

## “Relationship Between Academic Procrastination and Academic Achievement of School Students”



### Psychology

**KEYWORDS:** Procrastination, Academic Procrastination and Academic Achievement.

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### ABSTRACT

*Academic Procrastination is a complex self-handicapping psychological behaviour that affects everyone to some degree or another. It is a behaviour that occurs when people delay completing a task they intend to complete, potentially leading to lost productivity, poor performance, and increased stress. The present study aimed to investigate the academic procrastination of the 12<sup>th</sup> standard school students using an adapted scale based on Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS1990). Result indicate no significant difference in the level of academic procrastination between boys and girls students from science and arts background. The result further indicate non significant negative correlation between academic procrastination and academic achievement of the school students.*

### Introduction –

Procrastination is a common human behaviour that has historically emerged as early as preschool, a pervasive weakness in which most people engage during their life. As early as 1400 B.C., Egyptian hieroglyphics demonstrate people struggling with basic time management that transformed into serious problem among the present day school students than ever before. Procrastination is defined as unnecessarily deferment of an action that should be done or have priority or leaving it to the last minute. It is the practice of doing more pleasurable ones or carrying out less urgent task instead of more urgent ones thus putting off impending tasks to a later time. In this paper, an attempt has been made to study the impact of academic procrastination, on student's academic achievement and the causes of academic procrastination among higher secondary school students.

### Definition of Procrastination-

The word procrastination originates from the Latin “procrastinatus,” which is divided into two parts. The first part “pro” means “forward” and the second part “crastinatus” means “of tomorrow” (Klein, 1971). Thus, procrastination translates to delaying something until tomorrow. “Procrastination is the tendency to delay or completely avoid responsibilities, decisions, or tasks that need to be done” (Tuckman & Sexton, 1986). Nevertheless, Procrastination cannot be simply defined as person's intentional delaying or completing a task as people have different perceptions regarding delay. (Van Eerde, 2003). In addition to a person intending to delay a task, it is counter-productive and needless.

### Academic Procrastination –

Academic procrastination is “intentionally delaying or deferring work that must be completed” (Schraw et al, 2007). It involves knowing that one needs to carry out an academic task or undertake an academic activity, such as writing a term paper, studying for examinations, or finishing a school related project, or undertaking the weekly reading assignments, but, for one reason or another, failing to motivate oneself to do so within the expected time frame. A recent panel study from Germany among several thousand university student found that increasing academic procrastination increases the frequency of seven different forms of academic misconduct, i.e., using fraudulent excuses, plagiarism, copying from someone else in exams, using forbidden means in exams, copying part of homework from others, fabrication or falsification of data and the variety of academic misconduct.

Research repeatedly shows that academic procrastination is a highly complex human behaviour that involves a combination of affective, cognitive, and behavioral components and cannot be summarized easily. Psychologically, the pleasure principle may be responsible for procrastination; one may prefer to avoid negative emotions, and to delay stressful tasks. Currently, even though academic procrastination is an extensive and potentially harmful phenomenon, there is still much information that needs to be examined and understood.

Therefore, in this study an effort has been made to investigate academic procrastination among male and female higher secondary school students and the problem of the study is stated as-

### Statement of the Problem-

“Relationship Between Academic Procrastination and Academic Achievement of School Students”

### Objectives of the Study-

1. To know the level of academic procrastination among the H. S school students.
2. To examine the gender differences in academic procrastination of H. S school students.
3. To examine the differences in academic procrastination among students of arts and science stream.
4. To examine the relationship between academic procrastination and academic achievement of H. S school students.
5. To know the reasons of academic procrastination among the school students.

### Hypotheses of the Study-

1. There exists no significant difference in academic procrastination of male and female school students.
2. There exists no significant difference in academic procrastination of students from arts and science stream.
3. There exists no significant relationship between academic procrastination and academic achievement of school students.

### Review of Related Literature –

Academic procrastination has been a prevalent phenomenon on school, college and university campuses for decades. Recently, Day, Mensink, and O'Sullivan (2000) noted that nearly 50% of college students procrastinate consistently and problematically. Özer, Demir, and Ferrari (2009) reported that 52% of the surveyed undergraduates in their study were labeled as procrastinators. Gender based studies on procrastination demonstrated that female students procrastinate more frequently (Washington, 2004; Rodarte-Luna & Sherry, 2008) while some studies proved a different attitude depicting that procrastination is common among male students (Prohaska, Morrill, Atiles & Perez, 2000). The correlation between academic procrastination and academic achievement is also highly debated. An abundance of research has shown that the passive form of academic procrastination has significant adverse effects on academic progress, such as late assignments, lower grades, and course withdrawals.

### Significance of the study –

Academic procrastination leads students to experience various psychological and behavioural problems, such as anxiety, depression, cheating and plagiarism, fear of failure and task evasiveness. Past research has paid prime attention to the nature, antecedents, and consequences of academic procrastination at the college or university level. Only a few studies and publications focus on the

causes and coping strategies to help students reduce procrastination. Therefore, the findings of the study will be helpful in knowing the status and causes of academic procrastination of the school students that will contribute in enhancing student's performance and personality as well.

**Methods of the Study –**

Descriptive survey method has been used in the study to know the status of academic procrastination of the higher secondary school students.

**Sample –**

The sample consists of 70 Higher secondary school students of which boys 30, girls 40 selected randomly from 6 higher secondary schools and junior colleges of rural Kamrup.

**Tools –**

Adapted version of Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS) developed by Tuckman, 1991 is 16 items measure concerning academic behaviour has been used to know the level of academic procrastination of the school students. Self structured questionnaire to know the reasons of academic procrastination and personal data sheet were used. The participant's average performance in H. S. First yr Examination was considered as academic achievement.

**Statistical Analysis –**

Simple percentage for knowing the reasons of procrastination and 't' test for knowing the differences in procrastination among the students have been accepted

**.Delimitation of the Study-**

The findings of the study is limited higher secondary school students of the selected area. Another limitation in the use of self-report measures as the sole indicators of procrastination rather than actual observation of behaviour is there.

**Analysis and Interpretation –**

The analysis of the collected data are presented in the following tables-

**Table -1 Level and Significance of difference in Academic procrastination of the H. S. school students –**

Variable	Category	N	M	SD	t	Remarks
Sex	Girls	40	37.64	6.38	1.13	---
	Boys	30	35.52	8.62		
Stream	Science	27	37.42	8.11	0.98	---
	Arts	43	35.63	7.14		
Total	70	36.58	7.50			

From the table 1,it can be observed that higher secondary school students have an above average level of academic procrastination. Though the mean score difference between boys (35.52) and girls (37.64) is not statistically significant at any level of consideration, boys students are found to have more procrastination than the girls. Therefore, the hypothesis of no difference in procrastination between boys and girls students has been accepted. In the same way, the mean score (.98) difference of science (37.42) and arts (35.63) stream students are also not statistically significant, though students from arts stream have been found to be more procrastinator. Many studies result in the same direction, concluded that procrastination behaviour is more commonly found in male students than females. Balkis and Duru (2009) observed that male students intend to procrastinate more than female students.

**Relation between Academic Procrastination and Academic Achievement**

**Table-2 Co-efficient of correlation between Academic procrastination and Academic Achievement**

Variables	r	Remarks
Academic Procrastination	-0.16	Not Significant
Academic Achievement		

From the table 2, it has been observed that the coefficient of correlation between academic procrastination and academic achievement (-0.16) of the higher secondary school students are negative but not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant correlation between academic procrastination and academic achievement has been accepted. A previous study found that the average correlation for overall academic performance across 41 studies in Steel's (2007) meta-analysis was -.20. However, other studies found that academic procrastination has little effect on academic achievement (Beck, et al, 2000; Beswick, et al., 1988; Lay, 1986; Pychyl, et al, 2000; Solomon & Rothblum, 1988).

**Table-3 Reasons for Procrastination**

Sl No	Reasons	No of Students(-%)	Male	Female
1	Difficulty in completing task	40 (55.56)	16	24
2	Lack of Motivation	57 (81.71)	27	30
3	Fear of failure	42 (60.00)	16	26
4	Unpleasant; Overwhelming	41 (50.80)	23	18
5	Fear of unknown	38 (54.00)	13	25
6	Parental expectation and perfectionism	29 (41.10)	19	10

**Reasons for procrastination-**

Motivational level is considered as the main cause of procrastination which is further influenced by those behavioural and emotional processes which are related with task averting situation. Besides, fear of unknown, difficulties in completion of the allotted task, unpleasant and overwhelming feelings experienced, fear of failure parental pressure are some of the causes reported by the students for which they procrastinate in academic activities.

**Major Findings-**

1. The higher secondary level students have above average level of academic procrastination.
2. There is no significant difference among boys and girls students regarding level of academic procrastination.
3. The students of arts stream do not differ significantly from that of science stream in academic procrastination.
4. There is no significant relationship exists between academic procrastination and academic achievement of the higher secondary school students.
5. Students do found mostly in the habit of academic procrastination due to lack of motivation.

**Suggestions –**

The strategies for remedying academic procrastination include cognitive-oriented strategies such as identifying and prioritizing goals, allocating appropriate time and resources to each goal. Affective strategies aimed at augmenting the cognitive strategies that include building confidence, maintaining a positive attitude, linking the personal meaning of the overall goal to the academic task at hand as the result of higher-level hope, and even serving as a stress-reduction mechanism. Students should take the help of counselling for self-defeating problems such as fear, anxiety difficulty in concentrating poor time management indecisiveness and perfectionism., besides setting realistic goals, developing personal positive link between the tasks, evaluating own goal, strengths, weaknesses and priorities. Students should be motivated to energize their self with enjoyable activities, socializing and constructive hobbies.

**Educational Implication-**

The findings have important educational implications for teachers, counsellors, and parents as most studies have focused much more on college academics than high school students. With new

technologies and distractions available each day, it is becoming increasingly important to know how to control and reduce such tendencies in students. The academic procrastination prevalent in both college and high school should be reduced as much as possible following the strategies for checking it.

### Conclusion

This investigation about the academic procrastination prevalent among the student community contributes to our understanding of why do students procrastinate and how it can be tackled. The findings of this study suggest parents and educators of adolescents to be most concerned, and teach their children and students the value of working today and not to wait for tomorrow.

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