



Procrastination in relation to learned helplessness and achievement motivation among adolescents

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Abstract

The aim of the present investigation was to explore the relationship of the two variables i.e. Learned helplessness and Achievement Motivation among adolescents with the variable Procrastination. In this particular study, the method of descriptive survey was utilised. In order to obtain a representative sample of adolescents attending government and private senior secondary schools, a stratified random method was used to select 600 male and female students. Kalia and Yadav's Academic Procrastination Scale (APS-KAYM), (2013), Mathur and Bhatnagar's Helplessness Scale (HS-MGBR) (2012), Deo and Mohan's Achievement Motivation scale (N-Ache) (2011) were the tools that were utilized in the process of data collection. The results of the present investigation had clearly indicated a significant positive association of Learned Helplessness with procrastination while a negative association of Achievement Motivation with Procrastination.

Keywords: Procrastination, learned helplessness and achievement motivation, adolescents

Introduction

Procrastination is a universal key characteristic among humans. No one is there who can 100 percent sure that he has never procrastinate in their life and career. Although it may vary at different level (Senecal, Koestner, & Vallerand, 1995) [23]. Ellis and Knaus in 1997 stated that show procrastinating behavior in them while the major reason of the fifty percent of them was found to be related with academic responsibilities at least in half of the times and thirty-eight percent exhibited that they rarely procrastinate (Solomon & Rothblum in 1984) [24]. The term procrastinate comes from a Latin word 'procrastinare' i.e putting off or delaying/ postponing any task or assignment. Schouwenburg in 2004 found that procrastination can be synonymously used or the word idleness. According to Merriby (2019) [17], "Procrastination is an art of avoiding necessary tasks and focus on seeking pleasure". Sometimes it has been also found that procrastinating habit developed the way one is having their life style (Naoh, Merriby, 2019) [17]. Merri by explored in his best-selling book, "Escaping the Procrastinating Jail", that people who procrastinate admit five out of one consuming alcohol and week immune system. Gupta and Nain (2018) described in their unpublished report that procrastinators can be classified in as:

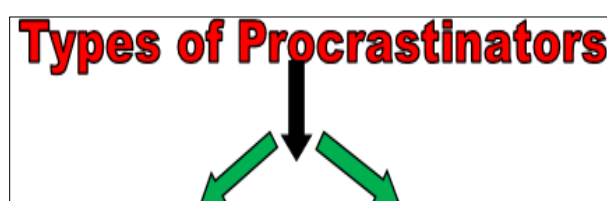


Fig 1

A. The tensed and afraid type

There are such individuals, which feel themselves under pressure have poor managing skills. These procrastinators are found to have high dissatisfaction, indecisiveness. They also exhibit external locus of control, lacking confidence in them. Some also show procrastination to bring perfection in their work. They got easily tensed as they think that they are being judged.

B. The second category belongs to those procrastinators who 'Wants To Seek Pleasure'. They are the common most among all types of Procrastinators particularly those who are college going & adolescents.

Besides this, there is another category of Procrastinators:

- The perfectionist
- The overwhelmed
- The imposter
- The lucky
- You
- The dread filled.

Burka & Yuan in 1983 described procrastination in five classes: 1) those who are fearing of schools. 2) Afraid of failing. 3) feeling themselves under the control of some one else (Ellis & Knaus, 1997) [6] 4) To maintain closeness to whom they want to keep. 5) The one who tend to keep frightening relationship at a distance.

(Source: <https://noahmerriby.medium.com/escaping-the-procrastination-jail-6ae1a865e041>)

Ellis & Knaus in 1977 [6] explored approximate fifty percent college-students procrastinate consistently and developed it at a serious level making their life to fall prey for more problematic issues (Day et al in 2000). Solomon & Rothblum in 1984 [24] established with their researches the fact that examination phobia and to complete their weekly assignments bring procrastination more frequently among the school going students which ultimately harm their academics (e.g. poor grades and course withdrawal) and increased health risks such as depression and anxiety (Solomon and Rothblum 1984) [24].

Causes of Procrastination

1. Overwhelming task
2. Unclear tasks
3. Tendency to overcommit
4. Addiction to overcramping
5. Fear of failure
6. Fear of change
7. Unpleasant task



Fig 2: Source: <https://miro.medium.com/max/1400/1jpeg>
Retrieved on 12/10/22)

Learned helplessness

Learned Helpless is considered to be an aversive stimulus when occurs repeatedly and an individual found difficult to overcome with that (Cherry, 2021) [13]. Individual with having a feeling of helplessness feel that they can not control the events or what is happening to them and ultimately they give up seemingly accepting their fate simply (Seligman and Maier., 2016) [14].

Even if the Individual is provided with the opportunities to escape are presented the feeling of learned helplessness can not let him escape (Hockenbury DE, Hockenbury, 2011). The phenomenon of learned helplessness was first proposed and studied by Seligman and Maier (1967) [22] while they were working on animals (Dogs). Originally the theory has stated that an organism develops helplessness as a reaction to situation of uncontrollability. Experimental animals exposed to inescapable situation learn that responses and outcomes are independent. Human beings exposed to insoluble problems for a long time discover that responses and events are unrelated. Learning acquired in this situation impairs future learning and leads to passivity. Subsequently, the organism fails to solve subsequently a problem, even if there is a solution for the problem. Seligman and Maier (1967) [22] observed that Mongreal dogs following exposure to inescapable electric shock showed striking deficits later, when placed in a shuttle box in which the simple act of crossing a barrier would terminate the shock. The phenomenon is described as learned helplessness which refers to learning or perception that responses and outcomes are independent. A number of experimental studies have indicated that this learned helplessness is a broad dimension and it operates as an induced trait (Sahoo & Mohapatra, 1986) [20] in such subjects.

Symptoms of Learned Helplessness:

According to Willows D.S following symptoms can be seen among the individuals who are suffering from helplessness. The symptoms according to him are given as below:

- Getting Frustration
- Giving up easily
- Lacking of efforts
- Low level of Self-esteem
- Passivity in Behaviour
- Poor Level of Motivation
- Procrastination

Consequences of Learned Helplessness

It has been found that learned helplessness may have an association with loneliness, any kind of phobia, shyness, Depression or another kind of psychological disorders. In case of adolescents and school going students learned helplessness may be a potential result of academic struggle. It may be a result of any PTSD and the individual is not able to control over the emotions of the past events. Then in such cases it may lead to several (as shown in figure-5) consequences like:

1. Fear and anxiety
2. State of burnout
3. No emotional healing
4. Unwillingness

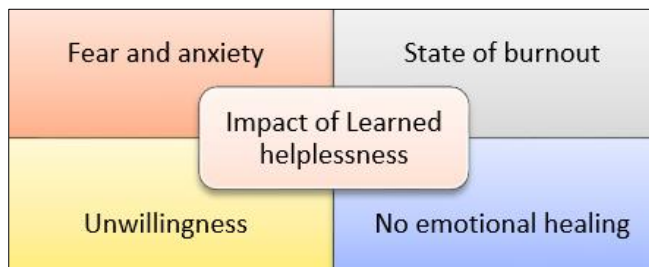


Fig 3: (Source:- <https://thepleasantmind.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Learned-helplessness-1-24-1024x1024.jpg>, Retrieved on 12/10/22)

Some other effects can be expressed by the picture given as below: in the form of Fig. No: 4

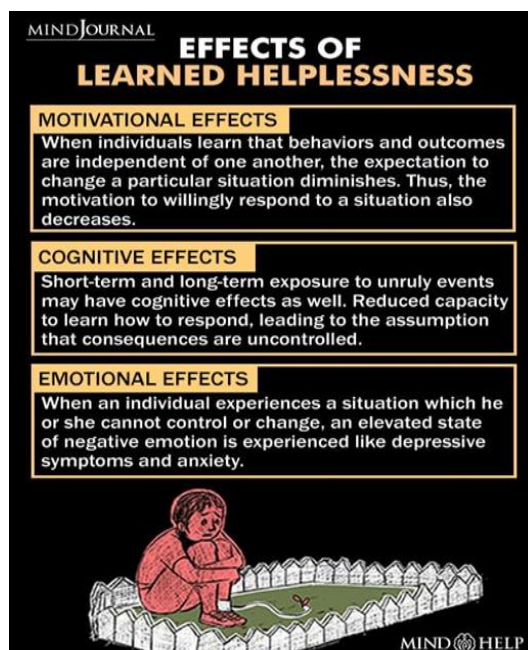


Fig 4: Source ://mind.help/topic/learned-helplessness/

How Procrastination often correlated with Learned Helplessness

The comparative table given below is showing some attributes of both the variable indicating that learned helplessness may related with Procrastination but still some characteristics also share some dissimilarities as described by Long, Caroline (June,24) (as Given below in Fig. 5).

Procrastination	VS	Learned Helplessness
Shaming term describing the act of voluntarily delaying a task	→	Sense of powerlessness after enduring repeated stressful encounters
Focus is on fault of individual.	→	Focus is on mismatch between environment + individual.
Common External Message: "Just get it done. It's not that hard."	→	Common External Message: "Let's work together to find solutions."
Common Internal Response: "My brain is defective."	→	Common Internal Response: "I am doing my best."

Fig 5: <https://www.elonpsychology.com/blog>

Achievement Motivation

The concept of achievement motivation particularly referred to the level of one's motivation to involve in achievement based on different parameters which are directly associated with the need of achievement / expectancy of getting success and any kind of value incentive related to it explored that lacking of academic motivations lead to incompatible academic behaviours like easily giving up habit, do not found any enjoyment in doing their work hence it ultimately results in academic procrastination.

The rationale of the study

Academic procrastination among school going students particularly the adolescents is a big problem and sometimes it leads to such consequences, which can harm them in different aspects. It has been found out that low achievement of students and their increased physical and psychological problems, anxiety, confusion, and irresponsibility. Although several studies were found by, the investigators but all were found with different variables, sample size and area in which the studies carried out. Although a plethora of researches were found pertaining to the academic anxiety but an analytic studies were found very less with procrastination. The investigators while reviewing concluded that the same variable has been studied with different other variables or some of the similar variables but the results were found contradictory and need further investigation. Several studies were found to be done on university students' procrastination habits, but a far lesser number on high school students' procrastination habits, which is the population this study focuses upon. The variable learned helplessness was also found to be less investigated in Indian perspective. In this study, we have taken into account academic anxiety, learned helplessness, and achievement motivation among adolescents. We have selected this topic because we want to know the effect of academic anxiety, learned helplessness, and achievement motivation on Procrastination among adolescents.

Operational Definitions

• Procrastination

"Procrastination" is to finish a job after the completion of optimal time, where optimal time means the most appropriate time to finish a job."

• Learned Helplessness

"A type of surrender issued in response to the problems and frustrations that the individual constantly faces, which makes him/her feel negative, weak in strength, and the belief that what can be done will not produce the desired result".

• Achievement Motivation

Achievement Motivation is a drive to excel in learning tasks combined with the capacity to experience tried in accomplishment".

Objectives

1. To study the relationship between Procrastination and Learned Helplessness.
2. To study the relationship between Procrastination and Achievement Motivation.

Hypotheses

1. There exists no significant relationship between Procrastination and Learned Helplessness.
2. There exists no significant relationship between Procrastination and Achievement motivation.

Research Methodology

The methodological approach used for the present study was descriptive survey method.

Population

For this study, the target population was 11th and 12th-grade school students (Adolescents) studying in government and private schools of Haryana state.

Sample

A multistage stratified random sampling technique was used to select a total sample of 600 students from grades XI and XII from 20 government and private senior secondary schools across three districts in the state of Haryana. The students were selected according to gender and the types of schools (i.e government and private schools)

Tools and statistical techniques

The researcher employed the following standardized tools for the current study:

- Academic Procrastination Scale (APS-KAYM).
- Helplessness Scale (HS-MGBR).
- Achievement Motivation scale (N-Ache).

Statistical Techniques

The results of the data collected for the survey were subjected to statistical analysis, which was carried out using the appropriate statistical methods. Mean, standard deviation and Karl Pearson's Product moment of correlation were utilized to accomplish this purpose.

Interpretation of the Data with Analysis

Table 1: Display of the values of Correlations between Procrastination and Learned Helplessness

	Pearson Correlation	'r'-value	
Procrastination	Sig. (2-tailed)	1	.130**
Learned Helplessness			
	N	600	.001

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table with S.No 1. is indicating the 'r' value between the two variables i.e Procrastination and Learned Helplessness of adolescents. The obtained 'r' value is 0.130, which has been found significant at 0.01 level of significance. The significant value clearly depicts a strong relationship between the two variables. The 'r' value is positive in nature. This 'r' value indicates a strong and positive relationship between the two variables. As the level of Learned Helplessness increases, the level of Procrastination among the adolescents also found to be increased. This implies that Procrastination can be lowered

among the adolescents if their learned helplessness can be reduced. This will further help in enhancing their motivation to achieve higher in their achievement. Therefore the proposed hypothesis that, "There exists no significant relationship between Procrastination and Learned Helplessness", has been rejected. (Fig.6. is showing the scatter diagram of the scores along with the reference line, which is indicating an upward increase in the scores of the two associated variables.)

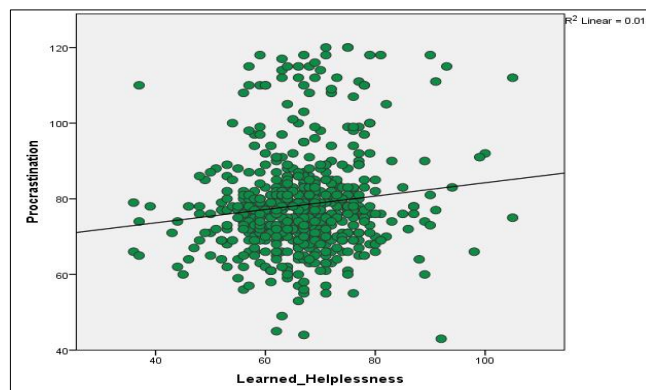


Fig 8: Scatter Plot showing the Correlation between the variables I.E Procrastination and Learned Helplessness.

Table 2: Display of the values of Correlations between Procrastination and Achievement Motivation

Correlations			
			'r'-Value
Procrastination	Pearson Correlation		-.189**
Achievement Motivation	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	600	

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The table with S.No 2. is indicating the 'r' value between the two variables i.e Procrastination and Achievement Motivation of adolescents. The obtained 'r' value is -.189, which has been found to be significant at 0.01 level of significance. The significant value clearly depicts a strong relationship between the two variables. The 'r' value is negative in nature. This negative sign of the obtained 'r' value indicates that the relationship is inverse. As the level of Achievement Motivation, increases a reduction in the level of Procrastination among the adolescents has been noticed. This implies that Procrastination can be lowered among the adolescents if they will be provided with the adequate motivation to acquire higher in their achievement. The results of the analysis are in the consonance of the results obtained by Mrinmoy Roy (2016) [19] who had worked on the similar topic. Therefore the proposed hypothesis that, "There exists no significant relationship between Procrastination and Achievement Motivation" has been rejected (Fig. 9. is showing the scatter diagram of the scores along with the reference line, which is indicating a downward fall in the scores of the two associated variables.

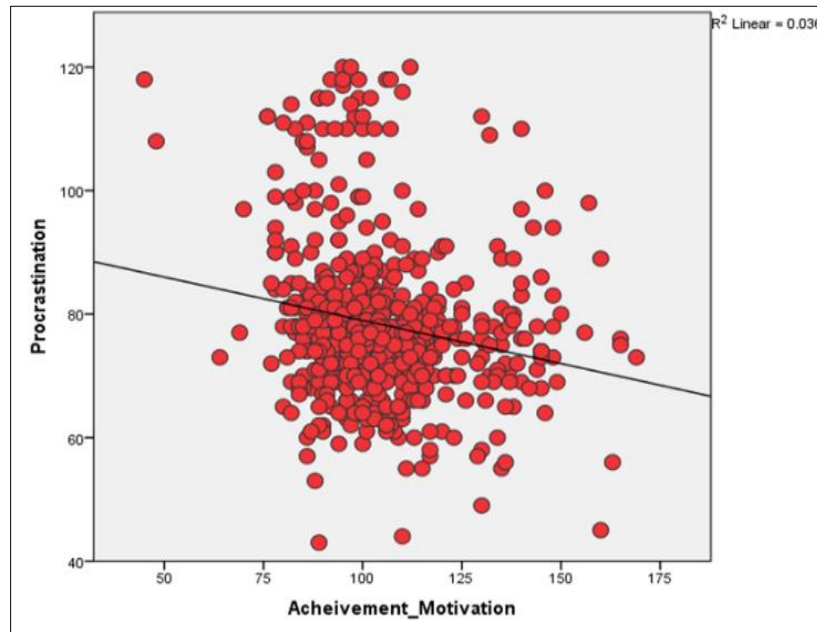


Fig 9: Scatter Plot Showing Correlation between the variables i.e Procrastination and Achievement Motivation.

Findings

- From the above analysis, it has been found that the Procrastination was positively correlated with Learned Helplessness.
- From the above analysis, it has been found that the Procrastination was negatively correlated with Achievement Motivation. .

Conclusion and educational implications

Every person in this world commonly exhibits two main features in their day today life. One is stress and other is procrastination. No can escape these two important influencing factors. The popular says going on well with the adolescents that, “Adolescence is the age of storms of emotions”. Therefore, they can easily fall prey for stress which sometimes may lead to them to depression, feeling low motivation and found themselves helpless. Low level of motivation sometimes may influence their achievement. In the present research paper the investigators has tried to analyze the association between the two variables i.e Procrastination with Achievement Motivation and Learned Helplessness among adolescents. The results of the present research showed that high level of procrastination was negatively and significantly associated to Achievement Motivation i.e if the Achievement Motivation of the adolescents decrease then it may cause increase in the level of Procrastination. Hence, teachers and parents are suggested to identify the factors or causes that weather their wards/ students are under the influence of Procrastination or not if yes then surely it will lead to the retardation in their achievements. Similarly, the level of procrastination was also found to be associated with Learned Helplessness significantly. If youth is under the feeling of Helplessness then chances are very high that they will Procrastinate more. The guardians, parents and teachers are suggested to pay attention towards their students who are passing under the adolescence stage. Procrastination some times take a form of habit which can bring many harms in different ways i.e may be it can destroy carrier, achievement aspirations, family conflict, social conflict and undesirable pressure and other psychological disturbances. To deal with the problem

adequately counselling sessions, psychological wellness camps some motivational movies can be arranged by the school authorities with the help of teachers and parents to build a healthy society with mind and body.

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