

Academic Stress on Academic Procrastination and its Effects on Students

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Introduction

Academic procrastination, which represents the intentional delay in the completion of activities, projects, and exam preparation, is quite common among students. According to various estimates, between half and 90 % of college and university students prone to this behaviour and the prevalence of this phenomenon rises. Researchers and practitioners note that academic procrastination leads to negative consequences on student's academic progress and well-being. All this is a source of growing interest of researchers in the problem of academic procrastination [1].

The purpose of this study is to analyze the links between procrastination, stress level, response to stressors, and academic performance. The main objectives of this study are: analyzing the interaction of procrastination, student stress and academic performance; determination of the severity of the components of procrastination and stress in students with different academic achievements. The subject of the study is the relationship between procrastination, stressors, responses to stressors, and academic performance. The following hypotheses were tested: procrastination is positively associated with stress; low-performing students are more likely to procrastinate and have stress.

Text Procrastination is a stable disposition expressed in a person's tendency to delay the completion of actions at a later time, which leads to negative experiences and an unfavourable outcome. Procrastination differs from planned postponement in that it is unscheduled and actually means delaying things that were planned. Procrastination, usually occurs when one activity is unnecessarily delayed, and individuals experience extremely severe agitation when they start thinking about it. With regard to various emotional, cognitive, and behavioral factors of procrastination, different types of procrastination have been mentioned, including academic procrastination, neurotic procrastination, compulsive procrastination, decisional procrastination, among which academic procrastination comes out top [2].

The pursuit of higher education is a time of transition marked by a set of unexpected sociocultural, environmental challenges with their increased academic loads. The fields of engineering, design/fine arts and medicine have become main stream and every 5th student is taking one of these courses as their specialization in under graduation in India. With exceeding demands to excel in academics this age group is vulnerable to academic stress and may force to adopt maladaptive coping strategies/methods to deal with their daily academic demands. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between academic stress, academic procrastination and its impact on self-regulation pattern of the students as they progress from 1st year to 4th year. Perception of Academic Stress Scale (18 item scale), The Academic Procrastination Scale (25 item scale), and Self-regulation Questionnaire (63 item scale) was used. A total of 430 undergraduate students from 3 different fields of study - namely 141 Design/ Fine Arts Students i.e., 71 of 2nd year students and 70 of 4th year students, 140 of Engineering Students i.e., 70 of 2nd year students and 70 of 4th year students and 149 of Medical Students i.e., 79 of 2nd year students and 70 of 4th year students participated in this study. The statistical tests (Viz. Correlation, ANOVA and regression) have been used to analyse

the data using SPSS 16.0. Using correlation analysis, results revealed that there was a significant relationship between academic stress, academic procrastination and self-regulation between the 2nd years and 4th years of design, medical and engineering students. By using ANOVA, it is found that there is a significant difference in the levels of self-regulation and its dimensions: receiving, searching, implementing, assessing, and dimensions of academic stress: academic expectations, faculty work and examinations, student's academic self-perception in 4th year students based on the branch. There is a significant difference in the levels of faculty work and examination in the 2nd year based on the branch of academic stress, academic procrastination and self-regulation and subscales between 2nd and 4th years. Academic stress is negatively correlated with academic procrastination. Academic stress is positively correlated to self-regulation and academic procrastination is negatively correlated to self-regulation. In this study, the main predictors of "academic procrastination" are "academic stress" and "self-regulation." The sample of the study reveals that there are different environmental demands which make significant changes in one's levels of academic stress, academic procrastination and self-regulation of these traditional and contemporary disciplines (Figure 1) [3-5].

Discussion

The research found that low-performing students are more prone to experiencing procrastination, laziness, and impulsive decision-making when trying to manage their time. At the same time, high-performing students are capable of self-control and can organize and structure their activities. Therefore, in accordance with the results obtained, it can be claimed that academic procrastination among students is an indicator of academic decline. Yet, the only question that remains is whether a high propensity to procrastination causes academic decline or, vice

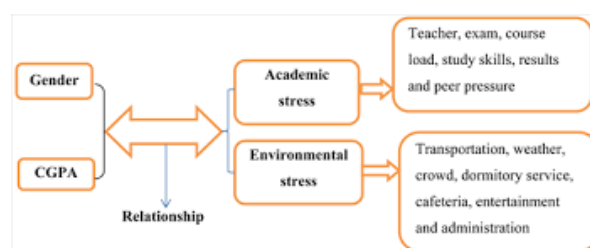


Figure 1: Academic performance stress overview.

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versa, poor performance leads to procrastination as a mechanism for coping with stress [6,7].

Studies have found that procrastination can act as a coping mechanism in the fight against dissatisfaction with one's own progress and achievements. The analysis of the relationship between the indicators of procrastination and stressors, as well as of the responses to them in students, showed that the higher the student's social anxiety, failure avoidance, procrastination incidence, laziness, poor perfectionism and impulsiveness levels, the higher he or she evaluates all stressors, as well as the severity of responses to them. Perhaps procrastination helps them to justify inaction caused by the fear of making a mistake, being unsuccessful, attracting excessive attention to themselves, or realising how helpless they are. Thus, in presence of a high procrastination level, there are also high levels of distress, emotional and behavioural responses. The correlation relationships found between procrastination, stress, and academic performance indicates the possibility to adjust behaviour strategies via counselling [8].

Conclusion

The analysis of the relationship between procrastination, stress level and academic performance of students has allowed for drawing the main conclusions: One of the topical focus areas of the modern education system is studying the causes and consequences of procrastination in people of different ages. Students who delay doing their homework are more susceptible to stressors, and their response to them is more acute. They are more likely to experience frustration and dissatisfaction, as well as psychological stress, which manifest itself in nervousness, headaches, gastrointestinal disorders, exhaustion, fear, anxiety, anger, and a sense of guilt. In general, stress levels are significantly higher in the low-performing group [9, 10]. A comparative study of procrastination coping strategies for groups of students with different academic performance showed that low-performing students

are more prone to experiencing procrastination, laziness and a lack of discipline. Successful students are capable of self-control; they can organize and structure their activities. The correlation analysis data allow for the conclusion that a high level of procrastination is related to stress and academic failure.

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