

The Difference in Job-seeking Stress between Perceived Parents' Parenting Style and Perfectionism of University Students

Jeong-Gyu Han ^{a,1}, So-Yeong Park ^{a,2}

^a Department of Education, Pusan National University, South Korea

¹ hanclan@pusan.ac.kr; ² park.sy@pusan.ac.kr

Abstract

The university students have several developmental tasks such as getting an academic goal, getting a job and preparing independence from their parents. But in Korea, those are not easy for university students. Especially, after the economic crisis in 1998, it became harder to find the right job of young people. To be independent of parents economically and psychologically was not easy. So, the purpose of this study is to investigate how university students feel job seeking stress as effects of perfectionism and perceive parenting style to help them effectively preparing as to be employed. The research questions were set up as follow: First, is there a difference in the university students' job-seeking stress according to perceived parenting style? Second, is there a difference in the university students' job-seeking stress according to perfectionism? To gain answers about these questions, a survey targeting the graduate students in Busan, South Korea was made. Five hundred survey questionnaires were distributed, and 423 responses were collected. The data were analyzed by t-test with SPSS 18. Results of this study were as follow. First, the lower-level care group experienced higher job seeking stress, personality stress, family stress and expectation stress than the other. And, the higher level of overprotection group suffered from higher job seeking stress and all of subtypes stress. Second, the higher level of self-oriented perfectionism students experienced more school stress than the lower one. Other-oriented perfectionism students experienced more job seeking stress, personality stress, and academic stress. And social imposed perfectionism group was suffering from all of subtypes stress. Limitations and suggestions for future study were provided.

Keywords

Parenting Style; Perfectionism; Job-Seeking Stress



This is an open access article under the CC-BY-NC license.

INTRODUCTION

University students who are in post-adolescence enter the adulthood with solving conflicts and adjusting themselves to a new world, and at the same time, they have to establish personal goal and identity and to get independence from parents and

to get own jobs. So, university period is an important time to establish self-identity on an early age of adult, to get the developmental tasks of emotional independence and social adaptation, and the period to focus on various tasks to prepare for adult life (Lee & Yoo, 2008).

Especially nowadays career decision is being postponed to the time of university students (Park & Park, 2009) because deciding one's career path and setting a clear plan about studies or career is an important task for individual development in adolescence (Lee, 2004). Therefore concerns about careers and job seeking can cause some stresses for university students. Today's university students experience the uncertain future amid the rapidly changing competitive landscape. In particular, because of the atmosphere of the job market has become stiff along with global financial crisis after the foreign exchange crisis in 1998, for university students the issue of job seeking has become the most important concern and stress (Park, Kim & Jung, 2009).

Job seeking stress refers to a condition in which physical and psychological balance is destroyed. The sense of crisis, tension or anxiety during university life as a result of problems related to employment after graduation is heightened (Hwang, 1988). To measure this, we use the Job-seeking Stress Measure, which involves that personality stress, academic stress, family environment stress, school environment stress, job preparation stress and stress about external conditions/expectations as

subtypes. The perfectionism is the individual characters that along the judgment which is a human's values for productivity and achievement to be superior to others in character, desire to reach a goal with a high standard of expectation that is difficult to achieve (Burn, 1980). To measure this, we use MPS (Hewitt & Flett, 1991), which involves that self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism, socially imposed perfectionism as subtypes. And perceived parenting style refers to attitude and behavior that parents or caregivers generally display when raising children (Becker, 1964). To measure this, we will use PBI (Parent Bonding Instrument; Parker et al., 1979), which includes the care and overprotection of the fathers and mothers respectively.

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to help university students prepare for job seeking effectively by identifying the differences in the job-seeking stresses that university students experience depending on their parent's parenting attitudes which are environmental factor and perfectionism which is a personal factor. So our study will examine if there a difference in the university students' job-seeking stress according to perceived parenting

style based on the PBI (Parker et al., 1979) and the Job-seeking Stress Measure by Hwang (1988). And more, we will examine if there a difference in the university students ' job-seeking stress according to perfectionism based on the Job-seeking Stress Measure (Hwang, 1988) and MPS (Hewitt & Flett, 1991).

LITERATURE REVIEW

In a study by Hammarstrom and Janlert (1997) that revealed a link between youth unemployment and mental health showed that unemployment correlated with insomnia, poor concentration, anxiety, and depression. Research by Lee, Kim & Park (2000) on mental health depending on the employment status, unemployed youth in their 20's showed symptoms of somatization symptom, obsession, interpersonal sensitivity, depression, hostility and anxiety compared to the young people who employed. And studies of the relationship between unemployment and specific health have shown that unemployment has led to increased drinking and smoking, sleep disorders, depression, anxiety, suicide attempts, digestive and respiratory disorders (Ahn, 2003).

Job seeking stress falls into the category of stress. We just understand stress as maladjusted elements that cause harm such as physical or mental problem and tension, but the stress that anyone can experience in their daily lives gives some people a serious degree of effects that cause maladjustment, or serves as a positive factor in handling such a situation better for others (Ryu & Kim, 1998). Thus, the reason why stress is an environmental stimulus condition that endangers physical and psychological well-being states or is a factor in growth that alter emotion system, behavior system and physiology system is due to differences in personal variables (Choi, 1986). That is, even under the same stress event, it may have conflicting results depending on the characteristics of the individual to accommodate it (Lee, 1985).

Burn (1980) regarded perfectionism as a characteristic of setting irrational goals beyond one's ability and trying to reach them, and Pacht (1984) stated that perfection does not exist and that the pursuit of perfection that does not exist raises several psychological issues. The accumulation of empirical studies has led to the need to raise a study of the functional aspects of perfectionism (Slaney & Johnson, 1992).

Meanwhile attempts to explain how perfectionism is formed have continued to revolve around three approaches, the psychodynamic theory, the learning theory and the cognitive theory, various theoretical approaches; however, they considered that the personal family environment, especially interaction with parents, played an important role in the development of perfectionism (Yoo et al., 2004). According to a study by Yoo (2004), the more positive the parent's parenting attitude, the more self-oriented perfectionism children were and the more negative the parent's parenting attitude, the more social-oriented perfectionism children were. Also, the more university students perceived their parent authoritarian, the higher his or her social perfectionism is (Yoo et al., 2004).

METHODOLOGY

Participants

Participants were 3th - 4th grade college students from University in Busan in the Southeast of South Korea (age range 21 to 27 years). They completed a self-report survey questionnaire comprising all measures in this study after obtaining students' permission for research participation. We used 432 of collected 500

questionnaires in the analysis of the results, except for those who responded inappropriately or missed responses.

Measures

Job Seeking Stress Scale

The Job Seeking Stress Scale (Kim, 2007) was measured with 40 items of 7 sub-factors (i.e., personality stress, academic stress, family environmental stress, school environment stress, job preparation stress, external conditions stress). Participants indicated how much they were like each statement on a 5 point scale (1=Not at all to 5=A lot). Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's α) for the total scale was found to be .93, in this study. In terms of subtypes of Job seeking stress were .88 for personality stress (11 items), .80 for academic stress (10 items), .81 for family environmental stress (6 items), .68 for school environment stress (4 items), .70 for job preparation stress, .61 for external conditions and anticipatory stress (4 items).

Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS)

The Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS: Hewitt, Flett, 1991) was measured with 45 items of 3 sub-factors

(i.e., self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism, socially imposed perfectionism). Participants indicated how much they were like each statement on a 5 points scale (1 = Not at all to 5 = A lot). Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's α) for the total scale was found to be .84, in this study. In terms of subtypes of Multidimensional Perfectionism, .81 for self-oriented perfectionism (15 items), .64 for other-oriented perfectionism (15 items), and .71 for socially imposed perfectionism (15 items).

Korean Parenting Bonding Instrument (K-PBI)

Korean Parenting Bonding Instrument (K-PBI: Song, 1992) is the Korean version of the original PBI (Park et al., 1979). K-PBI is a form of reporting perceived parents' parenting style of father and mother respectively by an undergraduate on the basis of memories up to the age of 16. Both global and specific items of the K-PBI were used to identify self-reported two dimensions of care and overprotection to

evaluate the parenting attitude of father and mother. Participants indicated how much they were like each statement on a 4 points scale (1 = Not at all to 4 = Always). Internal consistency coefficients (Cronbach's α) for the total scale were found to be .88, in this study. In terms of subtypes of Korean Parenting Bonding Instrument, .86 for the care of father (12 items), .78 for the overprotection (13 items), .86 for the care of mother (12 items), and .81 for the care of mother (13 items).

Statistical Analysis

Data were analyzed by t-test with SPSS 18.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The distribution of participants is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of participants

		<i>n</i> (%)
Gender	Male	214(50.6)
	Female	209(49.4)
Grade	3th	81(19.1)
	4th	342(80.9)
total		423(100)

Table 3. Differences in job seeking stress according to the overprotection (N=423)

	Higher-level care group(n=216)		Lower-level care group(n=207)		t
	M	SD	M	SD	
Personality stress	32.33	8.15	28.54	9.33	4.45***
Academic stress	28.25	6.69	26.13	6.94	3.20**
Family environment stress	14.87	5.09	12.54	4.90	4.79***
School environment stress	12.01	3.31	11.20	3.56	2.45*
Job preparation stress	12.09	3.57	11.27	3.59	2.35*
External conditions and expectation stress	8.34	2.91	7.19	2.75	4.18***
Total	107.89	3.60	96.86	24.89	4.68***

Note: * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

As shown in Table 2, there was a statistically significant difference between the higher-level care group and the lower-level care group in the total job seeking stress ($t = -2.64, p < .01$). The overall job seeking stress of the lower-level care group was higher than the higher-level care group. The mean of the lower care group was higher than that of the higher care group in the subtypes of job seeking stress such as the personality stress ($t = -2.52, p < .05$), family environment stress ($t = -3.76, p < .001$), external condition stress ($t = -2.69, p < .01$). Therefore, the lower-level care group among parents' parenting style perceived by university students is higher than the higher level care group in overall job seeking stress (i.e., personality stress, family environment stress, external

conditions and expectation stress). (see Table 2).

As shown Table 3, there was a statistically significant difference between the higher-level overprotection group and the lower-level overprotection group in the total job seeking stress ($t = 4.68, p < .001$). Specifically, in all subtypes of job seeking stress, such as personality stress ($t = 4.45, p < .001$), academic stress ($t = 3.20, p < .01$), family environmental stress ($t = 4.79, p < .001$), school environment stress ($t = 2.45, p < .05$), job preparation stress ($t = 2.35, p < .05$), external conditions and expectation stress ($t = 4.18, p < .001$), the higher-level overprotection group showed a significantly higher average than the lower-level overprotection group.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above conclusions, the following can be discussed:

First, university students who perceive their parents' parenting style as high care and low over-protective may be less likely to experience job-seeking stress. That is, the more sense that parents showed them a warm, accepted and loving parenting attitude, the less stressed university students are about job-seeking. And the more university students perceive their parents had shown less of an invasion of privacy, over-control, and guilt, the less job-seeking stress they feel. So, we could university students see the environmental factors especially the parenting style of their parent, to gain an objective view of themselves and to help them to be free from the negative effects of it.

Second, the higher tendency of self-oriented perfectionism, the lower the tendency of other-oriented perfectionism, and the higher the tendency of socially-imposed perfectionism, the more likely university students will experience job-seeking stress. However, since several studies on the effects of perfectionism have not produced a conclusion with the same direction so that perfectionism can be both functional and dysfunctional.

Therefore, it is necessary to investigate whether university students who are experiencing job-seeking stress have perfectionism, if so what kind of tendency they have, and whether their tendency is functional.

These results show that in South Korea, due to the special bond between parents and their children, even after they have grown into university students, it is not easy to become independent from their parents' influence. In other words, the stress due to the parent's expectation and dependence can increase job seeking stress.

Also, with the unemployment rate, the perfectionist tendency due to parents' parenting attitude seems to increase the stress of university students' job seeking.

Although this study identified differences in the job-seeking stress of university students according to perfectionism and the type of parents' parenting attitude, the following limitations exist: First, because this study is examined on Korean university students, the generalization of the results to all university students is limited by the cultural background. And we have some questions about how other country's situations are. And we assume that there

are any differences according to the cultural background. Second, because the questionnaires of this study were all self-reported, it is possible that participants with a perfectionist tendency reported a lower propensity toward perfectionism due to the nature of perfectionism. Third, it can be seen that job-seeking stress is periodic stress that is rapidly increasing at a certain period. Considering that this study was carried out at the beginning of the school year, it is possible that the participants reported less stress of job-seeking. Fourth, several studies on perfectionism tend to present various conclusions, but based on the previous studies, we propose developing a program that enables university students with perfectionism to deal with job-seeking stress effectively.

REFERENCES

- Park, S. H. & Park, H. J. (2009). Coping as a mediator between career-related stress and career decision-making in college students. *The Korean Journal of School Psychology, 6*(1), 67-81.
- Park M. J., Kim J. H., & Jung M. S. (2009). A Qualitative Study on the Stress of University Students for Preparing Employment. *The Korean Journal of Counseling, 10*, 417-435.
- Hwang, S. W. (1998). *A Study on Employment Stress of University Students*. Dong-A University. Busan, Korea.
- Burn, D. D. (1980). The perfectionist's script for self-defeat. *Psychology Today, 34*-51.
- Hewitt, P. L. & Flett, G. L. (1991a). Perfectionism in the self and social contexts: conceptualization, assessment, and association with psychopathology. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 60*, 456-470.
- Becker, W. C. (1964). Consequences of different kinds of parental discipline in Hoffman, M. L. & Hoffman, L. W. (Eds.), *Review of Child Development Research*, New York; Russell Sage Foundation.
- Hannarstrom, A., & Janlert, U. (1997). Nervous and depressive symptoms in a longitudinal study of youth unemployment-selection or exposure? *Journal of Adolescence, 20*, 293-305.