
Academic Procrastination and Resilience Among College Students

Amal Asok Kumar, Jayalakshmi R. J.

PG-MSc Psychology, Kristu Jyoti College of Management and Technology, Kerala

Abstract

The academic period is a very significant aspect of an individual's development. Although it is constantly observed that students fail to achieve their full potential. Procrastination or the act of delaying tasks might be a major reason in this aspect. The present study has focused upon the relationship between academic procrastination and resilience. Resilience is the ability to bounce back from difficulties and adapt to such situations. The Academic Procrastination Scale Short Form (APS - SF) and the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) was used in order to measure the procrastination and resilience among students, respectively. The measures were administered among 80 undergraduate college students selected through convenient sampling method. The data was analysed with Spearman's correlation method. The results show a significant negative correlation between academic procrastination and resilience. Hence it is inferred that if students can develop high resilience they may procrastinate much less in their academic activities. The limitations and suggestions for further studies are discussed.

Keywords: Procrastination, resilience, college students, correlation.

1. Introduction

Procrastination is the act of delaying tasks intentionally or habitually (Ludwig & Schicker, 2013). The word comes from the Latin verb "procrastinare" which means to postpone to tomorrow. When an individual is procrastinating, he or she will be spending more time on more trivial activities rather than productive ones. Procrastination is universal problem reducing the productivity and opportunities of millions of people in various areas of activities. Among the academic community procrastination is a very prevalent issue causing serious error on the part of students. It has been estimated that about 80 to 95% of students engage in procrastination daily (Steel, 2007). Behaviour theorists have theorized that students who procrastinate is very likely to have a history of successful procrastination where they did tasks at the last moment, or and finding more pleasurable activities than studying (Ferrari, Johnson, & McCown, 1995). There is common misunderstanding that procrastination is same as laziness, although it has been theorized that procrastination is a self-defence behaviour intended to protect one's own self-worth (Fiore, 2007). Procrastinators are not simply lazy rather there are various psychological aspects that drives the act of procrastination such as an external locus of control where the students attribute their success to external factors, and a high standard of perfectionism, which in turn makes them late completing works (Ferrari, Johnson, & McCown, 1995). Hence, we can assume that procrastination is a highly subjective phenomenon with underlying personal factors. It is found that academic procrastination is positively correlated with the personality trait of neuroticism (Ocansey et al., 2020). As the student become more neurotic, he or she is more likely to procrastinate. This further supports the claim that procrastination is neurotic self-defence which helps us avoid aversive activities and protects our self-worth (Fiore, 2007).

The present study is focused on the effects of resilience in academic procrastination. Resilience generally refers to a class of phenomena characterized by patterns of positive adaptation in the context of significant adversity or risk (Masten & Reed, 2002). Resilience is often characterized by the individual's ability to bounce back from the difficult conditions to socially desired aspects of academical achievements, absence of undesirable behaviours such as criminal activities or psychological distress etc. Resilience is very beneficial to everyone despite of their demographics. Students who had increased personal resilience and coping skills were found to be able to cope well with mandatory lockdown period that happened during the Covid-19 pandemic (Labrague & Ballad, 2021). This is further observed among LGBTQ students, among them it was found that those students

with high psychological resilience had comparatively low chances of depression, suicidal ideation and had a moderating effect on the interpersonal microaggressions that they may face in the academic campus (Woodford et al., 2018).

Longitudinal studies (Masten & Reed, 2002) on resilience have found that even when children are born in difficult situations, they may become more resilient if they had an outgoing disposition and if they were able to engage several sources of support such as better infantile care, intelligence, and perceptions of self-worth. But only one-third of children has such characteristics, and the rest often has psychological issues in life. Although it is interesting that the majority of such individuals (about 80%) had bounced back to be more resilient in their mid-30s. This was attributed to the presence of a supportive mentor, such as a teacher, or a guide. Hence it can be understood that resilience has both dispositional and situational antecedents.

Largely external adaptation towards the risky or difficult situations are given more importance than internal adaptation such as good psychological wellbeing and emotional health. Although it is accepted that the external adaptation defines resilience, the internal factors might play a larger role as the determinants or predictors of resilience in life. Hence, we can assume that a large array of cognitive and subjective factors plays a great role in an individual's capacity to be resilient.

2. Methodology

2.1 Participants

The purpose of the study is to assess the relationship between procrastination and resilience among college students. The sample selection was done using the convenience sampling technique. The sample consisted of 80 college students in the age group of 18 to 22. The data collection was administered using Google forms. The data collection was conducted based on the consent of the students in their leisure time. The participant was assured that the data collected would be kept strictly confidential and it would be used only for research purposes. The participants were thanked for their participation after completing the process. The collected data was analysed using SPSS (v 25), the relationship between the two variables was assessed using Spearman bivariate correlation.

2.2 Measures

2.2.1 Academic Procrastination

The Academic Procrastination Scale Short Form (APS - SF) for college students, with 5 items, prepared by Yockey (2016) was used. The scale measures the academic procrastination tendencies of an individual.

2.2.2 Resilience

The Brief Resilience Scale (BRS), developed by (Smith, et al., 2008). The scale has 6 items that measure the individual's resilience ability.

3. Result and Discussion

The results of the data analysis are shown in the table 1

Table 1

The analysis of correlation between academic procrastination and resilience among college students.

	Academic Procrastination
Resilience	-.258*

N = 80

*p < .05

The results shows that there is a negative correlation between academic procrastination and resilience (-.258*).

The purpose of the present study is to assess the relationship between procrastination and resilience among college students. The results have shown that there is significant negative correlation between academic procrastination and resilience among college students. Hence, we can understand that having a higher level of resilience is much likely to help students to overcome their tendencies to procrastinate their academic activities. This could potentially help them enhance their academic achievements and their overall quality of life may increase.

The previous studies have shown that about 80 to 95% of students procrastinate daily (Steel, 2007). Students could be avoiding the intended task or engaging in more pleasurable tasks. Building up resilience would be an effective method to cope up with avoidance related procrastination. It can be assumed that students may procrastinate when their activities are difficult or become more perilous than they can handle. In this aspect, having a mentor such as teacher could help the student to overcome the difficulties they would face in their academic activities. Such results have been observed by researchers studying resilience (Masten & Reed, 2002), it would require much more research to put them into an active use. Although having a guiding figure would certainly improve their academic and social activities.

The present study has used a small sample size and included only college students. Hence the generalizability of the research findings maybe difficult. Although we can understand that there is a relationship between academic procrastination and resilience. Further research in the area is necessary in order draw more intricate and in-depth conclusions.

4. Conclusion

The purpose of the current study was to assess the relationship between academic procrastination and resilience among college students. The results have shown that there is a significant negative correlation between academic procrastination and resilience. It is implied that students who have higher residence rate would have a lower tendency to procrastinate on their academic activities. It would be possible to develop methods to improve resilience among the students and therefore reduce procrastination. Although such an endeavour would require further research in a more diverse and larger sample. In further studies, it would be good to investigate various other aspects that contribute to academic procrastination and resilience.

Reference

- Ferrari, J. R., Johnson, J. L., & McCown, W. G. (1995). *Procrastination And Task Avoidance: Theory, Research, And Treatment*. Springer Science+Business Media .
- Fiore, N. A. (2007). *The now habit : a strategic program for overcoming procrastination and enjoying guilt-free play*. Penguin Books Ltd.
- Ludwig, P., & Schicker, A. (2013). *The End of Procrastination*. Murdoch Books.
- Masten, A. S., & Reed, J. M.-G. (2002). Resilience in Development. In C. R. Snyder, & S. J. Lopez, *Handbook of Positive Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
- Smith, B. W., Dalen, J., Wiggins, K., Tooley, E., Christopher, P., & Bernard, J. (2008). The brief resilience scale: assessing the ability to bounce back. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 194-200.
- Steel, P. (2007). The nature of procrastination: a quintessential self regulatory failure. *Psychology Bulletin*, 65-94.
- Yockey, R. D. (2016). Validation of the Short Form of the Academic Procrastination Scale. *Psychological Reports*, 118(1), 171-179.
- Zabelina, E., Chestyunina, Y., Trushina, I., & Vedeneyeva, E. (2018). Time Perspective as a Predictor of Procrastination. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 87-93.
- Zimbardo, P., & Boyd, J. (2008). *The Time Paradox*. Simon & Schuster, Inc.