







“Excellence or perfection: Examining work performance mediated through employee engagement in India”

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ARTICLE INFO	Kanika Kohli, Archana Tyagi, Poonam Khurana and Nandan Prabhu (2024). Excellence or perfection: Examining work performance mediated through employee engagement in India. <i>Problems and Perspectives in Management</i> , 22(3), 106-118. doi: 10.21511/ppm.22(3).2024.09
DOI	http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.22(3).2024.09
RELEASED ON	Monday, 15 July 2024
RECEIVED ON	Monday, 06 May 2024
ACCEPTED ON	Wednesday, 10 July 2024
LICENSE	 This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License
JOURNAL	"Problems and Perspectives in Management"
ISSN PRINT	1727-7051
ISSN ONLINE	1810-5467
PUBLISHER	LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”
FOUNDER	LLC “Consulting Publishing Company “Business Perspectives”



NUMBER OF REFERENCES

35



NUMBER OF FIGURES

1



NUMBER OF TABLES

11

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BUSINESS PERSPECTIVES



LLC "CPC "Business Perspectives"
Hryhorii Skovoroda lane, 10,
Sumy, 40022, Ukraine
www.businessperspectives.org

Received on: 6th of May, 2024

Accepted on: 10th of July, 2024

Published on: 15th of July, 2024

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2024

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Conflict of interest statement:

Author(s) reported no conflict of interest

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EXCELLENCE OR PERFECTION: EXAMINING WORK PERFORMANCE MEDIATED THROUGH EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN INDIA

Abstract

The model of excellencism and perfectionism (MEP) theorizes that the attitude toward goals as characterized in excellencism is desirable over perfectionism. Using the self-determination theory (SDT), this study aims to investigate the varying effects of perfectionism and excellencism on work engagement and performance. The study used a time-lagged multi-phase, multi-source, and cross-sectional online survey to collect responses from 360 corporate employees of Indian companies in the services industry. The results indicate that while both perfectionism and excellencism entail pursuing high standards, they relate differently with performance and work engagement. Interestingly, excellencism and work engagement were significantly associated with performance ($p < .001$); however, perfectionism was insignificant ($p = .989$). Perfectionism strengthens work engagement ($\beta = 0.112$; $p = .013$), while excellencism has an insignificant effect ($\beta = 0.035$; $p = .537$). Work engagement fully mediates the perfectionism-performance relationship. This demonstrates that striving for excellence alone is sufficient to achieve positive performance, challenging the traditional belief that one must focus on perfection. Furthermore, perfectionism is positively associated with performance only when employees are engaged and have positive motivation toward work.

Keywords well-being, perfectionism, excellencism, MEP

JEL Classification D91, D23

INTRODUCTION

Employees strive for perfect performance at the workplace. The perform-or-perish culture often induces the need to be flawless. This innate desire to seek perfection at all costs is termed perfectionism. While striving for flawlessness can be seen as positive, perfectionists tend to adopt an all-or-nothing attitude, which can become detrimental. Perfectionists tend to demonstrate two behaviors: 1) they set high standards for their work, and 2) they experience evaluative concerns and fear of failure to meet those standards (Ocampo et al., 2020). The high standards positively drive performance and engagement at work, whereas the fear of failure impedes work engagement and performance. In addition to the employee's own personal standards, the workplace also requires them to consistently fulfill and exceed organizational targets. Most organizations do not have mechanisms to support dealing with failures and setbacks at work. This makes the entire pursuit a relentless process, leading to extreme patterns. Employee behavior becomes failure-avoiding, fraught with evaluative concerns (Gaudreau, 2021). This failure-avoiding tendency leads to anxiety and stress with reduced vigor and engagement at work, thus impacting overall employee well-being and performance. Even though most organizations are working to improve employee engagement and well-being, due to perfectionistic tendencies, dysfunctional behaviors to-

ward performance also continue to rise (Ocampo et al., 2020). Organizations and employees continue to be relentless with extreme attitudes toward their goals. Furthermore, some individuals tend to be more regulated and balanced about work despite the pressure. They are mindful of their patterns while also holding high standards toward performance at work.

The tendency to deliver high standards of performance in a regulated way is called excellencism (Gaudreau, 2021). Even though perfection and excellence are often used in similar contexts, these differ in their manifestation. While perfectionism is an extreme behavior and relentless pursuit toward performance, excellencism is more flexible while still aiming for high standards (Gaudreau et al., 2023). The pursuit of excellence allows an employee to be goal-oriented without fearing failure or being extremely rigid about outcomes. Orientation toward excellence is likely to allow an employee to achieve goals while not being stressed about it. There is no internal compulsion to be perfect and flawless. Thus, the focus is on better performance with no fear.

This tendency may lead to differing behaviors in employees. This will likely affect their engagement and performance at work. However, these differences remain unexamined through empirical investigation. In the absence of this understanding, organizations continue to be relentless, thereby instilling stress, fear, and anxiety. By investigating and understanding the differing effects of perfectionism and excellencism on performance and engagement, one can draw insights for individuals and organizations. Examining the relationship between perfectionism, excellencism, work engagement, and performance will apprise the learning and development activities for employees and will provide insights to support strategic planning, drive cultural changes, and improve policies in organizations.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Perfectionism is “a personality disposition characterized by striving for flawlessness and setting exceedingly high standards of performance accompanied by overly critical evaluations of one’s behavior” (Stoeber, 2018, p. 3; Frost et al., 1990). Individual studies on perfectionism-performance relationships have shown mixed findings (Madigan, 2019), and meta-analysis shows virtually no relationship (Harari et al., 2018). Perfectionism has two dimensions: personal standards perfectionism, which involves setting high standards for one’s work and failure-avoiding perfectionism, which refers to the evaluative concerns and fear of failure to meet those standards (Frost et al., 1990). While personal standards perfectionism is generally considered adaptive, failure-avoiding perfectionism is maladaptive (Madigan et al., 2016). Prior research has found that personal standards perfectionism can lead to high performance levels, whereas failure-avoiding can lead to anxiety, reduced engagement, and decreased performance (Ocampo et al., 2020). This paradox may explain the mixed findings on the relationship between perfectionism and performance (Harari et

al., 2018; Gaudreau & Thompson, 2010). Given these conflicting findings, scholars have called for revisiting the conceptualization of perfectionism (Stoeber, 2016; Stoeber et al., 2013; Gaudreau, 2019, 2021). Scholars have argued that it is necessary to separate the core element of perfectionism from its correlates or signature expressions (Gaudreau, 2019). Gaudreau (2019, 2021) studied the deficiencies in conceptualizing perfectionism and theorized the model of excellencism and perfectionism (MEP).

The model of excellencism and perfectionism (MEP) separates the pursuit of excellence from perfectionism and posits excellencism and perfectionism as distinct constructs (Gaudreau, 2019). While perfectionism focuses on exceedingly high performance standards, excellencism is a tendency to have reasonable and attainable performance standards (Gaudreau, 2021). Pursuing excellence enables individuals to reach their goals with high quality and speed and experience a sense of accomplishment, while perfectionism may produce an extraordinary outcome with vague feelings of achievement due to their extreme expectations of themselves (Gaudreau et al., 2023). Given this theoretical

distinction between perfectionism and excellencism, MEP has referred to excellencism as the pursuit of excellence without any compulsion to be perfect or flawless.

MEP theorizes that some goals and tasks, such as daily chores, may not require high standards of performance as exhibited in perfectionism or excellencism (Gaudreau, 2019, 2021). However, in other cases, either one is enough. Therefore, the relationships between perfectionism and excellencism must be modeled and studied together to understand the relative impact. MEP posits perfectionism may be healthy and desirable up to a certain level, beyond which the compulsive behaviors trigger. In that case, an additional effort spent on the task may not result in a proportionate increase in outcome (Gaudreau, 2019, 2021). Thus, in most cases excellencism may be a desired tendency while perfectionism may be unwanted. This paper examines the MEP for the two positive/desired outcomes at work: work performance and work engagement. The study investigates if the regulated behavior of excellencism is indeed a desired tendency for better performance.

Work performance is defined as “the level of attainment of work for employees” (Yu et al., 2020). Pursuing excellence and perfectionism exhibit distinct tendencies for approaching tasks and objectives, each of which can have unique consequences on performance (Gaudreau et al., 2023). Pursuing excellence involves setting practical and attainable goals that foster continuous progress over time, while perfectionism sets unrealistically high standards, leading to persistent feelings of inadequacy and dissatisfaction (Gaudreau et al., 2022). Employees prioritizing excellence are more likely to adapt to feedback and learn from their mistakes, while perfectionists may struggle to adapt due to their fear of making mistakes (Goulet-Pelletier & Cousineau, 2022). Pursuing excellence cultivates a healthier mental health and well-being attitude, promoting a constructive outlook toward work and personal development (Goulet-Pelletier et al., 2022). At the same time, perfectionists often grapple with heightened levels of stress and anxiety stemming from their fear of failure or not meeting unrealistic standards, which can culminate in burnout, mental exhaustion, and a detrimental impact on overall well-being (Rice et al., 2013).

Those who pursue perfection focus excessively on the result or consequence, leading to an unhealthy fixation on avoiding mistakes and impeding creativity, exploration, and genuine understanding (Goulet-Pelletier & Cousineau, 2022). In contrast, by pursuing excellence, employees cultivate a positive and growth-oriented mindset focused on learning, improvement, and holistic development (Goulet-Pelletier et al., 2022). This approach nurtures resilience, adaptability, and a comprehensive perspective on life and learning, leading to higher performance and overall well-being. Thus, pursuing excellence and the drive for perfection are two distinct approaches that have different consequences on goal achievement. These approaches are closely aligned with the principles of self-determination theory (SDT) developed by Deci and Ryan (1980). Striving for excellence involves setting practical and attainable goals, which aligns with SDT’s emphasis on self-motivation. According to SDT, individuals with autonomous motivation will likely experience higher well-being and greater drive to perform. This is because their motivation is driven by internal factors that align with their values and interests. SDT suggests that individuals motivated by perfectionism may experience a reduced sense of competence and struggle to adapt to challenges due to their unrealistic expectations of themselves. Pursuing excellence is desired to enhance performance, while perfectionism may not be crucial for positive outcomes. This underscores the importance of intrinsic motivation and engagement in workplace contexts.

Work engagement is defined as “a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption” (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2010, p. 3). Perfectionism encompasses positive and negative aspects, and its relationship with work engagement is complex (Zhu, 2023). While it can sometimes impede work engagement, it can also foster positive work engagement by driving ambition (Stoeber & Damian, 2016). Perfectionists tend to consistently focus on details, which can improve the quality of their work and result in a sense of achievement and satisfaction (Goulet-Pelletier et al., 2022). Their internal motivation to exceed expectations and achieve goals drives them to pursue perfection and accomplishment constantly, leading to posi-

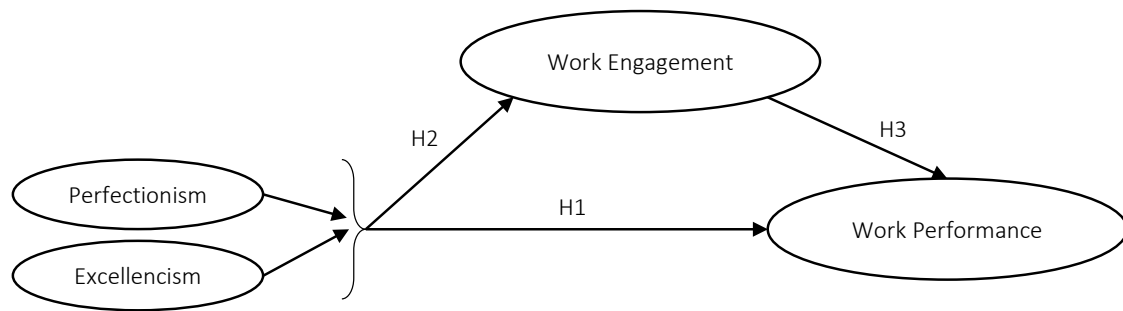


Figure 1. Proposed research model

tive work engagement (Zhang et al., 2007). While no studies have examined the excellencism-work engagement relationship, perfectionism can be adaptive or maladaptive. Previous studies suggest that the perfectionism-work engagement relationship is dependent on the context, individual characteristics, and balance between striving for excellence and avoiding the pitfalls of perfectionism (Spagnoli et al., 2022). The SDT elucidates the intricate interplay between perfectionism, excellencism, and work engagement. This theory posits that individuals are motivated by three fundamental psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are crucial in nurturing internal motivation and significantly impacting individuals' involvement and performance in various activities. Perfectionism, when viewed constructively, aligns with these needs within the SDT framework. Individuals who strive for perfection are driven by an internal motivation to attain their personal and professional goals, which is essential for maintaining long-term engagement and productivity in their work.

Perfectionism, studied within the SDT framework, can also relate to autonomy. Perfectionists are self-directed and internally motivated, which enhances their sense of control and ownership over their work endeavors. This autonomy fosters a deep engagement and investment in their work, perceiving it as personally meaningful and aligned with their values and aspirations. On the other hand, individuals pursuing excellence, despite their commitment to high standards and quality, may stay regulated in their engagement. Without the relentless internal drive inherent in perfectionism, individuals may remain balanced in their engagement and motivation toward fulfilling their pursuits. Consequently, within the context of SDT, this

study suggests that perfectionism is more likely to foster work engagement. While excellencism may contribute to strengthened performance, one may maintain a balanced stance on internal motivation and personal investment required for sustained engagement. Work engagement is known to positively affect work performance (Chalofsky & Krishna, 2009; Owens et al., 2016; Rich et al., 2010). Therefore, the vigor, dedication and absorption from heightened engagement will make perfectionism and work performance relationship significant. This paper is the first to examine the excellencism-work engagement-performance relationship; it posits that perfectionism will become significantly associated with performance only when the employees are engaged. In doing so, this research aims to examine the MEP for its association with work performance and work engagement. Figure 1 shows the research model constructed. The following hypotheses are framed and derived from the research model:

- H1: Excellencism is positively associated with work performance.*
- H2: Perfectionism is positively associated with work engagement.*
- H3: Work engagement fully mediates the positive relationship between perfectionism and work performance.*

2. METHODS

2.1. Research design

The research design and protocol followed the highest ethical and procedural standards approved by the Institutional Ethical Committee

at the Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal, India. This study deployed a descriptive research design and collected data using an online survey form (Appendix A).

Through the HR team of the respondent organizations, the survey link was mailed to 983 individuals in each phase. Phase 1 and Phase 2 received 564 (57.38%) and 413 (42.01%) responses, respectively. A complete response required participation in both phases. Therefore, the responses with participation in only one phase were excluded. Consequently, after cleaning, 360 (36.62%) final responses qualified for inclusion in this study.

2.2. Sample design

Cohen (1992) recommends a sample size of 310 with a power of .80 (statistical significance) at a 90% confidence level to achieve a small effect size. Therefore, this study aimed at achieving a sample size of 350. Perfectionism and excellencism are traits that are innate and can be examined by any working professional. However, employees of service sector organizations are required to meet high performance standards with high pressure to perform. Therefore, it would be insightful to examine the conceptual model of employees of such organizations. Accordingly, 15 private organization units from the services sector in India were contacted. These organizations provide consulting services in education, wellness, information technology, energy resources, market research, and creative services such as promotion, design, and planning. Delivering services as per the desired standards of performance was a common objective for these organizations. Employees who work in this industry and achieve desired performance must exhibit engagement and commitment to their work. Therefore, it was appropriate to select respondents from this industry. The sample frame solicited participation from all levels of the organization. The average age of respondents was 35.16

years, with 40% female population. 52% of respondents were postgraduate degree holders with more than 5 years of work experience.

2.3. Measurement of the variables

Perfectionism, excellencism, work engagement, and work performance were measured using appropriate scales from the relevant literature. Statements measure perfectionism, excellencism, work engagement, and work performance on a seven-point Likert scale. Table 1 shows the measurement scales deployed for this analysis.

Perfectionism and excellencism were measured using the scale of perfectionism and excellencism (SCOPE) designed to operationalize MEP. The scale asked questions such as: "As a person, my general goal in life is to reach perfection" to measure perfectionism and questions such as "As a person, my general goal in life is to reach excellence" for excellencism. The respondents answered the questions on a seven-point scale with choices ranging from 1 (Not at all) to 7 (Totally). Work engagement is measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) with its three dimensions: vigor (example: "At my work, I feel bursting with energy"), dedication (questions such as "I am enthusiastic about my job"), and absorption (for instance, "I am immersed in my work"). However, work engagement as a single dimension (instead of three) showed a good fit of measure for this study. Therefore, this study has used one composite score for work engagement. The work engagement questions are rated on a scale of 0 (Never) to 6 (Every day). The work performance scale was used with its two dimensions of quality and quantity. The work performance scale includes two questions each on the two dimensions that were to be answered by employees (Phase 2) and two questions that were answered by the supervisor/HR manager (Phase 3) in this study. Pettit Jr. et al. (1997) suggest using performance as a composite

Table 1. Measurement scale

Construct	Source	Statements		
		Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Perfectionism	Gaudreau and Schellenberg (2018)	11	–	–
Excellencism	Gaudreau and Schellenberg (2018)	11	–	–
Work Engagement (UWES)	Schaufeli et al. (2002)	–	9	–
Performance	Pettit Jr. et al. (1997)	–	4	2

score of quality and quantity. This study adopted this recommendation and used performance as an additive of quality and quantity. The seven-point Likert for work performance is rated on a scale of 1 (Poor) to 7 (Excellent). The Cronbach's alpha for all measures shows great reliability for all scales in this study (See Table 2)

3. RESULTS

The cleaned data of 360 respondents were assessed to ensure satisfactory normality of distribution, multicollinearity, multivariate normality, and linearity. Analysis for construct reliability and validity was run. The outer loadings and composite reliability of the constructs' indicators were also examined. Following the threshold limits for internal consistency recommended by Hair et al. (2017), all indicators with outer loadings <0.70 were removed until the rho_A values were above 0.70. As shown in Table 2, convergent validity, represented by the average variance extracted (AVE) values, was above the threshold of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017). The composite reliability was also well within the limits.

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for different models was run in Jamovi 2.3.24 software. In comparison to all other combinations, the proposed

model, consisting of four constructs, namely perfectionism, excellencism, work engagement, and work performance, demonstrated a good fit for the data: $\chi^2(164) = 450, p < .001$; CFI = 0.953; TLI = 0.945; SRMR = 0.0337; and RMSEA = 0.0696. Furthermore, as represented in Tables 3 and 4, HTMT values and the Fornell-Lacker criterion are well within the acceptable limits, thus supporting discriminant validity.

Table 5 exhibits the mean, standard deviation, and correlation matrix, which shows a significant correlation between all constructs.

The regression analysis and PROCESS model 4 in SPSS were deployed to test the hypotheses. To control for their confounding impact on the dependent variable, age and industry type were used as the control variables. Excellencism has a statistically significant positive relationship with work performance ($\beta = 0.271; p < .001$), while perfectionism has an insignificant relation with performance ($\beta = 0.001; p = .989$). Table 6 shows that while excellencism is positively associated with employee work performance, perfectionism is insignificant. Thus, H1 is supported.

Table 7 presents the results for H2, which shows that while the excellencism-work engagement re-

Table 2. Construct reliability and validity

Variable name	Cronbach's α	Composite reliability		AVE
		rho_a	rho_c	
Excellencism	0.87	0.89	0.91	0.73
Perfectionism	0.95	0.95	0.96	0.83
Work Engagement	0.91	0.92	0.93	0.66
Work Performance	0.84	0.93	0.88	0.59

Table 3. Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio matrix

Variable	Excellencism	Work Performance	Perfectionism	Work Engagement
Excellencism				
Work Performance	0.36			
Perfectionism	0.82	0.27		
Work Engagement	0.21	0.38	0.25	

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker criterion

Variable	Excellencism	Work Performance	Perfectionism	Work Engagement
Excellencism	0.85			
Work Performance	0.34	0.77		
Perfectionism	0.75	0.27	0.91	
Work Engagement	0.19	0.35	0.23	0.81

Table 5. Descriptives and correlation among variables

Variable	Mean	S.D.	1	2	3	4
1 Excellencism	5.52	1.12	–			
2 Perfectionism	5.22	1.41	0.75***	–		
3 Work Engagement	5.32	0.82	0.23***	0.19***	–	
4 Work Performance	5.46	0.91	0.24***	0.31***	0.34***	–

Note: *** $p < 0.001$.

Table 6. Work performance as the outcome variable

Variable	B	t	Sig.	Result
Control variables				
Age	.028	6.090	.000	
Industry	-.034	-2.166	.031	
Predictor variables				
Excellencism	.271	4.550	.000	H1 is supported
Perfectionism	.001	.014	.989	

Table 7. Work engagement as the outcome variable

Variable	B	t	Sig.	Result
Control variables				
Age	.010	2.339	.019	
Industry	-.038	-2.577	.010	
Predictor variables				
Excellencism	.035	.618	.537	H2 is supported
Perfectionism	.112	2.504	.013	

relationship is insignificant ($\beta = 0.035$; $p = 0.537$), perfectionism has a positive significant relationship with work engagement ($\beta = 0.112$; $p = 0.013$). Thus, $H2$ is supported.

Table 8 shows that work engagement significantly boosts work performance ($\beta = 0.27$; $p < .001$) and mediates the perfectionism-performance relationship, which becomes significantly positive with the mediation effect. Thus, $H3$ is supported. While excellence-orientation and work engagement in employees positively associate with work

performance, performance of perfection-oriented employees will rise as their work engagement increases.

4. DISCUSSION

This study provides evidence that focusing on excellence is sufficient for good work performance, whereas pursuing perfection is insignificant. Perfectionists will not be content with attaining excellence and will continue to set increasingly

Table 8. Mediation effect

Variable	B	t	Sig.	Result
Control variables/Covariates				
Age	.025	5.627	.000	
Industry	-.023	-1.535	.126	
Perfectionism	-0.029	-.650	.516	
Predictor variable				
Excellencism	.261	4.535	.000	
Mediator				
Work Engagement	.272	5.044	.000	
Indirect effect of the model	Effect	LLCI	ULCI	
Excellencism → Performance	.009	-.024	.045	
Perfectionism → Performance	.031	.007	.060	H3 is supported

challenging goals for themselves. There is an ever-expanding drive for higher achievement with no real joy in what gets accomplished. In contrast, those who pursue excellence set reasonable goals for themselves and celebrate their accomplishments (Goulet-Pelletier et al., 2022). The research on the relationship between perfectionism and performance has not yet operationalized this nuanced distinction between perfectionism and excellencism, nor has it investigated the distinct effects of the new conceptualization of perfectionism and excellencism as outlined in Gaudreau's (2019) seminal paper. Therefore, the present study adopted the conceptualizations of perfectionism and excellencism as presented in the MEP and examined the distinct effects of perfectionism and excellencism on work performance. The results of this study clarify that the pursuit of excellence must be preferred over the relentless pursuit of perfection that impedes performance.

This study demonstrates that perfectionism and excellencism, as defined in the MEP, have divergent effects on work engagement. Stoeber and Damian (2016) showed that perfectionism positively correlates with work engagement. However, there is no research on the potential distinct effects of perfectionism and excellencism on work engagement. If perfectionism and excellencism are two different constructs, they may exhibit varying impacts on work engagement. Considering this, current study has found that while perfectionism positively associates with work engagement, excellencism does not. Therefore, this paper indicates that striving for perfection is positively associated with work engagement, while striving for excellence is insignificant.

Furthermore, this analysis strengthens the argument that excellencism itself is enough for better performance, whereas perfectionism-performance relationship becomes significantly positive only through work engagement. The positive motivation of the perfectionistic tendency keeps an employee engaged at work, thereby positively affecting performance. Therefore, perfectionism shows a positive association with performance only through inner drive and motivation. This also supports the theoretical premise of MEP that while excellencism may be a preferred tendency, the relationship may vary based on context (Gaudreau et al., 2023). This also resolves the paradox in the perfectionism-performance relationship

by separating the high standards of performance from the added extremities in the pursuit. Therefore, when the tendency toward achieving high standards of performance is regulated as is in excellencism; the impact is positive.

This investigation based on MEP has identified differing effects of perfectionism and excellencism on both performance and work engagement. This provides key insights for individuals to self-regulate their behaviors and tendencies. Mindfulness practices with a goal of acceptance and self-compassion may help perfectionists regulate their minds, focus on the inner drive, and sustain the motivation to drive their performance. Furthermore, the results on the relationship with work engagement are crucial for organizations. The study shows that work engagement fully mediates the relationship between perfectionism and performance. Engagement is a subject of utmost importance at the organization and team level. This study posits that through the inner drive of engagement, extreme patterns such as perfectionism may also have a positive significant impact on performance. Therefore, human resource managers, leaders, and line managers must strive for better engagement at the workplace.

Organizations must encourage a culture that fosters high standards of performance without being overtly judgmental toward errors or failures. Such culture instills psychological safety in employees, thereby driving performance (Kim et al., 2020). Psychological safety enhances the inner drive of perfectionistic employees and provides support for them to perform better through enhanced engagement. Initiatives such as awareness training, coaching interventions, and mindfulness-based training programs are known to have a positive impact on engagement and must, therefore, be encouraged (Kohli & Prabhu, 2024). Furthermore, cognitive behavior therapy can help manage perfectionistic behaviors and shift the focus toward excellence-seeking (Gaudreau & Schellenberg, 2024). These are known to enhance self-regulation of the mind while positively influencing both work engagement and performance. Supportive team culture, well-being measures, constructive feedback mechanisms, and employee-friendly policies can go a long way in creating an excellence-oriented workplace that fosters performance.

CONCLUSION

This study has explored the intricate relationship between perfectionism, excellencism, work engagement, and performance of employees in consulting services businesses in India. The findings provide valuable insights into the theoretical understanding of several key areas. For instance, this study shows that although both perfectionism and excellencism involve high personal standards, they affect work performance differently. Excellencism is found to be a desired approach, strongly correlated with improved work performance, while perfectionism may not be essential. This challenges traditional views on perfectionism and emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between striving for excellence and striving for flawlessness.

Furthermore, findings show an interesting role of engagement driven by autonomy, competence, and inner motivation in the relentless pursuit of perfectionism when compared to the self-regulated tendency of excellencism. Thus, this study challenges and enhances the understanding of perfectionism and excellencism, shedding light on their distinct effects on work performance and work engagement. While work engagement fully mediates the perfectionism-performance relationship, it shows an insignificant relationship with excellencism.

The theoretical contributions of this study lay the foundation for future research to delve deeper into the nuanced mechanisms of perfectionism and excellencism. Future studies might want to investigate excellencism for its impact on employee and business metrics in different contexts and organizational settings. Future studies could explore the mechanisms of relationship using longitudinal, quasi-experimental, and experimental designs. Mediators such as job autonomy and leader support and moderators such as mindfulness can be studied to examine the interaction or incremental effects of excellencism on work engagement and performance.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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Validation: Kanika Kohli, Archana Tyagi, Poonam Khurana, Nandan Prabhu.

Visualization: Kanika Kohli, Archana Tyagi, Poonam Khurana.

Writing – original draft: Kanika Kohli.

Writing – review & editing: Kanika Kohli, Archana Tyagi, Poonam Khurana, Nandan Prabhu.

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APPENDIX A. QUESTIONNAIRE

Phase 1: Questions on demographics and independent variables

1. Email id: _____
2. Emp id: _____
3. Age: _____
4. Gender: Male / Female / Transgender / Prefer not say
5. Highest education completed: 10+2 / Graduate / Postgraduate / Other
6. Industry: _____
7. Total work experience: _____

Below is a set of statements about your life goals. Using the 1-7 scale, please indicate the extent to which each item represents the goals that you generally pursue in your life.

Items	1 Not at all	2 Very slightly	3 Slightly	4 Moderately	5 Strongly	6 Very strongly	7 Totally
As a person, my general goal in life is to							
1. ... have very good performances.							
2. ... be a competent person.							
3. ... accomplish great things.							
4. ... be very productive.							
5. ... be a skillful person.							
6. ... produce high-quality work.							
7. ... attain difficult but realistic goals.							
8. ... successfully learn difficult things.							
9. ... reach excellence.							
10. ... perform very well.							
11. ... work very hard until I reach excellence.							
12. ... have perfect performances.							
13. ... be a perfect person.							
14. ... accomplish great things perfectly.							
15. ... be exceptionally productive all the time.							
16. ... be a flawless person.							
17. ... produce error-free work.							
18. ... attain perfection.							
19. ... perfectly learn difficult things.							
20. ... reach perfection.							
21. ... perform perfectly.							
22. ...work relentlessly until I reach perfection.							

Phase 2: Questions to capture mediator and dependent variables

Using the 0-6 scale, please respond to the statements below.

Items	0 Never	1 A Few Times per Year	2 Once a Month	3 A Few Times per Month	4 Once a Week	5 A Few Times per Week	6 Every Day
1. At my work, I feel bursting with energy.							
2. At my job, I feel strong and vigorous.							
3. I am enthusiastic about my job.							
4. My job inspires me.							
5. When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work.							
6. I feel happy when I am working intensely.							
7. I am proud of the work that I do.							
8. I am immersed in my job.							
9. I get carried away when I am working.							

Using the 1-7 scale, please respond to the questions below.

	1 Very Poor	2 Poor	3 Fair	4 Average	5 Good	6 Very Good	7 Excellent
10. How would you rate the quality of your own performance in your job?							
11. How do you think your supervisor would rate the quality of your performance?							
12. How would you rate the quantity of your own performance in your job?							
13. How do you think your supervisor would rate the quantity of your performance?							

Phase 3: Questions asked from the supervisor/HR manager

1. How would you rate the quality of <name> performance in their job?
2. How would you rate the quantity of <name> performance in their job?