

Original Article

Perfectionism, Anxiety and English Language Achievement of Iranian EFL Learners: The Contribution of Performance Goal-Orientation

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Abstract

Foreign language learning is often associated with affective factors among which the constructs of anxiety and perfectionism have been recognized as important predictors of language performance. The purpose of this research was to explore the significant influence of Iranian EFL learners' socially prescribed and self-oriented perfectionism in the prediction of Foreign Language Anxiety, via the contribution of a mediated variable of achievement goals. Additionally, the associations among these constructs as a predictor of English language achievement were examined. The participants were 400 EFL learners within the age range of 15-30 who enrolled in private language learning institutes in Iran. The participants' proficiency fell within the range of upper-intermediate to advanced levels. For estimating perfectionism, the Multi-dimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS) of Hewitt and Flett (2004) and for anxiety factor, Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (2008) was utilized. Finally, Goal-orientation was measured by using Elliot and Murayama (2008) questionnaire. The language achievement was obtained from their final exam scores. Correlation analysis and structural equation modeling (SEM) were used to investigate the data collected. The research findings revealed there exists a relationship among the participants' perfectionism, FLCA, and English language achievement via the mediating role of performance goal-orientation. The findings have significant theoretical and practical implications for teachers, school psychologists, teacher educators, curriculum designers, and researchers. They contribute to planning learning activities and utilizing various techniques for different types of learners and learning settings to meet the program goals and objectives.

Keywords: Anxiety, English Achievement, Goal-Orientation, Perfectionism

1. Introduction

The importance of L2 learning has always encouraged teachers and researchers to use various approaches to determine the factors that affect language learning (Taherkhani & Karbakhsh Ravari, 2018). It is well known that language learning is frequently linked to affective factors, with anxiety being regarded as one of the most significant predictors of language performance, however, other psychological components were also effective in foreign language anxiety (Mahigir, 2021). In other words, some influential factors have been ignored, particularly, individual differences from personality traits perspectives. One of the areas of research, as an important predictor of academic achievement, is perfectionism (Madigan, 2019).

Since the mid-nineteenth century, perfectionism as a personality trait has attracted great consideration (e.g., Hewitt et al., 2008; Wadsworth, et al., 2021). It is characterized by traits such as striving for perfection and faultlessness, assigning high and excessive-performance benchmarks and criteria, and possessing a critical assessment propensity (Stoeber & Otto, 2006). Hewitt and Flett (1991) developed a model that divided perfectionism into three types: self-oriented (SOP), other-oriented (OOP), and socially prescribed (SPP). The main distinction between these dimensions is not the pattern of behavior itself, but the thing whereby the perfectionistic behavior is oriented, such as SOP and OOP, or the person to whom the perfectionistic action is attached, for instance, SPP (Stoeber & Hadjivassiliou, 2020).

Concerning foreign language learning, perfectionist individuals are the ones who strive for having a native-like performance such as error-free speaking or writing. Perfectionist EFL learners would prefer not to participate in any kind of activity or task unless they are confident in their ability to express themselves (Stoebr & Rambow, 2007). Undoubtedly, As a result of such high standards, language anxiety can develop (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002). The underlying premise along with Dewaele (2012) is that perfectionism's pressure is an obstacle to language learning that results in skipping the trial and error phase of learning a second language

The association between anxiety and perfectionism has been sought by recent research (Flett et al., 2016); however, this task is complicated by the fact that the mechanism that underlies this relationship is believed to implicate various mediator variables. Among them, goal orientation is one of the most state-of-the-art approaches in

the context of achievement that has received much attention from theorists and researchers alike.

People typically do a variety of activities to achieve certain goals. One of the most researched theories dealing with goals is the achievement and goal-orientation theory (Hosseyni Ramshe et al., 2019). Pintrich (2000) asserted that goal orientation refers to an individual's overall approach to a task as well as the criteria used to assess one's competency or success. Goals for achievement are different based on two factors: how competence is described and how competence is balanced. When two dimensions are combined, a 2×2 model with Mastery-Approach Goals (MAP: attempting to master a task or perform better than before), Mastery-Avoidance Goals (MAV: attempting to avoid leaving a task unmastered or performing worse than before), Performance-Approach Goals (PAP: attempting to outperform others at a task), and Performance-Avoidance Goals (PAV: trying to evade performing worse than others) is formed.

Regardless of rich literature in the Second language (L2) learning motivation area, there has not been much space to integrate various facets of L2 motivation such as achievement goals with other personality traits and affective variables such as perfectionism and L2 anxiety. Correspondingly, earlier research has primarily been undertaken in western environments using western students as subjects. Despite this, little research has been done in the educational context of Asian countries, particularly Iran. The idea of the perfect exists and is valued in its different levels.

In foreign language teaching and learning settings, foreign language proficiency is usually defined in terms of native-speaker competence. Although this view toward language learning has been abandoned by many authorities in the field (Widdowson, 2003), many English learners believe in the superiority of the British or the American accents and spend their time and energy in strict imitation of either variety. Therefore, as it is apparent, there is a gap between what the theory says and what is practiced in our country. Despite what theory approves, it is generally assumed that our language learners' competence should match as closely as possible with that of native speakers.

In addition, there is a dearth of research investigating perfectionism in the population of EFL learners, especially those who take English classes in private institutes. As past research has mainly focused on university and school students and those learners with a high intellectual ability (e.g., Margot & Rinn, 2016).

Further, most earlier studies focused solely on self-directed cognitions. They were severely hampered by a lack of well-developed perfectionism measures and a failure to obtain the conceptual framework that both self and social aspects are based on (Flett et al., 1995). Reflecting on the relevant research findings, we assumed that there might exist a relationship between perfectionism, FLA, and English language achievement. Though, the intention was to see how the theory of goal-orientated performance might complement the proposed relations when combined and elaborate the understanding of the postulated model.

If a full picture of the model is desired to achieve, then, all the pieces of the picture were needed to bring together. Therefore, Integrating several psychological theories (e.g., multidirectional perfectionism, goal-orientation. Employing structural equation modeling (SEM), the study was set to examine the unique roles that SOP and SPP may play in the prediction of EFL learners' foreign language anxiety (FLA) via mediating role of performance goal orientations in various institutes in Tabriz-Iran.

2. Literature Review

Considering the importance of the learners' psychological status in the arena of language learning, affective factors have been accounted for successful outcomes of language learning in many settings. As maintained in Horwitz et al. (1986), one of these affective variables that has a direct and indisputable impact on learning a foreign language is anxiety. Foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) as has been defined as "a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings and behaviors related to classroom learning arising from the individuality of the language learning process" (Horwitz et al. 1986, p. 128). Many researchers (e.g., Dewaele & Thirtle, 2009; Gregersen, 2003; Horwitz, & Young, 1991) have proved that FLA in several forms can be a forecaster of achievement in learning the foreign language and can lead to maladaptive learning behavior such as procrastination or an inclination toward perfectionism. In the longer term, anxiety can make learners to give up completely and leave their language classes.

Since the mid-nineteenth century, perfectionism has attracted great consideration among different personality traits (Adler, 1956; Hewitt & Flett, 1991; Horney, 1950). Examining the effective role of perfectionism in English language achievement using mediation of foreign language anxiety Ghorbandordinejad and Farjad Nasab (2013) found

that there are no significant relationships between perfectionism and language achievement. Classroom anxiety also has a negative influence on English performance and there was a negative relationship between perfectionism and foreign language anxiety.

Achievement goal theory as one of a new breed of social-cognitive theories of achievement motivation, also, represents a pattern of individuals' beliefs, feelings, and documents. It makes them more oriented towards certain situations and act under some circumstances encouraging the recognition of the fundamentals that motivate individuals to involve in tasks (Alrakaf et al., 2014).

Studies conducted by Speirs Neumeister, Fletcher, & Burney (2015) and Damian, Stoeber, Negru, & Baban (2014) have examined multidimensional perfectionism and the goals of the 2× 2 model and reported bivariate correlations. All studies found perfectionistic strivings to demonstrate positive correlations with performance-approach goals.

Based on the apparent gap in the literature, this study proposed a new theoretical framework aiming to facilitate a better understanding of foreign language achievement. The aim of this study along with the analytical method is to conduct a first study examining the assumptions mentioned. The current study tried to answer the following research question:

RQ: Are there any relationships among EFL learners' SOP and SPP, foreign language anxiety (FLA), and English language achievement with the contribution of Learners' performance goal-orientation?

3. Methodology

3.1. Participants

The target population was Iranian EFL learners enrolled in private language learning institutes in Tabriz. According to Wolf, et al. (2013), the sample size requirement for SEM analysis ranges from 30 (for Simple CFA with four indicators and loadings around .80) up to 450 cases (for mediation models). Therefore, to accomplish the objectives of the study, 400 EFL learners within the age range of 15-30, took part in the present study. Their first language was Azeri Turkish and Farsi was their second Language. The sampling method for institutions selection was Stratified sampling. To do so, 5 institutes including female and male branches of Iran Language Institute (ILI), Goldis Language Institute, Chitsazan

Language Institute, Safir-e-Danesh Institute in Tabriz were selected randomly as the accessible population. The selection of participants was random through a cluster sampling, An initial sample of 1200 participants was obtained. To calculate sample size, Cochran's formula (1977) is used to estimate the appropriate sample size of the population. However, 800 students were excluded because questionnaires had missing data or errors, or because they did not assist to school when questionnaires were administered. The participants' proficiency levels fell within the range of upper-intermediate to advanced sub-levels of ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines as determined by a placement test already administered by the institutes.

The below table demonstrates the demographic data related to the participants:

Table 1.

Demographic Background of the Participants

No. of Students	400
Gender	Male (163) Female (237)
Native language	Persian, Azari
Educational level	High school (120) Diploma (52) Bachelor(123) Master(81) Ph.D. (24)
Proficiency level	Advanced (194) Upper-intermediate (206)

3.2. Instruments

The following questionnaires were given to the participants to complete. In the present study, the questionnaires were piloted with a very similar sample (N=30) from different institutes to gain Reliability of the instrument by Cronbach's alpha and their content validity.

3.2.1. The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS)

Developed by Hewitt and Flett (2004), this questionnaire consists of 45 items on three dimensions: (a) Self-oriented perfectionism (SOP), (b) Socially-prescribed perfectionism (SPP), and (c) other-oriented Perfectionism (OOP). The OOP was excluded from the current study because, while we have gained a full picture of SOP and SPP over the last 20 years, our perception of OOP and how it varies from the other 2 types of perfectionism remains limited (Stoerber, 2015). The reliability of the scale was assessed and approved (0.97).

3.2.2. Foreign Language Anxiety Scale (FLCAS)

Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), has been considered as a systematic 33-item survey questionnaire including factors as communication anxiety, test anxiety and anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. The respondents are expected to answer on a five-point Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The current questionnaire underwent content validation and adaptation by different experts in previous studies. The reliability of the questionnaire turned out to be 0.93.

3.2.3. Goal-Orientation Questionnaire (AGO)

Goal orientation was measured by using Elliot and Murayama's (2008) 12-item (4×3 items) achievement goals questionnaire (AGQ) because the existing *questionnaires have collected valid evidence in previous work*. It assessed each of the four achievement goals in the 2×2 frameworks: (a) performance-approach (PAP), (b) performance-avoidance (PAV), (c) mastery-approach (MAP), and (d) mastery-avoidance (MAV). Due to time constraints and the ease of implementation and analysis, mastery-oriented goals were excluded in the present study. The students indicated their agreement with each statement on a scale of 1 (not at all true for me) to 5 (extremely true for me). The index of 0.80 was the estimated reliability for the questionnaire.

3.2.4. English Language Achievement

The participants' English Language Achievement scores were achieved from their final English grades obtained from the institute-made standardized achievement tests. The tests document how well students have learned a specific set of skills and concepts about a

subject. To test the applicability, reliability, item discrimination, and item difficulty of the tests, pilot studies had already been conducted by different experts after designing texts through Test Analysis Preprogram. The students' final exam scores were reported on their final report card grade. The test is typically consisted of different sections: Listening, grammar, vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing.

3.3. Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaires were chosen and reviewed by three experienced university experts regarding the validity and the amount of time necessary to fill in the questionnaires. Before administering the study's instruments, the purpose and directions of the questionnaires were explicated. Teachers informed the students that through these tests, they can gain genuine information on some of their tendencies. The administration procedures followed the regular accommodations procedures used with the students, that is, the teachers read aloud the directions and question items and provided paraphrasing when the need arises. The students' voluntary participation was sought, and the participants' anonymity and confidentiality were ensured.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedure

The reliability and construct validity of each construct were estimated by using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Henceforth, Pearson correlation coefficient, Intra-class Correlation (ICC), paired *t*-test (test-retest method), and Cronbach's alpha coefficient method were used to examine the reliability aspects, namely, internal consistency and stability. Construct Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Maximum Shared squared Variance (MSV), and Average Shared squared Variance (ASV) indices were calculated to assess various aspects of construct validity, including convergent and divergent validity. Following that, if the construct was supposed to be used in the model as a second-order construct, the construct validity of the second-order model has also been assessed. Finally, the results of models were calculated via Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) technique according to two pre-defined conceptual models. As asserted by Kline (2011), Structural equation models are widely used to measure latent constructs. They arise a measurement framework that predicts latent variables through one or more observed variables, as well as a structural model that shows relationships between latent variables.

In this respect, first of all, model fitness was tested using appropriate well-known fit indices, such as the value of χ^2 statistics, χ^2 value to the degree of freedom ratio, RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation), CFI (Confirmatory Fit Index), NNFI (Non-Normed Fit Index), GFI (Goodness of Fit Index) and AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index). After the model's goodness of fit was determined, using the t statistics, the significance of each relationship was checked. Moreover, in the second model (the model with further details), using a Bootstrapping estimation method, the indirect and total effects were calculated. Then, the significance of these statistics was examined by empirical p -value. For testing the significant mediation effect of achievement PAP and PAV goals, Baron-Kenny method along with Bootstrap method, and Bias-corrected (BC) confidence interval were used. All the process of analysis was done through SPSS 24 and AMOS 24 software.

In Figure 1, the effect of Perfectionism on FLA is mediated by Goal orientation.

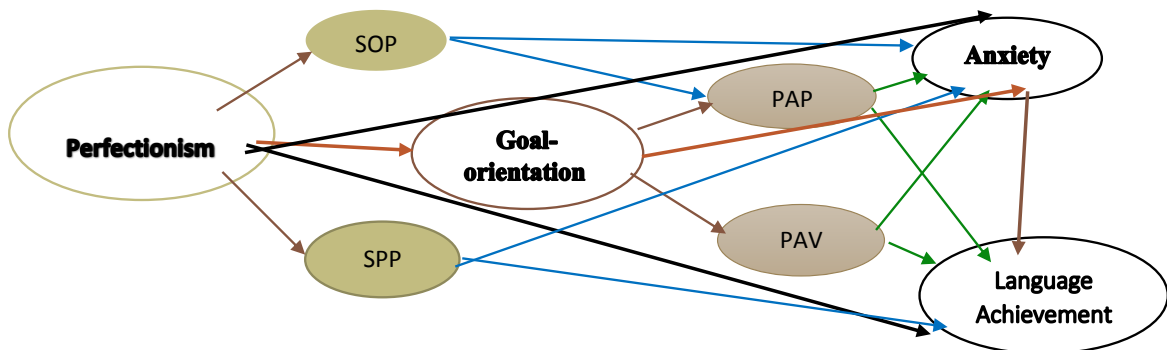


Figure 1. The postulated Relationships between Variables

As shown in the above figure, the directional arrows from the latent variables, perfectionism, FLA, and Goal orientation are illustrative examples of factor loading to be estimated and the arrow from perfectionism to other latent variables is an illustration of path coefficient that demonstrates the relationships among the latent variables.

4. Results

As stated in the previous section, several statistical approaches were used to address the study question.

4.1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Table 2.

Goodness of Fit Indicators of Factor Analysis of Constructs

Goodness of fit indices	Perfectionism (first-order)	Perfectionism (second-order)	Performance Goals	Anxiety
X2 (<i>df</i>)	354.29 (349)	343.89 (349)	40.81(48)	(495) 463/89
P-value of X2	>0.05	0.57	0	0.84
X ² to df ratio	1.09	0.98	0.92	0.93
RMSEA	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.02
P(RMSEA<0.05)	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.95
CFI	0.98	0.97	0.98	0.97
NNFI	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.97
GFI	0.95	0.90	0.94	0.95
AGFI	0.93	0.88	0.91	0.91

Based on the results presented in Table 2, this model is at a good and acceptable level considering the value of goodness of fit indexes, In other words, they are in the least acceptable limit for accepting the model. In addition, the significance value of unstandardized factor loading coefficient related to the factor analysis model of constructs and Construct Confirmatory Factor Analysis with their standard factor loading coefficients was calculated. All standard and non-standard factor loading coefficients are significant ($p < 0.001$) and all factor loading coefficients are more than 0.50.

4.2. Validation and Reliability of Constructs

Table 3.

Stability and Internal Consistency of the constructs

Construct	Sub-Constructs	N of Items	Pearson Correlation	ICC	P-value (Paired t-test)	Cronbach's alpha
Perfectionism	SOP	15	0.84	0.81	0.41	0.94
	SPP	15	0.73	0.65	0.12	0.94
Anxiety	Anxiety	33	0.89	0.82	0.45	0.93
Performance Goals	Pap	3	0.72	0.81	0.30	0.82
	Pav	3	0.78	0.79	0.29	0.79

Pearson Coefficient Correlation and Intra-class correlation (ICC) are more than 0.60 for all components; this reveals that the individuals have high agreement in responding. In

addition, the *p*-value obtained from paired *t*-test is more than 0.05, which reveals lack of significance among the mean scores of the components in every evaluation. So, the stability of the construct is proved. Also, the Cronbach's alpha shows that each component of sub-construct meet the internal consistency. Thus, the reliability of this construct is accepted in this phase.

4.3. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)

To address the research question two models were considered: Model 1 examined the effect of perfectionism on anxiety and achieved score through performance goals and anxiety constructs and Model 2 measured the effect of perfectionism subcomponents (i.e., SOP and SPP) separately on Anxiety through and EFL score Goal subfactors (i.e., PAP and PAV).

Table 4.

Structural Equation Modelling

Path			Estimate	Standardized Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Model 1							
Goal	←	Perfectionism	0.076	0.849	0.006	13.046	<0.001
Anxiety	←	Performance Goals	7.095	0.478	0.366	19.394	<0.001
Anxiety	←	Perfectionism	0.907	0.499	0.042	21.772	<0.001
Score	←	Anxiety	-0.11	-0.22	0.033	-3.376	<0.05
Score	←	perfectionism	0.301	-0.002	0.056	5.336	<0.05
Model 2							
pap	←	SOP	0.543	0.542	0.043	12.717	<0.001
pav	←	SOP	-0.47	-0.52	0.035	-13.36	<0.001
pap	←	SPP	0.461	0.436	0.043	10.618	<0.001
pav	←	SPP	0.489	0.514	0.037	13.278	<0.001
Anxiety	←	pav	11.74	0.33	1.148	10.227	<0.001
Anxiety	←	pap	9.204	0.288	0.919	10.011	<0.001
Anxiety	←	SOP	3.404	0.106	1.328	2.564	<0.001
Anxiety	←	SPP	5.111	0.151	1.324	3.86	<0.001
Score	←	Anxiety	-0.085	-0.25	0.027	-3.116	<0.001
Score	←	SOP	0.511	0.048	0.518	0.986	0.15
Score	←	SPP	-0.868	-0.07	0.936	-0.927	0.32

Based on Table 4, all the models have a good fit and are at an acceptable level, Results of structural equation modeling of the first conceptual model based on t statistics

revealed that the effect of anxiety on EFL score is negatively significant at 0.001 significant level. The effect of perfectionism on goal orientation is positively significant at 0.001. Goal orientation has a positive strong effect on anxiety at 0.001 significant level. the effect of anxiety on EFL score is negatively significant at 0.001 significant level.

The finding obtained from the structural based on equation modeling 2nd conceptual model showed there is a positive significant relationship between each of the following constructs: SOP and PAP; SPP on PAV; PAP and Anxiety; PAV and Anxiety; and SOP, SPP, and Anxiety. Though the anxiety effect on EFL score is negatively significant and the effect of SOP and SPP on EFL score is not significant.

Table 5.

Bootstrapping Estimation of Standardized Indirect Effect, Total Effect, and Biased corrected CI: Based on Model 2

Explanatory variable	Indirect effects		Total effect	
	Estimation (SE), 90% BC-CI (lower bound, upper bound)	P-value	Estimation (SE), 90% BC-CI (lower bound, upper bound)	P-value
SOP	0.006(0.08),(-0.04, 0.01)	>0.01	0.11(0.10),(-0.03, 0.21)	>0.01
SPP	-0.166(0.11),(-0.19, 0.08)	>0.01	-0.24(.08),(-0.29, 0.07)	>0.01
PAP	-0.07(0.06),(-0.16,-0.04)	<0.01	-0.07(0.06),(-0.16,-0.04)	<0.01
PAV	-0.08(0.14),(-0.18,-0.04)	<0.01	-0.08(0.14),(-0.18,-0.04)	<0.01
Anxiety	0	-	-.25(0.03),(-0.71,-0.15)	<0.01

Attributed to the findings obtained from Bootstrapping in Table 5 it can be argued that the indirect effects and total effects of SOP and SPP on the EFL score equal 0.006 and -0.16 respectively, which are negative and not significant ($p > 0.01$). Additionally, the indirect effect and total effect of PAP and PAV on learners' EFL score equals -0.07 and -0.08 respectively, which is negative and significant ($p < 0.01$). finally, the total effect of anxiety on the learners' EFL score equals -0.25, which is negative and significant ($p < 0.01$).

The most effective variables influencing the learners' score are Anxiety, SPP, SOP, PAV, and PAP, respectively. Therefore, it can be concluded that anxiety is the most effective factor in influencing the learners' scores.

4.4. Mediation Analysis of Goal-Orientation (Model 1)

Mediation Analysis of Goal-Orientation in the Effect of Perfectionism on Anxiety (Model 1) is presented in the following Table 5.

Table 6.

Baron-Kenny Results: Mediation Role of Goal-Orientation in the Effect of Perfectionism on Anxiety (Model 1)

Hypothesized Path	B	SE	Beta	T	P-value
Direct Model					
Perfectionism → Anxiety	1.51	0.93	0.58	4.99	<0.001
Mediation Model					
Perfectionism → Goal-Orientation	1.66	0.32	0.42	6.01	<0.001
Goal → Anxiety	1.31	0.44	0.35	4.98	<0.001
Perfectionism → Anxiety	2.55	1.08	0.85	7.17	<0.001

Based on Table 6, and obtained t and p-value (<0.001) the effect of Perfectionism on Anxiety without considering the indirect effect of Perfectionism on Anxiety is significant (p<0.001); consequently, the effect of each path examined in the mediation model through Baron-Kenny method reveals: Based on t-value and p-value, Perfectionism significantly affects Goal-orientation (p<0.001).

The goal has a significant effect on anxiety (p<0.001) and Perfectionism has also a significant effect on anxiety (p<0.001). The results of Baron-Kenny show the significance and partial mediation role of the goal variable in the effect of perfectionism on anxiety. Therefore, the effect of perfectionism on anxiety is effective not only directly but also indirectly through goal variables. The amount of direct effect of Perfectionism on anxiety equals 0.45 and the indirect effect equals $0.42 \times 0.35 = 0.147$. Thus, the total effect equals 0.581. to put it differently, based on the results of Bootstrap test these effects (direct, indirect, total) are significant. It is worth noting that direct effect is 52% more than indirect effect.

4.5. Mediation Analysis of Constructs' subcomponents (Model 2)

Considering the second conceptual model, Baron-Kenny methods are used to examine the mediation role of Performance Goal-orientation subcomponents in the effect

of perfectionism on anxiety. In this model, the paths are named as the following model is executed:

Table 7.

The Mediation Role of PAP and PAV in the Effect of SOP and SPP on Anxiety

Hypothesized Path	b	SE	Beta	t	P-value
Direct Model					
SOP → Anxiety	7.61	1.77	0.79	7.24	<0.001
Mediation Model					
SOP → PAP	7.15	1.18	0.62	7.13	<0.001
PAP → Anxiety	9.56	1.76	0.56	6.92	<0.001
SOP → Anxiety	7.61	1.56	0.42	6.64	<0.001
Direct Model					
SPP → Anxiety	4.98	0.60	0.45	4.29	<0.001
Mediation Model					
SPP → PAP	2.23	0.92	0.24	4.06	<0.001
PAP → Anxiety	0.85	0.20	0.30	4.99	<0.001
SPP → Anxiety	4.83	1.96	0.38	3.39	0.002
Hypothesized Path	b	SE	Beta	t	p-value
Direct Model					
SOP → Anxiety	7.29	1.69	0.46	6.42	<0.001
Mediation Model					
SOP → PAV	1.59	0.40	0.33	3.43	<0.001
PAV → Anxiety	1.37	0.36	0.44	5.03	<0.001
SOP → Anxiety	7.71	1.12	0.31	6.63	<0.001
Direct Model					
SPP → Anxiety	4.55	1.96	0.38	4.00	<0.001
Mediation Model					
SPP → PAV	1.45	1.05	0.35	3.90	<0.001
PAV → Anxiety	1.40	0.43	0.28	5.18	<0.001
SPP → Anxiety	4.38	1.47	0.28	3.74	<0.01

As Table 7 shows, the effect of each path is examined in the Mediation model through Baron-Kenny method is :

- The effect of SPP on PAV is significant (p<0.001). PAV has a significant effect on Anxiety (p<0.001). Plus, SPP has a significant effect on Anxiety (p=0.035).

- SOP has a statistically significant effect on PAV ($p < 0.001$). PAV has a significant effect on Anxiety ($p < 0.001$). SOP also has a statistically significant effect on anxiety ($p = 0.034$).
- SPP has a significant effect on PAP ($p < 0.001$). PAP significantly affects Anxiety ($p < 0.001$), and SPP has a significant effect on Anxiety ($p = 0.002$).
- SOP has a significant effect on PAP ($p < 0.001$). The effect of SPP on anxiety is significant ($p < 0.001$), and SOP has a significant effect on anxiety ($p = 0.034$).

Therefore, based on the results of Baron-Kenny the significance and mediation role of PAP and PAV variables in the effect of SOP and SPP on anxiety is partial. That is to say, the effect of SOP and SPP, and SOP on anxiety is significant not only directly but also indirectly through PAP and PAV variables.

The amount of direct effect of SOP and SPP on anxiety by mediating role of PAP equals respectively 0.42 and 0.45 and indirect effect equals 0.37 and 0.07. Therefore, the total effect equals 0.79 and 0.45. Thus, direct effects are less than indirect effects which are 0.06 and 0.68 respectively. Through the contribution of PAV, SPP, and SOP have direct and indirect effects on anxiety via the PAV variable. The SOP and SPP effects on anxiety equal 0.28 and 0.31 respectively. The indirect effect equals 0.10 and 0.15; hence, the total effect equates to 0.38. and 0.46. It is worth noting that the direct effect is more than the indirect effect for 0.47 and 0.34. In other words, the results of Bootstrap test demonstrate that all direct, indirect, total effects are significant ($p < 0.001$).

5. Discussion

The current study sought to investigate the distinct roles that Iranian EFL learners' two dimensions of perfectionism (i.e., SOP and SPP) play in the prediction of FLA, via the contribution of the mediated variables of PAV and PAP, as well as the relationship between these constructs as determinants of English language achievement. The obtained results were presented in two distinct models. Determined from the results of Baron-Kenny, the effects of SOP and SPP on Anxiety have direct and Indirect effects through PAV and PAP variables. Based on the results of Bootstrap test all direct, indirect, and total effects of SOP and SPP on anxiety and in turn Language scores were significant.

To address the research question, it can be argued that perfectionism has a significant effect on anxiety and language achievement. The related studies (Kilbert et al., 2005;

Burgess & DiBartolo, 2016) have revealed findings similar to the present study and the connection between SPP and SOP and anxiety. Perfectionist EFL learners are often anxious, as they strive to act perfectly in personal and social terms and so creating a high sense of anxiety in them. This is consistent with the result of the previous research proposing that those language learners pursuing an idealized rather than a realistic proficiency level are more likely candidates for experiencing language learning anxiety (Horwitz, 2001). Generally, as results reveal anxiety influences learners' language achievement in a negative way and anxious learners are not capable of showing high language performance. However, perfectionist learners attempt to act perfectly in their academic lives and this point improves their achievement.

Likewise, previous studies have shown learners with SPP, regularly face distress, which may lead to a variety of psychological disorders, such as depression (Zeifman et al, 2015) and test anxiety (Abdollahi & Talib, 2015). Yet, SOP results in intrinsic motivation for learning (Stoeber et al., 2009), a sense of accomplishment (Damian et al., 2014), and thrived success (Stoeber & Corr, 2016). Thus, different findings of the present study might be due to various factors such as different subject matter, samples, and cultural/contextual factors. Consequently, anxious learners attempt to avoid embarrassment and they try to prevent rejection and negative evaluations of others through performing perfectly in the social context of language learning. Since this type of learner believes that others including parents, peers, and teachers define impossibly high standards and never get satisfied with their performance, many of these symptoms are in line with Hewitt and Flett's Socially Prescribed Perfectionist.

Generally, it can be argued that perfectionism influences EFL learners' language achievement, positively. There is a strong significant relationship between SOP, SPP, and learners' English achievement scores. This substantiates previous findings in the literature. For example, Castro and Rice (2003) found that Perfectionism was found to be a strong predictor of self-reported academic accomplishment (as measured by GPA) among Asian and African American adolescents. In addition, Rastegar et al. (2017) and Pourmohammadi (2012) found that the perfectionism construct and language proficiency had a substantial positive association. Whereas the findings of the study carried out by Pishghadam and Akhondpoor (2011) demonstrated how perfectionistic drives in language learners are attributed to lower academic accomplishment and language skills performance.

Socially-prescribed perfectionist learners may feel anxious and nervous because of teachers' high expectations, be demotivated, and lose their self-esteem and self-confidence in the process of foreign language learning.

Furthermore, according to the findings of Ghorbandordinejad (2014), there is no substantial association between students' degrees of perfectionism and their language accomplishment. It appears that high personal standards and desire to be organized serve as positive strivings and facilitate academic engagement. But evaluative concerns over mistakes, doubts about one's actions, and expectations from parents act as maladaptive characteristics for students and lead to burnout symptoms.

Regarding the research question, the results showed that there is a strong positive relationship between perfectionism and goal orientation. There is also a strong positive relationship between goal orientation and anxiety, that is, learners' goal orientation affects their anxiety level. However, the relationship between anxiety and learners' English achievement is strong and negative. However, perfectionist learners attempt to act perfectly in their academic lives and this point improves their achievement. Also, as the model displays perfectionism and anxiety of the learners are related to their goal-orientation. The findings of the second model revealed a strong positive relationship between SOP and PAP goal orientation. The relationship between SPP and PAP is strong and positive.

Empirical studies have found that the four types of goal orientations are connected with diverse learner traits, study processes, and accomplishment outcomes and that they incorporate diverse underlying cognitive and affective processes (Ayas & Biçer, 2021; Lee & Anderman, 2020; Moller & Elliot, 2006). Additionally, PAP and anxiety, performance avoidance and anxiety, SOP and anxiety, and SPP and anxiety all have a strong positive correlation. Likewise, there exists strong negative relationship between English achievement and anxiety.

In consonance with these findings, Damian et al., (2014) concluded that Perfectionism estimates individual differences in teenage students' achievement goals, but different types of perfectionism are linked to distinct patterns of goal orientations. The findings with university students suggested that SOP is positively related to not only performance-approach orientation but also to performance-avoidance orientation (Speirs Neumeister et al., 2015; Verner-Filion & Gaudreau, 2010). As contrasted with the findings

of the current study, Verner-Filion & Gaudreau (2010) discovered that SPP is positively connected to performance-approach and performance-avoidance orientations. Going beyond previous findings (Damian et al., 2014; Stoeber 2018), the current results of the regression studies revealed that SPP only has positive relationships with performance approach goals.

Across the studies (Damian et al., 2014; Speirs Neumeister et al., 2015; Verner-Filion & Gaudreau, 2010), the attempts in line with the current study, found that both SOP and SPP indicated positive relationships with performance-approach goals. Stoeber et al. (2008) showed no association between perfectionistic strivings, while Zarghmi et al. (2010) found no significant relationship between perfectionistic concerns. Nonetheless, the relationship model implies that both perfectionism facets are linked to PAP goals, which confirms the present findings.

In Stoeber et al., (2008), six research revealed no significant associations between perfectionistic strivings (SOP) and PAV goals, three studies have confirmed positive relationships (Damian et al., 2014; Speirs Neumeister et al., 2015; Verner-Filion & Gaudreau, 2010), and one study showed a negative relation. Conversely, SPP was found to have positive relationships with PAV goals in all investigations except two, which revealed nonsignificant relationships (Speirs Neumeister et al., 2015; Stoeber et al., 2008). The model suggests that SPP is frequently related to PAV goals, but not with perfectionistic strivings. Recent correlation analyses have yielded mixed results when it comes to evaluating the relationships between the variables: some reported a negative correlation between anxiety and achievement, while others found a strong positive link, and yet others found no association at all (Kralova, 2016).

Performance Goal-orientation is a mediator variable and as mentioned earlier, it is found to be effective in EFL learners' level of anxiety and perfectionism. In line with the findings of the present study, Kord (2018) investigated the relationship between achievement goals and academic success. The results indicated that PAP goals were linked to academic success in a substantial way. Research suggested that many young people experience diminished motivation under these conditions. Moreover, the findings regarding PAP orientation lacked clarity (Maehr & Zusho, 2009). Because PAP goal has been connected to both positive and negative results (Moller & Elliot, 2006).

6. Conclusion

Teachers, peers, affective and physical characteristics, and numerous further components can be encompassed in the procedure of learning. Therefore, concentrating on these factors among EFL learners can help teachers to overcome the psychological problems of the learners and improve their personal and academic achievement. EFL teachers are required to consider and recognize perfectionist learners and the type of perfectionism to reduce the tension of this trait and convince learners to accept this notion that being a perfectionist does not necessarily lead to desirable achievement. Hence, the educational system with emphasis on guiding learners to pick appropriate mastery, to attain a true understanding of their goals, and advising parents against encouraging students towards out-of-reach criteria will guarantee their success in English language performance (Hewitt & Flett, 1991). The results of the study could have important implications for teachers, teacher educators, curriculum designers, and researchers, with a better understanding of student profiles, class activities, and the utilizing of various techniques and tasks for different types of learners and learning settings.

It is worth mentioning that the present study did not cover other crucial dimensions of Goal-orientation and perfectionism such as Mastery goal orientation and other-oriented perfectionism (Hewitt & Flett, 1991), perfectionistic self-presentation (Hewitt et al., 2003), and compound types of perfectionism narcissistic and self-critical perfectionism (Hewitt et al., 2003). Thus, future exploration may benefit from going beyond the obtained results when examining different forms, dimensions, and aspects of multidimensional perfectionism and Achievement goals. Future studies may get a lot out of addressing new advances in achievement goal theory that go beyond the 2×2 framework, such as the 3×2 framework (Elliot et al., 2011), which distinguishes approach and avoidance goal orientations in three areas of relative comparison: task, self, and others.

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