give direction as to how educators and parents can better accommodate the needs of perfectionist children. Perfectionism can produce great amounts of stress and lead to dysfunctional behaviors, particularly for young students. This study helps educators and counselors in understanding how to remedy the negative aspects of perfectionism, by finding whether boys or girls are more likely to perfectionists, as well as if extroverts or introverts are more likely to show high levels of perfectionism. By knowing which gender and personality preference is more susceptible to perfectionism, educators and

counselors can better identify perfectionistic students and provide them with healthy coping skills.

Definition of Terms

Self-oriented perfectionism is the striving to attain perfection in one's endeavors by setting unrealistic standards and focusing on one's flaws and failures (Blatt et al., 1995). Other-oriented perfectionism occurs when the perfectionistic behavior is directed outward to others and unrealistic standards and stringent evaluations occur (Preusser et al., 1994). Socially prescribed perfectionism involves the need to attain standards and expectations prescribed by significant others which are perceived as being excessive and uncontrollable (Blatt et al., 1995). An extrovert focuses one's energy outward while an introvert draws energy from within (Jung, 1976).

Research Questions

The effects of gender and personality preferences of extroversion and introversion on three types of perfectionism were examined. The following research questions are addressed.

1. What are the effects of gender and personality preference of extroversion and introversion on self-oriented perfectionism?
    1a. How do boys and girls differ on self-oriented perfectionism?
    1b. How do introverts and extroverts differ on self-oriented perfectionism?
2. What are the effects of gender and personality preference of extroversion and introversion on other-oriented perfectionism?
    2a. How do boys and girls differ on other-oriented perfectionism?
    2b. How do introverts and extroverts differ on other-oriented perfectionism?

3. What are the effects of gender and personality preference of extroversion and introversion on socially prescribed perfectionism?

    3a. How do boys and girls differ on socially prescribed perfectionism?

    3b. How do introverts and extroverts differ on socially prescribed perfectionism?

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of personality preferences and gender on three different types of perfectionism. By understanding how these variables relate to perfectionism, we can better identify who will need additional educational services. This chapter will review: (a) the literature on perfectionism, (b) perfectionism associated with the gifted, (c) strategies for educators who work with perfectionistic students, (d) gender, (e) introversion/extroversion, (f) the three types of perfectionism, and (g) possible reasons for perfectionism.

Perfectionism

Excessive orderliness, organization, and neatness have often been related to perfectionism because it has been assumed that there is a relationship between perfectionism and obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (Johnson & Slaney, 1996). The single quality that characterizes obsessive people is the need to feel in control - of themselves, of others, and of life's risks. One of the primary ways this need manifests itself is perfectionism (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). The personality traits that are rooted in being in control and being perfect include: a fear of making errors, emotional guardedness, a need to be above criticism, and a chronic inner pressure to use every minute productively (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). Most of these traits are viewed as valuable qualities by teachers and parents as conditional acceptance until they become exaggerated and rigid.

It is common for obsessives to focus on certain areas in maintaining order, such as: organizing physical surroundings, performing activities in a methodical manner and a

mental neatness where one has a clear comprehension of life (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). These activities may "impart a symbolic reassurance that one can order life in its greater aspects - that the unexpected catastrophe can be avoided" (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). The obsessive personality style functions towards maintaining safety and security through mastery. Obsessives tend to be especially sensitive to demands, either real or imagined, that are placed upon them. Many obsessives worry chronically and suffer from the constant worry of having to do everything perfectly (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). This outlook can ruin even the most enjoyable activities. Even in their time off, many obsessives can not completely relax and just play.

Additionally, obsessives tend to judge other people's lives by the same standards they have set for themselves. In doing so, they feel no compassion when they hear of mishaps befalling those they consider unworthy or "bad," and they resent it when honors or other good fortune come to someone "undeserving" (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). Rigid thinking may also take the form of rigid expectations. When things don't go exactly as the obsessive expected them to go, he/she tends to react with excessive disappointment (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992).

Perfectionism is a personality style characterized by chronic and excessive dissatisfaction with oneself and others. Burns (1980) defines perfectionists as:

> Those whose standards are high beyond reach or reason, people who strain compulsively toward impossible goals and who measure their own worth entirely in terms of productivity and accomplishment. For these people, the drive to excel can only be self-defeating. (34)

Perfectionists are highly critical and have unrealistic expectations. Perfectionists live in a narrowly defined world in which they feel empowered. They believe it is possible to be perfect. The fewer activities they engage in, the greater the possibility of achieving their goal. Perfectionists typically admire intellect and reason, while sneering at people who are emotional. Thus, the perfectionist is able to convert the pain of feeling inferior into pride in being competent (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992).

It is the fear of failure that leads perfectionists to procrastinate, avoid new experiences, or turn into workaholics who don't make time to enjoy the life around them (Hess, 1994). Work represents much more than just a way to earn a living; it is the main basis around which everything else revolves (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). Mallinger and DeWyze define a workaholic as, "someone who voluntarily devotes practically every waking hour to either doing or thinking about some form of work". The workaholic is constantly worried about professional responsibilities even when not engaged in job-related tasks. The workaholic behavior that perfectionists demonstrate is encouraged in dysfunctional families as a way for a person to maintain control over certain parts of his/her life. Perfectionist workaholics are likely to experience depression, burnout, and have poor social relationships (Adderholt-Eliot, 1987).

There are many talented people who are perfectionistic in their work and they demonstrate how the desire for perfectionism can be a positive factor in achievement (Preusser et al., 1994). Perfectionists derive satisfaction from meeting challenges and focusing intensely on the process necessary to attain the seemingly impossible goal. As Silverman (1995) points out, the process of pursuing a goal to the best of one's ability may be so rewarding that the attainment of the goal is only of secondary importance.

Perfectionists have an inner need to fulfill their own expectations even if no one else sees the need to do so.

Perfectionists are unable to experience pleasure as a result of their efforts, because they never feel their accomplishments are good enough (Parker & Mills, 1996). They are unable to feel satisfaction because in their own eyes they never seem to do things well enough to warrant that feeling (Parker & Mills, 1996). Perfectionists set high standards in every situation and are motivated by fears of failure. Thus, they are never satisfied or feel good about themselves (Preusser et al., 1994). Those with low self-esteem tend to be socially inhibited people who harbor fears of being noticed and having their flaws exposed (Mallinger & DeWyze 1992

Adderholt-Eliot (1987) describes several major traits that are common among neurotic perfectionists. Procrastination is used as a way to counteract possible failure, as perfectionists blame not having enough time as their excuse for failing to attain perfection. Another trait shared by perfectionists is all-or-nothing thinking where they perceive there to be nothing between success and failure. Thus, receiving one's first "B" is a catastrophic failure because only an "A" is acceptable. The chronic fear of failure leads perfectionists to avoid new experiences, particularly if they will be evaluated. Perfectionists cannot handle receiving less than the top grades even during the learning process. Paralyzed perfectionism affects people who are unable to let themselves have fun, as they only participate in activities that have been mastered.

For many people there is a dark side to perfection, when perfectionism is the pursuit of excellence taken to the extreme. The same traits that bring success and respect can also create serious problems. Perfectionism becomes a problem when it frustrates

and inhibits achievement (Parker & Mills, 1996). Neurotic perfectionism can play a significant part of psychological disturbances and pervasive feelings of failure, guilt shame, indecisiveness, low self-esteem, and serious forms of psychopathology (Blatt et al., 1995).

Schuler (1998) found that in dysfunctional families the children had intense concerns regarding parental expectations and criticisms. While a healthy will to excel tends to bring one pleasure, perfectionism quite often is a source of pain (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). A perfectionist views any task as a test which will be presented to others as a reflection of their personal adequacy. Thus, it is always important to do things correctly, and in doing so the motives are so complicated that the perfectionist is constantly preoccupied and tense. Sadly enough, when success is achieved it is rarely enjoyed (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). The perfectionist always finds room for improvement in any task. It does not matter how much time the perfectionist spends on a project; there is always the possibility that someone will find an error (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992).

Perfectionism seems to be a significant factor that interferes with effective short-term treatment of depression. Studies have indicated that perfectionistic patients do poorly in brief treatment for depression (Blatt et al., 1995). Perfectionists are more responsive to long-term intensive psychiatric treatment. Dr. Blatt's findings suggest that "personality factors of the patient can play an overall important role in the treatment process." Perfectionism seems to be a factor in depression, not only leading to negative outcomes during treatment, but also to suicide. Studies have shown that patients who are

neurotic perfectionists are more likely to make serious suicide attempts (Blatt et al., 1995).

Pacht (1984) discussed several symptoms of perfectionism that relates to students. Their performance standards are impossibly high and unnecessarily rigid; while their motivation stems more from fear of failure than from the pursuit of success. The perfectionist student measures self-worth entirely in terms of productivity and accomplishment. Thus, it is typical for these students to have an all-or-nothing outlook and perceive anything other than perfection as a failure. These students also have difficulty accepting credit or pleasure, even when success is achieved, because such achievement is merely what he/she expected. The perfectionist student procrastinates in getting started on work that will be judged, and typically experiences long delays in completing assignments, or repeatedly starting over on an assignment, because the work must be perfect from the beginning and continue to be perfect as he/she goes along.

Other characteristics of perfectionist students include an unwillingness to volunteer or respond to questions unless certain of the correct answer. They are also overly emotional and experience disastrous reactions to minor failures (Pacht, 1984). Many perfectionists downplay their achievements. They seem to effortlessly move from one accomplishment to the next. However, internally they feel like phonies that live in constant fear of getting caught. When perfectionists experience success, it is likely to be attributed to luck, good timing, or some other factor that is out of their control (Adderholt-Eliot, 1987). Perfectionists cannot accept praise because they do not believe they deserve it.

Perfectionism Associated with Gifted

This study does not use giftedness as a variable. However, it is important for educators to understand the link between giftedness and perfectionism. Feldman (1982) defined giftedness as "achieving advanced mastery within a field, or domain, of activity." Numerous studies have shown that giftedness is highly related to perfectionism (Oden, 1968; Orange, 1997; Parker, 1997; Roberts & Lovett, 1994; Schuler, 1998). Therefore, educators can better identify perfectionism by looking at those children most likely to develop perfectionistic tendencies.

While striving for excellence in some individuals can be considered unhealthy when the striving is unrealistically high, it is even more difficult for the gifted to determine what goals are out of reach. Furthermore, gifted students and teachers often share similar traits, which may reinforce one another. In this environment problems are harder to detect since perfectionism seems to be the norm (Adderholt-Eliot, 1987). Silverman (1995) believes that once an individual can perceive excellence and can sense "how it ought to be done" the desire to achieve that level of excellence may become intense. Thus, the gifted may feel inferior if they do not meet the high standards they perceive for themselves and unfulfilled if they don't attempt to strive for the quality of performance which they know they are capable of. It is important for those who interact with gifted individuals to keep encouraging their risk-taking and creative behavior as opposed to perfectionistic thinking styles which may limit their potential and their future (Adderholt-Eliot, 1990).

Roberts and Lovett's (1994) research found statistically significant higher levels of perfectionism among gifted students in grades seventh through ninth as compared to nongifted students and academic achievers. Even the gifted participants in Terman's

forty-year longitudinal study were found to have higher expectations and perfectionistic traits (Oden, 1968). Schuler (1997) also found perfectionistic tendencies among gifted students in grades sixth through eighth, regardless of socioeconomic or ethnic status. In Schuler's study (1998), 87.5% of the gifted students sampled demonstrated perfectionistic tendencies. Perfectionists had an intense need for order and organization and lived in a state of anxiety about making mistakes. They had extremely high standards, viewed others to have extreme expectations' and negative criticisms towards them; questioned their own judgment, did not possess effective coping skills, and demonstrated a constant need for approval (Schuler, 1998). This study showed that family, teacher, and peer influences on perfectionism were perceived as mostly negative for perfectionists. The impact of gender roles was not found as an influence (Schuler, 1998).

Orange (1997) performed a study using gifted participants who responded to a Perfectionism Quiz. It was hypothesized that a large proportion of the participants would score high on the Perfectionism Quiz as the participants were gifted. This study resulted in 89% of the participants scoring in the two highest categories. Orange's study (1997) demonstrates that perfectionism is a highly common characteristic among the gifted and that perfectionism is characterized by extremely high personal standards. Gifted children are also more susceptible to perfectionism due to: birth order, perfectionistic parents, and pressure from peers and teachers (Orange, 1997). Since perfectionists are typically smart, successful people, perfectionism has been viewed as an adverse reaction to stress in gifted children (Orange, 1997).

Parker's (1997) study involved 820 academically talented sixth graders who took the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale, the NEO-Five Factor Inventory, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, the Brief Symptom Inventory, and the Adjective Checklist to determine characteristics of cluster membership. This study demonstrated that parent perceptions of the children were consistent with the students' self-perceptions (Parker, 1997). Clark (1988) explained how the gifted are more prone to lower self-esteem since unusually high expectations are placed upon them, whether by others or by themselves. Clark believes that if this thinking is not treated properly it will be a compulsive behavior that continues throughout one's life. Perfectionism has been found to be more prevalent among the gifted possibly because they are "better able to approximate perfectionism and thus it is rewarded in them" (Roeper, 1982). In the gifted population, the higher expectations could lead to more devastating responses to failure, be it real or perceived. Parker and Mills (1996) point out that,

> A less able student who attempts to achieve high standards might be labeled as conscientious or responsible, while a talented student might be labeled perfectionistic because of the expectation of finding dysfunctional perfectionism in the gifted. (p.197)

Perfectionism is continuously stated as a major counseling issue for the gifted. Delisle cited perfectionism as a possible cause of suicide among teenagers. The group most likely to have suicidal tendencies are teenage gifted perfectionists (Adderholt-Eliot, 1989).

Silverman (1995) explains that the relationship between perfectionism and giftedness is inevitable for several reasons. Since gifted children set standards according to their mental age rather than their chronological age, perfectionism is a function of

asynchrony. For example, many gifted children have older playmates so they tend to set standards appropriate for their older friends. Additionally, many gifted children have enough forethought to enable them to be successful in their first attempts at mastering any skill. Thus, they come to expect success and fear failure since they have had little experience with it. When the work in school is too easy the only challenge a gifted child can create is accomplishing the work perfectly. Perfectionism is a distortion of the desire for self-perfection. There is an inner knowing that there is more to life than the mundane and a desire to create meaning in one's own life by doing the very best one is capable of doing.

Advocates for gifted children must recognize that perfectionism is not simply a problem to be cured; rather, it is a trait that can be potentially very harmful. The state of empirical knowledge concerning perfectionism and the gifted is in its infancy (Parker & Adkins, 1994). There are clearly significant questions that remain to be answered regarding perfectionism among the gifted and talented population. It has been recommended that future research on perfectionism in the gifted focus on both aspects of how perfectionistic strivings can inhibit students and how these strivings also stimulate the pursuit of excellence (Parker & Mills, 1996). Perfectionism remains to be "the most overlooked and influential personality trait of gifted children" (Parker & Adkins, 1994).

Strategies to Help Perfectionists

Perfectionists commonly demonstrate unsatisfactory progress due to their concern being focused on avoiding mistakes instead of on learning. Perfectionists are inhibited about classroom participation and their compulsive work habits often lead to counterproductivity. Teachers naturally want their students to do their best and set high standards, but it is vitally important for perfectionist students to learn to do so in realistic

and productive ways rather than in a compulsive and rigid manner. Perfectionists commonly show unsatisfactory achievement due to the fact that they are more concerned about avoiding mistakes than with learning. Their work habits tend to be compulsive. Intervention should involve the teacher having an understanding and approval of the child's desire to do well and sympathize with the students' feeling of embarrassment and frustration (Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1989).

In addressing the problems created by perfectionism, both internal and external pressures for children need to be reduced. Opportunities need to be created that provide for successes which increase self-esteem and make the child aware of his/her exceptional capabilities. This can be accomplished through eliminating grades and personal comparisons to help overcome the fear of failure. The student needs to be rewarded for their attempts, not just their successes. Teachers need to support the success-seeking aspects of achievement motivation while simultaneously striving to reduce unrealistic goal setting. Perfectionist students need to understand that schools are places to learn knowledge and skills, not merely to demonstrate them. They need to accept that errors are a necessary part of the learning process, and that everyone makes mistakes, including the teacher. Additionally, the perfectionistic student needs to understand that it is more helpful to measure progress by comparing where one is now with where one was, instead of comparing oneself with peers or ideals of perfection (Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1989).

Helping perfectionists develop more realistic expectations is a process that requires accepting their motivation to achieve and their need to feel satisfied with their accomplishments. Therefore, instead of dismissing their concerns as unfounded, teachers can use active listening methods to encourage students to express their concerns (Pacht,

1984). Schuler (1997) suggests that teachers working with perfectionist students give them permission to make mistakes, or divide assignments into outline, rough draft, and final draft stages, with perfection promoted only for the final draft. Another suggestion for educators is to use ungraded assignments. Additionally, it is advised to place limits on perfectionist's procrastination by limiting the time that can be spent on an assignment or by limiting the amount of correcting allowed. The goal is to gradually guide the student toward an independent work posture, as the students strive to achieve a 20- or 30-degree change rather than a 180-degree turnaround (Pacht, 1984). Since most teachers who are attracted to working with perfectionist students have dealt with similar problems, one of the best ways to help a child is to discuss strategies that the adult has used to work on the perfectionist need (Clark, 1988).

The perfectionist student needs a free, relaxed atmosphere in which to learn, while at the same time providing a structured environment. It is also important to incorporate goal setting and student evaluation into major facets of the curriculum. Adderholt-Eliot (1987) believes that teaching relaxation, creative visualization (where one pictures changes of behavior in one's mind as a step toward changing that behavior), and coping strategies would be beneficial in breaking the unhealthy perfectionistic style. Teachers can help students by teaching strategies to appropriately gain more control in their lives.

Schuler (1997) recommends that teachers be aware of the child's pressures at home and at school, and discuss what perfectionism means to the student. Teachers can work with students to improve self-evaluation skills by emphasizing the process and improvement rather than perfect products. Parents can help perfectionistic children by showing the child unconditional love, and avoiding comparisons with peers and siblings.

It is also important for parents to let the child explore and pursue their passions. Parents can also instill the importance of being healthy by enforcing good eating habits and proper sleep, and teaching their children relaxation skills (Schuler, 1997).

Perfectionists need to see failure for what it really is; an opportunity to discover that future success lies in another strategy or direction. Adderholt-Eliot (1987) suggests bibliotherapy as another means of helping perfectionists. Fertig (1993) also recommends sharing stories which present the concept that mistakes are used as part of the learning process. Stories, which serve to remind children that mistakes may not always be negative and where healthy adaptation is modeled are recommended for children. In order to help perfectionist children, parents and teachers can set realistic standards, monitor criticism, acknowledge personal imperfections, create an environment of unconditional acceptance, and support the child's efforts and attempts. By focusing on perfectionism with a realistic view, perfectionists can perceive excellence to be achievable, while recognizing that perfection is unattainable.

Gender

Eccles and Howard's (1992) studies on gender socialization found that parents and teachers have different gender socialization. Boys were socialized towards math, science, and sports, while girls were socialized into verbal areas, dance, art, and music. Getting good grades in science and math are expectations for boys, and as a result of the low expectations for girls in these subjects, many girls underachieve in math and science (Piirto, 1999).

Females have traditionally been raised to be non-assertive, accepting, and complacent while neglecting themselves and taking on more than they can handle

(Adderholt-Eliot, 1987). Girls are raised to be selfless and boys to do what's best for himself first. Little girls receive messages about the need for physical perfection from advertising, society, family and friends (Smith, 1990). The negative consequences of these messages are evident in the ever-increasing number of young girls with depression and eating disorders. Studies have found that more women than men are subject to depression, and there are theories suggesting that it is due to women turning their anger inward while men turn theirs outward (Adderholt-Eliot, 1987). Many girls are still brought up believing that they should be happy, cheerful, and smiling all the time. Little girls are being pushed to do everything competently and cheerfully.

Perfectionism in females differs from perfectionism in men. For females it is tied to family, home, and personal appearance, while for males it is linked to performance at work (Adderholt- Eliot, 1987). The goals of the women's movement have put even more pressure on women to perform multiple roles in society. Women in the 1950's learned from television ads that they were suppose to look perfectly, cook perfectly, and raise perfect children in a perfect house. Women today are still hearing this plus they're being told to be perfect at work while competing with men as they climb the corporate ladder (Adderholt-Eliot, 1987). When females look at this scenario it is easy to understand how they question their competency and many give up before trying to reach any goals. When children become aware of their own vulnerabilities in a world they perceive as threatening and unpredictable, many adopt perfectionism as a way to navigate through life sanely (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992).

Introversion and Extroversion

Jung (1959) created the words "extroversion" and" introversion" in order to distinguish the two worlds in which all people live. Jung's (1959) theory of personality

type explains that variation in human behavior does not result from chance but rather from basic differences in human functioning. This theory is divided into two major components: fundamental human attitudes (extroversion and introversion) and basic mental processes (sensation, intuition, thinking, feeling). Jung considered the distinction between extroversion and introversion as the most important of his dimensions of personality.

Jung's (1959) theory is that there is a world outside ourselves, and there is a world inside us. All people live in both worlds, but not simultaneously. When we listen to our inner dialogue we turn away from the outside world. When we focus on the world outside, we shut off our awareness of the world within. The key distinction between introversion and extroversion is whether the primary focus of one's attention and energy is directed inward or outward (Jung, 1959). Jung described the introvert's flow of vitality as inward, and the extrovert's as outward. We usually think of introversion and extroversion in terms of personality types, but both are also attitudes. Introversion and extroversion are best seen as preferences, much like right or left-handedness.

Introversion and extroversion are not learned behaviors but inborn traits (Kurchinka, 1994). Eysenck (1972) is best known for his theory of human personality, which suggests that personality is biologically determined. He proposed that introverts tend to have a higher level of central nervous system arousal than extroverts do. This can explain the findings that introverts have a lower pain threshold and are more reactive to external stimulation than extroverts (Eysenck 1972). Temperaments can be seen from birth. Even among siblings we see how one child is more oriented to the outer environment, while one is less active and more self absorbed. Everyone has a learning

style, which encompasses cognitive, affective, and psychological factors which serve as indicators of how a learner perceives, interacts with, and responds to the learning environment (Keefe, 1979). Our style of learning, if accommodated, can result in improved attitudes toward learning and an increase in productivity, academic achievement, and creativity.

With children, we need to understand the development of type in healthy and functional ways. It is during the elementary school years that children first begin developing individualized ways of taking in information (Keirsey, 1995). Type development begins in childhood. The theory of psychological type assumes that a child will use his/her preferred functions and attitudes whenever possible and that through this use the child will develop and strengthen a type preference. There seems to be a consensus that the elementary and beginning middle school years are important and formative in the development of healthy type, self-esteem, and the effective utilization of the dominant function in learning and growth tasks.

The learning styles of extroverts and introverts differ in numerous ways. Since they differ in their thinking, they also learn differently. Although all children display, to a degree, both extroverted and introverted traits, every child prefers one style to the other, and this preference is as innate to a child as gender or eye color. (Chance, 1987). Extroverts have difficulty understanding life until they live it. On the other hand, introverts believe they cannot live life until they have understood it (Keirsey, 1995). Because the extrovert and the introvert do not take in the world around them in the same way, they need to be taught differently. It is important to respond to the needs of children that correspond to their personality type.

In a study involving men and women from 37 different nations, women were more likely to show high levels of introversion; whereas men were more likely to show higher levels of extroversion (Lynn & Martin, 1997). The American population is comprised of about 75% of extroverts (Keirsey, 1995). In our extremely extroverted culture, introverts must often learn to fill extroverted roles. However, introversion is consistently linked with success in higher education (Magnus, Diener, Fujita, & Pavot, 1993). Jung (1959) saw the life cycle as favoring extroverts in the first half of life, learning how the world works, establishing a career and family; while favoring introverts in the second half of life, where the search of meaning and purpose are predominant.

Extroverts are generally more social, than introverts. They are more action oriented and spontaneous. The extroverted student needs time for social conversations and learn best through modeling. The extroverted student needs to see or try the experiment prior to explaining the concept. In order to concentrate this student needs an environment free of distractions. (Eysenck, 1972). An extrovert learns best by explaining things to others. It is not until they try to teach another that they know for sure if they truly understand something. Extroverts also find it easy to work in groups since extroverts think by talking. Extroverts need practice taking turns, listening, and waiting for others to finish before he/she starts speaking.

Introverts tend to shy away from the world. They are less distractible than extroverts and perform better at monotonous or highly attention demanding tasks (Keirsey, 1995). The introvert needs to understand the "big picture" in order to fully learn something. The introverted student needs time for internal processing before responding to questions. This student needs to develop an understanding of the task

through observation, explanation, and question-and-answer before they are asked to perform or be tested. (Eysenck, 1972). Introverted children need quiet times and a chance to prepare while in school. They need time to reflect on their experiences in order to understand. They recharge by spending time alone or with one or two other people. Introverts have difficulty sharing space with their classmates. These students should be taught how to make things such as flowcharts, contrast tables and concept maps to help view the "big picture" (Keirsey, 1995).

Learning to recognize and understand children's preferred style of thinking is critical in meeting the needs of both introverted and extroverted children. One way that a classroom could accommodate both needs is by providing both quiet reading areas and ones in which children are close to other students. The challenge for our schools is to assess the learning style characteristics of each student and to provide teaching and counseling interventions that are compatible with those characteristics (Griggs, 1991). Educators need to respect individual differences and give choices that work for both types of children.

Three Types of Perfectionism

There are different types of perfectionists with different risks of pathology (Parker & Adkins, 1994). The three different types of perfectionism are (I.) self-oriented, (II.) other-oriented, and (III.) socially prescribed. Self-oriented perfectionism is when a person has a strong desire to be perfect and in doing so they set unrealistic standards for themselves while focusing on their failures and flaws (Blatt et al., 1995). The behavior of other-oriented perfectionists is the same except that instead of focusing the behaviors on oneself they are directed towards others (Preusser et al., 1994). Socially prescribed

perfectionists believe that others expect them to be perfect (Preusser et al., 1994). Socially prescribed perfectionism occurs when one believes he/she must meet unrealistic expectations that are assumed to be held by other people (Blatt et al., 1995).

Self-oriented perfectionism is motivated by striving to attain perfection in one's endeavors as well as striving to avoid failures. It involves setting exacting standards for one's self and stringently evaluating and censuring one's own behavior. Other-oriented perfectionism is when the perfectionist behavior is directed outward to have unrealistic standards for others and stringently evaluating the performance of others. Socially prescribed perfectionism involves the perceived need to attain standards and expectations prescribed by significant others. These expectations are perceived as being excessive and uncontrollable.

Both self-oriented perfectionism and socially prescribed perfectionism are part of clinical depression and are related to severe psychopathology (Blatt et al., 1995). When a person combines these two dimensions of perfectionism, the sense of personal failure, along with the belief that one has failed to meet the expectations of significant others, it can create feelings of hopelessness which lead to clinical depression and even suicide (Blatt et al., 1995). Studies have shown that socially prescribed perfectionism is the most dangerous type since it is more likely to result in suicide (Parker & Adkins, 1994). Studies have shown that depressed patients have higher levels of self-oriented perfectionism (Preusser, 1994). Preusser (1994) discovered that self-esteem played a mediating role when examining the effects of self-oriented perfectionism on depression for women.

Possible Reasons for Perfectionism

Adderholt-Eliot (1987) cites several possible reasons for perfectionism. Perfectionists tend to be first born or only children, because parents tend to reward perfectionistic behavior in the firstborn. Since firstborns are mostly around adults they tend to measure their own behavior by adult standards. Another possible reason for perfectionism is that children learn the behavior from their own parents. Perfectionistic children often have perfectionistic parents, who are usually very high achievers. Children emulate the actions and attitudes their parents' model. Studies have shown that the mothers' perfectionism was related to greater maladjustment in daughters, while fathers' perfectionism was correlated with reduced maladjustment (Parker & Adkins, 1995). Adderholt-Eliot (1987) found that parents of the most perfectionistic students had always held extremely high expectations for their children, whereas parents of the least perfectionist students were more accepting and relaxed.

The developmental course of perfectionism can be viewed in young children's desires to do things independently without assistance is considered to be a precursor of achievement motivation (Parker & Adkins, 1994). There exists a difference among children who want to excel and children who feel that they should excel, as those who feel they should excel creating unrealistic expectations and feelings of inadequacy (Parker & Adkins, 1994). Mallinger and DeWyze's (1992) study showed that child perfectionists perceived a parent's word and actions as contradictory. While the parent's words may have conveyed love and concern, the parent's behaviors and attitudes reflected self-interest and a lack of empathy for the child. Children who live in dysfunctional families resort to perfectionism as a means to have control over some area of their life.

As children, perfectionists exercise their compulsive behavior in school. For many students achievement in school is the only way to gain attention and approval from others (Smith, 1990). Silverman (1995) believes that pressure does not come from a child's family but rather from within the child and stems from the child's need for an orderly environment. Children also receive a strong message from the media to look, act, and be flawless. Developmental asynchrony may create pressure for children to achieve but due to undeveloped social and emotional skills they may not be able to.

Summary of Chapter II

The single quality that characterizes perfectionism is the need to be in control. The personality traits that are rooted in being in control are valuable qualities until they become exaggerated and rigid. Perfectionists are characterized by excessive dissatisfaction with oneself and others. The same traits that bring successful results can also create serious problems for the perfectionist. Their unrealistic expectations can lead to numerous problems, including depression, poor social relationships, ill health, and possibly lead to suicide.

Personality traits begin in childhood where some students have an inner need to fill their own expectations, which may be unrealistic. It is the most difficult for gifted students to determine which high expectation is truly unrealistic. Teachers can identify perfectionistic students by identifying compulsive work habits. It is suggested that teachers support the perfectionistic student's success-seeking aspects of achievement motivation while working to reduce unrealistic goal setting. Every person has a preference for either extroversion or introversion. This does not mean that they do one at the exclusion of the other. Most people go both ways depending on the circumstances. An extrovert is energized by drawing energy from the outside world of people, activities,

or things; whereas, an introvert draws energy from one's internal world of ideas, emotions, or expressions.

The three types of perfectionism that this study focused on includes (a) self-oriented perfectionists who focus on their own failures, (b) other-oriented perfectionists who focus on the flaws of others, and (c) socially prescribed perfectionists who believe that others expect them to be perfect. Perfectionism may be an inborn trait or it might be learned from parents, or as a result of needing control in a dysfunctional family, or possibly as a result of the expectations of being the first born or only child. By focusing on perfectionism with a realistic view perfectionists are able to perceive excellence as attainable, whereas perfection is not.

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of personality preferences of extroversion and introversion and gender on three different types of perfectionism. By understanding how these variables relate to perfectionism, we can better identify who may need additional educational services. This chapter describes the participants in the study, the instruments used, procedures of the study, and the data analysis conducted.

Selection of Subjects

Participants for this study were fifth grade students from a suburban elementary school in the Midwestern United States. Over 100 children volunteers were invited to participate in this research. The children included special education, gifted, and traditional students as this study did not differentiate according to identified ability groups; rather, this study focused on the differences between genders. The school is in a metropolitan city with approximately 380,000 people and the school district serves around 40,000 students in elementary through high school. This particular school serves over 700 students in kindergarten through fifth grade. The sample included 28 males and 46 females in the fifth grade. Both genders were comparable in socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and age. The average age of the participant was 11 years of age, with a mean of 11.04 and a standard deviation of 0.74.

Research Instruments

The Murphy Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children (MMTIC) (Meisgeier & Murphy, 1987) was used to elicit information about individual differences in children through the identification of psychological type. The conceptual framework of the

MMTIC is based on Jung's (1959) theoretical model of personality type, which infers that there are patterns of how people perceive information and how they make decisions about that information. Type theory has been beneficial in that it has helped bring predictability to situations in life. The MMTIC seeks to provide an interpretation of type as it relates to how an individual child best perceives and processes information and how that child prefers to interact socially and behaviorally with others. The MMTIC is a self-report instrument in which the child is asked to choose his or her preferred response from two choices, neither of which is right or wrong. It consists of 70 items designed to measure four preference scales. The four preferences include (1) Extroversion/Introversion, (2) Sensing/Intuition, (3) Thinking/Feeling, and (4) Judging/Perceiving. Only the Extroversion/Introversion scale was used for this study.

The Extroversion/Introversion dimension assesses whether individuals are oriented to the outer or inner world. Extroverted individuals respond to the environment and are stimulated by people and actions in the environment. Those with a preference for extroversion tend to be sociable and enjoy active participation in tasks. Introverted individuals are interested in the inner world of ideas, concepts, or impressions. Those preferring introversion need privacy and do their best work when alone or with a few people.

The internal consistency of the MMTIC was estimated by Meisgeier and Murphy (1987) using a split-half procedure on the extroversion/introversion functions and the Spearman-Brown method was used to estimate the reliability of extroversion /introversion, which was 0.65. Reliability of the coefficients supports the conclusion that the reliability of the MMTIC raw scores is consistent across grade level, gender, and

reading level. A mean of 3.0 or better would be sufficient to support the position that the items in the MMTIC were rated as accurately reflecting the concepts of psychological type. The fact that the rating was 4.1 further strengthened the content validity of the MMTIC. Sample items from the MMTIC referring to extroversion/introversion include, "When meeting new classmates for the first time, you: (a) start to talk to someone first, or (b) wait until someone talks to you" and " You (a) like to talk to people you meet, or (b) keep your feelings to yourself" (Meisgeier & Murphy, 1987).

The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS) (Hewitt & Flett, 1998) is designed to assess three dimensions of perfectionism. To develop the scales, Hewitt and Flett used descriptive passages that reflect the three perfectionism dimensions, which were derived from case descriptions and theoretical discussions. These descriptions were generated into items that could be rated for agreement. The resulting 162 items were corrected, clarified, rephrased, and some were deleted. This resulted in 122 potential items that could be rated for agreement on a 7-point scale. Hewitt and Flett administered the items to the subjects who also completed the Marlowe-Crowne Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). An item was selected if it had a mean score between 2.5 and 5.5, and a correlation of less than .25 with social desirability. These criteria resulted in Hewitt and Flett's (1998) 45-item Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale with three subscales of 15 items each for the self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed dimensions.

Item-to-subscale total correlations were computed for each MPS item and ranged between .51 and .73 for self-oriented items, .43 and .64 for other-oriented items, and .45 and .71 for socially prescribed items. The coefficient alphas were .86 for self-oriented

perfectionism, .82 for other-oriented perfectionism, and .87 for socially prescribed perfectionism. Intercorrelations among the MPS subscales ranged between .25 and .40, which were relatively low compared with the magnitude of the subscale alpha coefficients. This difference indicates that the subscales are relatively distinct and are not simply alternate forms of the same dimension (Hewitt & Flett, 1991).

The validity of the MPS was measured by factor analytic techniques, which resulted in three corresponding factors that assessed the three dimensions. The coefficients of congruence were .94 for self-oriented perfectionism, .93 for socially prescribed perfectionism, and .82 for other-oriented perfectionism. The test-retest reliability's were .88 for self-oriented, .85 for other-oriented, and .75 for socially prescribed perfectionism. Item-to-subscales total correlations ranged between .51 and .73 for self-oriented items, .43 and .64 for other-oriented items and .45 and .71 for socially prescribed items. Alpha coefficients were calculated to confirm the subscales high internal consistency. The values were .89 for self-oriented perfectionism, .79 for other-oriented perfectionism, and .86 for socially prescribed perfectionism. This demonstrates that the three MPS subscales have an adequate degree of internal consistency and supports the belief that the MPS has three underlying factors which corresponds to three dimensions of perfectionistic behavior (Hewitt & Flett, 1991).

Sample statements from the MPS referring to self-oriented perfectionism include, " It makes me uneasy to see an error in my work," and " I set very high standards for myself." Other-oriented perfectionism statements from the MPS include, "I have high expectations for the people who are important to me," and "If I ask someone to do something, I expect it to be done flawlessly." Statements from the MPS regarding

socially prescribed perfectionism include, " Success means that I must work harder to please others," and "I find it difficult to meet others' expectations of me" (Hewitt & Flett, 1998).

Procedure

Since this study was conducted in a public school setting, approval from both the public school and Oklahoma State University's Institutional Review Board was sought. Public school approved the proposal (Appendix A). After receiving approval from Oklahoma State University's Institutional Review Board (Appendix B), the researcher went to all five of the fifth grade classes and orally explained the test to students (Appendix C). At that time the researcher distributed letters of solicitation to parents (Appendix D) to explain the purpose and procedures of the study, and parent consent forms (Appendix E) and child assent forms (Appendix F) were also distributed. All 114 fifth grade students were invited to participate. A letter to the school counselor (Appendix G) was sent to inform of the possible distress these instruments might incur upon the participants.

The Murphy-Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children and the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale were administered to all 74 fifth grade students who returned consent forms and assent forms for testing. The instruments were administered during the students' regularly scheduled daily art class. As there are five different fifth grade sections, this test was administered on five separate occasions to not disrupt the students regular class schedule. The first, third and fifth groups of students were given the MMTIC before the MPS while the second and fourth groups of students were given the MPS before the MMTIC. The researcher read the directions and all of the questions, as

directed by both instruments administration requirements. Students were given as much time as needed to complete the two instruments. Since the two different tests were stapled together and each labeled with the same identification number, the tests allowed students to remain anonymous, as no names were used.

Analysis of Data

This research study examined the influence of extroversion and introversion and gender on three separate types of perfectionism among elementary students. The MMTIC served to identify the variables of personality orientation of extroversion and introversion for each individual. The MPS instrument was used to determine each of three perfectionistic behaviors. Three ANOVA were conducted, one for each type of perfectionism.

Summary of Chapter III

This study included fifth grade students, who took the Murphy-Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children in order to identify their personality preference. Students also took the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale which assessed their level of perfectionism according to three subscales of (a) self-oriented, (b) other-oriented, and (c) socially prescribed perfectionism. This study determined if gender and personality preference influenced perfectionism among elementary students. Proper ethical administration of these two tests were taken by following the guidelines for proper testing of human subjects according to Oklahoma State University's Institutional Review Board (Appendix B).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of gender and the personality preferences of extroversion and introversion on three types of perfectionism by observing the development of individual differences among intact groups of elementary children. An analysis of variance was conducted using males and females, as well as extroverts and introverts on each of the three types of perfectionism. This chapter presents a summary of the characteristics of those students who participated, the descriptive statistics, and the statistical results of the data analysis by each of the nine research questions for the study.

Subject Description

Over 100 fifth graders were invited to participate in this study. Seventy-four students participated in this correlational study. Of the 74 students, 46 were females and 28 were males. Participants for this study were fifth grade students from a suburban elementary school in the midwestern United States. The children included special education, gifted, and traditional students as this study did not differentiate according to these identified ability groups. Rather, this study focused on the differences between genders. Both genders were comparable in socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, and age. Students come from working middle-class families and include 54% Caucasians, 22% African-Americans, 11% Native Americans, 4% Asians, and 9% Hispanics. The average age of the participants was 11 years old, with a mean of 11.04 and a standard deviation of 0.74.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 provides the summary of the mean and standard deviation of perfectionism scores for each group. Of the 46 females 7 were classified as introverts and 32 as extroverts, while 7 females could not be identified as either introverts or extroverts. Of the 28 males 4 were classified as introverts and 21 as extroverts, while 3 could not be classified as extroverts or introverts. A total of ten students were unable to be classified as either introvert or extrovert; but rather scored in the U-Band range of extroversion and introversion preference. Low scores on the MMTIC would indicate a clear preference for extroversion, while high scores would show a strong preference for introversion. In the middle of these continuous scales is the U-band. Any score that falls within the U-band indicates an undetermined preference. Students' scores that fell within the U-band were not included in this statistical analysis because they have not yet developed a clear personality preference for introversion or extroversion. Including the students who scored in the U-band range of extroversion and introversion would have weakened the statistical analysis to where there would be no significant differences. There were no differences between the groups of students who took the MPS first as compared to those groups of students who were administered the MMTIC first.

Table 1

Mean Scores of Perfectionism Levels by Gender and Personality Preference

	Males			Females		
	n	M	SD	n	M	SD
Extroverts						
Self-Oriented Perfectionism	21	66.95	16.81	32	67.31	13.42
Other-Oriented Perfectionism	21	55.57	10.08	32	52.25	7.83
Socially Prescribed Perfectionism	21	49.90	12.45	32	51.19	11.20
Introverts						
Self-Oriented Perfectionism	4	82.25	12.45	7	75.86	22.62
Other-Oriented Perfectionism	4	58.00	11.92	7	57.00	10.63
Socially Prescribed Perfectionism	4	78.00	10.42	7	67.71	12.22

The questions that guide this study of perfectionism have been answered by performing three separate analysis of variance procedures, one for each dependent variable corresponding to the three kinds of perfectionism that were relevant to the study.

Research Question 1

What are the effects of gender and personality preference on self-oriented perfectionism?

There was no significant interaction of gender among introverts and extroverts on self-oriented perfectionism. This means that self-oriented perfectionism was considered not to differ for boys and girls who are extroverted and introverted.

Research Question 1a

How do boys and girls differ on self-oriented perfectionism?

Boys and girls do not differ significantly on self-oriented perfectionism. There is no difference beyond chance.

Research Question 1b

How do introverts differ on self-oriented perfectionism?

The Analysis of Variance (Table 2) shows the main effect for personality was significant, $F(1,60) = 4.90$, $p < .01$. Thus, there is significance among different personality types on self-oriented perfectionism. An examination of the means shows that introverts are more likely than extroverts to be self-oriented perfectionists.

Table 2

Analysis of Variance for Self-Oriented Perfectionism

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Effect Size
Personality (P)	1205.05	1	1205.05	4.90**	0.075
Gender (G)	77.15	1	77.15	0.31	0.005
P x G	96.67	1	96.67	0.39	0.007
Error	14763.43	60	246.06		

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Research Question 2

What are the effects of gender and personality preference on other-oriented perfectionism?

There is no significant interaction for gender and personality preference on other-oriented perfectionism. Boys and girls do not differ on self-oriented perfectionism. This means that it does not matter if boys or girls are either introverted or extroverted. The main effect for gender was $F(1,60) = .47$, $p > .05$. The main effect for personality preference was $F(1,60) = 1.30$, $p > .05$.

Research Question 2a

How do boys and girls differ on other-oriented perfectionism?

There is no difference beyond chance.

Research Question 2b

How do introverts and extroverts differ on other-oriented perfectionism?

There was no significance between extroverts and introverts on other-oriented perfectionism. Thus, introverts and extroverts do not differ on other-oriented perfectionism.

Table 3

Analysis of Variance for Other-Oriented Perfectionism

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Effect Size
Personality (P)	109.24	1	109.24	1.30	0.021
Gender (G)	39.59	1	39.59	0.47	0.008
P x G	11.42	1	11.42	0.14	0.002
Error	5039.14	60	83.99		

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Research Question 3

What are the effects of gender and personality preference on socially prescribed perfectionism?

According to Table 4, the test for the interaction of gender and personality preference was not significant.

Research Question 3a

How do boys and girls differ on socially prescribed perfectionism?

Boys and girls do not differ on self-oriented perfectionism. There is no difference beyond chance.

Research Question 3b

How do introverts and extroverts differ on socially prescribed perfectionism?

Table 4 shows the main effect for personality preferences was significant, F (1,60)=30.84, p<. 01. This indicates a significant difference between extroverts and introverts on socially prescribed perfectionism. Examination of mean scores show that introverts are more likely than extroverts to score higher on socially prescribed perfectionism.

Table 4

Analysis of Variance for Socially Prescribed Perfectionism

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F	Effect Size
Personality	4220.93	1	4220.93	30.84**	0.339
Gender	171.82	1	171.82	1.26	0.020
P x G	283.70	1	283.70	2.07	0.033
Error	8212.11	60	136.87		

*p < .05. **p < .01.

Summary

This chapter presented the findings according to nine research questions. This study involved 76 boys and girls who were identified as either introverts or extroverts or U-band. Statistical analysis was conducted with introversion and extroversion only. The study showed that there were significant differences among personality preferences, of self-oriented perfectionism and socially prescribed perfectionism. Thus, introverts are more likely to be self-oriented perfectionists or socially prescribed perfectionists as

compared to extroverts. There was no significant difference for personality preferences on other-oriented perfectionism, indicating that neither introverts or extroverts were likely to show high levels of other-oriented perfectionism. There were no significant differences for gender on perfectionism. Thus, neither males nor females are more likely to be perfectionists. The next chapter addresses the implications of this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the influence of gender and personality preferences of extroversion and introversion on three types of perfectionism by observing the development of individual differences among intact groups of elementary children. This chapter summarizes the findings of this research study, as well as presents the conclusions and implications based upon the findings for practice, theory and further research in the education field.

Summary of the Findings

This study utilized two instruments to assess personality preference and perfectionism among elementary students. The Murphy Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children (MMTIC) (Meisgeier & Murphy, 1987) was used to elicit information about individual differences among children through the identification of the personality preference of introversion or extroversion. The MMTIC is based on Jung's (1959) theoretical model of psychological type, which infers that there are patterns of how people perceive information and how they make decisions about that information. Jung considered the distinction between introversion and extroversion as the most important of his dimensions of personality. Statistical analysis was conducted with introversion and extroversion only. The key distinction between introversion and extroversion is whether the focus of one's energy and attention are focused inward or outward (Jung, 1976). The MMTIC provides an interpretation of type as it relates to how a child best perceives and processes information and how that individual child prefers to interact socially and behaviorally with others.

The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS) (Hewitt & Flett, 1998) is designed to assess the three types of perfectionism. The three different types of perfectionism are (a) self-oriented, (b) other-oriented, and (c) socially prescribed. Self-oriented perfectionism is motivated by striving to attain perfection in one's endeavors as well as striving to avoid failures. Self-oriented perfectionists set unrealistic standards for themselves and focus on their flaws and failures. Other-oriented perfectionism is when the perfectionist behavior is directed outward to have unrealistic standards for others and stringently evaluating the performance of others. Socially prescribed perfectionism involves the perceived need to attain standards and expectations prescribed by significant others. These expectations are perceived as being excessive and uncontrollable. A high score on any of the three perfectionism subscales is an indicator of unhealthy adjustment.

This study involved 74 boys and girls who were identified as either introverts or extroverts or U-band. This research study showed that there was no significant difference between gender, on any of the three types of perfectionism. Thus, neither males nor females are more likely to be perfectionists. This finding makes educators aware that perfectionism does not affect one gender more than the other. Thus, we need to watch both boys and girls to see if they have perfectionistic tendencies and whether their behavior is healthy or unhealthy. In Lynn and Martin's (1997) study they found women were more likely to show high levels of introversion. This study concluded that introverts are more likely to be perfectionists. Thus, we would expect for girls to show higher levels of perfectionism than boys would. However, there were no differences for boys and girls on any of the three types of perfectionism. Furthermore, this finding lets us know that other factors than gender play a role in the development of perfectionism.

For instance, the gifted population has been highly associated with perfectionism (Schuler, 1998).

Another finding of this study also showed no significant difference for personality preferences on other-oriented perfectionism, indicating that neither introverts or extroverts were likely to show high levels of other-oriented perfectionism. Thus, it did not matter if one was an introvert or an extrovert to have unrealistic expectations for others. It is interesting that out of the three types of perfectionism, only other-oriented perfectionism did not show any significance. It is the only type of perfectionism where people place unrealistic standards on others and judge them accordingly. Thus, educators need to pay more attention to children's self-expectations, whether they be self-created or perceived from others instead of focusing on what children expect from others, in order to identify perfectionistic tendencies. One possible reason that there were no differences for other-oriented perfectionism is due to the young age of the subjects tested. Since other-oriented perfectionism was not found to be significant among children, future studies may want to see at which developmental stage other-oriented perfectionism does become a factor.

This study did find that there was significance among personality preferences on self-oriented perfectionism. Introverts were more likely than extroverts to have high levels of self-oriented perfectionism. Thus, introverts are more likely to set unrealistic standards for themselves, avoid failure, and focus on their mistakes (Hewitt & Flett, 1991). This research study also found that there was significance among personality preferences on socially prescribed perfectionism. Introverts were more likely to show high levels of socially prescribed perfectionism as compared to extroverts. Thus,

introverts are likely to perceive excessive standards from significant others. This is an important finding in helping educators identify students who are perfectionists. This study has shown that introverts are more likely to be self-oriented or socially prescribed perfectionists. Thus, by identifying children's introverted or extroverted personalities, educators can then focus on which introverts display perfectionistic traits. This finding is in agreement with Silverman's (1995) theory of introverts being more likely to be perfectionists because they have a two-dimensional personality. Perhaps because introverts focus their attention and energy on their inner dialogue more than extroverts they are more likely to create their own unrealistic goals or think about rigid expectations from others. Since extroverts and introverts think in different ways, where extroverts need to do something to understand it while introverts need to understand something before doing it. Perhaps it is this innate way of thinking which leads introverts to be more prone to develop perfectionistic tendencies. Several studies (Blatt et al., 1995; Parker & Adkins, 1994; Preusser et al., 1994) have indicated that self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism are part of depression and are related to severe psychopathology, and that when the two are combined the feelings of hopelessness can lead to suicide.

It is the fear of failure that is at the heart of perfectionism (Hess, 1994). Perfectionist children see themselves as failures when they are unable to meet the expectations of adults or their own unrealistic expectations (Fertig, 1993). When this unhealthy perspective is combined with the immaturity and limited skills that are characteristic in children, it can lead to many severe behaviors. Perfectionist children may react to minor failures very emotionally because they internalize any failure as a

catastrophe (Brophy & Rohrkemper, 1989). Perfectionist children tend to have a more mature personality style than their peers and it is typically encouraged and rewarded by adults (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992). Children are rewarded in school for being compulsive and perfectionistic. Additionally, children hear from teachers, parents, and the media to always do their best. From the researcher's experience as an elementary school teacher, daily witnesses of the behavior of today's children and parents show that in today's society second place is not considered winning. Furthermore, it is common for parents, particularly of the gifted, to question the "B" earned on an otherwise straight "A" report card. Thus, children learn at an early age to feel anxiety toward the fear of losing approval and love, and in turn develop unrealistic internalized standards (Mallinger & DeWyze, 1992).

Perfectionists may feel that every situation is "all or nothing," "black or white." They believe they must always do their best and find little value in doing things they can't do well. Perfectionistic students often feel pressure and anxiety towards projects which in turn has a negative affect on their performance. Some adults withhold love and acceptance when a child fails to meet the adults' ideals, which can be simply unattainable at the child's current age. When these children get older they continue to impose unreachable standards upon themselves in an attempt to prove their worthiness to themselves, their parents, and others.

Perfectionism can lead to dysfunctional behavior and severe psychopathology among children (Blatt et al., 1995). This study was intended to help educators identify those students who would be most susceptible to the negative effects of perfectionism. By understanding the social and emotional needs of students, educators can help students

with the negative aspects of perfectionism at an important formative stage in their personality type development. Brophy and Rohrkemper (1989) suggest using intervention methods, which utilize cognitive restructuring so the student begins to gradually become independent and to develop more rewarding ways of thinking. Educators must recognize that perfectionism is not a characteristic that can be "cured," but rather a trait that can be potentially very harmful. School intervention needs to reduce both internal and external pressures on children by reducing unrealistic goal setting and accepting mistakes as part of everyone's learning process (Schuler, 1998).

Conclusions

It is interesting that perfectionistic characteristics include feeling ambivalent towards interpersonal relationships, feeling like a failure for not meeting expectations, and the need to be outstanding in order to avoid feeling inferior (Blatt et al., 1995). Introverts prefer being alone where they are able to relax and reflect. Thus, they do not place much emphasis on interpersonal relationships. However, American society tends to look at the behavior of introverts as unsociable, and introverts are perceived as loners. This can result in the introvert feeling like they do not meet the expectations of society and feel inferior because they do not meet societies norm.

Perhaps for some introverts, self-oriented perfectionism may be an adopted behavior due to wanting approval from others. For example, an introvert probably doesn't have many friends due to the fact that they draw their energy from being alone or around one or two people, thus not placing much emphasis on interpersonal relationships. Therefore, to feel worthy the introvert places high demands on one's self to succeed. Perhaps self-oriented perfectionists use this means of thinking as a coping skill where

they have control of themselves in an otherwise chaotic and uncontrollable environment. When a child is able to draw attention to his/her numerous accomplishments, the child avoids having attention drawn to internal conflict.

The researcher believes this way of thinking is perpetuated by the ever-increasing demands put upon American children to excel at earlier ages. Parents begin children in school at younger ages in order to give them an advantage over peers in hopes of being the smartest. Parents dress their children in expensive designer clothes in order for the child to be good-looking and popular. Parents begin training children at a young age how to compete in competitive sports in hopes of being a glorified, successful athlete. Children are instructed to "just do your best." For self-oriented perfectionists this is interpreted as "do your best at everything if you want approval and love." Parents and educators need to be aware of the negative consequences the drive to perfectionism can lead to.

The researcher believes that the role of perfectionism in school achievement is a deceptive one, where perfectionism is typically encouraged and conditional acceptance from educators is dependent upon following the rules and making good grades. The better the grades and the more disciplined the behavior, the more praise is bestowed upon the student. It is a dangerous cycle for perfectionist children to get trapped into, where the self-oriented perfectionist or the socially prescribed perfectionist learns to gain acceptance from external accomplishments. Thus, the child learns to set unrealistic expectations which sets the child up for failure. Even when the child reaches a goal or receives an honor, the perfectionist does not take pleasure in it because most likely the perfectionist is already focusing on their next goal. During this process, the child never

learns inherent self-worth from unconditional acceptance, which leaves the child feeling inadequate or even empty within. To feel worthy, the perfectionist must continually achieve which in adulthood leads to becoming a workaholic.

Neurotic perfectionism in children can result in paralyzed perfectionism where the child is an underachiever in school. It is common for the perfectionist to procrastinate, withdraw from group discussions to avoid possible rejection, and to alienate one's self so as not to expose their terrifying fear of being inadequate. Perfectionism in children manifests itself during the school years where one can obtain acceptance through achievements while still feeling incompetent and unworthy on the inside. For children who struggle with difficult home lives or who do not receive acceptance from their family, school is the ideal escape where one can continually please others and receive acceptance, which is known as socially prescribed perfectionism. On the other hand, for students who are self-oriented perfectionists school may provide a structured environment in their otherwise chaotic and uncontrollable life. For self-oriented perfectionists, school achievement is a personal obsession, where each success brings self-validation of their self-worth. Educators and counselors need to be aware of the difficulty children face in trying to put perfectionism into a productive, healthy perspective. The researcher believes that the key in using perfectionism as a beneficial trait is self-esteem because it is those with low self-esteem who will avoid having their flaws exposed (Presseur et al., 1994).

Silverman (1995) describes extroverts as having a single-layered personality while introverts have a private self and a public self. It is this theory that led Silverman to believe that introverts try to be perfect in school. This research study supported

Silverman's belief, as introverts were more likely to have high levels of self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism. It is important to recognize that the two types of perfectionism which introverts are more likely to be are self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism; both of which are related to severe clinical problems. Self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism is part of clinical depression and is related to severe psychopathology. When these two types of perfectionism are combined the sense of personal failure and the belief one has failed to meet a significant others' expectations can create a feeling of hopelessness that leads to depression and even suicide (Blatt et al. 1995). Depressed patients have shown higher levels of self-oriented perfectionism (Preusseur, Rice, & Ashby, 1994). Studies show that socially prescribed perfectionism is the most dangerous since it is more likely to result in suicide (Parker and Adkins, 1994).

Perfectionistic children set extreme and unreasonable standards while placing unnecessary stress upon themselves. Perfectionism robs a person of time, whether it involves slaving away on a project at the neglect of family and other duties, or if it is procrastinating and deliberately avoiding responsibility. Educators and parents need to be aware of the negative consequences associated with perfectionism and more importantly how to help perfectionists develop a healthy perspective. Perfectionism that is not addressed continues to debilitate everyday life and with time develops into severe physical and mental health problems.

In regards to personality preferences, there were seven identified female introverts out of 46 females and there were four identified male introverts out of 28 males. The ratio of introverts among genders seems to be consistent. This differs from Lynn and

Martin's (1997) international study, where women were more likely than men to show high levels of introversion. The researcher believes that personality preference is in part due to one's environment. This could be explained by the fact that women in many foreign countries are expected to behave in an introverted manner. However, in America children are encouraged to be themselves and to think independently, which allows them the freedom to develop personality preferences on their own.

This study had a total of 32 identified female extroverts out of 46 females and 21 identified male extroverts out of 28 males indicating that the majority of children have developed a strong preference for extroversion. Keirsey (1995) found that the American population is made up of about 75% extroverts. This is congruent with my sample population, as 83% of the students were identified as being extroverts.

Limitations of the Study

A limitation of this study was using volunteers, which excludes nonvolunteers. The nonvolunteers could possibly share a personality trait, which might have a significant effect on the results of this study. Additionally, the public school setting consent/assent form is limiting because students do not return notes back from parents. This is a limitation to scientific work because those who are perfectionists may view the surveys as a measure of self-worth, which in turn would make those individuals more likely not to return the consent/assent forms. Additionally, both the MPS and MMTIC used self-report items so an assumption had to be made that all the children would understand the questions and answer honestly. If this study were to be replicated or a similar study run the researcher suggests using a larger sample size, possibly from numerous different schools in order to avoid intact groups which decrease the level of generalizability. The

use of random assingment is also recommended in order to avoid bias and to increase the stability of the findings.

The threats to external validity include the Hawthorne effect, which includes the factors associated with the way a study was conducted. The student's behavior was affected by their knowledge of participation in a study. Thus, their arousal level was increased because they were aware that the researcher was paying attention to them as the test instruments were read aloud to the participants while they wrote their responses. Both the test instruments used in this study were in regards to self-reporting personality. Students may have answered in a grandiose perspective in order to prevent themselves from not being excluded from the norm.

Recommendations and Implications

Several important results were found in this study that could have further implications for research in the field of childhood development. Perfectionism in children must be addressed in order to prevent the psychological and physiological detriments associated with perfectionism. More research needs to be conducted to better understand who is more likely to be susceptible to perfectionism and what strategies are most effective in dealing with perfectionism. It is important to note that there is limited research on perfectionism among children (Parker & Adkins, 1994). Therefore, this study focused on a critical age to research the development of perfectionism since it is during childhood that we begin developing individualized styles of taking in information (Hewitt & Flett, 1991). More studies regarding children and perfectionism would benefit the study of childhood development.

The researcher believes that it is also important to consider a study on the expectations of teachers based upon the students identified ability of traditional, gifted, and special education and how these expectations influence perfectionism. It is the personal experience of the researcher that gifted students are told they should do the work faster and better than the other students should. Some teachers' grade on ability levels, thus the gifted are expected to do more work on the same concept as their peers would. Does this lead gifted students to be perfectionists or high achievers? Furthermore, do the expectations of teachers motivate traditional students in a positive or negative manner? Finally, do the expectations of teachers encourage students in special education to be underachievers as a result of modifying their work?

Studies in gifted and perfectionism are still in their infancy (Parker & Adkins, 1994). However, the studies that have been conducted regarding the relationship between giftedness and perfectionism have shown that perfectionism is a highly common characteristic of the gifted (Oden, 1968; Orange, 1997; Parker, 1997; Roberts & Lovett, 1994; and Schuler, 1998;). Future research on gifted and perfectionism can examine how perfectionistic strivings can stimulate the pursuit of excellence and also show how these strivings inhibit students (Parker & Mills, 1990).

The findings of this study have an impact on how educators and parents view manifestations of perfectionistic tendencies. Educators and parents need to reflect on how they react to perfectionistic behaviors and attitudes and examine if parents or educators exhibit healthy or unhealthy perfectionistic tendencies. Adults need to help children move away from the unhealthy perspectives of t perfectionism. Perfectionistic students need to learn that school is a place to learn and not just a place to demonstrate

skills. They need to understand that everyone makes a mistake, which is a necessary part of the learning process. It is important for educators to encourage children's creative behavior as opposed to perfectionistic thinking styles, which might limit their potential. To address the problems created by perfectionism, both internal and external pressures need to be reduced for the child. Teachers should continue to motivate students to put forth their best efforts, but to do so with realistic goals. If the perfectionist's thinking is not treated properly it will be a debilitating behavior that continues throughout one's life.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

TULSA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

SKELLY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Monday, January 10, 2000

Oklahoma State University
Institutional Review Board
Stillwater, OK 74078-4042

Dear Review Board Members,

I have reviewed Aimee Andrews' research proposal for her study on "The Influence of Personality Preference and Gender on Perfectionism among Elementary Students." After reviewing the detailed measures she will take in the study to ensure confidentiality and anonymity, I am certain that she will follow the ethical procedures set forth by Oklahoma State University. Aimee Andrews has my permission to solicit volunteers at Skelly Elementary by distributing parental consent and student assent forms to all fifth grade students. She has my full support in administering the research instruments during school hours. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Ron Bradshaw
Principal

APPENDIX B

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Date: February 24, 2000 IRB #: ED-00-208

Proposal Title: "THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY PREFERENCE AND GENDER ON PERFECTIONISM AMONG ELEMENTARY STUDENTS"

Principal Investigator(s): Diane Montgomery
Aimee Andrews

Reviewed and Processed as: Expedited (Special Population)

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

Signature:

Carol Olson, Director of University Research Compliance

February 24, 2000
Date

Approvals are valid for one calendar year, after which time a request for continuation must be submitted. Any modification to the research project approved by the IRB must be submitted for approval with the advisor's signature. The IRB office MUST be notified in writing when a project is complete. Approved projects are subject to monitoring by the IRB. Expedited and exempt projects may be reviewed by the full Institutional Review Board.

APPENDIX C

Oral Solicitation Script for Students

Prior to volunteering to participate in the research study, the researcher will approach all fifth grade students with the following oral script.

Hi. I'm Miss Andrews. I teach first through fifth graders in our GT program. I'm currently attending OSU and working on a research study that I would like to invite all fifth grade students at Skelly to participate in. The study will involve taking two surveys, which will take about thirty minutes to complete. If you choose to participate, you will answer the surveys during art class next Wednesday. You will not be penalized for choosing not to participate, and you will not receive extra credit for your participation. The surveys ask questions about how you learn and what you like. There are no right or wrong answers. You will not receive a grade. In fact, you will not even put your name on your answer sheet. By doing this all answers remain confidential, and in doing so you will not receive any feedback from your answers. It is important that I have as many fifth graders participate as possible.

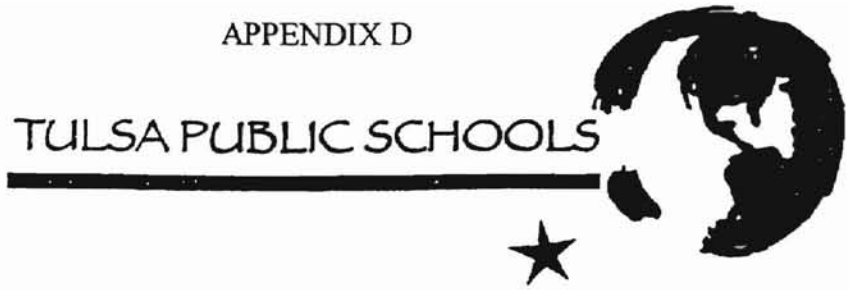
Today you will receive a letter to your parents explaining my research study, along with at permission slip for your parents to sign and a permission form for you to read and sign. There are two copies of the parent consent form and two copies of the student assent form. One copy is to be filled out and returned to me, and the other copy is for your family to keep in caste they have questions and need to contact my OSU professor or me. You will not be allowed to participate in the study without signed permission slips. Please return the permission slips to me or put them in my mailbox in the school office by this Friday.

Are there any questions about the research study at this time?

(Pass out letters of solicitation to parents, parent consent forms, and student assent forms.)

Thank you for your help. I look forward to working with you next week.

APPENDIX D



Dear Parents of Skelly Fifth Graders,

I have been privileged to teach at Skelly Elementary for the past four years. My experiences with Skelly students and parents have been extremely rewarding. The parental support has been outstanding and greatly appreciated. I am writing this letter to ask your help with my research study. This study is being conducted as part of a requirement for my Master's degree at Oklahoma State University. It is a research study involving children and will be in accordance with federal regulations involving the use of human subjects.

My research is focused on how students approach learning. The study will involve the use of two instruments (surveys) where students will be asked to respond to questions about their personal preferences. One instrument will assess levels of introversion and extroversion. Silverman (1995) describes extraverts as people who get their energy from people and objects outside of themselves, whereas introverts gain energy from within themselves. The other instrument will determine levels of perfectionism. Perfectionism is defined in Webster's Ninth Collegiate Dictionary as " a disposition to regard anything short of perfection as unacceptable." If you decide to help understand how students approach their learning, your child's participation would require about 30 minutes during their daily art class. Some students may experience slight discomfort, in that they will be asked to respond honestly to questions about themselves. Those students who are shy may find it uncomfortable to disclose their preferences on the survey instruments. They will be told they can stop at anytime without any worry.

Examples from each of the surveys are:

1. Does it make you uneasy to see an error in your work?
2. Do you like doing things the way you were taught or finding new ways to do it?

In order to ensure complete anonymity, no names will be used. No records will be maintained of the students' responses that would hinder or bind them to any placement or other influence in the future. The results will be kept confidential and strictly used for analysis by me for completing the degree requirement. Access to the raw data is available only to my research advisor and me. This study will help guide educators in developing appropriate services for students concerning how to most effectively meet the needs of individual learning styles. I would like to thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Aimee Andrews

Aimee Andrews

APPENDIX E

Parental Consent Form

"I, _____, hereby authorize Miss Andrews to perform the
(Print Parent's Name)
following research study on my child _____."
(Print Child's Name)

The research study will involve fifth grade students participating in two surveys. The surveys will be administered during art class and will take approximately thirty minutes to complete. The responses will not be judged as being correct or incorrect. Rather, the students' responses will provide valuable information as to how children prefer to learn. Children will not receive extra credit for participation in this study, nor will they be punished if they do not participate. Furthermore, the students will not have to make up work missed, as the surveys will be administered during a daily scheduled art class.

No names of any student will be recorded on the surveys. There will be no way to connect the responses with any student. The data will be stored in the researcher's office under lock and key for one year, at which time it will be shredded and kept only in electronic coding with no individual identification number. Access to the raw data is available only to the researcher and her advisor.

Some students may experience slight discomfort, in that they will be asked to respond honestly to questions about themselves. Those students who are shy may find it uncomfortable to disclose their preferences on the survey instruments. They will be told they can stop at anytime without any worry.

This research study is being done as part of an investigation entitled "The Influence of Personality Preference and Gender on Perfectionism among Elementary Students."
Research regarding perfectionism has been largely conducted with adults, leaving a void of research on perfectionism and children. Little is know about how gender and personality preferences influence perfectionism with children. The purpose of this descriptive study is to examine the influence of gender and personality on three separate and different types of perfectionism among elementary students. Perfectionism can be unhealthy when the motivation to achieve is combined with unrealistic expectations. Perfectionism has been linked to serious negative consequences, some of which include depression, ill health, and poor social relationships. By identifying which children are more likely to develop perfectionism, educators can be aware of what to look for in identifying perfectionism among children. Once students are identified, educators can provide additional educational services.

"I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty after notifying the project director." I may contact Miss Andrews at telephone number 641-1626, Dr. Diane Montgomery (research advisor) at (404) 744-9441. I may also contact Sharon Bacher, IRB Executive Secretary, 203 Whitehurst, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, OK 74078; telephone number (405) 744-5700.

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me.

_____ _____
Parent's Signature Date

APPENDIX F

Student Assent Form

"I, _____, voluntarily agree to participate in Miss Andrews's
(Print Student's Name)
research study on how fifth grade students prefer to learn. I have discussed with my parent/guardian the research study Miss Andrews has invited me to participate in. I understand that my participation is voluntary and my decision to participate will not result in a punishment or reward. I would like to help Miss Andrews with her research and agree to participate in her study. I am willing to spend around 30 minutes during art class to take two surveys. I sign this consent form freely and voluntarily."

The research study will involve fifth grade students participating in two surveys. The surveys will be given during art class and will take about thirty minutes to complete. Your responses will not be graded, and there are no wrong answers. Students will not have to make up work missed, as the surveys will be administered during a regularly scheduled art class.

No names of any student will be recorded on the surveys. There will be no way to connect the responses with any student. The surveys and responses will be stored in Miss Andrews' office under lock and key. Access to the surveys will only be available to Miss Andrews and her advisor.

Students may experience slight discomfort, in that they will be asked to respond honestly to questions about themselves. Students who are shy may find it uncomfortable to disclose their preferences on the survey instruments. You will be allowed to stop at anytime without any worry. You may also talk with the school counselor about any discomfort from the surveys upon request at any time.

"I understand that participation is voluntary, that there is no penalty for refusal to participate, and that I am free to withdraw my consent and participation in this project at any time without penalty after notifying Miss Andrews. I have read and fully understand the student assent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy has been given to me."

_____ _____
Student Signature Date

APPENDIX G

February 22, 2000

Mr. Marty Allgood
School Counselor
Skelly Elementary
2940 S. 90th E. Ave.

Dear Mr. Allgood:

I would like to make you aware of my research study being conducted to fulfill a requirement for my master's degree at Oklahoma State University. The investigation is entitled "The Influence of Personality Preference and Gender on Perfectionism among Elementary Students." The purpose of this descriptive study is to examine the influence of gender and personality on three separate and different types of perfectionism among elementary students.

Students who have consent from parents and who have agreed to participate in the study will complete two written instruments during their daily art class. The surveys require about 30 minutes to complete. The Murphy-Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children will be used to determine the personality preference for introversion and extroversion. The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale will be used to determine the levels of perfectionism on each of the three subscales of self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism, and socially prescribed perfectionism.

For some students there might be some discomfort in revealing personal preferences, such as whether they like things other kids like or if they like things found on their own on the Murphy-Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children; or if the people around them expect them to succeed at everything they do on the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale. It is highly unlikely that students will experience any discomfort from these surveys. However, if they do I want to prepare you in advance in case you are contacted for assistance in counseling. I have numerous books and articles on perfectionism and personality preferences that you may use as resources.

In order to ensure confidentiality, no names of any student will be recorded on instruments. There will be no way to connect the responses with any student. The data will be stored in my office under lock and key for one year, at which time it will be shredded and kept only in electronic coding with no individual identification number. Access to the raw data is available only to my advisor and me.

Research regarding perfectionism has been largely conducted with adults, leaving a void of research of perfectionism and children. Perfectionism can be unhealthy when the motivation to achieve is combined with unrealistic expectations. Perfectionism has been linked to serious negative consequences, some of which include: depression, ill health, poor social relationships, and has even led to suicide. By identifying which children are more likely to develop perfectionism, we can be aware of what to look for in identifying perfectionism among children.

Sincerely,

Aimee Andrews

Aimee Andrews

Teacher of Gifted and Talented

VITA

Aimee Elizabeth Andrews

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: THE INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY PREFERENCES AND GENDER ON PERFECTIONISM AMONG ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

Major Field: Applied Behavioral Studies

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Tulsa, Oklahoma on June 29, 1970.

Education: Graduated from Victory Christian School in Tulsa, Oklahoma in May 1988; received Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from the University of Tulsa, Oklahoma in May 1992; received a Certificate of Elementary Education from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma in December 1993. Will complete the requirements for the Master of Science degree with a major in Gifted Education at Oklahoma State University in July 2000.

Experience: Employed as an elementary education teacher at Tulsa Public Schools since 1994. Have taught three years in fourth and fifth grade homeroom and three years as a teacher for gifted students in first through fifth grades. Have won a grant from the Tulsa Education Fund for a collaborative project between elementary students and senior citizens at a local retirement center. Have served as my school's technology coordinator, newspaper editor, Red Cross sponsor, and community service liaison.

Professional Memberships: National Association for Gifted Children, Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association, Oklahoma Education Association, National Education Association, and the American Red Cross.