The Academic Procrastination among Undergraduate Students

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Abstract- This study explores the level of academic procrastination among undergraduate students, with particular focus on gender and domicile-based differences. A descriptive causal-comparative design was employed to collect data from 160 students (80 males and 80 females) using the Academic Procrastination Scale developed by Gupta and Bashir (2018). The study aimed to identify whether gender or residential background significantly influences procrastination tendencies. Results revealed that male students exhibited significantly higher academic procrastination than their female counterparts. However, no significant difference was observed between urban and rural students. These findings highlight the necessity of designing interventions targeted toward students more prone to procrastination.

Keywords: academic procrastination, gender, domicile, undergraduate students, procrastination scale.

INTRODUCTION

Academic procrastination is a widespread behavioral pattern observed among students across various educational levels. It is defined as the voluntary and unnecessary delay in the initiation or completion of academic tasks—such as studying for examinations, completing assignments, or preparing for presentations—despite knowing that this delay may result in negative consequences (Steel, 2007). Unlike general procrastination, academic procrastination is domain-specific and directly impacts students' educational outcomes. It often stems from a combination of psychological, emotional, and situational factors, including low self-efficacy, fear of failure, poor time management skills, task aversiveness, and lack of motivation (Tuckman, 1991).

The detrimental effects of academic procrastination extend beyond reduced academic performance. Chronic procrastination has been linked to increased stress, anxiety, low self-esteem, and overall psychological distress (Sirois & Pychyl, 2013). These emotional burdens can, in turn, further hinder academic engagement and create a cycle of avoidance behavior. Consequently, understanding the underlying causes and demographic correlates of academic procrastination is crucial for educators, counselors, and policy-makers aiming to design effective intervention strategies.

This study aims to explore the prevalence and intensity of academic procrastination among undergraduate students, with a specific focus on the influence of gender and domicile (urban vs. rural). Gender differences in procrastination behavior have been a subject of scholarly interest, with some studies suggesting that male students may procrastinate more frequently due to factors such as lower academic motivation or different coping styles. Similarly, the urban-rural divide may influence procrastination levels, potentially due to disparities in access to resources, parental involvement, academic pressure, or exposure to educational support systems. By investigating these variables, the present research seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on academic procrastination and to inform the development of tailored, context-specific interventions.

OBJECTIVES

- To study the gender difference on the level of academic procrastination among undergraduate students.
- To study the difference on the level of academic procrastination among urban and rural undergraduate students.

Hypotheses

H_1: There is a significant gender difference on the level of academic procrastination among undergraduate students.

H_2: There is a significant difference on the level of academic procrastination among urban and rural undergraduate students.

METHOD

Participants

The sample consisted of 160 undergraduate students (80 male and 80 female) selected using purposive sampling from Government First Grade College, Holenarsipura. The participants were aged between 18 and 21 years and included students from both Kannada and English mediums, as well as urban and rural backgrounds.

Measures

The Academic Procrastination Scale developed by Gupta and Bashir (2018) was used for data collection. It consists of 30 items across four dimensions—Time Management, Task Aversiveness, Sincerity, and Personal Initiative—measured on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5). The reliability of the scale is 0.763.

Procedure

The study was conducted at the Government First Grade College, Holenarsipura. After obtaining necessary permissions, the scales were administered to the students in a classroom setting. Demographic information was collected using a researcher-designed sheet. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and independent sample t-tests.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Gender Differences in Academic Procrastination

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Girls	80	89.21	9.16	5.33,	.001
Boys	80	96.41	7.87		

Note. *p < .05, **p < .01

An independent samples *t*-test was conducted to examine whether there was a statistically significant difference in academic procrastination between male and female undergraduate students. As shown in Table 1, female students (n = 80) had a mean score of M = 89.21, *SD* = 9.16, while male students (n = 80) had a higher mean score of M = 96.41, *SD* = 7.87. The results indicated a statistically significant difference between the two groups, $t(158) = 5.33$, $p = .001$.

These results suggest that male students exhibited significantly higher levels of academic procrastination compared to female students, supporting Hypothesis 1. This gender-based disparity aligns with prior research, which has shown that male students tend to procrastinate more frequently, potentially due to lower levels of academic motivation, time management skills, or self-regulation (Klassen & Kuzucu, 2009; Balkis & Duru, 2009). Conversely, female students often demonstrate higher levels of conscientiousness and task orientation, which may contribute to reduced tendencies to procrastinate.

These findings reinforce the need for gender-sensitive academic support strategies that foster better planning, self-discipline, and engagement, particularly for male students who may be at greater risk for academic underperformance due to procrastination.

Table 2: Urban vs. Rural Differences in Academic Procrastination

Group	N	Mean	SD	t	p
Urban	80	96.59	11.30	1.83	p = .06
Rural	80	99.94	11.89		

Note. Difference not statistically significant at p < .05

A second independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine whether domicile (urban vs. rural) had a significant impact on academic procrastination. As shown in Table 2, urban students (n = 80) had a mean procrastination score of M = 96.59, *SD* = 11.30, while rural students (n = 80) had a slightly higher mean of M = 99.94, *SD* = 11.89. However,

the difference was not statistically significant, $t(158) = 1.83$, $p = .06$.

Although rural students demonstrated marginally higher levels of academic procrastination, the difference was not sufficient to support Hypothesis 2, which posited a significant effect of domicile. This result may reflect the diminishing gap between rural and urban educational environments due to increased accessibility to educational technology, improvements in infrastructure, and the widespread implementation of standardized academic programs. The non-significant finding suggests that academic procrastination may be influenced more strongly by individual psychological and behavioral factors than by geographic or environmental differences. It also implies that interventions designed to reduce procrastination could be broadly applicable across student populations, regardless of domicile.

In summary, the results indicate that gender is a significant predictor of academic procrastination, while domicile is not. These findings highlight the importance of considering gender-specific strategies when designing academic interventions. Programs focusing on enhancing time management, motivation, and self-regulatory skills—particularly among male students—may help in mitigating procrastination behaviors and improving academic performance.

These outcomes are consistent with prior studies that have identified gender as a critical factor in procrastination tendencies (Özer & Ferrari, 2011), while they also point to the need for further research exploring other individual and contextual variables that contribute to academic procrastination.

The findings revealed a statistically significant difference in academic procrastination based on gender, with boys showing higher levels than girls. This supports the hypothesis that gender influences academic procrastination. However, no statistically significant difference was found between students from urban and rural areas, indicating that domicile does not play a major role in procrastination behaviors.

CONCLUSION

Academic procrastination is prevalent among undergraduate students, with noticeable gender differences. Educational institutions should consider incorporating workshops or counseling programs focused on time management and personal motivation to help students overcome procrastination habits.

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