



ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Psychology

ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION AMONG PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS: THE ROLE OF ANXIETY AND DEPRESSION

KEY WORDS: Academic procrastination, Anxiety, Depression

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ABSTRACT

An attempt was made in the present investigation to study the impact of anxiety and depression on academic procrastination among professional students. Sample of the present study consists of 400 professional students in the region of Andhra Pradesh, India. Academic procrastination scale developed by Tuckman (1991), Anxiety scale developed by Sinha (2002) and Depression scale developed by Shamin Karim and Rama Tiwari (1986) were used to collect the data. A 2x2 factorial design was employed. ANOVA and 't' test were used to analyze the data. Findings of the study revealed that anxiety and depression have significant impact on academic procrastination among professional students.

INTRODUCTION

Every single human being either working or non-working has to complete numerous tasks during a day for an effective performance, but for certain reasons completion of these required tasks is often delayed. This general tendency of delaying or postponing different task is referred as procrastination. Although procrastination is a phenomenon which is globally seen but equally likely unfavourable around the globe, it affects the individual's daily routine in negative way.

Milgram (1991) proposed that procrastination is initially defined as a series of delay or postpone one task because of the involvement of another task perceived as more important or satisfying which results in the imperfect behavioral product; which further leads to emotional upset. Procrastination dominates all areas of behavior and action but the most general form is academic procrastination which occurs in the academic settings. It is about having the knowledge that a student has to complete one or more tasks or administer any activity, for example solving a term paper, preparing for exams, completing a class project or concluding a reading assignment, but lacking in motivation to do in a specified time period.

Academic procrastination is the failure on the part of a student to perform an academic activity within the desired or expected time (Senecal, Kosner, & Vallerand, 1995). This tendency .of academic procrastination can lead to the failure of achievement of academic goals on destined time which results in the development of psychological distress in individuals. It also leads to inefficient behavioural outcomes and individual may feel problem in dealing with environment productively.

Anxiety can be defined as an unpleasant feeling accompanied by a premonition that something undesirable is about to happen. Anxiety, stated briefly, is the signal of danger, which mobilizes the human organism's resources at all levels of functioning in the interests of conservation, defence and self-preservation. At all levels of anxiety, there are various combinations in degree of loss of homeostatic control and attempts to mastery to regain control. The present era of modern age comprises of new socio-cultural and socio-economic processes where severe competition, conflicts disrupted family relations, desire for economic up-liftment, social differentiation, and more awareness towards rights combine together to make a disorganized society. Therefore the modern age has been rightly called the "age of anxiety". Depression is a state of low mood and aversion to activity that can affect a person's thoughts, behaviour, feelings and sense of well-being. During the last two decades, depression has

been a significant field of concern for the Clinicians, Psychiatrists, Psychologists and Educationalists. Moreover, during the last ten years theoretical and empirical investigations have been carried out on childhood depression. Depression has become the part and parcel of our every day life now, as we every now and then experience depression. Since ours in the age of anxiety and more over life has become so complex that one can hardly deny the experience of depression. Wahyu Rahardjo, JunemanJuneman and Yeni Setiani (2015) examined the impact of anxiety and academic stress on academic procrastination. Results showed that anxiety and academic stress play significant role in influencing academic procrastination among students. In terms of gender, academic procrastination, anxiety and academic stress were high in male students than the female.

Robert and Allen (1984) conducted studies in England and at the Penn medical school have found that about 50 percent of people who use a class of tranquilizers called benzodiazepines on a long-term, regular basis have problems of withdrawing, insomnia, nausea, anxiety, chills and many other psychological problems.

Jennifer (1987) found that medical students traditionally have contracted a temporary form of hypochondria when, in the course of their studies, they encounter every horrible disease known to man. The students have yet to develop the thick, experienced skin of the professional physician.

Ahmed, Banu et al. (2009) reported that Medical students represent a highly educated population under significant pressures. They encounter multiple emotions during the transformation from insecure student to young knowledgeable physician. During the transition to clinical settings in the third year, the student may experience a loss of external control and may counter this with an increase in depression and/or anxiety symptoms. Studies suggest that mental health worsens after students begin medical school and remains poor throughout training. It is not just the undergraduate study period, which brings about these changes; it may continue later in internship, postgraduate study, and in physicians' practical life, and it may reach burnout level.

Stober and Joormann (2001) examined the relationship of worry with procrastination, perfectionism and anxiety depression among 180 students including 136 female was taken for the purpose of this research. As previous relevant studies had associated procrastination and perfectionism with anxiety and depression, this study was different in nature which differentiated characteristics of worry from depression and anxiety. Results of the study depicted that worry had a

considerable relationship with procrastination and perfectionism.

OBJECTIVE: To find out the impact of anxiety and depression on academic procrastination among professional students.

HYPOTHESES

1. Anxiety would significantly influence academic procrastination among professional students.
2. Depression would significantly influence academic procrastination among professional students.

METHOD

SAMPLE

The subjects of the present investigation are drawn from students doing III year medicine and engineering courses in the regions of Andhra Pradesh, of India. The subjects were in the age group of 20 – 22 years. 400 students of medicine and engineering courses were randomly selected from 20 colleges. The sampling procedure was employed in the investigation was two stage one. At the outset, colleges were identified in which the students who were studying both in urban and rural areas.

Variables Studied

In the light of the hypotheses formulated, the following variables are studied

Independent Variables

Anxiety and Depression

Dependent Variable

Academic Procrastination

TOOLS

Academic procrastination scale developed by Tuckman (1991), Anxiety scale developed by Sinha (2002) and Depression scale developed by Shamin Karim and Rama Tiwari (1986) were used in the present investigation

RESEARCH DESIGN

As there are two independent variables in the investigation and each variable is further classified into two, a 2x2 factorial design was employed.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The obtained data have been treated statistically in order to test the hypotheses. The Means and SDs (Standard Deviations) of the scores were calculated. To find out the influence and interaction effect of the variables, the data were subjected to ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) and 't' test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table-I: Means and SD's of Academic Procrastination Scores for four Groups.

Depression		Anxiety	
		Low	High
Mild	Mean	43.87	39.25
	SD	7.89	5.25
Moderate	Mean	41.03	37.50
	SD	5.42	4.19

Grand Means

Low Anxiety = 42.45

Mild Depression = 41.56

High Anxiety = 38.37

Moderate Depression = 39.26

A close observation of table-I shows that students with high anxiety and moderate depression have obtained low score (M=37.50), indicating their high academic procrastination compared with other groups. Students with low anxiety and mild depression have obtained high score (M=43.87) indicating their low academic procrastination compared to other groups. An observation of table-I indicates that students with high anxiety (M=38.37) have high academic

procrastination than the students with low anxiety (M=42.45). Students with moderate depression (M=39.26) have high academic procrastination than the students with mild depression (M=41.56). There are differences in mean scores of the groups related to academic procrastination. However, in order to test whether anxiety and depression have any significant impact on academic procrastination of the professional students, the data were further subjected to factorial analysis of variance and the results are presented in Table-II.

Table-II: Summary of ANOVA for Academic Procrastination Scores.

Source of Variance	Sum of Square	df	Mean Sum of Square	F'
Anxiety (A)	759.528	1	759.528	29.87 **
Depression (B)	133.903	1	133.903	5.26 **
A X B	190.653	1	190.653	7.49 **
Within	8034.638	316	25.426	-
Corrected total	9118.722	319	-	-

Note: ** Significant at 0.01 level

Hypothesis-I Anxiety would significantly influence the academic procrastination among professional college students.

It is evident from the table-II that the obtained "F" value of 29.87 is significant at 0.01 level implying that anxiety has significant influence on academic procrastination. As the 'F' value is significant the first hypothesis, which predicted anxiety would significantly influence the academic procrastination among professional college students, is accepted as warranted by the results.

In the contest of globalization and privatization of education many professional students (medical and engineering) are often subjected to a lot of anxiety and academic stress. The importance of anxiety as a powerful influence in contemporary life is increasingly recognized, and manifestations of current concern with anxiety phenomena are ubiquitously effects in literature, science and technology as well as in many other facts of our culture.

In all these cases, the emotion of anxiety is clearly related to, conflict between motives, conflict between motive and an inner standard, frustration of the motive for certainty and frustration of the affiliation motive. Anxiety state is evolved whenever a person perceives a particular stimulus on situation as potentially harmful, dangerous or threatening to him. Anxiety state varies in intensity and fluctuates overtime as a function of the amount of stress that impinges upon an individual a new campus, not knowing what kind of behavior is expected. Anxiety corrupts a person's ability to think, perceive and learn. A student suffering from anxiety usually experience difficulties in concentrating, remembering the learned material and establishing what the necessary relations among events. So only professional students postpone their academic activities and experience academic procrastination.

Hypothesis-II Depression would significantly influence the academic procrastination among professional college students.

It is evident from the table-III that the obtained "F" value of 5.26 is significant at 0.01 level implying that depression has significant influence on academic procrastination. As the 'F' value is significant the second hypothesis, which predicted depression would significantly influence the academic procrastination among professional college students is accepted as warranted by the results. The chief symptoms of depression are passivity and dejection, individual

experience, an over whelming inertia, feels unable to make decisions, to initiate activity or take interest in anything or any one, broods over his inadequacies and worthlessness etc. Most of the professional students get depressed because of academic pressure and postpone their academic activities. So only, academic procrastination was influenced by depression.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Anxiety has significant impact on academic procrastination. Academic procrastination is high among professional students who have high anxiety than the students with low anxiety.

2. Depression has significant impact on academic procrastination. Academic procrastination is high among professional students who have moderate depression than the students with low depression.

IMPLICATIONS

The results of the study imply a need to develop interventions and implement programmes to boost self-efficacy to reduce academic procrastination, anxiety and depression among professional students.

Psychologists, educationalists, and counsellors need to extend their expertise in developing behavioral modification techniques and intervention programme to reduce academic procrastination, anxiety and depression and help the students to have more information on effective ways of coping with problems in academic settings.

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