



## PERFECTIONISM, ACADEMIC MOTIVATION, AND PERFORMANCE ANXIETY IN SOUTH AFRICAN UNIVERSITY MUSIC STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

Perfectionism is often associated with the positive characteristics of motivation, effort, and achievement. However, perfectionism encouraged by the views of others may result in increased anxiety levels. The debilitating effects of socially prescribed perfectionism frequently cause inferior academic performances of undergraduate university students. The aim of the study is to examine whether and to what extent perfectionism is related to academic motivation and to performance anxiety in BMus and BA (Music) students. A total of 93 music students from four South African universities' music departments participated in the study. Students are compared in terms of perfectionism, academic motivation, and performance anxiety, and the correlations between these traits. Confounding variables such as the university of attendance, type of music degree, academic year, gender, home language, and first instrument are taken into account. The study follows a quantitative survey design consisting of the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale, the Work Preference Inventory, and the Performance Anxiety Inventory. Strong positive correlations were found between the Concern over Mistakes subscale of Perfectionism and the Extrinsic Motivation/Outward-dimension. The Personal Standards subscale of Perfectionism showed moderate to strong correlations to the Intrinsic Motivation/Challenge and Extrinsic Motivation/Compensation dimensions. The BA (Music) students scored significantly higher than the BMus students in Performance Anxiety, Parental Expectations and Parental Criticism. Students from the Other language group scored significantly higher in both the Perfectionism subscales of Parental Expectations and Parental Criticism. The study provides valuable insight into the perfectionistic trends and its effect on motivational orientations in South African undergraduate music students, particularly the differences between the BMus and BA (Music) degrees, which has not yet been investigated. The study verifies various inter-correlations between aspects of perfectionism and motivation with specific emphasis on the parental dimensions of perfectionism. **Keywords**

Perfectionism, academic motivation, performance anxiety, music students, intrinsic, extrinsic, South Africa, university [The author can be reached at [madaleen7@gmail.com](mailto:madaleen7@gmail.com) ]