



Delaying Success: A Mixed-Method Examination Of Academic Procrastination Among College Students In Kashmir

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ABSTRACT

This study attempted to explore academic procrastination among college students in the Kashmir Valley using a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies. A simple random sampling technique was adopted on a sample of 1,000 college students from government degree colleges across gender (male and female) and subject streams (B.A., B.Sc., and B.Com.), ensuring balanced representation across these demographic variables. Additionally, quantitative data was collected using a standardized 30-item Academic Procrastination Scale developed by Gupta and Liyaqat (2018) using mean, standard deviation, independent t-tests, one-way ANOVA, and Tukey's HSD test. Furthermore, for qualitative insight, structured interviews were conducted with selected extreme cases to explore underlying psychological and contextual factors contributing to procrastination. Results revealed significant differences in procrastination levels based on gender and academic stream, with B.A. and B.Sc. students differing significantly from those in B.Com. On the basis of the major research findings, educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders can be provided with recommendations for implementing interventions aimed at reducing academic procrastination. These recommendations may include strategies for enhancing time management skills, motivational support, and context-sensitive strategies—to mitigate academic procrastination among students in the region.

Keywords: Academic Procrastination, College students, Gender, Subject stream, Kashmir

INTRODUCTION

Entering higher education often brings about a range of transformations at personal, cognitive, professional, affective, and social levels, accompanied by a set of anticipations regarding the chosen undergraduate program. Such expectations often bring forth anxiety, fear, and uncertainties regarding academic achievement and career development. Consequently, the undergraduate course becomes the student's fresh learning environment, capable of exerting both positive and negative influences on their academic growth and future professional prospects. Presently, procrastination has become a prevailing phenomenon among students due to the overwhelming abundance of tasks coupled with limited time availability. Procrastination is the disease eating away at student productivity. Typically, procrastination has been regarded as problematic when it cuts off some areas of human nature. It is an unusual phenomenon; initially it leads to short term pleasure but long-term poor performance and frequent failure.

Academic procrastination is a prevalent and significant issue that impacts students in various academic environments and age groups. According to Simpson and Pychyl (2009) as well as Steel (2007), academic procrastination can be described as the inclination to postpone intended academic responsibilities, despite the potential negative outcomes it may entail. In academic settings, students frequently procrastinate on studying, completing assignments, and exam preparation, resulting in unsatisfactory academic performance (Senecal et al., 2018). Due to its prevalence and negative effects on students' educational outcomes and mental health, Low academic performance, regrets, and avoiding social relationships (Steel & Ferrari, 2013; Pychyl, 2013; Krause

& Fruend, 2014; Kim & Seo, 2015), this phenomenon has attracted considerable attention (Klassen, et al., 2010).

Empirical studies illustrated that a large percentage of undergraduate students, ranging from 70% to 95%, procrastinate on their academic tasks and experience academic delays. (Ferrari et al, 2005; Steel, 2007; Rabin et al., 2011), across racial categories, and between genders (Klassen et al., 2010; Ozer & Ferrari, 2011). It can decrease the quality output of college students. The Kashmir Valley offers an unusual setting for the investigation into college students' procrastination. The region is prevalent for its sociopolitical complexities, which include prolonged conflicts and educational disruptions (Zargar & Bhat, 2018).

Such circumstances can have a significant impact on the academic experiences of students and their well-being, resulting in increased stress, anxiety, and decreased motivation. These factors may contribute to the pervasiveness of academic procrastination among college students in the Valley of Kashmir. This chronic problem requires more attention to address it effectively.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the level of college students on academic procrastination.
2. To compare the academic procrastination of college students with respect to gender and subject stream.

HYPOTHESES

H₀₁: College students don't differ significantly on academic procrastination with respect to gender.

H₀₂: College students don't differ significantly on academic procrastination with respect to subject stream.

METHOD & PROCEDURE

The present study adopted a mixed-method research approach, which integrates both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies to provide a comprehensive understanding of the variables under investigation. The mixed-method approach is particularly relevant to this study as it combines the strengths of both descriptive survey methods and qualitative case studies, allowing for a deeper exploration of variable i.e., academic procrastination.

Using simple random sampling, a representative sample of 1,000 college students—constituting 13% of the total population—was selected. To ensure gender balance, disproportionate stratified sampling was employed, with 200 students drawn from each of five colleges, equally divided between 100 males and 100 females per institution. This yielded a final sample of 500 males and 500 females. The academic stream distribution included 380 students from the B.A. stream, 350 from B.Sc., and 270 from B.Com., ensuring broad disciplinary representation. For the qualitative component, a purposive selection of extreme cases was included to provide deeper contextual insights.

A standardized questionnaire developed by Gupta & Bashir (2018) was administered to students in a real classroom like situation while keeping ethics of test administration in highly consideration. Students responded to 30 itemed Likert questionnaire with four dimensions namely time management (08 statements), task aversiveness (08 statements), sincerity (07 statements) and personal initiative (07 statements). According to Cronbach's alpha coefficient, the scale had a reliability of 0.76. Moreover for the analysis of data, statistical techniques like mean, standard deviation, t-test, ANOVA and Tukey's HSD test were employed using SPSS version 26.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

Table 1: Overall percentage level of Academic Procrastination of College Students

Level of Academic Procrastination	Range of Score	N	Percentage (%)
High	Above 108	151	15.1
Moderate	71-107	823	82.3
Low	Below 70	26	2.6
Total		100	100%

From the Table 1, it is clear that 15.1% college students demonstrated high academic procrastination. Additionally, majority of students (82.3%) exhibited moderate academic procrastination, while only 2.6% displayed low academic procrastination. Therefore, the majority of college students can be categorized as having a moderate level of academic procrastination.

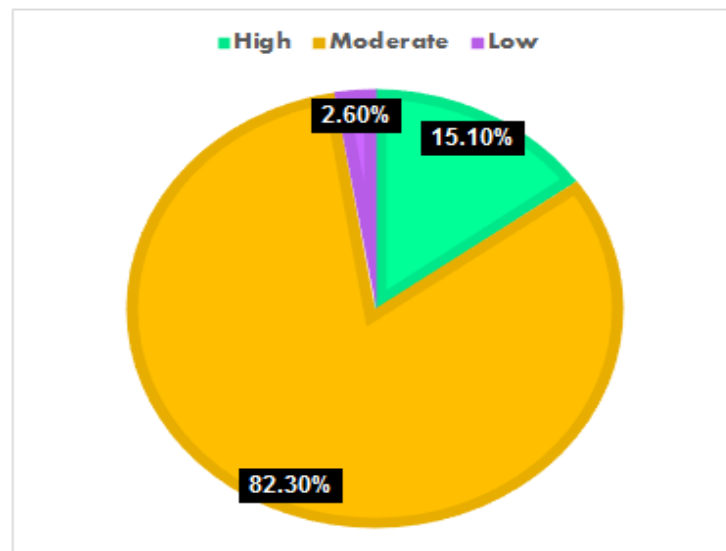


Fig. 1: Pie Chart showing the overall percentage level of Academic Procrastination

Table 2: Mean comparison of College Students on Academic Procrastination with respect to Gender (N=500 each)

Dimensions	Gender	Mean	SD	t-value
Time Management	Male	25.70	4.25	5.04*
	Female	24.43	3.62	
Task Aversiveness	Male	23.55	5.79	5.41*
	Female	21.60	5.58	
Sincerity	Male	23.07	3.93	1.58
	Female	22.67	4.03	
Personal Initiative	Male	23.87	3.97	1.06
	Female	22.61	3.67	
Composite Score	Male	95.20	13.44	4.67*

The table 2 shows the mean comparison for different dimensions of academic procrastination based on gender. The table shows that there is a significant mean difference between male and female college students on Time management and Task Aversiveness dimensions of academic procrastination at .01 level, indicating that male students have a higher mean score on time management and Task Aversiveness than female students. Moreover, the t-value for Composite Score is 4.67, which is significant at the .01 level, indicating that male students have a higher academic procrastination than their counterparts. However, there is no significant mean difference between male and female students on Sincerity, and Personal Initiative dimensions. So, in the light of above our Null Hypothesis H_{01} which states “College students don’t differ significantly on academic procrastination with respect to gender” stands rejected.

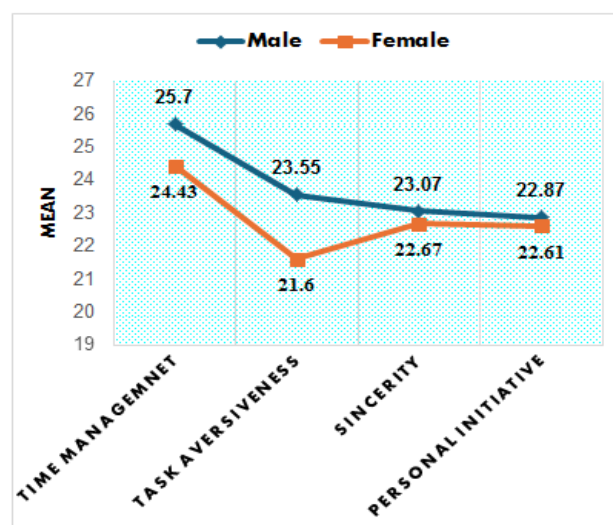


Fig. 2a: Line graph of College Students on various dimensions of Academic Procrastination with respect to Gender

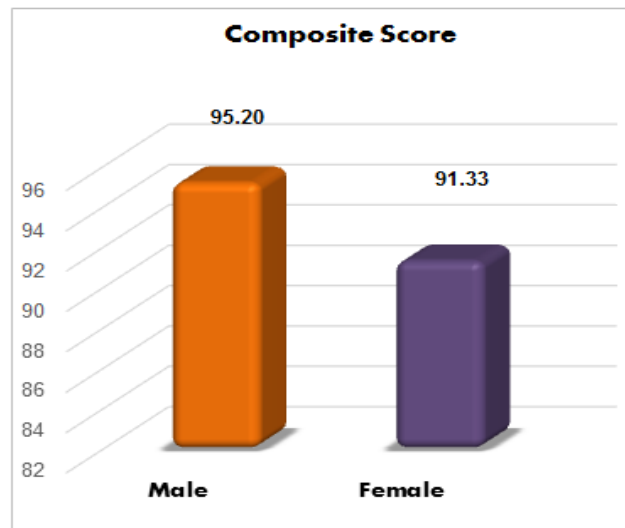


Fig. 2b: Bar graph of College Students on composite score of Academic Procrastination with respect to Gender

Table 3: One way ANOVA test of Academic Procrastination of College Students with respect to Subject Stream

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Academic Procrastination	Between Groups	4053.171	2	2026.585	11.94*
	Within Groups	169185.725	997	169.695	
	Total	173238.896	999		

* Significant at .01

Table 3 presents the results of a one-way ANOVA test conducted to determine whether there are significant differences in academic procrastination among college students from different academic streams (arts, science and commerce). The table indicates that the F-value (11.94) for academic procrastination is statistically significant at a significance level of 0.01.

So, our existing hypothesis H_{02} which states “College students don’t differ significantly on academic procrastination with respect to subject stream” stands rejected. To further investigate and compare the differences among the three groups, a Tukey’s post hoc test needs to be performed. This test will provide more insight into the specific variations among the academic streams regarding academic procrastination.

Table 4: Post Hoc Comparison of Academic Procrastination of College Students with respect to Subject Stream

Variable	Stream (I)	Stream (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	P
Academic Procrastination	B.A	B.Sc.	3.46233	.001*
		B.Com	4.73947	.000*
	B.Sc.	B.Com	1.27714	.447

*Significant at $P \leq 0.05$

During the Tukey’s post hoc analysis, the Table 4 clearly confirmed the mean score of college students with B.A as subject stream differ significantly from those college students having B.Sc. and B.Com subject stream at .01 level of significance, with p-values of .001 and .000 respectively. However, the above given table also shows that the mean scores between B.Sc. and B.Com college students don’t differ significantly, with a p-value of .447.

DISCUSSION

This study aims to understand academic procrastination among college students and explore the same across few demographic variables like gender, and subject stream. It is evident from Table 1 and Fig. 1, 82.3% of college students exhibit moderate academic procrastination, 15.1% show high levels, and only 2.6% demonstrate low procrastination. This suggests that procrastination is a prevalent issue potentially impacting academic performance. Students with high procrastination often struggle with deadlines and academic responsibilities due to poor time management and lack of motivation (Vij, 2016). Moderate procrastinators delay tasks but typically complete them under pressure. Studies by Ghasempour, et al. (2024) support these findings, reporting that over 80–96% of students face moderate to severe procrastination, particularly in exam preparation and

presentation tasks. Onwuegbuzie (2004) also found that 40–60% of graduate students frequently procrastinate on academic assignments. Key factors include poor time management, ineffective planning, stress, and low self-discipline. Conversely, low-procrastinating students tend to perform better academically (Elias, 2020). Recommended interventions include time management training, personalized counseling (Grunschel et al., 2013), and digital tools to reduce procrastination.

As the Table 2 and Fig. 2a & 2b, clearly indicated that the overall score of academic procrastination with respect to gender differs significantly from one another and thus, doesn't favor the hypothesis no. 1. This is in line with Balkis and Duru (2009); Steel & Ferrari, 2013; Khan, et al., 2014; Syeda, et al., 2016; Shukla et al. (2020); Malla, 2021; Roy and Banerjee, 2022, where males to be found higher on procrastination in their academic setting. Moreover, the higher mean scores of male students on time management (Aribas, 2021) indicate difficulties in accurately predicting task durations, organizing schedules, and prioritizing academic responsibilities. Batool, et al., 2017 also revealed that male students scored significantly higher as compared to female students on academic procrastination. In addition, they have higher mean task aversiveness scores, indicating that they view tasks as more unpleasant or undesirable than female students. Therefore, the overall finding that males are more prone to academic procrastination, as they may face societal expectations to engage in family businesses, local trades, or social responsibilities, leading to a lack of academic focus, and self-esteem, and thus, develops a sense of fear of failure caused by such delaying habits, underlines the importance of considering gender-specific interventions, such as targeted time management training or motivational enhancement strategies, to address these disparities and foster academic success in both genders.

Table 3 in the paper presents the results of a statistical test called one-way ANOVA, which was conducted to determine if there are significant differences in academic procrastination among students from different academic streams (B.A, B.Sc., and B.Com). The F-value (11.94), suggests that there are significant differences in academic procrastination among college students from different subject streams and thus rejects the hypothesis no. 2. The significant difference in academic procrastination between B.A. students and those in B.Sc. and B.Com streams (as shown in Table 4) may be attributed to varying academic demands and learning structures. B.A. programs often allow more flexibility, involve less structured assessments, and are prone to lower time management and task engagement, leading to higher procrastination. Factors such as task aversiveness, poor decision-making, and lack of conscientiousness were more prevalent among B.A. students. In contrast, B.Sc. and B.Com students typically follow structured, quantitative curricula with strict deadlines, encouraging consistent task completion and reducing procrastination. The insignificant difference between B.Sc. and B.Com students likely reflects the similarity in their academic frameworks and professional orientation. These results are in line with Bhat & Jan (2023), found significant difference based on academic stream whereas, study conducted by Eksi and Dilmac, 2010 has found that graduate (college) students are significantly different on the course of study. The findings of present study can be used to develop interventions and strategies to help college students overcome academic procrastination.

QUALITATIVE DATA: CASE STUDIES ON EXTREME CASES

Extreme case sampling was used to conduct in-depth case studies, involving structured interviews with selected students, their teachers, and family members. Case studies of students with severe academic procrastination reveal that it often stems from emotional distress, personality traits, and external pressures rather than laziness or poor time management. Emotional instability, childhood trauma, and overwhelming responsibilities contribute to anxiety and avoidance. Some students, though intellectually capable, struggle with self-doubt and fear of failure. Others lack self-discipline, are distracted by social media, or exhibit perfectionism, delaying tasks until conditions feel ideal. Financial burdens also exacerbate procrastination, especially for students balancing academics with part-time jobs. These challenges lead to stress, poor academic performance, and dissatisfaction. Teachers and parents noted social withdrawal and anxiety during exams. Addressing this issue requires psychological counseling, structured support, and mentorship tailored to individual student needs for their welfare and future career goals.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

- **Early Identification & Awareness:** Most college students show a moderate level of academic procrastination. Colleges should run awareness programs to help students understand how procrastination negatively affects their performance and well-being.
- **Teacher Support:** Teachers should be trained to recognize procrastinating students and guide them on its harmful effects. This can help students make better academic choices.
- **Time Management:** Students should learn to manage time by creating realistic study plans, avoiding last-minute pressure, staying consistent with studies, and submitting work on time.
- **Parental Role:** Parents can reduce procrastination by encouraging good study habits and self-discipline. A quiet study space, limited screen time, and structured routines at home help students stay focused and build willpower.

- **Classroom Environment:** Teachers should create a supportive classroom atmosphere with flexible and experiential learning, as recommended by NEP 2020. Using formative assessments and positive reinforcement can boost student motivation and involvement.
- **Focus on Male and B.A. Students:** The study shows that male and B.A. students procrastinate more. Special workshops and seminars on study techniques, time management, and goal setting can help them improve.
- **Counseling Services:** Colleges should set up counseling centers to help students with emotional or psychological issues causing procrastination. These centers should address problems like fear of failure, low confidence, and poor motivation, and guide students on how to cope effectively.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The current study explored the prevalence and factors contributing to academic procrastination among college students in the delimited region i.e., Kashmir Valley. The findings highlight the significant presence of moderate academic procrastination, indicating challenges in time management and motivation. Gender differences are observed, with male students exhibiting higher scores in time management and task aversiveness. At the same time, it has been noticed that there are significant differences in academic procrastination among college students from different academic streams. This suggests difficulties in estimating task durations and perceiving academic tasks as unpleasant.

The study emphasizes the need for interventions and support mechanisms to improve time management skills, motivation, and reduce procrastination tendencies. Specifically targeting male students with tailored intervention programs and psycho-educational workshops may yield positive outcomes. Addressing procrastination is crucial, as it can lead to lower grades and dissatisfaction with academic life. College psychologists, counselors, and educational institutions should prioritize the development of strategies to mitigate procrastination and support students in successfully completing their courses. Future research should consider broader samples and objective measures to enhance understanding of academic procrastination.

The results of the current study have practical implications indicating that male students are particularly susceptible to procrastination, which can have a negative impact on their academic performance and overall satisfaction with their academic career. It is suggested that college psychologists and counselors develop intervention programmes specifically designed for male students and equally to that of different subject stream students. Providing them with psycho educational workshops on their procrastination tendencies could facilitate them with effective strategies to overcome their delaying behavior. By offering assistance and intervention, these programmes have the potential to increase students' chances of successfully completing their courses and enjoying greater academic satisfaction.

The findings indicating significant gender differences in academic procrastination among college students have important implications for understanding and addressing this issue. Acknowledging these gender differences can help in developing targeted interventions and support strategies to assist students in overcoming academic procrastination. College students with respect to gender and academic stream may employ different coping strategies when faced with academic demands and stress. Some studies suggest that students tend to adopt avoidance-based coping strategies, such as procrastination, when dealing with stressful situations. This tendency towards avoidance can lead to higher scores on the time management and task aversiveness dimensions.

The study also emphasizes the importance of time management, motivation, and stress management in reducing academic procrastination. Therefore, interventions that focus on improving these factors can be developed to help students overcome procrastination. The current study, however, can be used as a reference for future research on academic procrastination among college students in other regions or countries.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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