



## **Academic Procrastination in relation to Socio-demographic variables**

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### ***Abstract***

*Procrastination is a common behavior in contemporary societies (Ferrari, Johnson, & McCown, 1995; Ferrari, O'Callaghan, & Newbegin, 2005). There is also a great mystery in procrastination research. That is, although many students indicate needing help for overcoming procrastination (Gallagher et al., 1992), and there are case descriptions of students whose performance has been hurt by procrastination (Burka & Yuen, 1983). Thus the problem is significant enough to require utmost attention. Academic Procrastination in relation to Socio-demographic variables. objectives of the present study were To study and compare the academic procrastination of male and female adolescents and to study and compare the academic procrastination of urban and rural adolescents and hypotheses were there is no significant difference between academic procrastination of male and female adolescents.*

*Urban and rural adolescents are similar on academic procrastination. A sample of 400 adolescents equally divided on the basis of gender and residence was randomly selected from +1 stage studying in senior secondary schools of Haryana. For the purpose of sampling the whole of the Haryana state was divided into five zones, i.e. North, East, South, West and Central. One district from each zone was selected by Random Lottery Method i.e. Rewari, Punchkula, Faridabad, Hisar and Rohtak. A list of senior secondary schools from each district was procured from the concerned D.E.O. Four schools from each district (2 urban + 2 rural) were selected randomly from the list supplied by D.E.O.. From the selected schools 20 students (10 male + 10 female) of +1stage were selected using lottery method making a total sample to 400. Academic Procrastination Scale: Academic Procrastination Scale was developed and standardized by the Kalia and Yadav(2013) on the lines of Lay(1991). The scale comprised of 25 items having 16 positive items and 9 negative items. Each item has five alternate answers ranging from most appropriate to least appropriate. Academic procrastination does not differ with respect to male and female adolescents. Locality does not affect academic procrastination among adolescents. Hence the teacher, parents and students have to change their traditional behavior and treat both male and female; urban and rural adolescents equally*

**Key Words:** *Academic Procrastination Socio-demographic variables*

## **Introduction:**

They may say “I will certainly begin next Monday.” The term procrastinating used for this and similar expressions are defined as procrastinating or postponing responsibilities and decisions as a typical situation or behavioral characteristic (Milgram, Mey-Tal, & Levison, 1998). Procrastination is the instance of postponement of the works and tasks that are better to be done today until the following day. Individuals’ postponing their duties and responsibilities, and not being able to begin a work with the aim of completing, can be regarded among the most typical and frequent incidents of procrastination (Dryden, 2000).

Procrastination is a common behavior in contemporary societies (Ferrari, Johnson, & McCown, 1995; Ferrari, O’Callaghan, & Newbegin, 2005). For example, almost 20% of the adults admit they procrastinate when faced with routine tasks such as paying bills, paying taxes, or undergoing medical examinations (Schouwenburg, 2004). According to McCown and Johnson (1989), for about 25% of the non-student adult population, procrastination is usually a big problem, and in 40% of the cases it had caused significant financial loss. These data have been replicated by more recent investigations (e.g., Dewitte & Schouwenburg, 2002), which allows us to state that procrastination is a recurrent behavior in modern societies.

An individual who says “I never procrastinate” is answering at social approval level and certainly there are things he/she procrastinates in his/her life. Procrastination is the universal weakness of people and a problem of arranging oneself in this way (Senecal, Koestner, & Vallerand, 1995). It is stated in the literature that 70% of university students have procrastinating behaviors (Ellis & Knaus, 1977), 50% of those procrastinates their academic responsibilities at least in a half of their times and 38% of those rarely procrastinates (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984).

The term procrastinate comes from the Latin word *procrastinare* and means to put off, delay, prolong, defer, stall, or postpone performing a task. Procrastinating implies performing an alternative activity to the one intended, which is not synonymous with idleness (Schouwenburg, 2004). Procrastination can even be distinguished from the intentional postponement of a task—because procrastination is unplanned—or from logical and necessary delay, due to understandable reasons such as illness or technical problems (Burka & Yuen, 1983; Milgram, Sroloff, & Rosenbaum, 1988; van Eerde, 2003). Procrastination can be temporary or permanent and can be defined as a function of the behavioral output—putting off the action—or the cognitive output—putting off making a decision (Dewitte & Lens, 2000).

Procrastination while not having a single accepted definition can be defined as a behavioral trait or disposition to delay and therefore avoid performing tasks or making decisions. (Wiley, 2000; Milgram, & Tenne, 2000; Hussain, & Sultan, 2010). This has led many to believe that procrastination is just another part of life and isn’t a pathological condition as such (Sigall, Kruglanski, & Fyock, 2000). However as some studies suggests, individuals who procrastinate most of the time may have a particular fear or personality attributed to a predisposed thought, emotion, or memory (Steel 2001). Furthermore, academic procrastination can involve putting off assignments or public speaking until the last minute

(Wiley, 2000) This can in turn, lead to a range of adverse affects including; fear, anxiety, stress, worry and low self-esteem(Steel, 2007).

Academic procrastination which can be named as reflection of daily postponement to school life is defined as to delay duties and responsibilities related to school, or to save them to the last minute (Haycock, McCarthy, & Skay, 1998). Procrastination behavior occurs as not completing the given assignments or delaying preparation for examinations (Beck, Koons, & Milgrim, 2000). Generally, such behaviors are much more common among the students who were graduated from high school and have just entered university (Kachgal, Hansen, & Nutter, 2001; Lee, 2005).

The behavior of students who procrastinates their academic responsibilities is a phenomenon related to learning. During a newly learned subject or lesson, if the internal motivation and profound learning integrate, the subject will be completely learned and the student will master the subject. Thus interest, leasure, enjoyment, and desire to learn more in terms of the material learned/studied profoundly will increase. Ho-wever, subjects studied or learned superficially are procrastinated more. They do not enjoy learning the simple and easily perceived subjects. Therefore, students procrastinate due to restless and unpleasant emotions experienced during superficial learning (Orpen, 1998).

Academic procrastination can be understood as the voluntary delay of the Completion of an academic task within the expected or desired time frame despite expecting to be worse off for the delay (Sencal et al.1995; Steel 2007). It can also be described as delaying the start of a task that one eventually intends to complete until he or she experiences emotional discomfort about not having performed the activity earlier (Lay and Schouwenburg1993). Other researchers have explained procrastination as a deficit in self-regulated performance (Chu and Choi 2005; DeRoma et al.2003). Academic procrastination can therefore be understood as a type of“anti-motivation”wherein individuals decide not to move towards carrying out and finishing a chosen academic task. This behavior is common among adults as well as students in the high school and college levels (Wolters2003). For example,80%–95% of college students engage in procrastination (Ellis and Knaus1977) and about 50% procrastinate in a consistent and problematic fashion (Day et al. 2000).Academic procrastination has been found most widespread when writing term papers, studying for examinations, and completing weekly assignments (Solomon and Rothblum1984) and such behavior results in detrimental academic performance (e.g. poor grades and course withdrawal) and increased health risks such as depression and anxiety (Semb et al.1979; Solomon and Rothblum1984).

The research in this study offers both a quant if able measure of academic procrastination unaffected by student self-definition or self-reporting and a more complete analysis of external impacts on academic procrastination. By the use of this impartial measure, the effect of certain demographic and academic characteristics on the degree of academic procrastination is investigated more thoroughly A common form of academic procrastination among students is waiting until the last minute to turn in papers or to study for an examination (Migram, Batin & Mower, 1993). According to Oweini and Haraty (1993) College students are notorious for procrastination. They refer to procrastination as the acts of needlessly delaying a task until the point of some discomfort. Procrastination is a behavioural

problem that many adults experience on a daily regular basis (Jansen and Carton, 1999) particularly on task which should be completed by a specific deadline (Oweini and Haraty, 2001) Procrastination is probably the single most common time management problem (Learning Commons Fast facts Series, 2004). One basic thing about procrastination is that everyone procrastinates to some extent. However, some reasons can be put forward why university students rank highly among those mostly vulnerable to procrastination (Learning Commons Fast facts Series, 2004). The reasons according to this group are: (i) there is always a tremendous amount of work to do. Regardless of how much time the students spend studying, it can seem impossible to get finished; (ii) for most students, only a few hours each day are spent in class and labs. The majority of time is unstructured, and students are responsible for deciding what to do and when to do it; and (iii) in the university environment, particularly in residence, there is usually something more enjoyable to do than studying. Many activities compete for a limited number of hours in a week, and studying is often pushed to the bottom of the list.

There is also a great mystery in procrastination research. That is, although many students indicate needing help for overcoming procrastination (Gallagher et al., 1992), and there are case descriptions of students whose performance has been hurt by procrastination (Burka & Yuen, 1983). Thus the problem is significant enough to require utmost attention.

The studies reported above reveals that very little or no research work has been carried out on academic procrastination in Indian context. The present study is an attempt in this direction.

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Academic Procrastination in relation to Socio-demographic variables.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Following objectives were set in the present study.

- To study and compare the academic procrastination of male and female adolescents.
- To study and compare the academic procrastination of urban and rural adolescents.

## **HYPOTHESES**

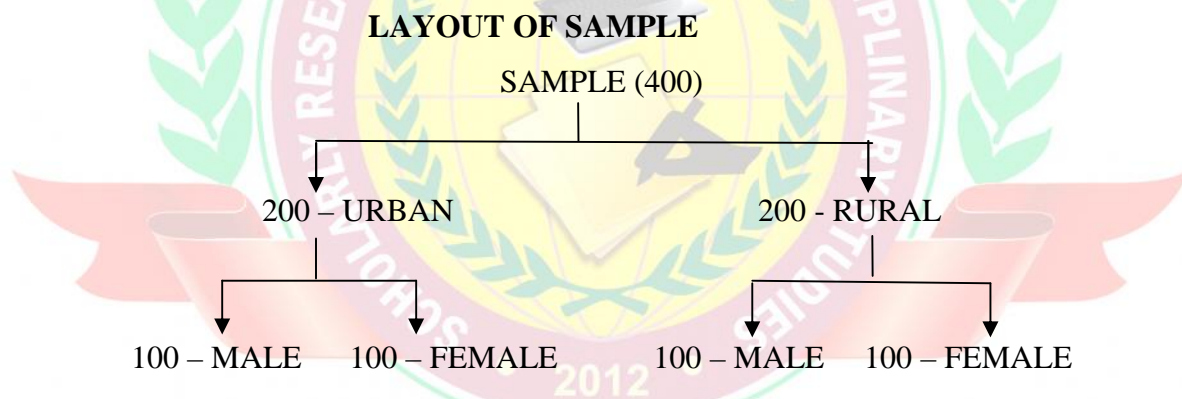
In conronance with objectives, the following hypotheses were fromed for verification in the present study.

- There is no significant difference between academic procrastination of male and female adolescents.
- Urban and rural adolescents are similar on academic procrastination.

### **SAMPLE**

A sample is a small portation of the population that is selected for observation and analysis. By observing the characteristics of the sample, certain inferences can be made about the characteristics of the population from which it drawn (Best, 2008).

A sample of 400 adolescents equally divided on the basis of gender and residence was randomly selected from +1 stage studying in senior secondary schools of Haryana. For the purpose of sampling the whole of the Haryana state was divided into five zones, i.e. North, East, South, West and Central. One district from each zone was selected by Random Lottery Method i.e. Rewari, Punchkula, Faridabad, Hisar and Rohtak. A list of senior secondary schools from each district was procured from the concerned D.E.O. Four schools from each district (2 urban + 2 rural) were selected randomly from the list supplied by D.E.O.. From the selected schools 20 students (10 male + 10 female) of +1stage were selected using lottery method making a total sample to 400. The layout of sample was as:-



Thus the final sample consisted of 400 students equally divided on the basis of gender and residence of 11<sup>th</sup> class was collected randomly from five districts of Haryana. A detailed description of the sample has been given in the table below.

### **INSTRUMENT USED:**

**Academic Procrastination Scale:** Academic Procrastination Scale was developed and standardized by the Kalia and Yadav(2013) on the lines of Lay(1991). The scale comprised of 25 items having 16 positive items and 9 negative items. Each item has five alternate answers ranging from most appropriate to least appropriate. The respondent is required to respond in terms of ‘Strongly Agree’, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. The total scores of this scale ranges from 25 to 125. The scale according to authorsis highly

reliable and valid having reliability co-efficient 0.73 and co-efficient of temporal stability is 0.843. Score of 5,4,3,2 and 1 is given to positive items for Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree respectively. The scoring of negative items are done in reverse order.

## **RESULTS**

### **Means, S.D's,S.Em. and 't' ratio of Male and Female Adolescents on Academic Procrastination**

**Table 1**

Category	N	Mean	S.D.	S.Em.	't' value	df
Male	200	60.89	14.54	1.02	0.481	398
Female	200	60.24	12.71	0.89		

A scrutiny of table-1 shows that the mean score of male adolescents on academic procrastination(M= 60.89+14.54) is higher than the mean score of female adolescents(M=60.24+12.71). The "t" ratio is 0.481 which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence. The result indicates that the difference between male and female adolescents is not significant. Hence the hypothesis that, There is no significant difference between male and female adolescents on academic procrastination stands accepted in the present study.

### **Means, S.D's,S.Em. and 't' ratio of Urban and Rural Adolescents on Academic Procrastination**

**Table 2**

Category	N	Mean	S.D.	S.Em.	't' value	df
Urban	200	62.90	15.56	1.10	0.69	398
Rural	200	61.86	14.56	1.02		

A scrutiny of table-1 shows that the mean score of male adolescents on academic procrastination(M= 62.90+15.56) is higher than the mean score of female adolescents(M=61.86+14.56). The "t" ratio is 0.481 which is not significant even at 0.05 level of confidence. The result indicates that the difference between male and female adolescents is not significant. Hence the hypothesis that, There is no significant difference between urban and rural adolescents on academic procrastination stands accepted in the present study.

## **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

- Academic procrastination does not differ with respect to male and female adolescents.
- Locality does not affect academic procrastination among adolescents.

## **DISCUSSION**

Each variable were calculated. The difference between means were tested with the help of "t" test. The significant differences were interpreted and conclusions were drawn. The

purpose of the present study was to determine the academic procrastination of adolescents in relation to gender and locality. The results indicated that there were no significant differences on academic procrastination in relation to gender and locality. The available literature supports the findings of the present study. The results of the study conducted by Firouzeh Spherion Azar et.al.(2013); Owrans and Newbegin(2000); McCown and Robert(1994); Haycock et.al.(1998); O'Donoghue and Rabin(1999); Konoualova, Lana(2007), also support the result.However the study conducted by Solomon and Rothblum(1984) indicate that male students exhibit more procrastination behavior than females. Also Reasinger and Brownlee(1996); Prohak et.al.(2000); Senegal et.al.(1995) and Brownlow and Reasinger(2000) found that women procrastinate less than men.

## **EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

The present study has an important educational significance for teaching and learning. The study is helpful in understanding the behavior of adolescents and breaks the assumption that male adolescents more procrastinate than female. The study is also helpful for the parent of the students. Hence the teacher, parents and students have to change their traditional behavior and treat both male and female; urban and rural adolescents equally.

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