

RELATIONSHIP OF PROCRASTINATION WITH LIFE SATISFACTION OF STUDENTS AT UNIVERSITY LEVEL

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ABSTRACT: Procrastination is a pervasive and widely spread problem among university students. It is the tendency to irrationally delay a task until the deadline. Therefore, the purpose of conducting this research was to find out the relationship of procrastination with life satisfaction of students. The sample of 200 students was derived from PMAS-Arid Agriculture University, Rawalpindi, Pakistan. Two standardized scales "Procrastination Scale" [1] and "Satisfaction with Life Scale" [2] with sound validity and reliability respectively, .89 and .87 were employed. Tendency of procrastination and degree of life satisfaction among students was calculated, through frequencies and percentages: whereas, gender difference in procrastination was examined through independent t-test. Moreover, bivariate Pearson correlation 'r' was applied for finding out the relationship between procrastination and satisfaction with life. The study found that almost half of the university students procrastinate on their work, and there was no significant difference among students on the basis of gender. More than two third of students were satisfied with their life; however, procrastination had a negative correlation with life satisfaction of students that depicts if procrastination get higher the satisfaction with life decreases among students. Therefore, it is concluded that procrastination has a significant relationship with life satisfaction of students. The study may be helpful for the educational professionals to draw their attention on devastating phenomenon of procrastination and to work upon those areas that mediate and moderate the negative relationship between procrastination and life satisfaction of students.

Keywords: procrastination, academic procrastination, satisfaction with life, university level

INTRODUCTION

Procrastination is a personality trait and considered as a complex phenomenon with cognitive, affective and behavioral component [3,4]. It is the tendency to postpone or delay the task intentionally until the day when it is required by saying "will do it tomorrow". It is the propensity to needlessly putting off the task despite the awareness of the negative consequences and usually results in subjective discomfort [5]. Almost everyone in this universe delay tasks to some extent in order to manage their multiple responsibilities but the tendency of putting off the tasks may vary person to person. It is considered that unreasonable delay to complete the task is not only associated with negative consequences in term of poor performance but also put anxiety and psychological distress [6] and results in decreased well-being and mental health [7]. Researchers most likely divide procrastination behavior into two types: personal or trait procrastination that is considered as chronic form of procrastination and situational procrastination [8]. Therefore, growing body of literature not only examine its tendency in general population but also in students' academic life.

Academic procrastination

Academic procrastination is commonly conceptualized as the act of needlessly putting of academic tasks to the deadlines. It is considered as the situational procrastinatory behavior in academic setting prevails among students [6]. It is the irrational tendency in initiating and completing the academic task. While Rothblum, Solomon and Murakami, defines academic procrastination as postponing the academic tasks such as preparation for exams, making assignments and delaying homework etc. [4]. Moreover, it is also considered as maladaptive behavior of intentionally avoiding the academic task that causes failure, academic unhappiness and stress [9].

Variety of researches reported varying degree of procrastination among students. Balkis and Duru's survey

reported, 23% students were engaged in procrastination behavior at university level [10]. Ozer et al. reported 52% students procrastinate on academic task [11]. More alarming were Ellis and Kuaus [12] and O'Brien [13] studies that estimated respectively, 95% and 80-95% prevalence of academic procrastination among students.

Although many students delay their work but the reasons for their procrastination may vary such as, self-regulatory failure [14,15], time management/study skills [16,17], low self-esteem [18], self-efficacy [19], self-doubt, perfectionism [20], feeling of incompetence, lower motivation [21,22], anxiety [23,24], task aversiveness/ lack of interest in task [25], biases and myths associated with tasks i.e. irrational belief, problem avoidance, perceived task difficulty, and perceived negative outcome of the task such as failure etc [23,26].

Moreover, differences in procrastination tendency among students were also found on the basis of demographics mostly on gender. So, various studies examine its tendency on the basis of gender but present inconsistent results therefore researchers believed that it is difficult to explore this phenomenon [14]. Some studies highlighted that gender difference do not exist [27,28,29,30]. While some of them reported female students have higher tendency to procrastinate [31] due the fear of failure and laziness [32]. On other hand, bulk of researches reported male students procrastinate more than females [33,34,35,36] whatever the results were, almost all depict the negative consequence of procrastination on the individual's subjective wellbeing. Subjective wellbeing is the individual's cognitive and affective evaluation of his or her own life [37, 38]. Affective component of subjective wellbeing has been given considerable importance in literature but cognitive that is judgmental component and conceptualized as one's satisfaction with his or her life was neglected [38]. In the positive psychology, life satisfaction is considered as the part of happiness and happiness is operationalized as "subjective well-being" one's own assessment of life [39]. Commonly

students' academic life is believed to be filled with a lot of challenges, worries, competitions and deadlines. So, in this regard their life satisfaction is a crucial subject for present research.

Life satisfaction

Life satisfaction is the individual's global or overall cognitive judgment of his or her personal life [38,40]. It assesses the quality of life at general and individual's satisfaction level with his or her presumed life standard by assessing the difference in the actual and ideal standards [40]. Though everyone has set some standards and ideals in their life to be reached, but some students set unrealistic goals and expectation in their academic life, such as "doing perfect" such behavior is commonly conceptualized as perfectionism. Number of researches explored that maladaptive perfectionism leads to academic anxiety due to procrastination or students' own and externally imposed standards [41,42,43]. Likewise, it is argued that one's ability to meet the standards increases the life satisfaction while the difference between the perceived and actual standards decreases the life satisfaction [20]. Meanwhile, it is also argued that success in academic life affect the overall life satisfaction the higher the achievement rate higher will be the life satisfaction of students [20, 44]. Therefore, it is can be stated that procrastination has direct and indirect causal relationship with students' life satisfaction.

Procrastination and life satisfaction

As, it is reflected from different research studies that procrastination affect the students' academic and social life negatively [45,46,47]. Therefore, many researchers attempt to draw the relationship of procrastination with life satisfaction of students. Hence, many researches have yielded significant negative relationship between procrastination and life satisfaction of students [5,6,9,48]. While on self-reported data, procrastinators reported to have lower life satisfaction [34]

HYPOTHESIS

The study was carried out under the research hypothesis.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between academic procrastination and life satisfaction of students.

Objectives

1. To identify the tendency of academic procrastination among students
2. To identify the tendency of academic procrastination among male and female students (to differentiate male and female students' tendency to procrastinate on the basis of high and low procrastinators).
3. To find out the difference between male and female students on their academic procrastination.
4. To measure the degree of students' satisfaction with life.
5. To find out the relationship of academic procrastination with the life satisfaction of students.

Problem statement

Procrastination is the behavioural tendency of irrationally postponing the required tasks to unknown time that is prevailing entire the globe. The unreasonable delay of the task creates subjective discomfort, hence affect one's happiness and satisfaction with life. This dysfunctional and maladaptive behavior is common among university students which affect their subjective wellbeing. In this regard, the

present study attempts to examine the tendency of academic procrastination among students and its relationship with the life satisfaction of students at university level.

Delimitations of the study

The study is delimited to,

1. Pir Merhr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture university Rawalpindi (PMAS-UAAR) Pakistan
2. Session: spring, 2016

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Population of the study consisted of all the students studying at university level, but (due to time constrain) study is delimited PMAS-UAAR. The study was correlational in nature and survey design was employed.

Participants

The sample of the study was derived from PMAS-UAAR Pakistan. Two hundred participants were randomly selected to conduct investigations in different programs of university.

Measures/Materials

Demographic information was taken and self-reported scales were employed to obtain data from the participants of the study. For data collection two different measures were used. Firstly, Procrastination Scale (PS) for students and second Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS).

Demographics

Demographics information was taken that include name, gender, class and program of study.

Procrastination scale

The Procrastination Scale for student population [1] is a 20-items scale with five response categories. It was designed to measure students' academic procrastination behavior. Ten items on a scale were false-keyed (3,4,6,8,11,13,14,15,18,20) hence reversed scored where 1=5, 2=4 and 3 neutral. Higher scores on scale by students reflect higher procrastination while lower scores indicate lower procrastination. Lay [49] reported .89 reliability of the scale while as mentioned by Ransom-Flint [50] the scale demonstrates Cronbach's alpha .82 and test-retest reliability .80.

Satisfaction with life scale

"Satisfaction with life scale" (SWLS) is the measure of global cognitive judgment of an individual's life satisfaction developed by Diener, Emmons, Larsen & Griffin [2]. The scale is consisted of 5 items rated upon 7-point scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 7 "strongly agree" having the internal consistency of .87 and test-retest reliability .82 within the two month period.

Procedure

Self-rating scales were administered randomly after obtaining the willingness of the participant. Data were collected during spring 2016 semester. After data collection scoring was done according to the prescribed procedures of the scales.

Data analysis

Two hundred participants took part in survey, 64 (32%) were male and 136 (68%) were female. To determine the tendency of procrastination among students first of all scoring of the scale was done. The score on each item summed up to obtain total score on the scale. The higher score reflect higher procrastination while lower score reflect lower procrastination. The range of students' procrastination scores was 37-85. However, there is no clear cutoff between high

and low procrastination therefor median split was used to transform continuous data into categorical. The main purpose of median split is to put data into high and low categories where below median is “low” and every value above median as “high”. For this study, median split is 57 therefor greater than and equal to (\geq) 57 were considered as high procrastinators.

Table 1: Median split on procrastination score

N	Valid	200
	Missing	0
Median		57.0000

The scoring of SWLS is continuously summing up the scores on each item. Then students’ responses were categorized into the prescribed categories (benchmarks) such as 31-35 “Extremely satisfied”, 26-30 “Satisfied”, 21-25 “Slightly satisfied”, 20 “Neutral”, 15-19 “Slightly dissatisfied”, 10-14 “Dissatisfied”, 5-9 “Extremely dissatisfied” to measure the degree of satisfaction.

Independent t-test was applied to find out the differences in the tendency of procrastination on the basis of gender. Correlation was run to find out the relationship between procrastination and satisfaction with life among students.

RESULTS

Data on the tendency of procrastination revealed that out of two hundred participant (200), 95 (47.5%) were low procrastinator and 105 (52.5%) were high procrastinator. That represents more than half students procrastinate their work at university level.

Table 2: Tendency of procrastination among students

	Frequency	Percent
low procrastinators	95	47.5
high procrastinators	105	52.5
Total	200	100.0

Table 3: Gender difference in tendency of low and high procrastination

			Procrastination		Total
			low procrastinators	high procrastinators	
Gender	M	Count	28	36	64
		% within gender	43.8%	56.2%	100.0%
	F	Count	67	69	136
		% within gender	49.3%	50.7%	100.0%
Total		Count	95	105	200
		% within gender	47.5%	52.5%	100.0%

Table 3 represents the tendency of procrastination among male and female students. Frequency distribution shows that

out of 64 male students 28 (43.8%) were low procrastinators and 36 (56.2%) were high procrastinators. While out of 136 female students 67 (49.3%) were low procrastinators and 69 (50.7%) were higher procrastinator.

Table 4: Gender difference in procrastination

Procrastination	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
					F	Sig.	T	df	Sig.
	Male	64	1.5625	.50000	2.018	.157	.726	198	.469
Female	136	1.5074	.50179						

Table 4 shows that Levene’s test for variance found insignificant because $p > 0.05$. So, by assuming the equal variance results reflected that on average male participant procrastinate higher ($M = 1.5625, SE = .50000$) than to the female students ($M = 1.5074, SE = .50179$). However, the difference between male and female students was found insignificant at $t(198) = .726, p > 0.05$. Therefore, we concluded that there was no significant difference between the means of two groups (male and female students). Both male and female students have equal tendency to procrastinate their work.

Table 5: Degree of students’ satisfaction with life

		Frequency	Percent
Satisfaction With Life	Extremely dissatisfied	4	2.0
	Dissatisfied	25	12.5
	Slightly dissatisfied	31	15.5
	Neutral	7	3.5
	Slightly satisfied	49	24.5
	Satisfied	59	29.5
	Extremely satisfied	25	12.5
	Total	200	100.0

Result on the table 5 represents the degree of students’ satisfaction with their lives which was categorized into seven categories. Frequency distribution shows that out of two hundred participants 4 (2%) were extremely dissatisfied, 25 (12.5%) were dissatisfied, 31 (15.5%) were slightly dissatisfied, 7 (3.5%) were neutral, 49 (24.5%) were slightly satisfied, 59 (29.5%) were satisfied and 25 (12.5%) were extremely satisfied. The highest percentage was fall in the category of “satisfied” that is 29.5%. If the scores on the three categories of “dissatisfaction” were combined it shows that 30% students were dissatisfied with their lives while the combination of the three categories of “satisfaction” indicates that 66.5% students were satisfied with their lives that are almost double of dissatisfaction categories. So, the results reflected that almost two third of the participants were satisfied with their lives.

Table 6 demonstrates the correlation between students’ academic procrastination scores and satisfaction with life scores ($r = -.180, p < 0.05$), which represented significant but negative weak correlation between the variables under study.

Therefore, it was revealed that when procrastination increases the life satisfaction decreases or vice versa.

Table 6: Correlations between Academic Procrastination and Life Satisfaction of Students

		Procrastination scores	Satisfaction with life scores
Procrastination scores	Pearson Correlation	1	-.180*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.011
	N	200	200
Satisfaction with life scores	Pearson Correlation	-.180*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.011	
	N	200	200

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

DISCUSSION

The results of the study reflected that a total of 105 (52.5%) out of the 200 participants scored higher on procrastination. In other words, half of the participants reported higher tendency to procrastinate their work. The results are in line with previous finding [11]. The gender difference in procrastination had shown differences in literature, however the study findings are consistent with some researches which indicate that no significant difference exists in the tendency to procrastinate between male and female students [27,28,29,30] and inconsistent with many others that indicate that gender differences do exist [31,33,34].

Results on the life satisfaction scale depicts that 66.5% students are satisfied with their life that is more than two third of the sample. The probable reason for such higher percentage may be the cultural and religious practices that prevail in the home and society. It is argued that various cultural beliefs, contexts and practices play a vital role in shaping the inner emotions and hence provide judgments of life satisfaction [51].

Moreover, findings revealed that a significant negative relationship exists between procrastination and life satisfaction of students. The negative relationship indicates the inverse relationship between academic procrastination and life satisfaction of students. In this regard, the findings are in line with the previous literature [5,6,9,37]. Therefore, it conforms with the study's main hypothesis that procrastination has a significant relationship with life satisfaction. Although, students reflect the higher degree of percentages in satisfaction with life categories, but results also revealed that procrastination has a significant negative relationship with life satisfaction. That further indicates that higher level of procrastination may result in lower subjective well being of university students due to the stress and anxiety that student experienced by delaying their work [37]. The second probable reason for lower life satisfaction may be the lower performance or academic grade due to procrastination [16].

Present study subject to some limitations: firstly, only one university is selected and the sample size is small/inadequate that limit the scope of generalization. Secondly, simple random sampling techniques were employed to draw the sample in order to provide the equal chance to the group representative, but it yields unequal data on the part of demographic "gender". These factors restrict and limit the results for generalization on large populations. Despite all these facts study has several implications for research and practice, mainly helpful for students to change their attitude towards procrastination and also for researchers, teachers, and academic counselors to provide proper guidance and intervention to overcome the growing trend of procrastination and helping students to live satisfied and successful life.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study was conducted to examine the tendency of procrastination among students and its relationship with their life satisfaction. On the basis of findings it is concluded that more than half of the students procrastinate their work. On average, male students marginally procrastinate higher than female students but the difference was found insignificant. Therefore, it is concluded that there is no significant difference on the scores of procrastination among male and female students. By the results it was also revealed that almost two third of the students were satisfied with their lives, but at the same time study results indicated that procrastination had an inverse relationship with the life satisfaction of students. So, it is concluded that when the students procrastinate higher their satisfaction with life decreases.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Procrastination is the commonly occurring phenomenon among the university students, but the higher degree of procrastination is chronic for the academic and subjective life of students at general and may result in subjective distress and anxiety. Therefore, to overcome this problem, cognitive-behavioral intervention and rational motive behavior therapy may be helpful to modify the behavior and irrational belief of students such as perfectionism, self-doubt and over estimation of abilities. In addition, students may employ effective time management skills, self-discipline and internal self-control to achieve success. Self-regulatory measure and goal-orientation can also play an important role to reach towards the goal. For future research, the causal relationships of procrastination with life satisfaction will be beneficial to explore that mediate and moderate the relationship. In this regard, future research can be conducted on exploring the role of institutional culture in predicting procrastination and life satisfaction of students.

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