



Multidimensional perfectionism and narcissism: Grandiose or vulnerable?



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ABSTRACT

Multidimensional perfectionism is related to grandiose narcissism, with other-oriented perfectionism showing the strongest, most consistent relationships. The relationships with vulnerable narcissism, however, are unclear. Our study investigated how three forms of perfectionism—self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed perfectionism (Hewitt & Flett, 1991)—are related to narcissistic grandiosity and vulnerability. A sample of 375 university students completed the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin & Terry, 1988), Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (Hendin & Cheek, 1997), and Pathological Narcissism Inventory (Pincus et al., 2009) capturing various facets of narcissistic grandiosity and vulnerability. Multiple regressions were conducted controlling for the overlap between the three forms of perfectionism and gender. Other-oriented perfectionism showed unique positive relationships with key facets of grandiose narcissism. In contrast, socially prescribed perfectionism showed positive relationships with all facets of vulnerable narcissism. Self- and other-oriented perfectionism showed positive relationships with individual facets only. Other-oriented perfectionism appears to represent a form of perfectionism predominantly related to narcissistic grandiosity, whereas socially prescribed perfectionism is predominantly related to narcissistic vulnerability. As the first study to examine perfectionism in relation to narcissistic grandiosity and vulnerability, our research both extends and clarifies the nomological network of the perfectionism construct in important ways.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Multidimensional perfectionism

Perfectionism is a personality trait characterized by striving for flawlessness, setting exceedingly high standards of performance, and evaluating one's behavior in an overly critical way (Flett & Hewitt, 2002; Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblate, 1990). Evidence suggests perfectionism is best conceptualized as multidimensional (Enns & Cox, 2002), with different forms of perfectionism each having their own unique characteristics.

One of the most influential and widely researched conceptualizations of multidimensional perfectionism is Hewitt and Flett's (1991) model, which differentiates three forms of perfectionism: self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed. Self-oriented perfectionism comprises internally motivated beliefs that striving for perfection and being perfect are important. Self-oriented

perfectionists have exceedingly high personal standards, strive for perfection, expect to be perfect, and are highly self-critical if they fail to meet these expectations. In contrast, other-oriented perfectionism comprises internally motivated beliefs that it is important for others to strive for perfection and be perfect. Other-oriented perfectionists expect others to be perfect, and are highly critical of others who fail to meet these expectations. Finally, socially prescribed perfectionism comprises externally motivated beliefs that striving for perfection and being perfect are important to others. Socially prescribed perfectionists believe that others expect them to be perfect, and that others will be highly critical of them if they fail to meet their expectations (Hewitt & Flett, 1991, 2004).

1.2. Multidimensional perfectionism and narcissism

Narcissism has been described as a “cognitive-affective preoccupation with the self” (Westen, 1990, p. 227) associated with the pursuit of gratification through vanity or egotistic admiration of one's own attributes. While narcissism research originated from studies of psychopathology (see Raskin & Terry, 1988), narcissistic

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tendencies are normative and widespread in the general population. This may be especially true for aspects of “normal narcissism” that Raskin and Terry (1988) described as reflecting individual differences in showing off one’s accomplishments, being preoccupied with physical appearance, feeling superior to others, and feeling entitled to special treatment. In fact, some authors suggest we are living in an age of entitlement where narcissism is increasingly common (Twenge, Konrath, Foster, Campbell, & Bushman, 2008). Narcissism is also a unique predictor of many consequential outcomes including criminal behavior, interpersonal problems, anger, workplace incivility, aggression, and difficulties in psychotherapy (e.g., Pincus, Cain, & Wright, 2014), suggesting a need to better understand this potentially destructive trait.

The relationships between multidimensional perfectionism and narcissism were investigated from the beginning of Hewitt and Flett’s (1991) research differentiating the three forms of perfectionism. This research has gained new momentum because of renewed interest in other-oriented perfectionism and its unique relationships with narcissism (e.g., Sherry, Gralnick, Hewitt, Sherry, & Flett, 2014; Stoeber, 2014a). The renewed interest in other-oriented perfectionism is relevant because—when all three forms of perfectionism are considered while simultaneously controlling for their overlap—other-oriented perfectionism appears to be the form of perfectionism with unique positive relationships with narcissism. In a study investigating the relationships of self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed perfectionism with narcissism measured with the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Raskin & Terry, 1988), other-oriented perfectionism emerged as the only form that showed positive unique relationships (Sherry et al., 2014). The same pattern was observed in another study (Stoeber, 2014a) measuring narcissism with the Dirty Dozen (Jonason & Webster, 2010), a brief measure of the dark triad of personality (narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy). Again, other-oriented perfectionism emerged as the only form of perfectionism showing positive unique relationships with narcissism. Furthermore, in a study examining how the three forms of perfectionism were related to pathological personality traits measured with the Personality Inventory for the DSM-5 (Krueger, Derringer, Markon, Watson, & Skodol, 2013), other-oriented perfectionism showed unique positive relationships with the two traits defining narcissistic personality disorder: grandiosity and attention seeking (Stoeber, 2014b). Together, these findings suggest that only other-oriented shows unique positive relationships with narcissism, whereas self-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism show no consistent relationships with narcissism once their overlap with other-oriented perfectionism is taken into account.

1.3. Narcissism: grandiosity and vulnerability

There is, however, a caveat to this suggestion. Narcissism research differentiates between grandiose narcissism and vulnerable narcissism (Pincus & Roche, 2011), and the narcissism measures used in the previous mentioned studies (Sherry et al., 2014; Stoeber, 2014a, 2014b) captured grandiose narcissism exclusively. Consequently, the unique positive relationship of other-oriented perfectionism with narcissism may be restricted to grandiose narcissism.

Grandiose narcissism, the form of narcissism considered most prototypical of narcissism, is characterized by an inflated positive self-image of one’s skills and authority combined with exhibitionism, attitudes of entitlement, and a tendency toward exploitativeness. Grandiose narcissism is mostly overt, making it highly visible to others. In contrast, vulnerable narcissism is mostly covert and is characterized by a need for other people’s recognition (e.g., validation or admiration) and a sense of self-worth that is contingent

upon this recognition. If other people’s recognition is not forthcoming or is doubtful, vulnerable narcissism is related to social avoidance and withdrawal (Miller et al., 2011; Pincus et al., 2009).

The differentiation of grandiose versus vulnerable narcissism is important because these two aspects of narcissism have shown different, sometimes opposite, relationships with indicators of well-being, adjustment, and psychopathology (Pincus & Roche, 2011). In particular, grandiose narcissism shows positive correlations with explicit self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965) indicating that grandiose narcissists have a high sense of self-worth. In contrast, vulnerable narcissism shows negative correlations with explicit self-esteem, indicating that vulnerable narcissists have a low sense of self-worth (e.g., Miller et al., 2011; Pincus et al., 2009).

Other-oriented and socially prescribed perfectionism have also shown opposite relations with explicit self-esteem, with other-oriented perfectionism showing positive correlations and socially prescribed perfectionism showing negative correlations (Flett, Hewitt, Blankstein, & O’Brien, 1991; Watson, Varnell, & Morris, 1999–2000). This suggests that socially prescribed perfectionism should be positively related to vulnerable narcissism. No study to date has investigated the relationships between multidimensional perfectionism and vulnerable narcissism. A study by Watson et al. (1999–2000), however, investigated perfectionism and pathological narcissism, which combines grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (Pincus & Roche, 2011), using the O’Brien Multiphasic Narcissism Inventory (OMNI; O’Brien, 1987). Two of the OMNI subscales (narcissistic personality, narcissistic abused personality) showed negative correlations with explicit self-esteem proposing that they tapped vulnerable narcissism. Both subscales showed significantly larger correlations with socially prescribed perfectionism than other-oriented perfectionism, again suggesting that socially prescribed perfectionism is the form of perfectionism predominantly related to vulnerable narcissism.

1.4. The present study

Watson et al.’s (1990–2000) study had a number of limitations. First, the OMNI is not a widely used and validated measure of pathological narcissism. Moreover, it was not designed to differentiate grandiose and vulnerable narcissism (O’Brien, 1987). Second, when testing the perfectionism–narcissism relationships, the study controlled for individual differences in explicit self-esteem but not for the overlap between the three forms of perfectionism (which have shown significant positive intercorrelations; Hewitt & Flett, 2004). Hence, it remained unclear which significant relationships between perfectionism and narcissism were unique and which were due to the overlap between the three forms of perfectionism.

Against this background, the aim of the present study was to examine the unique relationships of self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed perfectionism with grandiose and vulnerable narcissism using widely used and validated measures of narcissism. We also controlled for gender differences, as men have shown higher levels of grandiose narcissism compared to women (Grijalva et al., *in press*). In line with previous research, we expected other-oriented perfectionism to show the strongest associations with grandiose narcissism. In contrast, we expected socially prescribed perfectionism to show the strongest associations with vulnerable narcissism.

2. Method

2.1. Participants

A sample of 375 students (68 men, 307 women) studying at the University of Kent was recruited via the School of Psychology’s

Research Participation Scheme (RPS). Mean age of students was 19.6 years ($SD = 3.3$). Students volunteered to participate for RPS credits or a £50 raffle (~US \$78). Participants completed all measures online using the School's Qualtrics® platform, which required participants to respond to all questions to prevent missing values. The study was approved by the relevant ethics committee following the [British Psychological Society's \(2009\)](#) code of ethics and conduct.

2.2. Measures

2.2.1. Multidimensional perfectionism

The 45-item Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS; [Hewitt & Flett, 2004](#)) was used to measure self-oriented perfectionism (e.g., “I demand nothing less than perfection of myself”), other-oriented perfectionism (e.g., “If I ask someone to do something, I expect it to be done flawlessly”), and socially prescribed perfectionism (e.g., “People expect nothing less than perfection from me”). The MPS has demonstrated reliability and validity in numerous studies ([Hewitt & Flett, 2004](#)). Items were presented with the MPS's standard instruction (“Listed below are a number of statements concerning personal characteristics and traits...”), and participants responded on a scale from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

2.2.2. Grandiose and vulnerable narcissism

To capture various facets of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, we used three scales: the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (NPI; [Raskin & Terry, 1988](#)), the Hypersensitive Narcissism Scale (HSNS; [Hendin & Cheek, 1997](#)), and the Pathological Narcissism Inventory (PNI; [Pincus et al., 2009](#)).

The NPI is a measure of grandiose narcissism comprised of 40 forced-choice items presenting two alternatives (e.g., [A] “I try not to be a show off” versus [B] “I am apt to show off if I get the chance”). Participants are asked to choose the alternative closest to their own feelings and beliefs, and scores are computed by adding item choices indicating narcissism (here [B]). Whereas the NPI is the most widely used measure of narcissism, and has shown reliability and validity in many studies (cf. [Twenge et al., 2008](#)), the factor structure of the NPI is debated. Factor analyses of the NPI have found from two to seven factors ([Ackerman et al., 2011](#); [Corry, Merritt, Mrug, & Pamp, 2008](#)). However, factor solutions that suggest more than two subscales regularly result in subscale scores with unsatisfactory reliability (Cronbach's alphas $< .70$; see also [Pincus et al., 2009](#)). Hence we followed [Corry et al.'s \(2008\)](#) two-factor solution differentiating exhibitionism/entitlement (“I am apt to show off if I get the chance”) and leadership/authority (“I see myself as a good leader”), which has demonstrated satisfactory reliability and validity (e.g., [Corry et al., 2008](#)).

The HSNS is a one-dimensional measure of vulnerable narcissism comprised of 10 items capturing narcissistic hypersensitivity (e.g., “My feelings are easily hurt by ridicule or by the slighting remarks of others”). The HSNS has demonstrated reliability and validity in numerous studies (e.g., [Miller et al., 2011](#); [Pincus et al., 2009](#)). Participants indicated to what extent the items were characteristic of their feelings and behavior using a response scale from 1 (*very uncharacteristic or untrue*) to 5 (*very characteristic or true*).

The PNI is a multidimensional measure of pathological narcissism comprised of 52 items forming seven subscales: (a) *contingent self-esteem* capturing fluctuating self-esteem and fragile self-worth that is dependent on others' recognition and admiration (“It's hard to feel good about myself unless I know other people admire me”), (b) *exploitativeness* capturing a manipulative interpersonal orientation (“I find it easy to manipulate people”), (c) *self-sacrificing self-enhancement* capturing the social display of altruistic behavior to

support an inflated self-image (“I help others in order to prove I'm a good person”), (d) *hiding the self* capturing the avoidance of showing others faults and needs or asking others for help (“I often hide my needs for fear that others will see me as needy and dependent”), (e) *grandiose fantasy* capturing compensatory fantasies of being successful and gaining recognition and admiration (“I often fantasize about being admired and respected”), (f) *devaluing others* capturing disinterest in and hostility towards others who do not provide needed recognition and admiration (“Sometimes I avoid people because I'm concerned they won't acknowledge what I do for them”), and (g) *entitlement rage* capturing experiences of anger when expectations one feels entitled to are not met (“I typically get very angry when I'm unable to get what I want from others”). Exploitativeness, self-sacrificing self-enhancement, and grandiose fantasy capture narcissistic grandiosity whereas contingent self-esteem, hiding the self, devaluing others, and entitlement rage capture narcissistic vulnerability ([Wright, Lukowitsky, Pincus, & Conroy, 2010](#)). The PNI has shown reliability and validity in numerous studies (e.g., [Miller et al., 2011](#); [Wright et al., 2010](#)). Participants indicated how well the items described them using a response scale from 0 (*not at all like me*) to 5 (*very much like me*).

2.3. Data screening

We investigated whether any participants gave uniform responses and excluded nine participants from the analyses who showed zero variance in their responses to the MPS, HSNS, or PNI items. (All participants showed variance in their responses to the NPI items.) Next, we computed the scores for all 13 scales. Because multivariate outliers can severely distort the results of correlation and regression analyses, we excluded another two participants who showed a Mahalanobis distance larger than the critical value of $\chi^2(13) = 34.53$, $p < .001$ indicating they were multivariate outliers. With this, the final sample comprised 364 participants (67 men, 297 women). All scores displayed satisfactory reliability (Cronbach's alphas $> .70$).¹ Finally, we probed the scores for possible gender differences by computing a MANOVA with gender as between-participants factor. Gender was significant with $F(13, 350) = 3.45$, $p < .001$ and was therefore included in all further analyses.

3. Results

3.1. Multidimensional perfectionism

We examined the bivariate correlations among the three forms of perfectionism and gender. In line with previous findings ([Hewitt & Flett, 2004](#)), the three forms showed significant positive intercorrelations: Self-oriented perfectionism showed a correlation of $r = .38$ with other-oriented perfectionism and $r = .40$ with socially prescribed perfectionism whereas the latter two showed a correlation of $r = .25$, all $ps < .001$. All three forms showed nonsignificant correlations with gender (coded 1 = men, 0 = women), $-.10 \leq r_s \leq -.02$, all *ns*.

3.2. Multidimensional perfectionism and narcissism

We conducted an exploratory factor analysis with SPSS 21 to examine if the 10 narcissism facets formed the expected two factors of grandiose versus vulnerable narcissism. As recommended ([Fabrigar, Wegener, MacCallum, & Strahan, 1999](#)), we used maximum likelihood extraction and oblique rotation. Because Kaiser's

¹ Means, standard deviations, and Cronbach's alphas of all scores are available from the first author.

Table 1
Exploratory factor analysis of narcissism facets: two-factor solution.

| Narcissism facets | Factor 1 | Factor 2 |
|-----------------------------------|------------|------------|
| <i>Grandiose narcissism</i> | | |
| Exhibitionism/entitlement | .99 | -.02 |
| Leadership/authority | .92 | -.10 |
| Exploitativeness | .43 | .11 |
| <i>Vulnerable narcissism</i> | | |
| Contingent self-esteem | -.09 | .84 |
| Devaluing others | .11 | .73 |
| Entitlement rage | .27 | .70 |
| Hypersensitivity | .06 | .70 |
| Self-sacrificing self-enhancement | -.09 | .67 |
| Hiding the self | -.16 | .64 |
| Grandiose fantasy | .22 | .54 |

Note. $N = 364$. Pattern matrix. Factor extraction method = maximum likelihood; rotation method = oblimin. Loadings $> .30$ are boldfaced. $r(\text{Factor 1, Factor 2}) = .26$, $p < .001$.

eigenvalue > 1 rule is notorious for overextracting, we examined the eigenvalues with parallel analysis and Velicer's minimum average partial test using *psych* (Revelle, 2015). Both tests suggested retaining two factors that had eigenvalues of 4.29 and 2.07 and together explained 63.6% of variance. Oblimin rotation resulted in a pattern matrix that showed exhibitionism/entitlement, leadership/authority, and exploitativeness with substantial loadings on Factor 1 and the remaining facets with substantial loadings on Factor 2 (see Table 1). We labelled Factor 1 grandiose narcissism because the three facets defining Factor 1 represented key aspects of narcissistic grandiosity; we labelled Factor 2 vulnerable narcissism because five of the seven facets defining Factor 2 represented narcissistic vulnerability (contingent self-esteem, devaluing others, entitlement rage, hypersensitivity, hiding the self) and only two represented grandiose narcissism (self-sacrificing enhancement, grandiose fantasy; cf. Wright et al., 2010).

3.2.1. Grandiose narcissism

We examined bivariate correlations between perfectionism and the facets of grandiose narcissism (exhibitionism/entitlement, leadership/authority, exploitativeness). As expected, only other-oriented perfectionism showed positive correlations with the three facets (see Table 2). Gender also showed positive correlations with the facets. As in previous research (Grijalva et al., in press), men showed higher levels of grandiose narcissism than women.

Table 2
Self-oriented (SOP), other-oriented (OOP), and socially prescribed perfectionism (SPP): bivariate and semipartial correlations with grandiose and vulnerable narcissism controlling for gender.

| Narcissism facets | Bivariate correlations | | | | Semipartial correlations | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| | SOP | OOP | SPP | Gender | SOP | OOP | SPP | Gender |
| <i>Grandiose narcissism</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Exhibitionism/entitlement | .04 | .20*** | .04 | .18*** | -.02 | .20*** | .00 | .18*** |
| Leadership/authority | .01 | .13* | -.02 | .17** | -.01 | .14** | -.04 | .17*** |
| Exploitativeness | .02 | .13* | .02 | .20*** | -.01 | .13* | .00 | .20*** |
| <i>Vulnerable narcissism</i> | | | | | | | | |
| Contingent self-esteem | .17** | .04 | .41*** | -.03 | .03 | -.07 | .38*** | -.01 |
| Devaluing others | .22*** | .28*** | .43*** | .04 | .00 | .17*** | .36*** | .07 |
| Entitlement rage | .16** | .33*** | .32*** | .06 | -.04 | .26*** | .25*** | .08 |
| Hypersensitivity | .18*** | .12* | .37*** | .07 | .03 | .02 | .33*** | .09 |
| Self-sacrificing self-enhancement | .19*** | .09 | .25*** | .02 | .10* | -.01 | .19*** | .04 |
| Hiding the self | .31*** | .16** | .47*** | .01 | .13*** | .00 | .37*** | .05 |
| Grandiose fantasy | .32*** | .24*** | .36*** | .19*** | .17*** | .10* | .24*** | .22*** |

Note. $N = 364$. Semipartial correlations from multiple regressions simultaneously entering SOP, OOP, SPP, and gender (coded 1 = male, 0 = female).

* $p < .05$.

** $p < .01$.

*** $p < .001$.

To examine unique relationships between the three forms of perfectionism and grandiose narcissism, we computed multiple regressions entering self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism, socially prescribed perfectionism, and gender simultaneously to control for the overlap between the three forms of perfectionism and gender effects. The resulting pattern of semipartial correlations, however, remained consistent in that only other-oriented perfectionism and gender showed positive semipartial correlations with the facets of grandiose narcissism (Table 2).

3.2.2. Vulnerable narcissism

We examined bivariate correlations between perfectionism and the facets of vulnerable narcissism (see Table 2). As expected, socially prescribed perfectionism showed positive correlations with all seven facets (contingent self-esteem, devaluing others, entitlement rage, hypersensitivity, self-sacrificing self-enhancement, hiding the self, grandiose fantasy). However, self-oriented perfectionism also showed positive correlations with all seven facets, and other-oriented perfectionism showed positive correlations with five of the seven facets.

Consequently, we examined unique relationships between the three forms of perfectionism and vulnerable narcissism using the same multiple regression approach as before. This time, however, the resulting pattern of semipartial correlations differed from the bivariate correlations (see Table 2). Only socially prescribed perfectionism continued to show positive semipartial correlations with all seven facets after controlling for the overlap with the other forms of perfectionism. In contrast, self-oriented perfectionism showed positive semipartial correlations with only three facets (self-sacrificing self-enhancement, hiding the self, grandiose fantasy) as did other-oriented perfectionism (devaluing others, entitlement rage, grandiose fantasy). Consistent with the bivariate correlations, gender only showed a positive semipartial correlation with grandiose fantasy, indicating that men showed higher levels of grandiose fantasy than women.

4. Discussion

4.1. The present findings

Despite longstanding (e.g., Hewitt & Flett, 1991) and recently reinvigorated (e.g., Sherry et al., 2014) interest in narcissistic forms of perfectionism, our understanding of the perfectionism–narcissism relationship is lopsided: We have extensive research

on perfectionism and grandiose narcissism, but no research on perfectionism and vulnerable narcissism. Our study begins to fill this important gap in knowledge. Specifically, the aim of our study was to test the relationships of self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed perfectionism with facets of grandiose and vulnerable narcissism using correlation and regression analyses while controlling for gender. As expected, other-oriented perfectionism was the only form of perfectionism showing unique positive relationships with key facets of narcissistic grandiosity (exhibitionism/entitlement, leadership/authority, exploitativeness). This result corroborates past findings in which, of the three forms of perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism was the only form showing unique positive relationships with grandiose narcissism (Sherry et al., 2014; Stoeber, 2014a, 2014b). As expected, socially prescribed perfectionism showed unique positive relationships with all facets of narcissistic vulnerability (contingent self-esteem, devaluing others, entitlement rage, hypersensitivity, hiding the self) suggesting that, of the three forms of perfectionism, socially prescribed perfectionism is the form most strongly associated with vulnerable narcissism.

Furthermore, there were noteworthy differences between self- and other-oriented perfectionism in the pattern of unique relationships with facets of pathological narcissism (Pincus et al., 2009). Self-oriented perfectionism showed positive relationships with two facets in which the self plays a prominent role (self-sacrificing self-enhancement, hiding the self). These facets suggest that self-depreciation, rather than self-aggrandizement is characteristic of self-oriented perfectionism. This finding accords with a wider literature suggesting that self-oriented perfectionism may be associated with silencing, concealing, or sacrificing the self (Hewitt et al., 2003). Conversely, other-oriented perfectionism showed unique positive relationships with three facets of pathological narcissism in which others play a prominent role. However, all three facets had a strong antisocial component (exploitativeness, devaluing others, and entitlement rage) corroborating previous findings that other-oriented perfectionism, but not self-oriented perfectionism, has an antisocial component (Stoeber, 2014a, 2014b). Indeed, other-oriented perfectionists tend to be domineering, arrogant, mistrustful, and distant in social relationships while remaining blissfully unaware of (or unconcerned with) the emotional turbulence they create for others (Hill, Zrull, & Turlington, 1997). This combination makes other-oriented perfectionism particularly important for interpersonal functioning.

Other findings, however, were not as expected. In our exploratory factor analysis, two facets of pathological narcissism that Wright et al. (2010) found to capture narcissistic grandiosity—self-sacrificing self-enhancement and grandiose fantasy—loaded on the same factor as the facets capturing narcissistic vulnerability (cf. Miller et al., 2011) suggesting a kind of vulnerable grandiosity. Second, all three forms of perfectionism—self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed perfectionism—showed unique positive relationships with grandiose fantasy, suggesting all three are associated with compensatory fantasies of being successful and gaining recognition and admiration. Lee, Roberts-Collins, Coughtrey, Phillips, and Shafran (2011) found that perfectionists are prone to intrusive mental images (e.g., intrusive images of problems at work or at school), and our study extends this work by suggesting grandiose mental images are important to perfectionists. For some, perfection may be easier to imagine than to obtain.

Finally, other-oriented perfectionism showed unique positive relationships with two facets of pathological narcissism (entitlement rage, devaluing others) that represent narcissistic vulnerability rather than narcissistic grandiosity. Although both facets contain aspects linked to characteristics of other-oriented perfectionism, namely an enhanced sense of self-entitlement and disregard for others (Stoeber, 2014a), it is noteworthy that the

unique relationships involving other-oriented perfectionism were not restricted to narcissistic grandiosity.

4.2. Limitations and future studies

Our study was the first to test the relationships of multidimensional perfectionism with grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, and some specific relationships self- and other-oriented perfectionism showed with facets of vulnerable narcissism were not predicted. Moreover, 82% of our sample were women. Future studies should replicate our findings and use samples with a larger percentage of men before firm conclusions are drawn. This also applies to the two-factor structure we found for the 10 facets of narcissism whose construct validity remains questionable until replicated. Second, our study examined multidimensional perfectionism following Hewitt and Flett's (1991) model. Although this is one of the most widely-used models of perfectionism, there are other prominent models (Frost et al., 1990; Hill et al., 2004; Slaney, Rice, Mobley, Trippi, & Ashby, 2001). Future studies may profit from extending the present research to these other models, although Hill et al.'s (2004) model is the only other model considering other-oriented perfectionism.

5. Conclusion

Our study represents the first study of multidimensional perfectionism and narcissism differentiating grandiose and vulnerable narcissism, and makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the perfectionism–narcissism relationships. In particular, our results indicate that self-oriented, other-oriented, and socially prescribed perfectionism differ with respect to grandiose and vulnerable narcissism. Whereas all three forms of perfectionism showed unique positive relationships with individual aspects of narcissistic grandiosity and vulnerability, other-oriented perfectionism was predominantly related to grandiose narcissism and socially prescribed perfectionism was predominantly related to vulnerable narcissism.

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