

## Relationship between Procrastination & Self Esteem among Male & Female University Students

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### Abstract:

*The primary objective of the study was to investigate relationship between procrastination and self esteem among the university students. The sample considered of 200 (male=100, female=100), university students (B.Z.U + Comsat) in Sahiwal, range from 17 to 24 years of age. It was hypothesized that there will be relationship between procrastination and self esteem. Convenient sampling technique was used to collect the data. Lay procrastination scale (Lay, 1986) and Rosenberg self esteem scale (Rosenberg 1965) were used to measure the degree of procrastination and self esteem respectively. Beside this a self constructed questioner was use to get the demographic information. Cronbacks alpha revealed reliability for the Lay procrastination scale and Rosenberg self esteem questionnaire was 0.85 and 0.80 respectively. Results indicated that a significant negative correlation exists  $r = -0.067$  between procrastination and self esteem in university students and also negative correlation between age and procrastination. Independent T test used to compare the level of procrastination and self esteem among male and female. Results indicated that males become more procrastinated rather than females.*

**Key words:** procrastination; Self Esteem; Emotional Responses; Educational sector

### Introduction

Procrastination is defined as a behavior in which an individual leaves a feasible, important deed planed beforehand to another

time without any sensible reason (Grecco, 1984). Procrastination is a type of behavior which is characterized by deferment of actions or tasks to a later time. Psychologists often cite procrastinations as a mechanism for coping with the anxiety associated with starting or completing any task or decision. In psychology, procrastination refers to the act replacing high-priority actions with task of low priority, and thus putting of important task to later time (Fiore, 2006).

### **Classification of procrastination**

This complex issue is studied under five different sub titles as follows; General Procrastination, Academic procrastination, Decision making procrastination, Neurotic procrastinate, Non-obsessive or Non functional procrastination. While general and academic procrastination is related to the avoidance of the task, the other procrastination behavior seems to be connected to decision making. Procrastination behaviors in general is described as the difficulties that an individual has been performing daily tasks due to incapability to organize time and management effectively. Academic procrastination behavior as homework, preparing for exams or doing the term papers assigned at the end of term at the last minute. Decision making procrastination is illustrated as the incapability of making proper decisions about different experiences (Effert, 1989). The computer has activities that cater to many different sectors of society and distractions like checking e mail, messaging friend instantly, surfing the news, listening to music, watching videos on You Tube, playing computer games and hanging out in virtual social networks like Face book and MySpace can all unnecessary delay the task at hand. The computer is not the only distraction: television, cell phones, MP 3 players, video games and a whole host of increasingly sophisticated, modern inventions can cause serious procrastination. Fear of failure is

usually manifests as performance anxiety, lack of self confidence and perfectionism (Solomon, 1984).

### **The inner workings of procrastination**

- A. Activating event. The activating event is whatever you are putting off, such as studying, tests or unpleasant tasks.
- B. Belief System. These are your “hidden feelings about the task; your feelings governed your motivation. If you have negative feelings, you will tend to put off or delay. These feelings control your response.
- C. Consequence. This is what we actually do. There are two approaches: rational and irrational. Rational response is I do not like writing papers at all, but I had better get going on it any way. An irrational approach is I hate writing papers, and even though it’s due next week, I’ll start it latter (Ellis, 1977). Attempts to specify the relationship between procrastination and individual differences have been abundant. I to help organize the suspected correlates, researchers have organized traits in to the traditional five-factor model. Still, several researchers have focused their work on a single facet of a trait, such as impulsiveness. Because the feed of personality lacks definitive terminology at the facet level (John, 1999). A review of procrastination literature revealed that procrastination is related to poor academic performance, slipping off the lesson, depression, unpunctuality, difficulty in following instructions, low effort for success, weak self esteem, low capacity, anxiety, inadequate motivation, modes of thinking and decision making perfectionism, low consciousness level and neuroticism. When all the studies above are considered, it is concluded that procrastination behaviors are a common problem among university students and an influential factor on their personalities,

psychological well being, and academic achievement. It is known that studies on the relationships of procrastination behavior with personal differences are plentiful, whereas analyses on the relationships of procrastination behavior with demographic variations are insufficient in the literature. One of the objectives of this study is to fill in this missing part of literature. When the studies on the relationship of procrastination behavior with demographic variables are analyzed, it is suggested that procrastination behavior is negatively related to age difference, the level of procrastination behavior decreases as the age goes up. As the studies on the relationships of procrastination behavior with gender are taken in to consideration, it is found that the results of their relationships are different. A number of studies indicate that procrastination behavior does not differentiate according to the gender difference (Cakici, 2009).

### **Relationship of study**

This study was aimed to explore the relationship between procrastination and self esteem. In Pakistan procrastination is very common in people because they are living under the circumstances as an authoritarian regime apparently. It is form of defense mechanism mean to avoid can also be a form of rebellion. Bottom line they fail to cope with this rigid, controlling environment and tell themselves lies by blaming it on other things, seeking distractions. Every one puts off doing certain things, but it sis considered procrastination when a person continues to put off task despite knowing that doing so adversely affects him or her. Procrastination is also a part of profile of people with low self esteem. When someone feels less than competent about getting a certain project done at work, for example, it is likely that he or she will procrastinate. This

becomes a vicious cycle: the longer a task is put off the more weight it is perceived to carry. As the procrastination drags on, the less and the less confident person feels about accomplishing this now huge, weighty task. Some psychologists cite such behavior as a mechanism for coping with the anxiety associated with starting or completing any task or decision. Other psychologists indicate that anxiety is just as likely to get people to start working early as late and focus should be impulsiveness. That is, anxiety will cause people to delay only if they are impulsive.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Heterogeneous population of the students were taken as a sample the sample consisted of two hundred university students one hundred of sample is consisted of male students and one hundred sample considered of female students with an age range of 17 to 14 years. The aim to explore the relationship between the procrastination & self esteem, also comparison between the male and female university students. Convenient sampling technique was used to collect the data.

### **Instruments**

Two instruments were used to check the variables. The instruments are used to check the level of procrastination and self esteem among the university students.

#### ***Procrastination Scale (1986)***

Procrastination scale by Lay, 1986 was used to measure the level of procrastination. Scale was considered of 20 items, 10 positively Phrased items. Positively phrased items are 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 16,17,19,20 and negatively phrased items are 3,4,6,8,11,13,14,15,18,20. The final version of procrastination scale has 5 point self rating response format, response were

scored as 0= strongly disagree, 1=disagree, 2= neutral, 3=agree and 4= strongly agree. Response to negatively phrased items was reserved in the scoring process.

### ***Self Esteem Scale (1965)***

Rosenberg (1965) scored his ten-question scale that was presented with four response choices, ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree, as a six- item Guttman scale. The first item included questions 1 through 3 and received a positive score if two or three of its questions were answered positively. Questions 4 and 5 and questions 9 and 10 were aggregated into two other items that were scored positively, if both in the item had positive answers. Questions 6 through 8 counted individually formed the final three items. For the negatively worded Rosenberg self esteem questions, responses that express disagreement and hence, were consistent with high self esteem, were considered positive or an endorsed. (Rosenberg 1965). The self esteem scale by Rosenberg 1965 was used to measure the level of self esteem. Scale was consistent of 10 items. 5 positively phrased items and 5 negatively phrased items. Respondents were asked to give response with the statement on 5 points self rating format: 0= strongly disagree, 1=disagree, 2=neutral, 3= agree, 4= strongly agree. Responses to negatively phrased items are reversed in the scoring process. Possible range of score is 0 to 30. Count any item left blank neutral =2 than just add up to get total score.

### **Procedure**

In present study the data was collected by the researcher herself. Data was collected from the Sahiwal city. Requires demographic information was printed on a separately designed demographic information sheet regarding age, gender, and social activities. Both scales were administered individually to the participant after their willingness to participate in a study by the researcher. They were briefed about the purpose of the

study and explained the content of questionnaire. A gap of minutes was given between the tests. It looks almost 25 to 20 minutes to get each questionnaire filled by each participant. Subjects were assured that their identity will not be disclosed and all the information will be kept confidential. The instructions were printed on each questionnaire and they were also generally instructed verbally before giving them the questionnaire. The received questionnaire was checked to see that questions were left unfilled. The data was analyzed by descriptive statistics such as t-test and Pearson correlation used SPSS (statistical package for social sciences, version 13.0).

## Results

**Table 1: Two – Sample t-test between female and male on procrastination.**

Scale	participants	N	M	SD	t-value	p-value
Procrastination	Male	100	41.598	6.24	.502	*0.02
	Female	100	41.07	8.25		
Self esteem	Male	100	15.54	1.25	1.67	*.671
	Female	100	14.51	1.39		

df. =197,\* p<0.05

It stated hypothesis is significant at 5% level of significance. Hence the male students who are highly procrastinated they will get high score on procrastination scale. Male has become more procrastinated because of low self esteem.

**Table 2: Correlation between procrastination and self esteem**

Scales	N	M	SD	r	p-value
Procrastination	200	41.32	7.314	-.067	*0.02
Self esteem	200	15.03	2.776		

df=197,\*p<0.05

The second hypothesis of this study is that there will be negative correlation between procrastination and self esteem. The students who are highly procrastinated will have low level of self esteem. The results also shows that there is negative correlation (-.067) between procrastination and self esteem, its means if procrastination increases than self esteem decreases or in the other hand if self esteem increase procrastination decreases.

**Table 3: Correlation between age and procrastination**

Scales	N	M	SD	r	p-value
Procrastination	200	41.32	7.314		
				-.084	*0.00
Age	200	1.517	.4720		

df=197,\*p<0.05

The third hypothesis of the study is that there will be negative correlation between procrastination and age. Those students whose age is between 17to20 are more procrastinated than older. The results are shown in the following Table 3. The result also shows that there is a negative correlation between procrastination and age, its means with the passage of time as age increase the level of procrastination decreases.

## **Discussion**

Procrastination shows a big impact toward the individual performance at work place. Procrastination appears to reflect the human conditions as it is presently widespread and had been reported since the earliest of history. It is also particularly interesting as to voluntarily delay an intended course of action despite expecting to be worse-off for the delay is inherently risky or negative behavior. The present research was undertaken to investigate the relationship between Procrastination and Self esteem among university students of (B.Z.U + Comsat) Sahiwal. The first hypothesis of this study is



that the male students will get high score on procrastination than female students. Females are more responsible and they do their work on proper time.

Steel found in his research that procrastination behavior differs in respect of gender variation and that the level of procrastination behavior for male prospective is greater than that of the female perspective. The gender differences concerning procrastination behaviors are considerably difficult to envisage (Steel, 2004). When studying the literature on this issue, it can be seen that the findings of the studies on the procrastination behavior-gender relation are inconsistent with each other. When some of the studies emphasize that procrastination behavior does not change according to gender (Watson, 2001).

Second hypothesis of the study was there were negative relationship between procrastination and self esteem. Those university students who are highly procrastinating will have low level of self esteem.

Another study support this research that Wolters had suggested that procrastination is related with the belief with belief that one can successfully do a task; assuming that the belief of success is related to self-esteem. The relationship among procrastination, perfectionism, and self-esteem was unexpected because some researchers have suggested that perfectionists show low levels of self-esteem, therefore procrastinating more often (Wolters, 2003).

Third hypothesis of the study was that there were negative relationship between procrastination and age. Those students who are in Master level will have low level of procrastination than those students who are in their graduate level. The main reason of this finding is that as the age goes up person become responsible because at earlier age lack of responsibilities factor makes them procrastinator. As most people get older, they can better evaluate the benefits of past and future, leading to a decline in the hyperbolic discounting of

time. By increasing age, sensitivity to delay is decreased which causes the utility of a task to increase.

Another study support this research that when the studies on the relationship of procrastination behavior with demographic variables are analyzed, it is suggested that procrastination behavior is negatively related to age difference, the level of procrastination behavior decreases as the age goes up(Gulebaglan, 2003).

Educational sector are least concerned with psychological, family, cultural, socio-economic background of their students. Studies show that when person's emotionally connections are disturbed, he/she cannot make even single decision that ultimately affect negatively the educational outcome. This disturbance of emotions for a longer period of time may also distort his/her mental and physical health. It is concluded from this study that male students are more procrastinated than the female students. Male students get high scores on procrastination scale. As the level of procrastination increases the level of self esteem decreases that is proved from this thesis report. Procrastination can be simply reduced by simply starting the dreaded task puts a positive cycle into motion, often increasing self esteem with a reduction in the level of stress and the pride of accomplishment. Procrastination has been with us, as a race, since at least the birth of civilization. Without recognizing the importance of time, it may continue to define us for a considerable time hence. Writing down the reasons of avoiding a certain task can reduce the validity of the rationalizations for procrastinations. We need to focus our efforts on the role of time in decision making. Procrastination has been with us, as a race, since at least the birth of civilization. Without recognizing the importance of time, it may continue to *define* us for a considerable time hence.

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