

Knowing Perfectionist Profiles: A Possible Key to Supporting Teaching Internships

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Internships are a pivotal component of teacher training, enabling future teachers to develop essential competencies, bridge theory and practice, and build a professional identity. However, they are also sources of significant stress and emotional challenges, particularly for student teachers with perfectionist tendencies. Based on a small sample, this exploratory mixed-methods study investigates how perfectionism profiles, based on Gaudreau and Thompson's (2010) 2×2 model, are associated with the internship experiences of future teachers. A sample of 32 second-year primary-level teacher trainees in French-speaking Belgium completed the Almost-Perfect Scale-Revised, which identified four profiles: Non-Perfectionism (34%), Pure Perfectionistic Strivings (16%), Pure Perfectionistic Concerns (28%), and Mixed Perfectionism (22%). Qualitative data, gathered through interviews with four representative trainees, revealed distinct internship experiences for each profile. While PPS students demonstrated motivation and satisfaction, PPC and MP profiles reported heightened stress, self-doubt, and risk of burnout. NP students displayed a balanced approach, with manageable stress and openness to feedback. These findings highlight the need for teacher training programs to raise awareness of perfectionism profiles and implement targeted support strategies, particularly for the 50% of students in more vulnerable profiles. This study links perfectionism research with teacher training, providing actionable insights to better support trainees and foster their professional growth.

Keywords: teacher training, perfectionism profiles, internships, professional development

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Introduction

Internships are considered one of the most relevant and important experiences in today's teacher training program (Eksi and Yakisik 2016). Internships are accompanied learning experiences (Villeneuve and Moreau 2010) in which future teachers develop essential competencies and build their professional identity (Zhu and Zhu 2018).

Internships often boost students' self-efficacy (Knoblauch and Woolfolk Hoy 2008). But despite these benefits, handling the internships offered to trainees as part of their training program is not so easy.

First, trainees have double baggage related to their experience (Boutet 2002). The first is rich: theoretical knowledge of training and experience as a learner and as a student. The second is limited or non-existent: practical experience as a teacher (Boutet 2002). This imbalance in their experiences places student teachers in an uncomfortable position.

Second, the internship brings trainees concerns that crystallize around three major categories (Desbiens, Abdenour, and Negaz 2020): managing all of the teacher tasks, evaluation and the support they receive. When it comes to managing teacher tasks, student teachers are faced with enacting the 'art of teaching': they must plan teaching activities (Deprit and Van Nieuwenhoven 2021) and carry them out in the classroom. This involves planning, organization of materials organization, mastery of content, meeting diverse students' needs, and classroom management (Desbiens, Abdenour, and Negaz 2020). In fact, it has been shown that classroom management is a competence for which student teachers feel the least prepared and which they worry about the most (Colognesi, and Gouin, 2022; Greenberg, Putman, and Walsh 2014). With regard to evaluation, trainees' concerns are mainly related to the evaluation criteria and the repercussions this evaluation could have (Desbiens, Abdenour, and Negaz 2020). And with regard to support, which enables the student teacher to learn

(Colognesi, Beusart, and Van Nieuwenhoven 2018; Eksi and Yakisik 2016), concerns are centred on the relationship with internship supervisors, the amount of support received, the quality of the relationship, or even meeting the expectations of supervisors. All these concerns begin as early as the internship preparation phase, when trainees seek validation for their proposals from their supervisors and/or internship master (Desbiens, Abdenour, and Negaz 2020). Trainees often worry about aligning their lesson preparation with the expectations of their trainers and the requirements of the training program (Colognesi et al., 2024).

Finally, and as a consequence, trainees experience a range of emotions before, during and even after the internship. However, not all trainees are equipped to manage these emotions effectively (Pelletier 2015). For instance, internships can be a source of anxiety, stress, failure and disappointment, which can have detrimental consequences for their internship practices (Eksi and Yakisik 2016). Furthermore, the internship does not act as a key to developing self-efficacy for students who combine a negative internship experience with high self-identity as a teacher, whereas it does for other students (Coppe, Devos, and Colognesi 2023).

Teacher trainers frequently observe the challenges described above. At the start or during the internship period, some students report feeling unable to carry on. They sometimes report sleep issues and a sense of being overwhelmed as reasons for their inability to persevere. It is not uncommon for them to justify this by identifying themselves as perfectionists.

A wealth of studies has demonstrated a link between perfectionism and a range of maladjustment outcomes and mental health disorders (for a meta-analysis, see Limburg et al. 2017). However, perfectionism is a multidimensional construct, with not all dimensions necessarily associated with negative outcomes, particularly in the context

of education. The current literature distinguishes two main dimensions of perfectionism: *perfectionistic strivings*—a self-oriented motivation to set high standards and strive for perfection, and *perfectionistic concerns*—a tendency to perceive high performance demands on oneself coming from others, accompanied by self-criticism and doubts about one's capacity to achieve (Gaudreau and Thompson 2010; Stoeber and Otto 2006).

Perfectionism has been extensively investigated in the context of education, mainly among university students. In particular, person-centred approaches combining the two dimensions of perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns in profiles have been used in higher education contexts (e.g., Gaudreau and Thompson 2010; Kljajic, Gaudreau, and Franche 2017). For instance, Madigan's (2019) meta-analysis demonstrated that perfectionistic strivings have some desirable outcomes, showing a significant small to medium positive relationship with academic achievement, while the adverse effects of perfectionistic concerns were evidenced by a significant small negative relationship with academic achievement. Perfectionism has also been linked with stress and anxiety in students (Wuthrich, Jagiello, and Azzi 2020) and with academic drop-out and burn-out (Hill and Curran 2015).

However, few studies have explored how these profiles operate in professional training contexts such as teaching internships. According to Gaudreau and Thompson (2010), taking into account within-person combinations of perfectionism is essential to understanding the consequences of perfectionism. In their 2 X 2 model of dispositional perfectionism, these authors distinguished four combinations: Non-Perfectionism (low perfectionistic strivings and low perfectionistic concerns), Pure Perfectionistic Strivings (low perfectionistic concerns and high perfectionistic strivings), Pure Perfectionistic Concerns (high perfectionistic concerns and low perfectionistic strivings) and Mixed

Perfectionism (high perfectionistic strivings and high perfectionistic concerns).

Depending on the outcomes, some combinations are more favourable than others (Kljajic, Gaudreau, and Franche 2017).

Furthermore, to the best of our knowledge, no studies have examined how perfectionism might operate in the specific context of an internship for prospective school teachers. Some studies among school teachers have shown that perfectionistic concerns can negatively affect their professional development (Shim, Cho, and Knapke 2020; Stoeber and Rennert 2008). In addition, Kilmen (2022) showed that self-efficacy in prospective teachers was negatively associated with concerns related to doubts about actions. But, apart from that study, the links between perfectionism and future teachers remain underexplored, particularly in relation to internship experiences, although the internship is probably the training experience that is closest to what will be required in their future profession.

Given the lack of prior research on this question, the current study adopts an exploratory approach (Stebbins, 2001) based on a small, convenience sample of future teachers enrolled in a single institution. While the results cannot be generalized beyond that context, they will allow for an initial exploration of how perfectionism profiles may shape internship experiences, with the aim of identifying hypotheses for further investigation.

Therefore, we investigate which perfectionism profiles future teachers display and how they experience internships. Our research questions are as follows:

RQ1: What are the perfectionism profiles of future teachers?

RQ2: How do future teachers with different perfectionism profiles experience their internship?

Method

To answer our two research questions in this exploratory study, we chose a mixed-method approach, using a sequential explanatory model (Creswell 2014). The first phase was a quantitative questionnaire-based profile analysis (RQ1), followed by a second qualitative phase in which interviews were done (RQ2).

Context

In French-speaking Belgium, teacher training includes internships each year, progressing from observation to full classroom management (FWB 2000), in a structure comparable to that of many programs internationally. The classroom teacher employed by the school, in whose class the internship takes place, is present in the classroom, while one or more university supervisors visit the student at the internship site. At the time of the study, primary teacher education was organized as a 3-year professional bachelor's program offered in university colleges (non-university higher education institutions).

Our study took place during the second year of the training program. This period was selected because the students were, for the first time, in complete charge of the class (in the first year, they were in pairs, and thus were not expected to manage all the activities on their own). Furthermore, the second year is when students are expected to create lessons that fully integrate the pedagogical and didactic aspects learned in their training program.

Phase 1 – Quantitative (RQ1)

Participants

A convenience sample of 32 primary school student teachers (27 females, 5 males) from the same class was used in the first phase of this study. Participants, aged 18 to 23 years ($M = 20$, $SD = 1.3$), were in their second year of training.

This study conforms to the internationally accepted ethical guidelines and the ethical code of the Belgian Science Policy Office (www.belspo.be). Participants were informed about the objectives of the study and gave their written informed consent. In addition, authorization was obtained from the head of the institution and the teacher trainer, and students' anonymity was guaranteed.

Data collection and analysis

Participants completed the French version of *Almost Perfect Scale-Revised* (APS-R; Douilliez, and Henot 2013; Slaney et al. 2001) at the beginning of the academic year. The APS-R is a 23-item self-report questionnaire that assesses the following aspects of perfectionism: High Standards (APS-R_s, 7 items), which measures the tendency to set high standards for oneself and to evaluate oneself according to these standards; Discrepancy (APS-R_d, 12 items), which measures the tendency to perceive a discrepancy between personal standards and performance for oneself; and Order (APS-R_o, 4 items)¹, which reflects the importance attached to order and organisation for oneself. One missing APS-R_d value was replaced by the average score for the corresponding aspect.

Due to the small sample size, perfectionism profiles were not based on cluster analysis, but were defined according to predetermined cut-offs. Based on previous

¹ Although the APS-R includes the Order subscale, this dimension is no longer typically considered part of the strivings/concerns framework. For that reason, it was reported descriptively but not used in the construction of the four profiles.

studies, we used the third tercile of the APS-R High Standards score (Ashby and Kottman 1996; Periasamy and Ashby 2002) and the median² of the APS-R Discrepancy score (Ashby et al. 1999) as cut-offs to distinguish between low and high scores on each of the two perfectionism dimensions, in order to define 4 perfectionist profiles according to the model developed by Gaudreau and Thompson (2010): Non-Perfectionism profile (NP, low scores on APS-R_s and low on APS-R_d); Pure Perfectionistic Strivings profile (PPS, high scores on APS-R_s and low on APS-R_d); Pure Perfectionistic Concerns profile (PPC, low scores on APS-R_s and high on APS-R_d); Mixed Perfectionism profile (MP, high scores on APS-R_s and high on APS-R_d).

Phase 2 – Qualitative (RQ2)

Participants

Four students were selected for further investigation (see Table 1). These four student teachers were chosen because they fell within the four perfectionism profiles (one per profile), with assignment to the profiles based strictly on APS-R scores using predefined thresholds, rather than on qualitative interpretation.

Table 1. Details for the 4 pre-service teachers selected for their representative profile

Name	Profile	Age	Additional information
Patricia ³	PPS (APS-R _s = 44; APS-R _d = 41)	22	Spent 3 years at university in economics and management
Carla	PPC (APS-R _s = 40; APS-R _d = 54)	20	Repeating her second year

² Other studies have used the mean as the cut-off for the APS-R_d (e.g., Gilman and Ashby 2003; Periasamy and Ashby 2002). In the present study, the mean and median were very close (49.31 and 50.5, respectively). The use of one or the other did not make a difference in the assignment of participants to profiles.

³ The first names are aliases. They were chosen so that the first letter matches the student's perfectionist profile.

Maud	MP (APS-R _s = 44; APS-R _d =70)	21	Did a year of psychology before training to be a teacher
Nathan	NP (APS-R _s = 39; APS-R _d =36)	19	Did a year of Romance languages before training to be a teacher

Data collection and analysis

Two interviews per participant (eight in total) were conducted in French, audio-recorded, and fully transcribed (78–130 minutes each; ~80,865 words).

The interview guide consisted of three parts. The first asked participants to talk about their background. The second asked participants to share the key moments of their internship. The third invited participants to talk about their concerns, needs, sources of self-improvement, and so forth, before, during and after the internship.

Content analysis was used, following the steps recommended by L'Écuyer (1990): (1) reading transcripts to gain an overview and note particularities; (2) selection of units of meaning for analysis; (3) categorization of units of meaning on the basis of Gaudreau and Thompson's (2010) characteristics while leaving freedom for other aspects to emerge; (4) highlighting of salient elements for each profile; (5) description of the internship experience for the student in each profile and (6) selection of emblematic verbatim quotes to illustrate the results and translation of these quotes from French to English. To reinforce the fidelity of the results (Creswell 2014), a discussion between the researchers was carried out as the analysis progressed, in order to reach a consensus.

All data were collected by an independent researcher who was not involved in the students' training or evaluation, thereby ensuring that no power imbalance influenced the process.

Results

RQ1: What are the perfectionism profiles of future teachers?

Table 2 reports descriptive statistics and McDonald's omega coefficients.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients

Variables	Total sample ($n = 32$)					NP ($n = 11$)		PPS ($n = 5$)		PPC ($n = 9$)		MP ($n = 7$)	
	Ω	Min	Max	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
APS-R _s	.67	26	47	39.06	5.28	34.55	3.80	44.20	0.84	37.56	4.00	44.43	1.27
APS-R _d	.90	21.82	73	49.31	13.15	38.89	9.34	39.20	9.50	57.22	6.92	62.71	6.05
APS-R _o	.85	11	28	21.63	4.28	18.46	4.08	23.40	3.29	22.44	3.25	24.29	3.90

Note. APS-R_s= High Standards dimension of the Almost Perfect Scale-Revised; APS-R_d= Discrepancy dimension of the Almost Perfect Scale-Revised; APS-R_o= Order dimension of the Almost Perfect Scale-Revised.

Based on the cut-offs, 34.4% of the sample (four men and seven women) belonged to the Non-Perfectionism profile (NP), 15.6% of the sample (five women) belonged to the Pure Perfectionistic Strivings profile, 28.1% of the sample (one man and eight women) belonged to the Pure Perfectionistic Concerns profile, and 21.9% of the sample (7 women) belonged to the Mixed Perfectionism profile. The groups differed in their mean APS-R_s scores, $H(3) = 23.13$, $p < .001$, with all paired comparisons (with Bonferroni correction) significant (all $ps < .02$) except, as expected, those between the NP and PPC groups and between the PPS and MP groups; the difference between the PPC and PPS groups was not significant after correction ($p < .054$). Similarly, the groups differed in their mean APS-R_d scores, $H(3) = 24.19$, $p < .001$, with all paired

comparisons (with Bonferroni correction) significant (all $ps < .05$) except, as expected, those between the NP and PPS groups and between the PPC and MP groups.

RQ2: How do future teachers with different perfectionism profiles experience their internship?

To answer this question, each perfectionist profile is illustrated by a portrait of the internship experience of each representative student teacher interviewed.

Patricia, the Pure Perfectionistic Strivings profile

Patricia described herself as a 'perfectionist,' constantly striving for high standards.

I'm sensitive to detail (...) I've got a little wheel turning in my head. I think about a lot of things and I can't stop.

When it came to internships, her main concerns were threefold. Firstly, she set herself a strict schedule and anticipated. This meant that everything was always ready well in advance of the due dates: lesson planning, the material for the pupils and even her internship self-assessment.

I wanted everything to be finished before the course started. I spent all my holidays there.

When other student teachers would say, "Are you going to pull an all-nighter to finish your preparations too?" I'd say, "Guys, I finished 2 weeks ago."

Secondly, she set high standards for the quality of her teaching. She wanted students to appreciate and find meaning in what she offered. She integrated knowledge from her training program to achieve high-quality planning and to offer the best to her pupils.

I put a lot of pressure on myself because I think it's important to teach students (...) I ask myself a lot of questions: Does my lesson make sense to them? Will it really be useful for them? That's one of my big concerns.

Thirdly, Patricia's aim was to enable students to feel good about themselves and to develop their personalities. This was the result of intrinsic motivation.

I'm the one who puts a certain amount of pressure on myself, because I want to lead my pupils towards something good, to become good persons. I'm one of the people involved in their lives. I know I'm going to have an influence on them.

In the end, and despite the pressure she put on herself, Patricia said she got a great deal of satisfaction from doing the preparations and interacting with the students. She wondered whether the time spent on preparation is realistic in real-life practice, but felt that as a student teacher she had the time. She said she also enjoyed the trust her trainers placed in her. For her, it was a form of support, but also a source of additional pressure.

My internship supervisor put a lot of trust in me, and I was really scared at first (...) I tell myself it's not a bad thing, because I had a lot of freedom and I was able to make the most of it. But at the same time, he had so much confidence in me that I put a lot of pressure on myself.

Carla, the Pure Perfectionistic Concerns profile

Carla described herself as "a very perfectionist". She said that she is able to revise things many times, such as lesson plans or documents for the pupils.

My mom rereads my lesson preparations once and then I go back maybe three or four times (...) for the exercise sheets for the pupils, everything has to be well aligned, not too dark, not too light, the colours have to match. It has to be clear, the writing has to be right. (...) and after my internship, I edit all the documents so that they look good.

Two aspects stood out in our interviews with Carla: her lack of confidence in her abilities, and the fact that she was concerned about the way her trainers looked at her. She explained that she is never satisfied with her work, even when she receives positive feedback from a trainer. This makes her rework things constantly.

I tend to see only the negative. Even when there's something positive, I don't say it or, or for me, it's not positive. And in fact, I'm a person who questions myself all the time. I ask myself 10,000 questions about everything.

I change the lesson depending on what happened in class. In class, I make notes on draft sheets of what happened, (...) and then I change what didn't go well.

For her, the internship was a major source of anxiety and stress because she felt constantly evaluated. She felt that what she proposed was systematically criticised by her trainers. Yet she felt that it is very important to have the trainers' point of view. She talked about the meeting with her supervisors before the course, when they confirmed that she was ready for the course, which reassured her. She also said that it is important to her to have the opinion of her trainers in order to improve.

When you're a trainee, you see that you're being assessed all the time, that you're being watched by your supervisor.

It's really important to have the opinion of the trainers in order to improve. Because sometimes, we don't really think the same thing, we don't see the same things.

Still, she said that the only time she dared to try out activities was when she was alone in the classroom with the pupils, without the watchful eye of a supervisor.

When I learned that the supervisor wasn't coming to see me at the time, I said to myself, "At least I can test it out quietly and see what happens."

Despite this, Carla enjoyed preparing teaching activities, being in class with students and improving. She attributed this to her internship tutor, who helped her gain self-confidence.

I love teaching. I love to prepare. I love changing my lessons based on what's happened so that it's better afterwards. (...) Overall, I tend to worry about everything. I have a lot of trouble trusting myself, so my internship tutor helps me a lot with that too.

Maud, the Mixed Perfectionism profile

Maud explained that she set herself strong goals, such as planning effective lessons for her pupils, constantly improving her practice, and introducing technology into her lessons. But she also shared that she found the internships very stressful and made it clear that she does not like them.

I don't like it, I don't like going on internships. It's a bit weird (...) I'm exhausted when I get home. I usually end up crying, it's stress. It's really not a happy time for me.

There were two main sources of stress. Firstly was the fear that the activities would fail: that the pupils would not want to participate, or would not understand the subject being taught. Then there was the fear of being judged by her trainers. She mentioned that she puts a lot of pressure on herself to meet her own and others' expectations. She was aware that she strives for unattainable goals. In order to achieve her goals and not disappoint, Maud invested herself wholeheartedly, even if it meant forgetting about everything else. She mentioned that she was exhausted by the internship.

I work very late at night and sometimes put my personal life on hold for a while (...) I don't do any extra activities for myself. I just concentrate on the internship.

I was exhausted (...) the next day, I have huge dark circles under my eyes, and I have to drink three coffees to get through it.

One day, I knew the supervisor was coming. I stayed up until 1.a.m., to make sure everything was ready. I redid things at the last minute to make sure it was perfect (...) I reread my preparatory work 20 times (...) I was too scared that she wouldn't be happy with what I had delivered.

In the end, all these aspects led Maud to evaluate herself negatively. She questioned her place in teacher training.

For any lesson, I'm never reassured. Because when I'm in front of the pupils, I think: "Is this going to work? Will they like it? (...)" And then I think, "What the hell am I doing here anyway? Why am I doing these studies?" I tell myself that there are other students doing this 10 times better than me and who are 10 times better teachers than me. Sometimes I look like a loser... a loser... in front of the kids.

Nathan, the Non-Perfectionism profile

Nathan said he is committed to his studies and wanted to have good internships. In particular, he explained that in order to achieve this, he anticipated things, consulted his trainers before the course and took up the lessons suggested in the training. He pointed out that any stress he felt was natural, due to the novelty of the internship situation, and that it was not too intense: he knows how to manage it.

Basically, I'm not a very stressed person. Of course, before the first day, I was stressed, but that's it, I was going into the unknown, but once I saw that the first day went well, it was ok. I'm doing things, I'm creating things, and even if I have questions, I have to try, and when the time comes to try, we'll see. If I start to have a lot of questions, every time in all my lessons, it's going to add stress and that's something I don't like.

Nathan was also not overly stressed by the way the instructors looked at him. If the supervisor's visit worried him, he says that was normal. And he took the feedback as a step in his training to help him progress.

I was a bit stressed about the supervisor coming. But it doesn't matter. It's a day like any other, it's a class like any other.

Nathan worked for his internship, but still found time for himself. He also enjoyed spending time with his family. For example, he explained that he prepared his lessons by sitting in the living room with his parents.

We can easily work from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., with breaks of course. I prepare my lessons in my living room, at home with my parents. We watch TV, but at the same time I'm working on my internship.

Summary of results

Table 3. Summary of results

Profile	Profile characteristics (Gaudreau and Thompson 2010)	Internship related behaviours and subjective outcomes
Patricia Pure Perfectionistic Strivings	- High personal goals - Sense of satisfaction	- Strict timetable to ensure that everything is ready well in advance of the course - Attention to the quality of teaching and relationships with pupils - Use of training program elements in the internship - Great satisfaction in achieving personal goals
Carla Pure Perfectionistic Concerns	- Pressure from others - Never feels up to it	- Constant reworking - Feels constantly observed and evaluated, preventing her from being herself and taking the initiative - Attaches great importance to the teacher's opinion - Needs support to gain confidence
Maud Mixed Profile	- High personal goals - Fear of making mistakes - Exhaustion	- Setting important goals - Fear of being judged by trainers - Works without counting the hours, neglecting a healthy lifestyle - Dislikes internship experience and thinks about dropping out of training

Nathan	-	Achievable personal goals	-	Openness to internship experience without fear of failure
Non-Perfectionist	-	Little self-critical evaluation	-	Open to feedback
			-	Academic/private life balance

Discussion and conclusion

This study highlights important elements for teacher training programs, even within its exploratory nature. Firstly, the presence of the four perfectionism profiles (Gaudreau and Thompson 2010) among the group of future teachers is a key finding. The Pure Perfectionistic Strivings and Mixed Perfectionism profiles were less frequent, while the Non-Perfectionism and Pure Perfectionistic Concerns profiles dominated the sample. Notably, half of the respondents fell into the more maladaptive profiles (MP and PPC). Students in the MP and PPC profiles from our study reported feeling inadequate, subjecting themselves to harmful levels of pressure, and—in the case of PPC—being at high risk of burnout (Gaudreau and Thompson 2010).

Such findings underscore the importance of recognizing and supporting this variety of perfectionist tendencies in teacher training. Supporting students based on who they are (Maes, Colognesi and Van Nieuwenhoven 2019) is not only essential for their immediate well-being, but also critical for addressing broader concerns about teacher retention in the profession (Kelchtermans 2017). By creating detailed portraits of the internship experience of a student representing each profile, this study provides actionable insights into how these tendencies can become manifest during teaching placements, offering potentially valuable guidance for teacher trainers.

Additionally, the results reaffirm the concerns identified by Desbiens, Abdenour, and Negaz (2020) regarding internships: managing teaching tasks, evaluation, and support. However, the way these concerns were experienced varied greatly depending on the perfectionism profile. For example, a PPS student like Patricia

would approach teaching tasks with meticulous preparation and intrinsic motivation, but would sometimes question the feasibility of their efforts in real-world contexts. Conversely, a PPC student Carla would experience profound anxiety linked with evaluation, which would inhibit their ability to fully engage with teaching activities and take the initiative. A student in the MP profile, as represented by Maud, would exhibit particularly high vulnerability to exhaustion and self-doubt, emphasizing the compounded challenges of both having high personal standards and engaging in critical self-evaluation. Finally, an NP student like Nathan would be less affected by these concerns, approaching the internship with a balanced perspective and openness to feedback. While the assignment of profiles was based strictly on APS-R scores, some participants expressed attitudes or showed behaviours that could also be associated with other dimensions of perfectionism. This underlines the complexity of individual experiences and highlights the added value of combining quantitative and qualitative data to capture such nuances.

These findings align with existing research (Hill and Curran 2015; Madigan 2019), but emphasize the heightened vulnerability of students with MP profiles in teaching internships. This underscores the need for nuanced support strategies that consider the interplay between the dimensions proposed in Gaudreau and Thompson's (2010) 2×2 model of dispositional perfectionism: perfectionistic strivings and perfectionistic concerns.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study must be acknowledged. First, the small sample size ($n = 32$ and $n = 4$) and the use of a convenience sample limit the generalizability of the findings. Future research could replicate this study with larger and more diverse samples to validate the identified patterns. Second, the reliance on self-report data,

particularly for the APS-R, may introduce biases. Incorporating objective measures or peer evaluations could provide additional insights. Furthermore, this study focused on a single training year and institution in French-speaking Belgium. Longitudinal studies across different contexts could explore how perfectionism profiles evolve over time and influence career trajectories.

Practical implications

As a practical implication of this study, it seems advisable to raise awareness of potentially maladaptive perfectionist profiles and their associated costs among both student teachers and trainers. This would help them to recognize trends and provide tools for self-regulation, such as taking time for oneself or downplaying excessive demands. For trainers, this would enable them to adapt their stance more closely to the student and their needs. Introducing a screening process at the beginning of teacher training could help identify students at higher risk, enabling early support and tailored interventions. In this sense, the questionnaire we have used and the summary table we have created can be used as tools in teacher training. For student teachers, it seems that a program to help them regulate the way they do things would be useful, and certainly for those with a mixed profile.

This study uniquely connects perfectionist profiles with teacher training, offering new insights into their distribution among student teachers and what they look like in terms of student teachers' internship experiences. By highlighting these dynamics, it provides a foundation for trainers to develop tailored support strategies that enhance both trainee well-being and their professional growth.

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