

The Relationship between the Severity of Orthorexia Nervosa Symptoms, The Severity of Obsessive-Compulsive Symptoms, and Perfectionism

PhD. Zafer GÜL

St. Clements University Clinic of Psychology

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ABSTRACT: Orthorexia nervosa is an eating disorder characterised by an obsession with healthy eating; it significantly affects individuals' thoughts and behaviours and can therefore have a serious negative impact on their quality of life. This disorder typically manifests itself through the individual adopting excessively regimented, rigid and restrictive eating habits; this can significantly and negatively affect the individual's social relationships and general daily life. The obsessions associated with orthorexia nervosa, alongside symptoms of obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and perfectionist tendencies, constitute a noteworthy area of research. The level of obsessive-compulsive symptoms encompasses behaviours associated with repetitive and uncontrollable thoughts, which are influenced by genetic and environmental factors; perfectionism, on the other hand, is directly linked to the effort to meet high standards and the fear of making mistakes. A detailed examination of the relationships between these three key factors holds the potential to provide a deeper understanding of the pathogenic structure of orthorexia nervosa and its clinical course. In particular, identifying these relationships could form a basis not only for the development of effective and practical treatment approaches but also for the planning of personalised psychological interventions. In this study, for the reasons outlined, the aim is to systematically analyse the relationship between the level of orthorexia nervosa symptoms, the level of obsessive-compulsive symptoms, and the level of perfectionism.

KEYWORDS: Healthy eating obsession, eating habits, obsessive-compulsive disorder, perfectionism, psychometric measures

1. INTRODUCTION

The relationships between the level of orthorexia nervosa symptoms, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) symptoms and perfectionism have been examined in great detail and with meticulous care in recent years, and the literature on this subject is expanding rapidly. In this context, whilst many studies have demonstrated that orthorexia nervosa is characterised by an obsession with excessively healthy eating and that this condition is becoming increasingly prevalent in society, forming a clinical disorder, there is still a need to deepen our understanding in this field. Furthermore, the strong link between this health condition and obsessive-compulsive symptoms has been scientifically proven. In particular, the close association between symptoms of obsessive-compulsive disorder and orthorexia actually points to a shared psychopathological basis between these two conditions; consequently, understanding the interactions between them has become a key factor influencing the recovery processes of these disorders. Furthermore, it is recognised that perfectionist tendencies are highly significant predictors of both orthorexia and obsessive-compulsive symptoms; as these tendencies lead to individuals' behaviours and thoughts becoming rigid, automatic, and sometimes excessively structured, thereby exerting a distinct, albeit indirect, influence on the course of these disorders and individuals' recovery processes. In the literature, it is clearly evident that, in the relationship between perfectionism and obsessive-compulsive symptoms, elements such as self-monitoring and setting high standards come to the fore and hold a notable importance.

Studies have demonstrated strong positive correlations between these three factors, and have also shown that high levels of perfectionism can increase the severity of both obsessive-compulsive symptoms and orthorexia symptoms. Furthermore, some studies have found that these relationships are particularly pronounced in adolescent and young adult populations, leading to findings that emphasise the need to develop targeted intervention strategies for these specific groups. Overall, current findings in the literature indicate that the relationship between the level of orthorexia nervosa symptoms and obsessive-compulsive symptoms and perfectionism is of critical importance in understanding psychopathological symptoms from a holistic perspective, and that a more detailed assessment of these factors could form the basis for the development of effective treatment approaches. Therefore, from the perspective of guiding psychological research and clinical practice, a thorough examination of these relationships holds great significance in both clinical and academic terms; further research into these topics will be a necessary step towards understanding the complexity of orthorexia and OCD in the future and developing more effective and sustainable methods to combat these disorders. Future research, by conducting in-depth investigations into these areas, has

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the potential not only to bring about significant innovations within the profession but also to create positive impacts on individuals. Therefore, it must not be forgotten that research in this field is not merely an academic necessity but also a social need. Making progress in understanding the relationships between perfectionism, obsessive-compulsive disorder and orthorexia will make a significant contribution to improving individuals' quality of life.

2. THE AIM OF THE STUDY AND HYPOTHESES

One of the primary aims of this study is to thoroughly examine the potential significant relationships between the level of orthorexia nervosa symptoms and obsessive-compulsive symptoms and perfectionism, and to gain a better understanding of these relationships. In this context, in line with the study's main hypotheses, the primary focus is on the prediction that symptoms of orthorexia nervosa will have a positive relationship with obsessive-compulsive symptoms. The first hypothesis suggests that symptoms of orthorexia nervosa may co-occur significantly with obsessive-compulsive symptoms. This situation may also trigger individuals' emotional states and reveal a complex psychological structure. The second hypothesis suggests that high levels of perfectionism are associated with both orthorexia and obsessive-compulsive symptoms in a highly significant and distinct manner. Perfectionism encompasses not only the standards and goals individuals set for themselves but also the attitudes and efforts they demonstrate in achieving these goals. At this point, the primary objective of the research is defined as detailing and highlighting the potential interactions between symptom levels and individual personality traits. Furthermore, an effort to understand whether personality traits shaped by perfectionism influence the clinical levels of orthorexia nervosa stands out as another key and fundamental objective of the study.

This can be achieved through an in-depth examination of the subject, coupled with a detailed investigation and meticulous analysis of the relationships between variables. The acquisition of key data that can be utilised in the development of clinical assessment processes and intervention strategies will be further substantiated by the findings of this research. In this context, it is intended that the findings of this study, when compared with existing information in the literature, will make a significant contribution to the development of new and innovative solutions and treatment approaches in the field. The research findings will facilitate an increase in awareness regarding orthorexia nervosa and the identification of key information for the development of intervention strategies. For this reason, the contributions that this research topic will provide should be considered and supported not only from the perspective of individual treatment processes but also from a public health perspective. In this way, it will be possible to investigate and implement more effective methods in the fight against orthorexia nervosa and to advance the body of knowledge in this field. Furthermore, a more comprehensive definition of symptoms associated with orthorexia nervosa and the differentiation of their effects on individuals are of great importance in terms of the scope of the research. In this context, the results of the study could serve as a valuable resource contributing to the treatment process, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of psychological support services as well as nutrition and health education services. Whilst perfectionism provides a certain level of motivation for individuals to achieve their goals, the fact that excessive perfectionist attitudes can negatively impact an individual's mental health must also be taken into account. Consequently, the careful observation of individuals' attitudes towards perfectionism emerges as a significant research topic, and the effects of these attitudes on individuals' lives must be assessed. Therefore, examining the impact of orthorexia nervosa on these processes within the context of interactions should be enriched within the research field by evaluating it from a broader perspective.

It is anticipated that the findings of this research will be useful in developing applicable strategies across various fields, such as educational institutions, health counselling services and public health programmes. In this way, broader and more inclusive support will be provided for both individuals and society. This process will create a positive impact on the community's health levels, laying the groundwork for significant steps towards improving individuals' overall quality of life. In addition to this contribution to public health, encouraging healthy lifestyles among individuals will also help prevent similar issues that may arise in the future. Among the reasons for this is the need for ongoing research into orthorexia nervosa and the development of innovative methods. It is of great importance that work in this field contributes to the development of effective and sustainable solutions aimed at improving individuals' living standards; at this point, raising public awareness should also be supported. Consequently, particularly to ensure that society is composed of healthy individuals, it is necessary to increase knowledge in this area and to foster healthy individuals.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Comprehensive and detailed analyses have clearly demonstrated a significant positive correlation between the level of orthorexia nervosa symptoms and obsessive-compulsive symptoms. This significant finding indicates that both variables strongly influence one another and exert a profound and significant impact on individuals' psychological well-being. Comprehensive research has also highlighted the complexity of the interaction between these variables, thereby helping us to better understand the negative effects on individuals' mental health. Furthermore, a significant relationship has been found between the level of perfectionism and symptoms of orthorexia. These results indicate that individuals with a high tendency towards perfectionism express their concerns regarding healthy living and nutrition in a more pronounced and intense manner. In analyses of obsessive-compulsive symptom levels, a positive correlation was observed with perfectionism scores, suggesting that perfectionist tendencies have an amplifying effect on obsessive-compulsive symptoms. The results

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of multiple regression analysis indicate that the relationship between obsessive-compulsive symptoms and perfectionism, in particular, significantly explains orthorexia symptoms. The findings strongly indicate the existence of a comprehensive network of interactions among these three variables, highlighting that perfectionism and obsessive-compulsive traits play an extremely important role in the development of orthorexia nervosa. Furthermore, in between-group comparisons, statistically significant differences were observed, indicating that individuals with high levels of perfectionism exhibited higher levels of orthorexia symptoms. Statistical analyses support that these differences are clinically significant and that symptoms associated with perfectionism are more pronounced in individuals who deviate further from the specified norms. The study's findings emphasise the critical importance of the relationship between orthorexia nervosa, levels of obsessive-compulsive symptoms, and perfectionism, both clinically and in research. These findings may assist in the development of treatment and intervention programmes that take these relationships into account and contribute to future research. In particular, by fostering a deeper understanding, a significant step has been taken towards determining the strategies to be applied in treatment processes. Such findings provide a crucial foundation for professionals to understand these dynamics when offering psychological support; they also offer important guidance on how to manage perfectionist tendencies during individuals' treatment processes. More effective and outcome-focused strategies can be applied in individuals' treatment processes. With an understanding of this relationship, psychologists and therapists can develop various methods to help individuals cope with the challenges they face. This appears to be of paramount importance both in terms of improving individuals' psychological well-being and enhancing the effectiveness of the treatment process. Thus, by developing original and creative approaches in the field of orthorexia, positive progress in the treatment process can be facilitated. Furthermore, in-depth research and clinical interventions conducted with individuals will enable more effective outcomes to be achieved in treatment processes. It is believed that this will provide significant guidance, particularly for psychologists and therapists, in analysing the complexities of individuals' psychological states. Overcoming the obstacles individuals face during the treatment process can make the process of receiving psychological support more efficient and effective, thereby making it possible to achieve better outcomes. Furthermore, in light of these findings, the development of various social and individual intervention methods also encompasses training programmes to be delivered in collaboration with those implementing the treatment processes. The aim here should be to ensure that individuals possess the competence and knowledge to cope not only with orthorexia but also with other mental health conditions such as specific phobias and anxiety disorders. In this way, it will be possible to establish a more holistic and integrated psychosocial support system.

4. DISCUSSION

In the discussion section of this study, the aim was to examine the relationships between the level of orthorexia nervosa symptoms and obsessive-compulsive symptoms and perfectionism in a more in-depth and comprehensive manner. In this context, the findings were analysed in detail by comparing them with the existing literature, and potential explanations for these relationships were explored. The data clearly demonstrate that orthorexia nervosa exhibits significant and notable relationships with obsessive-compulsive symptoms and perfectionism. These results are consistent with previous studies and provide an important indication that these disorders may share common psychopathological components. In particular, it was observed that in individuals with high levels of perfectionism, rigid and strict attitudes towards their health and diet become more pronounced and intensified alongside obsessive-compulsive symptoms. Furthermore, the close association between orthorexia symptoms and personality traits such as obsessive-compulsive disorder and perfectionism further highlights the complex and multifactorial nature of these behaviours. In this context, the findings highlight the importance, from a clinical perspective, of taking into account obsessive-compulsive symptoms and elements of perfectionism in the treatment of orthorexia nervosa. However, given the study's limitations and challenges, attention has been drawn to issues of generalisability arising from the small sample size and single-centre nature of the study. Consequently, there is a need to obtain more comprehensive and detailed data on this subject. The findings of this study indicate a serious need for more in-depth investigations and comprehensive long-term studies in this field. Future studies could facilitate a clearer and more comprehensible understanding of these relationships by utilising different sample groups and various measurement tools. In clinical practice, considering these three variables—orthorexia, obsessive-compulsive symptoms and perfectionism—together can make a significant contribution to planning treatment processes with a personalised and holistic approach. Such a holistic approach can enhance treatment effectiveness and greatly assist in improving individuals' psychological well-being. With all these elements coming together, it will become possible to achieve more effective results in improving individuals' overall health. Therefore, expanding research in this field and enriching it with diverse perspectives may pave the way for the development of more effective strategies in the future. Such development plays a significant role both in managing disorders in individuals and in enhancing public health. In particular, taking these variables and factors into account, it is concluded that a systematic approach must be adopted to improve methods for coping with psychological distress and to make treatment approaches more effective and appropriate. In addition to developing new knowledge and practices in the field, the need to review and refine existing treatment methods is drawing the attention of mental health professionals.

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5. LIMITATIONS

This study has a number of significant limitations, and a better understanding of these limitations is of great importance for the effective interpretation of the research findings. Firstly, the limited sample size significantly restricts the generalisability of the results obtained. The fact that participants were selected solely from a specific geographical region and easily accessible groups may reduce the validity of the study's results across different socio-economic or cultural contexts. For example, such selection reduces the chance of addressing a broader audience and leads to the loss of data that could be enriched by different perspectives. This situation raises significant concerns regarding the external validity of the findings and clearly highlights the limited scope of the research. Furthermore, whilst voluntary participation is ensured, participants' levels of motivation and honesty can vary significantly. Consequently, the likelihood of receiving inaccurate or distorted responses increases, thereby posing a risk of undermining the reliability of the results; this, in turn, can raise serious questions regarding the research's reliability. Although the scales used are standardised and valid measurement tools, cultural differences or linguistic incompatibilities can lead to errors in their application; this situation may negatively affect the study's general validity and seriously threaten the accuracy of the findings. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design employed during the study, as a natural consequence of this design, may significantly hinder the interpretation of the identified relationships in terms of causality. As this design only allows for establishing relationships based on snapshot data, it has been a significant factor limiting the depth of the analysis. Furthermore, the presence of various psychopathological conditions observed in the study field can create confusion in the interpretation of the data and, consequently, reduce the clarity of the results. For this reason, taking all these limitations into account necessitates the careful analysis and appropriate evaluation of the findings; it also clearly demonstrates that there must be certain restrictions when generalising these findings. Consequently, it is emphasised that future research should utilise more diverse and larger samples, alongside longitudinal designs and measurement tools that enhance cultural validity and are relevant to the local context, in order to enhance the reliability and validity of the results. Being aware of such limitations in future studies helps define the boundaries of the research's scientific contribution and accuracy, thereby establishing a solid foundation for subsequent work.

Researchers must continue their efforts to obtain more comprehensive and representative data whilst taking these limitations into account, and should bear in mind the feedback received during this process. Furthermore, ensuring the use of more diverse and inclusive methods in similar studies will play a significant role in reducing biases during fieldwork. This is an extremely critical point for ensuring progress in the field and will contribute to making the results of these studies more consistent and meaningful. Furthermore, research conducted with participant groups that are more diverse in social and demographic terms will significantly enhance the effectiveness of the results obtained. The methodological changes and innovations proposed for future studies could make a significant contribution to obtaining more robust and reliable findings during the research process. Consequently, researchers must be aware that such limitations must be taken into account in order to achieve their objectives of presenting results that are more appropriate and valid for the needs of society. Such an approach aims to be a significant step towards enhancing the reliability of scientific research and forms the cornerstones of progress in this field. Indeed, taking these limitations into account at every stage of the research process is highly valuable in terms of general scientific ethics and methodological approaches. Furthermore, studies conducted with the aim of reaching a wider audience make it possible to provide more in-depth information on various aspects of the field, thereby enabling researchers to make higher-quality, guiding, and meaningful contributions.

Consequently, this plays a crucial role in efforts to enhance the reliability and validity of research and is essential for driving progress. Researchers must continue their struggle to obtain accurate and reliable data by overcoming these challenges, adopting an approach focused on development and improvement throughout this process, and collaborating to achieve richer results by supporting interdisciplinary work.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study aims to examine the relationships between the level of orthorexia nervosa symptoms, the level of obsessive-compulsive symptoms, and perfectionism from a deep and multidimensional perspective, with the objective of detailing, understanding, and analysing how these complex and multi-layered psychopathological processes interact. In light of the study's findings, it is clearly evident that all three variables—orthorexia nervosa, obsessive-compulsive symptoms and perfectionism—exhibit significant and strong relationships with one another. In particular, it has been established that the perfectionism factor plays a significant and decisive predictive role in relation to both obsessive-compulsive symptoms and the severity of orthorexia. These findings clearly highlight the necessity of taking these important variables into account in diagnostic and treatment processes within clinical practice. The strong correlation between perfectionism and obsessive-compulsive symptoms provides noteworthy evidence that this characteristic plays a central role in the emergence of obsessive and compulsive behaviours. In this context, it is thought that specific intervention approaches targeting perfectionism traits, both in psychotherapy techniques and in patient follow-up, could be extremely beneficial in reducing orthorexia and obsessive-compulsive symptoms. Furthermore, it is anticipated that, throughout the therapeutic process, helping patients recognise their high perfectionism tendencies and working towards developing flexibility in this regard could be an effective method for reducing symptom severity.

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This research provides a solid foundation for future studies in this field and holds the potential to contribute to the development of various psychiatric and psychological intervention methods. It is of great importance for future research to validate and gain a deeper understanding of these relationships through long-term follow-up studies across different age and cultural groups. Furthermore, this study aims to provide innovative and fresh perspectives on understanding the interaction between orthorexia nervosa and obsessive personality traits in clinical and research settings, whilst also seeking to expand the existing body of knowledge on this subject. In this regard, gaining a better understanding of the relationship between perfectionist traits and obsessive-compulsive symptoms will form a crucial and indispensable foundation for individuals to achieve a healthier psychological state. In this respect, it not only provides a significant basis for current and future research in the field but also facilitates the development of effective strategies to enhance individuals' psychological resilience. The findings highlighted by the data obtained carry significant importance from a public health perspective and emphasise that such psychopathologies have a major impact on individuals' quality of life; consequently, they clearly demonstrate the necessity for further research in this area. The prevalence of such psychopathological processes within society can have adverse effects on individuals' mental health. In this context, the necessity of taking steps to raise public awareness will become a key factor in the coming days. This situation plays a critical role in improving individuals' mental health whilst also providing a framework for fostering healthier individuals within society. Consequently, the findings of this study lay an important foundation for developing a variety of theoretical and practical perspectives to understand the relationship between orthorexia and the level of obsessive-compulsive symptoms.

Evaluating the data from a broad perspective will enable the creation of greater awareness and the development of effective intervention strategies in the field of mental health, which is of utmost importance and significance for both individuals and society. In this process, the use of personal awareness and cognitive restructuring techniques can make a significant contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of treatment processes. Furthermore, the aim is to achieve significant gains in improving individuals' psychological well-being by guiding them towards healthier patterns of thinking. Consequently, this will facilitate a better understanding and management of symptom levels associated with orthorexia nervosa and obsessive-compulsive disorder. When evaluated from every angle, this research clearly demonstrates the potential to enhance individuals' quality of life by introducing a new approach and mindset within the sector. Furthermore, the fact that the results of such studies resonate widely, both theoretically and in practical application processes, will contribute to the value of future research in this field and make significant contributions to the development of psychiatric treatment approaches. Consequently, it lays the groundwork for achieving groundbreaking results in the field. It makes a significant contribution to individuals' healthy developmental processes, and the in-depth examination of the effects of such psychological processes on individuals serves as an important resource that enriches the academic literature whilst also helping individuals make healthier choices in their own lives, thereby enabling them to lead more fulfilling lives in the long term. In summary, the findings of this study hold the potential to develop innovative approaches that address the needs of individuals in the field of mental health. Thus, whilst the effects of such health issues within society reach a wide audience, individuals will also be afforded the opportunity to make more informed decisions regarding the management of these processes, thereby enabling them to improve their own well-being.

7. CONCLUSION

This study aims to examine in depth the relationship between the level of orthorexia nervosa symptoms and the level of obsessive-compulsive symptoms and perfectionism. The primary objective of the research is to understand, by providing a detailed answer to the question of how these complex, multidimensional psychopathological processes interact with one another. In light of the findings, orthorexia nervosa, obsessive-compulsive symptoms and perfectionism have been clearly identified as reflections of complex dynamics, exhibiting highly significant and strong relationships with one another. During the research process, it was demonstrated that the perfectionism factor plays a significant and decisive predictive role, both in terms of its effect on obsessive-compulsive symptoms and its influence on the severity of orthorexia. These findings clearly highlight just how critical it is to take these key variables into account in the diagnostic and treatment processes conducted in clinical practice. The strong correlation between perfectionism and obsessive-compulsive symptoms highlights that this characteristic plays a central role in the emergence of obsessive and compulsive behaviours. It is noteworthy that as levels of perfectionism increase, the frequency and severity of obsessive-compulsive behaviours also tend to rise. In this context, it is thought that specific and effective intervention approaches targeting perfectionism traits, both in psychotherapy techniques and in patient follow-up processes, could be extremely beneficial in reducing orthorexia and obsessive-compulsive symptoms.

At the same time, helping patients to recognise their tendencies towards high perfectionism throughout the therapeutic process and engaging them in exercises designed to foster flexibility in this regard holds the potential to be an effective method for reducing symptom severity. This research not only provides a solid and effective foundation for future studies in this field but also has the potential to contribute to the development of various psychiatric and psychological intervention methods. It is of great importance that future research validates and provides a deeper understanding of these relationships through long-term follow-up studies across different age and cultural groups. Within this process, the aim of presenting innovative and fresh perspectives analysing the interaction between orthorexia nervosa and obsessive personality structures in clinical and research settings is intended to expand and deepen the existing body of knowledge. Gaining a better understanding of the relationship between perfectionist traits and obsessive-compulsive symptoms forms a critical and

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indispensable foundation for individuals to achieve a healthier psychological state. In this respect, it provides a significant foundation not only for current research in the field but also for future studies. It also facilitates the development of effective strategies to enhance individuals' psychological resilience. The findings revealed by the data obtained in this context hold significant importance for public health and emphasise that psychopathological processes have a major impact on individuals' quality of life. Consequently, the necessity for further research in this field is clearly articulated. The prevalence of such psychopathological processes within society can have adverse effects on individuals' mental health. It is anticipated that steps taken to raise public awareness will become a key factor in the coming days. This situation will play a critical role in improving individuals' mental health and will also provide a framework for fostering healthier individuals within society. The findings obtained form an important foundation for developing both theoretical and practical perspectives to understand the relationship between orthorexia and the level of obsessive-compulsive symptoms. Evaluating these data from a broad perspective will enable the creation of greater awareness in the field of mental health—which is of utmost importance for both individuals and society—and facilitate the development of effective intervention strategies. In this process, the use of personal awareness and cognitive restructuring techniques makes a significant contribution to enhancing the effectiveness of treatment processes.

Furthermore, the aim is to achieve significant improvements in psychological well-being by guiding individuals towards healthier thought patterns. Strengthening social support systems is also of considerable importance in this context. Consequently, this will facilitate a better understanding and management of the severity of symptoms associated with orthorexia nervosa and obsessive-compulsive disorder. When all aspects of the research are considered, the potential to enhance individuals' quality of life by offering the sector a fresh perspective and way of thinking is clearly evident. The findings of such research have the potential to generate significant resonance both from a theoretical standpoint and in practical application processes. It will contribute to the value of future research in this field and make significant contributions to the development of psychiatric treatment approaches. Consequently, this study lays the groundwork for groundbreaking results in the field and makes important contributions to individuals' healthy developmental processes. A thorough examination of the effects of such psychological processes on individuals both enriches the academic literature and creates a valuable resource that can assist individuals in making healthier choices in their own lives. In summary, the findings of this study hold the potential to develop innovative approaches that address individuals' needs in the field of mental health. Consequently, the effects of such health issues within society reach a wider audience; furthermore, this creates an opportunity for individuals to make more informed decisions and improve their well-being. Projects aimed at improving the psychological well-being of society will enable individuals to adopt a healthier and more balanced approach in both their personal and social lives, raise their awareness of mental health, and strengthen social solidarity.

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