Exploring The Factors And Experiences Of Academic Procrastination Among Libyan Students: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract

Academic procrastination is a prevalent problem among students that has significant negative impacts on their academic performance and well-being. This qualitative study aims to explore the factors and experiences of academic procrastination from the perspective of students. The study involved in-depth interviews with a sample of students who have experienced academic procrastination. The data collected were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify common themes and patterns related to procrastination behavior. The results of this study provide insight into the underlying factors that contribute to academic procrastination and the experiences of students who struggle with this behavior. The study results indicate that there are several factors that influence students and contribute to academic procrastination, such as ineffective time management, lack of motivation or self disipline, lack of planning skills, fear of failure, and boredom with tasks.

Keywords: Academic procrastination; Factors and Experiences; Libyan college Students

Abstrak

Prokrastinasi akademik merupakan masalah yang umum terjadi di kalangan mahasiswa yang berdampak negatif pada prestasi akademik dan kesejahteraan mereka. Studi kualitatif ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi faktor-faktor dan pengalaman prokrastinasi akademik dari perspektif mahasiswa di Libya. Studi ini melibatkan wawancara mendalam dengan sejumlah mahasiswa yang pernah mengalami prokrastinasi akademik. Data yang dikumpulkan dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik untuk mengidentifikasi tema-tema umum dan pola-pola yang terkait dengan perilaku prokrastinasi. Hasil dari studi ini memberikan wawasan tentang faktor-faktor yang mendasari prokrastinasi akademik dan pengalaman mahasiswa yang mengalami kesulitan dengan perilaku ini. Hasil studi menunjukkan bahwa terdapat beberapa faktor yang mempengaruhi mahasiswa dan berkontribusi terhadap prokrastinasi akademik, seperti manajemen waktu yang tidak efektif, kurangnya motivasi atau disiplin diri, kurangnya keterampilan perencanaan, ketakutan akan kegagalan, dan kebosanan dengan tugas-tugas tersebut.

Kata kunci: Prokrastinasi akademik; Faktor dan pengalaman; Mahasiswa Libya

INTRODUCTION

Academic procrastination is a widespread phenomenon that affects students across various educational levels and disciplines (Kim & Seo, 2015; Klingsieck, 2013). According Lay (1986), procrastination refers to the unnecessary delay of tasks that require completion within a specific timeframe. It refers to the act of delaying the completion of academic tasks, often resulting in rushed and subpar work quality. While occasional procrastination may be a common occurrence, chronic academic procrastination can hinder students' academic progress and overall well-being(Lowman, 2004). The impact of academic procrastination on students' academic performance is significant (Tian et al., 2021; Türel & Dokumaci, 2022). Procrastination often leads to missed deadlines, incomplete assignments, and lower grades (Suhadianto & Pratitis, 2020).

Around 70% of students admitted to delaying academic responsibilities, such as completing term papers, studying for exams, or reading assigned texts (Hen & Goroshit, 2020). The act of delaying academic tasks was discovered to have a significant correlation with factors such as aversion to the task, postponement of tasks, one's belief in their abilities to complete the task, impulsivity, as well as conscientiousness and its various aspects including self-discipline, distractibility, organization, and motivation towards achieving success(Steel, 2007). Rather than focusing on these tasks, they found themselves indulging in various alternative and often more enjoyable activities, such as watching television, getting some shut-eye, or engaging in conversations with family members or friends(Madjid, Sutoyo, & Shodiq, 2021).

Additionally, students who consistently engage in academic procrastination may experience increased stress, anxiety, and feelings of guilt and frustration (Domínguez, Villegas, & Centeno, 2014). The consequences of this behavior can extend beyond the academic realm, affecting other aspects of students' lives, such as their relationships, mental health, and self-esteem (Grunschel, Patrzek, & Fries, 2013). Understanding the factors that contribute to academic procrastination is crucial for designing effective interventions and strategies to mitigate and prevent this behavior (Orpen, 1998). Various factors have been identified as potential influences on academic procrastination, including task aversiveness, low self-efficacy, perfectionism, poor time management skills, and fear of failure (Zacks & Hen, 2018). However, the experiences and perspectives of students who engage in academic procrastination are not well-explored. This qualitative study aims to delve into the factors and experiences associated with academic procrastination from the viewpoint of students. Investigating the subjective experiences and perspectives of students regarding the antecedents and consequences of academic procrastination through qualitative studies can be an effective way to gain new insights and understand the issue more deeply(Stake, 2010).

By conducting in-depth interviews with a diverse sample of students who have experienced academic procrastination, this study seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying factors that contribute to this behavior. It also aims to explore the nuances and complexities of students' experiences with academic procrastination, shedding light on the emotional, cognitive, and social aspects of this phenomenon.

METHODS

This study employs qualitative research methods to explore the factors and experiences of academic procrastination among students. Qualitative research is particularly useful for understanding complex social phenomena that cannot be easily quantified, such as procrastination behavior and its underlying causes (Merriam, 2009). The participants in this study were a purposive sample of students who have experienced academic procrastination. The study sample consisted of 20 under graduated students from College of Medical Technology, Derna, Libya with an estimated responses rate 90%. Researchers recruited participants from various levels of education, backgrounds, and disciplines to

ensure a diverse sample. All participants were volunteers, which means the participants did not receive class credit for participation. Participants were recruited through flyers, social media, and word of mouth. Inclusion criteria included a self-report of academic procrastination and the ability to provide informed consent.

Data was be collected using in-depth semi-structured interviews. The interviews took place in a private room, and all interviews were audio-recorded with the participants' consent. The interview questions were developed based on the literature review and become pilot tested to ensure clarity and comprehensibility. The interviews were exploring participants' experiences with academic procrastination, including their reasons for procrastination, triggers, emotional reactions, outcomes, and coping strategies. Researchers continued conducting interviews until data saturation is reached, meaning that no new information is being obtained. Data collected from the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, which is a method of identifying recurring patterns and themes in qualitative data. The data analysis was performed by two independent raters who are familiar with qualitative research methods. First, the audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. Second, the transcriptions were closely read and re-read to identify themes and patterns. Third, the researchers coded the data based on recurrent categories to develop an initial coding framework. Fourth, the researchers examined the data within the coding framework to refine and develop the themes and patterns. Finally, the researchers map the themes and patterns to provide a coherent and comprehensive account of the data.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Factors influencing procrastination

The reviewed studies identified various factors that contribute to academic procrastination. These include excessive anxiety or worry about academic demands, poor time management and planning skills, lack of motivation or self-discipline, and psychological factors such as self-regulation difficulties. Knaus (2000) has also affirmed the presence of various reasons that lead to procrastination. These include inadequate time management and the consequent inability to make wise use of time; this often causes individuals to defer task completion when their objectives or priorities for the task remain unclear. Procrastination may also arise from a lack of focus, characterized by thinking about other subjects while working or losing concentration due to external factors like food, significant others, etc. Additionally, fearing failure, whether it be from a personal inadequacy or dissatisfaction with the outcome, can contribute to procrastination. Finally, boredom with a task can also result in procrastination.

The primary cause of procrastination among Libyan students is poor management of time. Many research participants belonged to both internal and external campus organizations. Despite this, they sometimes found it challenging to determine their priorities, often choosing organizational activities over coursework, if there was a scheduling conflict. The students were also prone to

procrastinating and delaying their assignments, and some even opted not to complete them. Consequently, this had an adverse impact on their academic performance, resulting in delays in the completion of coursework and failure to graduate within the expected timeframe.

When Libyan students feel bored with their academic tasks, it often leads to academic procrastination. Boredom can arise if the assigned tasks feel monotonous and uninteresting to them. Students may lose interest and motivation to start or complete the tasks. As a result, they choose to procrastinate or seek distractions to fill their time. Boredom with academic tasks can be a strong driver for Libyan students to engage in procrastination, which negatively impacts their academic performance.

Lack of motivation and self-discipline is one of the major contributing factors to academic procrastination in Libyan students. Many students struggle to motivate themselves to complete their coursework and put in consistent effort to achieve academic success. Without sufficient motivation, students are more likely to delay starting on an assignment or studying for an exam, leading to procrastination. This can also be compounded by a lack of self-discipline, as students may struggle to stay focused and avoid distractions that can lead to further procrastination and poor time management.

Moreover, academic procrastination in Libyan students can also be influenced by cultural factors. In Libyan society, there is a tendency to prioritize socializing and family obligations over academic pursuits. This cultural mindset can lead some students to view academic success as less important than other aspects of their lives, which can in turn contribute to a sense of apathy and lack of motivation towards their studies. Additionally, the educational system in Libya can sometimes lack effective guidance and support for students, which can exacerbate the problem by not providing the necessary tools for students to overcome their lack of motivation or self-discipline.

The fear of failure is a common factor that contributes to academic procrastination among Libyan students. Students may feel overwhelmed and anxious about the expectations placed upon them, leading to a lack of confidence in their ability to complete assignments to the best of their ability. As a result, they may delay starting or completing tasks, hoping to avoid failure altogether. The fear of not meeting expectations or disappointing themselves, their families or their peers can be a strong motivator for procrastination.

The lack of planning skills among Libyan students is another contributing factor to academic procrastination. Effective planning is essential for organizing one's tasks, allocating time appropriately, and setting achievable goals. However, many Libyan students struggle with planning their academic responsibilities, which leads to procrastination. One reason for this lack of planning skills is a limited understanding of time management. Libyan students may not have been taught how to effectively prioritize tasks, estimate the time needed for each task, and create a realistic schedule. As a result, they may find themselves overwhelmed by the amount of work they need to complete, causing them to delay starting on assignments or studying. Additionally, external factors such as social obligations and familial responsibilities can also hamper the planning abilities of Libyan students. These obligations can create a sense of time constraint and leave little room for effective

planning of academic tasks. As a result, students may find themselves prioritizing immediate, short-term demands over long-term academic goals, leading to procrastination.

The experiences of students who struggle with academic procrastination

The fear of failure among Libyan students creates a sense of anxiety that can negatively impact their academic progress. Many students become paralyzed by the fear of not meeting expectations or disappointing themselves and others, leading to procrastination and difficulty in starting or completing academic tasks. Furthermore, some students strive for perfectionism, setting unrealistic standards that can be difficult to attain and making them even more afraid to fail. As a result, many Libyan students with academic procrastination need support and guidance to overcome their fears and develop effective strategies to manage their time and stress levels.

"Procrastination may be our way of avoiding failure, but it also holds us back from achieving our true potential." - Libyan Student

"I often find myself trapped in a cycle of academic procrastination. I realize that it only delays my progress, but it's difficult to break the habit." - Libyan Student

Many Libyan students experience difficulties in time management, which ultimately leads them to resort to procrastination. A lack of time management skills makes it challenging for them to effectively prioritize their academic tasks. They often feel overwhelmed by demanding schedules and mounting assignments, causing them to procrastinate. As time becomes limited, stress and anxiety increase, making it even more difficult for them to start and focus on their work. Consequently, they lose momentum, the quality of their work is compromised, and they become trapped in an endless cycle of procrastination that is hard to break.

"Procrastination leaves me feeling guilty and stressed as academic tasks pile up. I understand the importance of time management, but it's challenging to overcome the habit of delaying." - Libyan Student

Numbers of Libyan students can relate to the experience of academic procrastination brought on by boredom with tasks. It's a common problem that arises when students perceive their assignments as uninspiring and uninteresting. This lack of engagement makes it incredibly challenging to get started on the work, and students often find themselves wasting valuable time seeking distractions instead.

"I often find myself procrastinating on my assignments because I get easily bored with the tasks. It's hard to stay motivated when the work feels monotonous and uninteresting. As a result, I keep putting it off and seek distractions instead." - Libyan student

"Procrastination becomes my escape when I feel a sense of boredom and disengagement with my academic tasks. The lack of excitement makes it difficult to find the motivation to start and complete my assignments on time. It's a vicious cycle that I struggle to break free from." - Libyan student

Some Libyan students face the significant challenge of academic procrastination, which often stems from difficulties in time management and a lack of motivation. The pressure of demanding

schedules and overwhelming assignments can lead to feelings of stress and anxiety, making it even harder to start and focus on their work. Some students also struggle with boredom and disengagement from tasks, finding it difficult to stay motivated and complete their assignments on time. As a result, they fall into a frustrating cycle of procrastination that hampers their progress and compromises the quality of their work. To overcome this obstacle, students must develop effective time management skills, find ways to stay motivated, and seek support or strategies to combat boredom and maintain focus.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, procrastination is a complex phenomenon influenced by various factors. Understanding the factors contributing to procrastination and the experiences of students can help develop more effective strategies and interventions to address this issue. It is important for educators and researchers to continue exploring the aspects related to procrastination in order to provide appropriate support to students and help them overcome their procrastination tendencies. Urgent steps need to be taken to address this issue and provide students with the resources and support they need to succeed academically.

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