

Abstract

Recent research has identified perfectionism as a specific risk factor for eating pathology. Using the Chinese Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (CFMPS), the preset study aims to evaluate: (1) the association of different dimensions of perfectionism with disturbed eating attitudes and behaviors; and (2) the role of perfectionism in the development of eating pathology in a sample of Chinese adolescents. One thousand one hundred and thirty nine secondary school girls between 11 to 18 years of age participated in this study. Subjects completed measures assessing perfectionism, disordered eating attitudes and behaviors. Results indicated that the factor structure of CFMPS largely correspond to the original version. Replicating and extending previous findings, the factors 'Concern over Mistakes' and 'Doubts about Actions' are the major sub-components that predict pathological eating behaviors. Furthermore, the present study also found that perfectionism is a moderator in the development of disturbed eating behaviors. Adolescents who were dissatisfied with their bodies were more prone to disturbed eating behaviors if they were perfectionists, regardless of their levels of drive for thinness. Possible explanations of these findings were discussed in the socio-cultural context in relation to the negative affect regulation pathway and the concept of self-inadequacy.