A study of age and gender differences in perfectionism, procrastination and body image and their relationship with self-esteem and academic achievement in adolescents

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Objectives: The purpose of the present study was to explore age and gender differences in perfectionism, procrastination and body image concerns and their relationships with self-esteem and academic achievement.

Method: A random sample of 492 high school students responded to questionnaires tapping these variables. Data were analyzed using MANOVA, Pearson’s correlation coefficient and multiple regression methods.

Result: Regression analysis revealed that body image indices, procrastination and perfectionism accounted for 17.9%, 14.8% and 4.6% of the variance in self-esteem in boys, while they accounted for 22.2%, 16.2% and 8.4% of the variance in girls’ self-esteem. Academic achievement in boys was predicted by perfectionism (8.4%) only, while in girls’ academic achievement, perfectionism was less contributive (4.5%) and procrastination was more significant (8.8%).

Conclusion: The main findings obtained were as follows: Girls scored higher than boys and younger adolescents scored higher than older adolescents on perfectionism. No gender and age differences emerged on procrastination. Regarding body image concerns, girls reported greater preoccupation with weight and dissatisfaction with body parts than boys. A similar difference was observed between younger and older adolescents. Furthermore, greater self-esteem was reported by boys and older adolescents. Body image scores correlated positively with self-esteem in boys. Procrastination correlated positively with negative perfectionism, and perfectionism correlated positively with all indices of body image dissatisfaction.

Keywords: perfectionism, procrastination, body image, adolescent, gender, age