

COPING RESOURCES AS MEDIATORS OF MULTIDIMENSIONAL PERFECTIONISM AND BURNOUT

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This study examined the relationship between 2 dimensions of perfectionism (perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns) and burnout and the role that coping resources may play in mediating the relationship between these variables. Participants for this study included 235 employees from a large consulting firm in the Netherlands. The hypothesis that perfectionistic strivings would be negatively related to burnout was supported. This finding suggests that perfectionistic strivings may shield an individual from certain forms of psychological distress and be accompanied by lower burnout. The hypothesis that perfectionistic concerns would be positively related to burnout was also supported. This finding suggests that perfectionistic concerns are related to negative psychological and work consequences that may contribute to higher levels of burnout. Also as hypothesized, coping resources (cognitive restructuring and functional beliefs) mediated the relationships between both dimensions of perfectionism and burnout.

Keywords: perfectionism, burnout, coping resources

Job burnout is an important factor when considering the physical health and emotional well-being of employees. As a result, there is a longstanding interest in burnout and how it affects employee work engagement and psychological health (e.g., Chang, 2012; Hill, Hall, & Appleton, 2010; Reichl, Wach, Spinath, Brünken, & Karbach, 2014). Researchers and conceptual authors (e.g., Bakker, Van der Zee, Lewig, & Dollard, 2006; De Vries & Van Heck, 2002; Garrosa, Moreno-Jimenez, Liang, & Gonzalez, 2008; Goddard, Patton, & Creed, 2004) have noted that several factors, including personality characteristics, may contribute to employee burnout. For instance, the results of Swider and Zimmerman's (2010) recent meta-analysis on burnout and the Five-Factor Model of Personality (John & Srivastava, 1999) suggest that conscientiousness is associated with lower levels

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of burnout whereas neuroticism is associated with higher levels. In addition, research in the work domain has also found burnout to be associated with neuroticism (e.g., Jiang, Huang, & Chen, 2012). Although the relationship between higher-order personality traits and burnout is prevalent in the existing literature, newer research suggests that lower-order personality traits, such as perfectionism, provide increased predictability to various psychological and behavioral outcomes (O'Connor & Paunonen, 2007). The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between different dimensions of perfectionism and burnout and what role, if any, that coping resources may play in those relationships.

Maslach and Jackson (1981) noted that burnout results from chronic job stress and includes three components: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Of such, emotional exhaustion was found to be the core component of burnout across various domains and settings (e.g., Koeske & Koeske, 1993; Reilly, 1994; Schwenke, Ashby, & Gnilka, 2014). Within a work setting, emotional exhaustion is distinguished by depleted "emotional resources" and "often perpetuates tension, frustration, and fear that he or she can no longer perform as they once did" (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993, p. 623). Therefore, employees with high levels of burnout are more likely to be absent, less communicative with coworkers, and have poor and inconsistent job performance (Jackson, Schwab, & Schuler, 1986; Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Parker & Kulik, 1995; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). Conversely, employees low on burnout are more likely to be engaged (Cole, Walter, Bedeian, & O'Boyle, 2012) and have higher levels of intrinsic motivation toward their work (Rubino, Luksyte, Perry, & Volpone, 2009).

In addition to the numerous negative work-related outcomes associated with burnout, there are also several negative emotional outcomes. For instance, individuals may experience physical and emotional disturbances including insomnia, chronic fatigue, anxiety, depression, withdrawal from others, loss of motivation, and hostility (Maslach et al., 2001; Schaufeli & Enzmann, 1998; Shimazu, Schaufeli, & Taris, 2010; Shirom, 2003).

Individual personality characteristics may impact if and how an employee experiences these negative outcomes and burnout (Goddard et al., 2004). Given the increased focus on lower-order personality traits, recent studies have considered links between perfectionism and burnout (e.g., Chang, 2012; Childs & Stoeber, 2010; Ozbilir, Day, & Catano, 2015; Schwenke et al., 2014; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008). Whereas earlier conceptualizations viewed perfectionism as a unidimensional construct and defined it as unhealthy and dysfunctional (Burns, 1980), more recent studies have viewed perfectionism as multidimensional. Although several different conceptual models of multidimensional perfectionism have been offered by researchers (e.g., Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1990; Hewitt & Flett, 1991; Slaney, Rice, & Ashby, 2002), a comprehensive review by Stoeber and Otto (2006) identified two main dimensions across the various models: perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns. Perfectionistic strivings are defined as setting high standards of performance. In contrast, perfectionistic concerns are defined as self-criticalness about performance and fear of making mistakes.

Perfectionistic strivings are positively associated with multiple positive outcomes such as life satisfaction and hope (Ashby, Dickinson, Gnilka, & Noble, 2011; Gnilka, Ashby, & Noble, 2013; Rice & Ashby, 2007) and negatively associated with a multitude of negative emotional states such as depression, stress, ineffective coping, and anxiety (Gnilka, Ashby, & Noble, 2012; Noble, Ashby, & Gnilka, 2014; Rice & Ashby, 2007). Conversely, perfectionistic concerns are positively associated with higher levels of multiple negative emotional states and behaviors such as depression, alcohol-related problems, and perceived stress (Ashby, Noble, & Gnilka, 2012; Rice & Stuart, 2010; Rice & Van Arsdale, 2010) and negatively associated with positive emotional outcomes such as self-esteem, hope, and life satisfaction (Ashby et al., 2011; Gnilka, Ashby, & Noble, 2013; Wang, Slaney, & Rice, 2007).

More specific to the work environment, several studies (e.g., Childs & Stoeber, 2010; Ozbilir et al., 2015; Stoeber, Hutchfield, & Wood, 2008; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008; Zhang, Gan, & Cham, 2007) have shown a positive relationship between perfectionistic strivings and positive influence (e.g., encouraging coworkers and offering inspiration in the workplace), patience (e.g., perseverance despite demanding work deadlines and different employee work styles), intrinsic motivation, and

work engagement and a negative relationship with burnout. However, perfectionistic concerns are positively related to burnout (Childs & Stoeber, 2010; Ozbilir et al., 2015; Stoeber & Rennert, 2008) and negatively related to engagement (Childs & Stoeber, 2010).

A recent meta-analysis of perfectionism and burnout across three domains (work, sport, and education) concluded that perfectionistic strivings had only a small negative or nonsignificant relationship with burnout whereas perfectionistic concerns had a moderate to large positive relationship with burnout (Hill & Curran, 2016). Although significant research has explored the direct relationships between the two dimensions of perfectionism and burnout, Hill and Curran (2016) noted that “research that identifies explanatory factors is a priority” (p. 283), with a particular focus on mediating factors for future research. To date, only a few studies could be located that specifically dealt with potential mediators between multidimensional perfectionism and burnout in professional samples (Chang, 2012; Schwenke et al., 2014; Taris, Beek, & Schaufeli, 2010; Tashman, Tenenbaum, & Eklund, 2010).

Coping resources is one promising mediating factor that has gained increased attention in exploring relationships between multidimensional perfectionism and psychological outcomes, including burnout. According to Hobfoll’s (1988, 1989) Conservation of Resources Model, people are constantly building coping resources, which they strive to protect and retain. Coping resources are factors such as traits, cognitive schemas, abilities, social support, and assets, which can provide resilience against stressors (Matheny, Aycok, Curlette, & Junker, 1993) and can shift a person’s perception of a stressor from a negative to a manageable task (Matheny, Aycok, Curlette, & Junker, 2003). Consistent with this view, Hobfoll (1988, 1989) argues that coping resources are a better predictor of eventual stressful reactions than actual demands placed on an individual. One of the most comprehensive assessments of coping resources (Coping Resources Inventory for Stress [CRIS]; Matheny, Curlette, Aycok, Pugh, & Taylor, 1987) measures three higher-order coping resource constructs: Cognitive Restructuring, Functional Beliefs, and Social Ease. Cognitive restructuring refers to an individual’s ability to adjust their thinking to reduce stress. Functional beliefs refer to an individual’s beliefs that may reduce stress. Social ease refers to a person’s comfortableness in being connected to others.

Coping resources may account for the differential relationships between the two dimensions of perfectionism and burnout. For instance, perfectionistic strivings are negatively associated with unhelpful and avoidant coping (O’Connor & O’Connor, 2003) and dysfunctional coping (Rice & Lapsley, 2001) and positively associated with problem-focused coping (Rice & Lapsley, 2001) and task-oriented coping (O’Connor & O’Connor, 2003). Inversely, perfectionistic concerns are negatively associated with problem-focused coping and positively associated with dysfunctional, emotion-based, and avoidant styles of coping (Dunkley, Sanislow, Grilo, & McGlashan, 2006; Gnlika et al., 2012; Rice & Lapsley, 2001). Individuals high on perfectionistic concerns may be motivated by the “fear of failure,” which leads to avoidance behavior and the feeling of being “emotionally drained” (Hamachek, 1978, p. 28).

A more comprehensive study that looks at the combination of both forms of perfectionism, multiple coping resources, and burnout would have significant implications for consulting psychologists and executive coaches in business settings. For example, although several researchers have found that perceived stress (Chang, 2012; Schwenke et al., 2014) and workaholism (Tashman et al., 2010) mediated the relationship between perfectionistic concerns and burnout, none of the studies found this relationship fit for perfectionistic strivings and burnout. In addition, Schwenke et al. (2014) did not find support for a moderated-mediation model that tested if overall coping-resource levels moderated the relationship among perfectionism, perceived stress, and burnout. Schwenke et al. (2014) suggested that future researchers consider exploring more complex mediation models that concurrently include multiple types of coping resources. By exploring multiple types of coping-resource strategies, it would be possible to help narrow the goals and focus, in executive coaching sessions for example, on only those coping-resource strategies shown to be most effective.

In sum, there is limited research investigating potential mediators to the relationship between multidimensional perfectionism and burnout, especially in work-related areas. The role of coping resources may offer insight into the relationship between both dimensions of perfectionism and

burnout, suggesting several implications for business settings. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between perfectionism (i.e., perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns) and burnout while inspecting coping resources as a possible mediator. In this study, we hypothesized the following:

Hypothesis 1: Perfectionistic strivings will be negatively related to burnout and positively related to coping resources.

Hypothesis 2: Perfectionistic concerns will be positively related to burnout and negatively related to coping resources.

Hypothesis 3: Coping resources will mediate the relationship between perfectionistic concerns and burnout.

Hypothesis 4: Coping resources will mediate the relationship between perfectionistic strivings and burnout.

Method

Participants and Procedures

Institutional review board approval was obtained before starting the study. Participants for this study included 255 employees from a large consulting firm in the Netherlands. Participants were volunteers that responded to an initial announcement that introduced the study. Participants first signed an informed consent form and were provided a battery of assessments to be filled out either at home or at work measuring (a) coping resources, (b) burnout, and (c) perfectionism. All assessments were translated into Dutch and then translated back into English to ensure comparability. Next, participants were provided with an individualized interpretive report regarding the strengths and weaknesses of their personal coping resources and with an opportunity to attend a stress-management seminar as compensation for their participation. Although a formal debriefing was not required for the purposes of this study, participants were provided with the contact information of the primary investigator listed in the informed consent if there were any questions or concerns.

Measures

CRIS. The CRIS (Matheny et al., 1987) is an inventory of 15 personal coping resources that is designed to measure a person's strengths and weaknesses regarding coping with stress (Matheny et al., 1993). The CRIS was developed to provide a comprehensive measure of a person's stress-coping resources. The instrument contains 280 true/false items, 15 primary scales, 3 composite scales (Cognitive Restructuring, Functional Beliefs, and Social Ease), and a total coping-resources scale. Items are summed to create the scales, with higher scores representing higher levels of coping resources. For the present study, the three composite scales were used; they do not have overlapping items. Cognitive Restructuring measures a person's ability to adjust cognitions in an effort to reduce stress. An example item is: "When facing frightening tasks, I have learned to rehearse past success to help calm myself." The second scale is Functional Beliefs, which measures an individual's beliefs that help lower stress activation and assist in preventing stressful situations. A sample item is: "I need everyone to like me." Lastly, Social Ease measures a person's ability to feel at ease in the company of others. "I generally feel at ease when I meet people" is a sample item from this scale.

Curllette, Aycock, Matheny, Pugh, and Taylor (1992) as well as other researchers (e.g., Matheny et al., 2003) have shown evidence of strong internal consistency reliabilities (.84–.97) and high test–retest reliabilities (.76–.95). The scales have demonstrated strong construct validity and are related to multiple outcomes such as illness, personality, life satisfaction, and emotional distress

(Matheny et al., 2003; Matheny & Curlette, 1998). For the present sample, Cronbach's coefficients α s were .82 for Cognitive Restructuring, .83 for Functional Beliefs, and .81 for Social Ease.

Maslach Burnout Inventory. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Golembiewski & Munzenrider, 1988) was first developed by Maslach and Jackson (1986) with the goal of measuring burnout. The scale was designed to measure three dimensions of burnout, including emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. The original MBI was intended for use with human-services professionals (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996).

The MBI-General Survey uses a 7-point Likert scale with 23 questions and revised the MBI language to make it more applicable for use in the general work environment. This version of the MBI was selected for this study because it seeks to address burnout issues with business professionals. For the purposes of this study, only Emotional Exhaustion scores were used in the analyses.

The internal consistency coefficient α s for the three scales range from .72 to .86. Validity studies have been conducted and correlated inventory measures with ratings of the worker's burnout by family members and working peers, the presence of job characteristics that were expected to contribute to burnout, and other measures related to burnout (Maslach et al., 2001). The current study's Cronbach's coefficients α for the Emotional Exhaustion subscale was .86.

Almost Perfect Scale-Revised. The Almost Perfect Scale-Revised (APS-R; Slaney, Rice, Mobley, Trippi, & Ashby, 2001) is a 23-item measure designed to assess the multidimensional construct of perfectionism through three subscales: Standards, Discrepancy, and Order. The Standards subscale is designed to measure perfectionistic strivings, the Discrepancy subscale measures perfectionistic concerns, and the Order subscale measures a participant's organization and need for order.

The APS-R uses a 7-point Likert scale with response options ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). The subscale structure has been consistently supported through factor analysis with factor loadings for the items ranging from .49 to .86 (Slaney et al., 2001).¹ In addition, several validity studies of the subscales have been conducted with the measure (e.g., Rice & Pence, 2006; Slaney et al., 2001), with Gnilka et al. (2012) recently reporting Cronbach's coefficients α s of .88 for the Standards subscale and .94 for the Discrepancy subscale. Rice and Ashby (2007) found that the APS-R Order subscale did not significantly contribute to the measurement of adaptive and maladaptive perfectionism. As a result, the current study utilized only the Standards and Discrepancy subscales. Cronbach coefficients α s for the current study were .72 for the Standards subscale and .91 for the Discrepancy subscale.

Results

In initial analyses, Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken's (2003) recommendations were used to assess regression assumptions. There was no reason to suspect a violation of independence of observations. We did not find evidence for multicollinearity. Multivariate normalcy was assessed with standardized residuals ($\pm 3SD$), Cook's Distance, and Mahalanobis' Distances. One participant had a standardized residual greater than 3 and one participant had a Mahalanobis' Distance above the cutoff of 20.52; therefore, both cases were removed from further analysis. No case had a Cook's Distance exceed 1.00, which would suggest no undue influence on the dependent variable. Two cases had univariate outliers ($\pm 3SD$) on at least one of the study variables; therefore, these cases were removed from the study, leaving a total sample of 235. Correlations among APS-R subscales, CRIS subscales, and MBI as well as Cronbach's coefficients α s for all scales appear in Table 1.

Tests of Mediation

To test the hypotheses that three types of coping resources (Cognitive Restructuring, Functional Beliefs, and Social Ease) mediated the relationships between both dimensions of perfectionism (i.e.,

¹It should be noted that the APS-R was administered using a 6-point Likert scale and was rescored to fit the standard APS-R 7-point Likert scale model.

Table 1
Correlations Among Variables (N = 235)

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	α	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. APS-R Standards	39.45	5.25	.72	—					
2. APS-R Discrepancy	35.52	13.09	.91	.40*	—				
3. CRIS Cognitive Restructuring	30.13	6.68	.82	.02	-.33*	—			
4. CRIS Functional Beliefs	25.82	8.50	.83	-.30*	-.47*	.57*	—		
5. CRIS Social Ease	32.00	6.40	.81	.00	-.29*	.45*	.46*	—	
6. MBI Emotional Exhaustion	20.06	7.84	.86	.20*	.49*	-.49*	-.51*	-.34*	—

* $p < .05$.

perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns) and burnout, two separate regression models were conducted. Tests of mediation are still often conducted using Baron and Kenny’s (1986) multistep approach; however, this approach has been shown to have significant limitations (see Hayes, 2009; Preacher & Hayes, 2004, 2008). For example, Baron and Kenny (1986) suggested that the first step in the analysis is to demonstrate that the direct effect from the independent variable to the outcome variable is significant. More recent studies note no need to demonstrate that the independent variable has a significant relationship with the outcome variable (see Hayes, 2009; Shrout & Bolger, 2002). Kenny, Kashy, and Bolger (1998) revised their procedures for testing mediation and removed this first step. Therefore, it is recommended to utilize statistical tests of the indirect effect of the independent variable—in this study either perfectionistic strivings or perfectionistic concerns—on the dependent variable (i.e., burnout), such as the Sobel Test (Sobel, 1982).

Preacher and Hayes (2004, 2008) argue that the Sobel Test is more powerful than the multistep process suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). Even so, the Sobel Test suffers from several limitations, including increased Type I error rates, lower statistical power, and the assumption that the indirect effect path is normally distributed. Note that the term ab is generally used to represent the indirect effect of the independent variable (either adaptive or maladaptive) on the dependent variable (burnout) and is defined as the product of the independent variable to the mediator paths (a) and mediator to burnout paths (b), or ab . Given that the distribution of ab is known to be non-normal even if a and b are perfectly normally distributed (see Hayes, 2009), bootstrapping is the recommended approach. Bootstrapping is a nonparametric approach that does not need to rely on the assumption that the variables are normally distributed or skewed. In addition, bootstrapping has been shown to have significantly better power than other methods (e.g., Baron and Kenny, Sobel Test) and of particular validity for studies with smaller sample sizes (Hayes, 2009). Hayes (2013) recommended a minimum of 10,000 bootstrap samples; therefore, the point estimate of the indirect effect is the mean path value computed over all of the 10,000 samples. Through the creation of 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals (CIs), the indirect effect estimates are sorted from lowest to highest. The lower limit of the CI is the 250th score and the upper limit is the 9,760th score. The indirect effect is significant when zero is not located in these 95% CIs. The SPSS macro PROCESS (Hayes, 2013) was used to calculate the indirect effect. As done in past studies (e.g., Ashby et al., 2011; Gnilka et al., 2012), the two perfectionism dimensions were covaried.

Results of the bootstrapping analyses showed that Cognitive Restructuring and Functional Beliefs, but not Social Ease, mediated the relationships between both perfectionism dimensions and burnout as noted by zero not being included in the 95% CIs. Results of the bootstrapping analyses with perfectionistic strivings as the independent variable are in Table 2 and Figure 1, and perfectionistic concerns as the independent variable are in Table 3 and Figure 2.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between two dimensions of perfectionism (i.e., perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns) and burnout and whether coping re-

Table 2
Coping Resources as Mediators Between Perfectionistic Strivings and Burnout (N = 235)

Path/effect	b	SE b	β	95% CI
C	.00	.09	.01	
a1 (STRIVINGS → COG)	.23	.08	.18*	
a2 (STRIVINGS → FUNC)	−.22	.10	−.13*	
a3 (STRIVINGS → SOC)	.16	.08	.13*	
b1 (COG → BURNOUT)	−.32	.08	−.27*	
b2 (FUNC → BURNOUT)	−.17	.07	−.19*	
b3 (SOC → BURNOUT)	−.07	.07	−.05	
c' (STRIVINGS → BURNOUT)	.05	.09	.03	
Partial Effect of Control on DV	.17	.04	.28*	
a1 × b1	−.07	.03	−.05	−.1516, −.0237
a2 × b2	.04	.02	.02	.0065, .0938
a3 × b3	−.01	.02	.01	−.0612, .0072
Total Indirect	−.05	.05	−.02	−.1570, .0504

Note. $R^2 = .39$, $F(5, 229) = 29.62$, $p < .05$. STRIVINGS = APS-R Standards subscale, Partial Effect of Control on DV = APS-R Discrepancy subscale; BURNOUT = Emotional Exhaustion MBI, COG = CRIS Cognitive Restructuring subscale, FUNC = CRIS Functional Beliefs subscale, SOC = CRIS Social Ease subscale. For paths, C = total effect of independent variable (IV) on dependent variable (DV), a = IV to mediators, b = direct effect of mediator on DV, c' = direct effect of IV on DV, a × b = indirect effect of IV on DV through mediator.
* $p < .05$.

sources mediated the relationships between these variables. The initial hypothesis was confirmed that perfectionistic strivings were negatively related to burnout. This finding is consistent with the results of previous research linking perfectionistic strivings to positive work outcomes (e.g., Rice & Dellwo, 2002; Stoeber et al., 2008; Zhang et al., 2007). Individuals in this study who were higher in perfectionistic strivings may have had lower burnout because, as Hamachek (1978) noted, they “are better able to establish performance boundaries that take into account both their limitations and strengths. In this way, success is more possible because self-expectations are both more reasonable and realistic” (p. 28). Individuals with high levels of perfectionistic strivings may create a work environment where high standards are set and employees are able to celebrate in their achievements while also appreciating the limits of their capabilities.

One implication for consulting psychologists and executive coaches who have a client with high levels of perfectionistic strivings is to keep in mind that perfectionistic strivings may buffer individuals from burnout while also keeping their usage of coping resources high. Consulting psychologists and executive coaches may want to focus on reinforcing the client’s usage of coping resources through strength-based coaching, which has been shown to be effective to increase

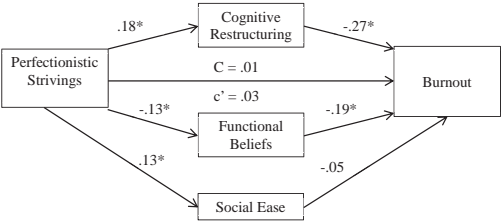


Figure 1. Path models of the relations among perfectionistic strivings, coping resources, and burnout while controlling perfectionistic concerns. The path coefficients are standardized regression coefficients. For paths, C = total effect of perfectionistic strivings on burnout; c' = direct effect of perfectionistic strivings on burnout. * $p < .05$.

Table 3
Coping Resources as Mediators Between Perfectionistic Concerns and Burnout (N = 235)

Path/effect	b	SE b	β	95% CI
C	.29	.04	.49*	
a1 (CONCERNS \rightarrow COG)	-.21	.03	-.40*	
a2 (CONCERNS \rightarrow FUNC)	-.27	.04	-.41*	
a3 (CONCERNS \rightarrow SOC)	-.17	.03	-.34*	
b1 (COG \rightarrow BURNOUT)	-.32	.08	-.27*	
b2 (FUNC \rightarrow BURNOUT)	-.17	.07	-.19*	
b3 (SOC \rightarrow BURNOUT)	-.07	.07	.03	
c' (CONCERNS \rightarrow BURNOUT)	.17	.04	.28*	
Partial Effect of Control on DV	.05	.09	.03	
a1 \times b1	.07	.02	.11	.0320, .1091
a2 \times b2	.05	.02	.08	.0118, .0892
a3 \times b3	.01	.01	-.01	-.0124, .0396
Total Indirect	.12	.02	.18	.0791, .1768

Note. $R^2 = .39$, $F(5, 229) = 29.62$, $p < .05$. CONCERNS = APS-R Discrepancy subscale, Partial Effect of Control on DV = APS-R Standards subscale, BURNOUT = Emotional Exhaustion MBI, COG = CRIS Cognitive Restructuring subscale; FUNC = CRIS Functional Beliefs Subscale, SOC = CRIS Social Ease Subscale. For paths, C = total effect of independent variable (IV) on dependent variable (DV), a = IV to mediators, b = direct effect of mediator on DV, c' = direct effect of IV on DV, a \times b = indirect effect of IV on DV through mediator.
* $p < .05$.

well-being (Wood, Linley, Maltby, Kashdan, & Hurling, 2011). Furthermore, MacKie's (2014) research suggests that strength-based coaching may be effective in leadership development, which may also be an area of attention for consulting psychologists and executive coaches working with clients with perfectionistic strivings.

The second hypothesis that perfectionistic concerns were positively related to burnout was also supported. This finding is consistent with previous research highlighting that perfectionistic concerns are consistently associated with lower levels of work engagement and increased levels of burnout (Hill & Curran, 2016; Stoeber et al., 2008). This finding also supports Houkes, Winants, and Twellaar's (2008) research, which indicates that perfectionism can be a stress-inducing factor, resulting in employee emotional exhaustion. These unhealthy work consequences and higher levels of burnout may be related to the tendency to "stew endlessly in the emotional juices of their own brewing about whether they are doing it just right" (Hamachek, 1978, p. 27). Increased levels of perfectionistic concerns may cause individuals to worry in excess about the quality of their work and engage in inefficient work behaviors (e.g., spending too much time on unnecessary details to complete projects), resulting in higher levels of burnout. This may be of particular importance in the

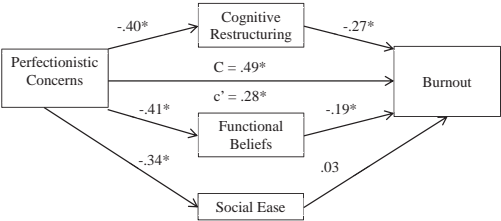


Figure 2. Path models of the relations among perfectionistic concerns, coping resources, and burnout while controlling perfectionistic strivings. The path coefficients are standardized regression coefficients. For paths, C = total effect of perfectionistic concerns on burnout; c' = direct effect of perfectionistic concerns on burnout. * $p < .05$.

consulting field given that much of the work is project based with strict deadlines and ever-changing client priorities. Performing at peak levels while under constant pressure to deliver work products may prove more difficult for employees with perfectionistic concerns because their fear of criticism and failure can take hold. The competitive nature in the corporate workplace can create an environment of employee comparisons, only further promoting an employee's perfectionistic concerns and worry about work quality and performance.

Utilizing techniques to achieve "peak performance" through executive coaching may be useful for employees with perfectionistic concerns. Peak-performance-training techniques used by sports psychologists have recently been adapted for employees in the corporate environment (Hallett & Hoffman, 2014). Peak performance is defined as a high level of functioning involving "the full use of human power" (Privette, 1983, p. 1362). Peak-performance skills that emphasize increased focus and confidence development can be taught and cultivated in employees with perfectionistic concerns similarly to the way in which this is done with athletes. These skills can be learned and strengthened over time and may improve performance under work stress (Hallett & Hoffman, 2014). Another suggestion by Houkes et al. (2008) recommends that consulting psychologists and executive coaches consider utilizing interventions that involve rational emotive-behavior therapy to develop reasonable client attitudes toward work, which may prove useful when working with clients with perfectionistic concerns.

The third hypothesis was confirmed in that the relationship between perfectionistic concerns and burnout was mediated by the coping resources of functional beliefs and cognitive restructuring. This finding is consistent with other studies that noted that perfectionistic concerns are negatively related to task-based coping styles and positively related to dysfunctional coping styles (Dunkley et al., 2006; Gnilka et al., 2012; Rice & Lapsley, 2001). Individuals with high levels of perfectionistic concerns may hold fewer positive functional beliefs (e.g., a need to be liked by everyone), which may limit their resilience against stressful situations and stress arousal. One implication for consulting psychologists and executive coaches working with clients with higher levels of perfectionistic concerns is to anticipate this increased amount of self-criticism regarding their performance as well as significant issues in utilizing coping resources. An intriguing approach that may be adapted specifically for individuals with higher levels of perfectionistic concerns was tested by Anshel and Kang (2007). This study used a cognitive-behavioral approach over a 10-week period to replace negative habits with more functional cognitions and behaviors in a sample of full-time university faculty and staff. Results showed a significant decline in negative work habits along with increased usage of positive work habits and work engagement.

The last hypothesis explored if the three coping resources mediated the relationship between perfectionistic strivings and burnout. Although the results of the study indicated that Social Ease did not mediate this relationship, the other two coping resources (Cognitive Restructuring and Functional Beliefs) were found to be significant mediators. Whereas the results indicated that the coping resource of functional beliefs was a significant mediator, the negative relationship with perfectionistic strivings was not conceptually or empirically consistent with earlier studies that have shown a positive relationship with more problem-focused and task-based coping styles (O'Connor & O'Connor, 2003; Rice & Lapsley, 2001). One possible explanation for the difference is cultural. Given that most studies of perfectionism have been based on samples in the United States and Canada (e.g., Dunkley et al., 2006; Gnilka et al., 2012; O'Connor & O'Connor, 2003; Rice & Lapsley, 2001), perfectionistic strivings may have a different meaning in Scandinavian countries.

Cognitive Restructuring was found to be a significant mediator between perfectionistic strivings and burnout. Specifically, perfectionistic strivings was positively associated with Cognitive Restructuring, which was negatively associated with burnout. This finding is consistent with earlier studies that found that perfectionistic strivings was positively associated with problem-focused and task-oriented coping styles (O'Connor & O'Connor, 2003; Rice & Lapsley, 2001), suggesting that individuals with higher levels of perfectionistic strivings may be better able to reframe stressors, leading to a less pronounced stress response.

Given that the coping resource of Cognitive Restructuring mediated the relationships between both dimensions of perfectionism and burnout, consulting psychologists and executive coaches

should tailor interventions that specifically target this coping resource. For example, executive coaching that focuses specifically on the client's cognitive reappraisals of his or her work performance and beliefs of how others perceive him or her could be very beneficial (Grant, Curtayne, & Burton, 2009; Gyllenstein & Palmer, 2005). Weinberg (2016) provides an example of how the Conservation of Resources Model can be integrated with executive coaching. Weinberg found mixed results that executive coaching using a solution-focused approach may have helped prevent declining psychological health during a significant organizational change. However, it is important to note that this effect was only found with managers who volunteered for the study compared to those who were required to do so by their employer.

One key implication of the summary of these results is to be mindful that different types of perfectionists have different types of cognitions regarding their work performance, their beliefs about how others perceive them, and their own internal self-talk. Consulting psychologists and executive coaches should consider using 360-degree appraisals that specifically focus on a broad range of cognitive and behavioral attributes. Providing an opportunity to create realistic goals based on any differences between self and colleagues' ratings and areas of strengths as well as weaknesses could be fruitful. For example, individuals with high perfectionistic concerns commonly have negative self-talk and behaviors regarding their performance and perception of others. A focus on identifying this talk (e.g., "People think I am a failure") and behavior (e.g., "I cannot share work with others until done perfectly") and replacing them with more positive self-talk and behaviors may be beneficial (Grant et al., 2009; Gyllenstein & Palmer, 2005). Conversely, individuals with high perfectionistic strivings and low perfectionistic concerns may already have sufficient positive self-talk and behavior and may want to consider engaging in brief executive coaching that focuses on other attributes such as leadership development.

There were several limitations to our study. First, although valid and reliable empirical measures were used, results were based on participants' self-reports (i.e., no external observations). Participants received a coping-resources interpretative report and an opportunity to attend a stress-management seminar, which may have attracted participants particularly interested in stress management. Second, cause-and-effect relationships between variables could not be determined because of the cross-sectional design of this study. Third, this sample was rather homogenous in terms of race, ethnicity, nationality, and professional identity.

This study was not intended to predict burnout but was an attempt to understand its relationship to different types of perfectionists and how coping resources may mediate this relationship. These findings only considered specific participants' perfectionism and coping resources. Further research should be conducted to determine if and how far the findings of this study may be generalized to a broader business context as well as more widely applied to a demographic base in terms of race, ethnicity, and nationality. Furthermore, collecting information from employees who may be experiencing symptoms of burnout may be difficult. Considering the length of the measures used and an employee's motivation to participate in a stress-management seminar, which was offered to participants, some employees with burnout may not have participated. Longitudinal studies with both qualitative and quantitative measures may be beneficial in future research to better understand the construct of burnout and how personality, demographics, stress, and coping resources affect a person's relationship to and experiences with burnout over time.

This study also focused only on participants' assessment of three coping-resource strategies versus multiple individual coping resources. In the future it may be beneficial to evaluate if and to what extent individual coping resources have a mediating or moderating relationship on a person's experience with burnout. More broadly, future research about the impact of work environments and stress appraisal of work demands for individuals with perfectionistic strivings and concerns and how this relates to levels of burnout may be helpful for professional business employers.

Conclusion

This study adds to the increasing body of research looking for potential mediators between multidimensional perfectionism and burnout by investigating three types of coping resources (functional beliefs, cognitive restructuring, and social ease). For both dimensions of perfectionism,

two of the three coping resources (i.e., functional beliefs and cognitive restructuring) were found to be significant mediators. Consulting psychologists and executive coaches working with clients in the consulting field should be aware of the potentially positive and negative aspects that perfectionism and coping resources have on burnout.

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