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Procrastination as Predictor of Fear of Evaluation among Pakistani University Students

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ABSTRACT

Objective: The research aimed to examine the association between procrastination, self-conceptual self-clarity, fear of negative evaluation (FNE) and Grade Point Average (GPA). The research also examined the predictive role of procrastination, and self-conceptual self-clarity on fear of being evaluated among students from Lahore.

Methodology: The current study is quantitative approach and employed correlational research design. University students were recruited through convenient sampling with sample size n=400. The students with age range 18 - 25 years, from both private and public university of Lahore were approached. The standardized assessment measures including: Procrastination Scale, Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation and Self-Concept Clarity Scale were used after adaption and translation of the scales.

Results: Result were computed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences SPSS. After establishing the reliability, the analysis including. Correlational analysis revealed positive association between fear of negative evaluation (FNE) and procrastination. Whereas, inverse association with manifested in FNE self-concept clarity. Hierarchical Regression results indicated that conceptual self-clarity and GPA as negative predictors while procrastination was positive predictor of FNE.

Conclusion: Students with ambiguous self-concept tend to have higher fear of evaluation in academia and procrastinate the task to achieve satisfaction on any given task. Counseling centers can facilitate student with counseling services to work on healthier self-concept concept to achieve academic goals.

Keywords: Conceptual Self-clarity, Fear, Grade Point Average, Procrastination, Students, Negative Evaluation.

Introduction

Lay (1986), defined it as Delay of initiation and timely completion of task is referred as procrastination. Ferrari (1994) describe procrastination as self-defeating personality trait. It was defined as self-regulatory failure (Steel, 2007), often leading to unwanted findings, including poor performance and

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well-being. Procrastination is a tendency to postpone, or even not to do, an activity under one's control to the last possible minute (Gafni & Geri, 2010).

The process of suspending any task that is of utmost importance in order to achieve academic goals either in form of delaying them or overdoing in order to achieve excellence lead to toll of pending list. The process of procrastinating has its negative repercussion and manifest itself in form inability to deadlines, poor academic achievement, performance anxiety and lower self-satisfaction (Alblwi & Abdulaziz, 2020).

Academic procrastination, is expressed in form of dragging assignment submission till deadlines along with delaying other semester work either individual or group activities (Beck et al., 2000). These delaying tactics not only bring more unease with passing time and things to do keep expanding. This toll of never ending list of things-to-do increase susceptibility of ambiguity in sorting most important task resulting in confusion, anxiety and fear or being left out and left behind others in academic task (Klingsieck,2013). The association between procrastination with university success was explored by a considerable number of methodological studies. Findings of which suggested that procrastination has an impact on low grades and course withdrawal. (Howell et al. 2006; Lakshminarayan et al. 2012; Balkıs & Duru, 2019). A correlation between unmanaged and poor academic achievement was found in one particular domain (Kim & Seo, 2015). Findings revealed that procrastination has a negative impact on GPA, Grades and quiz score. Balkis and Duru (2019) revealed that rational/irrational beliefs, self-doubt, fear of failure are the predicators of procrastination.

Self-concept is described as an individual's confidence that he or she can perform a particular role. Trust is an important part of doing everything (Bandura, 1977). Tseng (2020) revealed that self-efficacy has negative impact on student's procrastination. Self-Concept Clarity plays an important part for university students so that they have a better sense of life and life goals.

Procrastination is found to be closely associated with ambiguity in self-concept clarity and higher levels of being negatively evaluated (Petrie, 2014; Al-Momani, 2017; Bui, 2007). Without understanding the root of the problem, we can't come with an effective solution. Awareness and self-knowledge are the main objectives for figuring out procrastination (Voge, 2007). The earliest known use of the word 'Procrastination' was from Middle French in 1540s. Burka and Yuen (2008) indicated a vulnerable sense of self as a key factor for procrastinating behavior.

A wide array of literature has explored the connection of over doing task to extend of perfectionism and poor self-concept clarity stemming from fear of negative evaluation and reinforcing procrastinating task. Procrastination has been positively correlated with shame, guilt, and fear of negative evaluation (Fee & Tangney, 2012; Abbasi & Alghamdi, 2015; Bui, 2007). Norm-based model suggested that procrastination is likely to invade shame in people can also result in lowering their mental health and well-being (Giguère et al., 2016) higher the procrastination, higher will be the academic perfectionism (Belgin & brucin, 2019). Procrastination is a state of mind, a subjective experience that entails habitual or intentional avoidance of doing a task that is important for the need to be accomplished within a fixed deadline which might have negative consequences on life. Weeks and Weeks and Howell (2012) comprehensive model acknowledged that interpersonal risks are the strong determinants of fear of negative evaluation as compared to contextual risk factors (DeBoer et al., 2013). A theoretical and scientific framework offers evidence that those who have failed to carry out a certain mission and do not trust their talents, have reported higher fear of negative evaluation (Petrie, 2014).

Many studies explored the connection between consistency of self-concept and anticipation of being negatively evaluated (McIntyre, et al., 2017; Stopa, et al., 2010). Self-concept enables a person to be fully aware of their self, as there are two type of people one who completely understands their worth and second who have no idea regarding their capabilities and potentials. Academic self-concept clarity enhances psychological well-being of students (Jerusalem, 1993), also promotes motivation, inspiration to the student to achieve more (Yeung et al.2011; Green et al., 2012).

People with self-concept clarity have higher self-esteem as compared to those who have ambiguous beliefs about themselves. Previous researches explored that having more clear sense of self will have a low level of negative evaluation similarly more social anxiety is related to more fear of negative evaluation (Brown, 2006; Iqbal & Ajmal, 2018).

Various phenomena's in academia including academic performance, self-esteem, fear of failure and social anxiety are aligned with performance anxiety, overdoing task to the extent of procrastination and conceptual self-clarity (Kim & Seo, 2015; Nezlek & Plesko, 2001; Weeks et al. 2008). The self-concept is useful to psychologists and educators, since what a person thinks or believes in himself is very important and can be a good indicator for his or her own behavior, including at school (Boulter, 2002). Self-concept gives us the image of ourselves that we create in a wide spectrum of ways, but that is particularly affected by our relationship with significant people (Cherry, 2016).

"Self-concept clarity" is an abstract idea of physical, social, and spiritual being of an individual himself. Self-concept as "holistic conceptualization of one's thoughts, feelings encapsulated in reference to one own self' is very important determinants of what people know about themselves and how they evaluate a situation (Rosenberg, 1989).

The probability of experiencing negative circumstances is higher among people who anticipate negative consequences and have higher fear of being evaluated (Yokus, 2013). Previous literature supports the notion that ambiguity in self-concept clarity is a predictor of fear of negative evaluation (Stopa et al., 2010). Fear of Negative Evaluation (FNE) defined the construct as "avoidance of evaluative situations, predictions about the others that they would evaluate one-self negatively (Reiss et al., 1986). The person who is fearful of negative judgement is not inherently evil, merely fears that others will negatively judge his or her success. Previous researches suggested that procrastination was related to shame and guilt which plays an important role in understanding of chronic procrastination (Fee & Tangney, 2000). The acknowledgment of self-concept clarity will make a person conscious of their convictions and gain cognitive knowledge of who they are (Burger & Guadagno, 2003).

Perfectionism and FNE found to be significantly related to each-other (Stephan & Palmer, 2016). Both the terms academic procrastination was significantly related with self-concept (Al-Momani, 2017). Another reason for studying the "self-concept clarity" is to avoid procrastination, so that students complete their task within the given time which avoids the fear of negative evaluation in their studies. Many academics highlight the great impact of procrastination and 'self-concept clarity' in students' behaviors, which can cause them to risk harsh judgments from people who either view themselves poorly or have little self-worth. Knowledge on who we are and how a person sees himself is necessary to help people and play a part in educating them how to judge themselves (Shoukir, 1995).

Zarrin and Gracia (2020) revealed that there is positive relationship between fear of negative evaluation and academic procrastination. Burka and Yuen (2008) indicated that those who have perfectionistic ideals are apt to procrastinate due to these strong demands and unable to achieve unlikely high standards of ideals. Adekitan et al., (2020) found gender differences according to his research female grades are poorer than boys.

Study Objectives

The current research investigated procrastination and self-concept clarity as predictors of FNE among students by providing the theoretical framework of these concepts in process of debriefing. It also aims to identify the relationships of procrastination and clarity of self with the FNE among students from university from Lahore.

The importance of the research:

1. The paucity of limited studies in particular and in the South Asian region in general, which dealt with the three variables together, with in the knowledge of the researches.

- 2. The researchers are working to illuminate the idea of self-conception and procrastination, its forms and sources, and to explain the fear of negative judgement and the associated factors. Findings will help to understand effects of procrastination, importance of self-concept clarity and how they are predicting the fear of negative evaluation.
- 3. The results of the current study can be used in the field of psychological counseling and pedagogy of students through the design of guidance programs that work to play important role in student's daily lives.

Hypotheses

H1: Procrastination will likely to be a positive associated with self-concept clarity among university students.

H2: Procrastination will likely to have inverse relationship with FNE among university students.

H3: Self-concept clarity will likely to have inverse relationship with FNE among university students.

H4: Procrastination, self-concept clarity and CGPA will likely to predict fear of negative evaluation among university students.

Method

Research Design

Correlational research design was used to recruit the sample comprised of n=400 students with age range of 18-25 years (M=21.77, SD=1.92) and was collected from the Punjab University, Lahore Garrison University, and Education University, Lahore, Pakistan.—Purposive sampling strategy was used in this study. On the basis of existing literature, G-Power Analysis was used for the determination of sample size.

Assessment Measures

Self-constructed demographic information questionnaire consisted of age, class, GPA in previous semesters, parental status, monthly income, family system, accommodation status, number of siblings, and birth order. The Procrastination Scale (Lay, 1986), the Self-Concept Clarity Scale (Campbell, et al. 1996) and the Brief Fear of Negative Evaluation Scale (Leary, 1983) scales were translated into the Urdu language by using MAPI guidelines (Butcher, 2015).

Ethical Considerations

APA requirements have been met for data collection. Both APA requirements were adopted before data collection and authorizations of the respective authors of the English and Urdu Edition Scales were taken in the present study to use the evaluation measures. Informed consent was taken from the participants prior to data collection, before the administration of questionnaires relevant information was provided to the participants about the nature of research. The participants were also told that their information is for scholarly study only, they are not restricted for the completion of research as they can quit from the research at any time. After data collection, it was analyzed through SPSS 21, statistical software.

Results

Results of the present research revealed a positive correlation between procrastination and the FNE, but the clarity of self-concept and fear of un-favorable appraisal have shown a strong negative association between them. Furthermore, outcomes explored a highly significant negative correlation found between grade point average (GPA) and FNE. Results also revealed a negative impact of procrastination on student's self-concept clarity. The results of present investigation were in line with the previous researches and theoretical framework that revealed there was a significant negative correlation found between the self-concept clarity and fear of negative evaluation. Study will focus on the self-conception

of students and inspire them to stop adjourning and to express their ideas without performance anxiety or fear of being judged.

A series of statistical analysis were regulated to test the hypotheses.

Internal consistencies of the total scale score and sub-scales are shown in table 1.

Table 1: Psychometrics Properties of Procrastination, Self-clarity and FNE among Students

Variables				Range		
	K	M	SD	α	Potential	Actual
Procrastination	20	68.74	5.90	.83	20-100	29-92
Conceptual Self Clarity	12	34.05	3.12	.92	12-60	15-58
FNE	12	48.64	5.86	.80	12-60	12-56

Note. N= total items

Table 1 showed that moderate reliability of variables.

Table 1 summarizes that variables shown above are moderate to good alpha reliability. It was also assumed that a correlation found in procrastination, self-concept clarity and FNE among university students. To test the hypotheses of present research, person moment correlation analysis was conducted. Results are presented in table 2.

Table 2: Relationship between Procrastination, Self-Concept Clarity, FNE & GPA in previous semesters among Students (N=400)

	1	2	3	4
1. GPA	-	00	.12	26**
2. Procrastination		-	25*	.31**
3. Self-Concept Clarity			-	14
4. Fear of Negative Evaluation	ł			-

Note: * p < .05 ** p < .01

The results showed that significant negative relationship in GPA, self-concept clarity and FNE.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Fear of Negative Evaluation among Students (N = 200)

	Fear of Negative Evaluation				
Variable	$\Delta \mathbf{R}^2$	В			
Block 1	.047**				
GPA		3.8*			
Monthly income		21			
Block 2	.046				
Self-concept clarity		022			
Block 3	.31**				
Procrastination		.43*			
R	.56				
R^2	.314				
F	45.17				

Note: * p < .05 ** p < .01

Results of multiple hierarchical regression analysis conducted to examine if procrastination, self-concept clarity and GPA can predict FNE among university students. The results showed that GPA, monthly income and conceptual self-clarity predicts the FNE.

In the first step of multiple hierarchical regression model 1 procrastination was entered and this model was statistically insignificant, F=10.73, p<.01 and explained 4.7% of variance in FNE among university students. After entry of self-concept clarity, the next model was statically significant F=7.3, p<.01 and the total variance explained by the model 2 as a whole 4.6%. In the third step grade point average was entered and this model was statistically significant, F=45.17, p<.01 and explained 31% of variance in FNE among university students. In the final adjusted model, procrastination found to be significant positive impact ($\beta=0.55$, p=0.06) on fear of negative evaluation among university students. Self-concept clarity had a insignificant and negative impact ($\beta=-0.38$, p=0.001) whereas grade point average also had a significant and negative impact ($\beta=-0.152$, p=0.01) on fear of negative evaluation among university students. Since, the overall regression model was significant, the hypothesis that procrastination, self-concept clarity and grade point average will be a predictor of FNE among university students is accepted. It indicates that conceptual self-clarity and GPA can cause decrease in FNE in university students whereas, procrastination can cause increase in fear negative evaluation. Thus, the hypotheses H_3 is accepted.

Discussion

The current research focused to investigate variables of procrastination and conceptual clarity of one's self as predictors of fear of being judged and scrutinized in university students. Procrastination has been identified as being closely associated with self-concept clarity and fear of negative evaluation (Al-Momani, 2017; Petrie, 2014; Bui, 2007). The first hypotheses of the present research assumed that procrastination among university students measured by Procrastination Scale would be positively correlated with fear of negative evaluation. For this purpose, findings in table 2 showed that there was a positive relationship found among procrastination and the fear of negative evaluation. Research findings of Zarrin, et al. (2020) is in congruence with the present findings as they explored positive association between fear of negative evaluation and academic procrastination. As evident from Table 2 students having Procrastination in their daily lives face high FNE in their studies. The findings of the current research supported the first hypotheses. Results of the current study were in line with the findings of Giguere, et al. (2016), revealed that procrastination is likely to invade shame in people, can also result in lowering their mental health and well-being. Ellis (1979) explored it as a habit that usually he outcome of irrational thoughts.

On other hand, the second hypotheses of the current study showed that a significant negative correlation found among the self-concept clarity and FNE. Academic procrastination tends to increase academic risk taking behavior (Abkay, Evin, Delibalta & Ayca, 2020). Perfectionist have greater self-concept clarity and positive views about themselves as compared to those who have lower sense of self-concept clarity (Lo & Abbott, 2019).

Results also revealed that procrastination has a negative impact on students' self-concept clarity. Findings of the current study suggested that procrastination is significantly related to self-concept clarity and predicts FNE is supported by several researches (Sirois, 2013; Sirois & Tosti, 2012; Williams, 2008; Steel, 2007; Flett, Blankstein, & Martin, 1995; Friedman, 2000; Tice & Baumeister, 1997). The findings of the current investigation were in line with the previous researches, they established a significant negative correlation among the self-concept and GPA or academic procrastination. Post-hoc analysis investigated a significant inverse correlation between the procrastination and self-esteem among university students but no relationship was found in procrastination and self-concept (Saleem & Rafique, 2012). As evident from Table 2 there was a positive relationship found among procrastination and the fear of negative evaluation but there was significant negative relationship found among self-concept clarity and being scrutinized and judged. Furthermore, outcomes explored that a highly significant inverse correlation was found among grade point average (GPA) and FNE.

In a research conducted by Tuasikal & Patria (2019) revealed that social support, self-concept clarity has lower level of procrastination. Procrastination and Self-concept clarity as predictors of fear of negative

evaluation are consistent with results from previous researches (Mccown et al.2012; Allen & Leary, 2010; Neff & McGehee 2009; Neff, 2003). This is supported by Petrie (2004) explained that self-concept was described by procrastination-related attributes, self-efficacy, self-esteem and fear of negative evaluation symptoms causes anxiety, depression, and stress. Moreover, results described that high procrastinators showed positive evaluation after receiving improvements to their self-concept clarity. Findings of our study are analogous to the previous researches that confirmed the existence of positive relationship between procrastination and fear of negative evaluation (Burns et al., 1999; Suomalainen, 2017). Button et al. (2015) argued that FNE is associated with cognitive distortion in reference to processing social provided feedback in specific to one's performance. Individuals with lower fear of evaluation are found to be manifest indifference in context of negative self- reference whereas, contrary to that individuals with higher fear of negative evaluation indicated higher sensitivity to both positive and negative evaluation in self-referential context. This higher sensitivity in internalizing feedback provided in negative context have detrimental effects on mental health.

Theorist tried to examine different reasons of why students procrastinate on their academic assignments. Temporal motivational theory is found to be the most compendious and appropriate theoretical framework (Steel, 2007). Temporal Motivational theory (TMT) indicates that person prefer to perform task with high benefits as compared to those with lower advantages. When people think the usefulness to do the job is minimal, they prefer to procrastinate. Less attractive rewards may lead towards the development of procrastination. They prefer current enjoyment over future rewards (Schraw et al., 2007).

The present research also declared that self-concept clarity was a negative predictor of self-concept. The results generated from the current research are analogous to the past researches that confirmed the existence of negative association between self-conceptual self-clarity and the fear of being evaluated negatively.

Congruent to the present findings Tseng (2022) revealed that self-efficacy has negative impact on student's procrastination. Self-concept was associated more highly with Positive Affectivity than with Negative Affectivity. It also found the highly significant negative correlation of grade point average (GPA) with negative affectivity (Tarlow & Haaga, 1996).

In this study the third hypotheses were procrastination, self-concept clarity and grade point average (GPA) will be a predictor of fear of negative evaluation among university students. Results of multiple hierarchical regression analysis conducted to examine if self-concept and GPA can predict FNE among university students which proved that procrastination had an insignificant positive impact on fear of negative evaluation. Whereas, conceptual self-clarity and GPA negatively predicted ($\beta = 1.52$, p = 0.05); ($\beta = -0.15$, p = 0.05) on fear of being evaluated in students. Since, the hypotheses that procrastination and self-concept clarity will predict the of fear of evaluated negatively among university students is accepted. It indicates that higher the clarity of self and GPA, lower will be the fear among students of being scrutinized whereas, procrastination can cause increase in fear negative evaluation. Thus, the hypotheses H_3 is accepted.

The current study also showed that there was a positive correlation found between procrastination and fear of negative evaluation hence, students who procrastinate in their work have high apprehensions about others to evaluate them negatively (Fee & Tangney, 2012; Abbasi & Alghamdi, 2015; Bui, 2007; Hoffmann & Petrie, 2014; Al-Momani, 2017). Outcomes also explored that there was a highly significant negative relationship among grade point average (GPA) and fear of negative evaluation; this relationship persisted even when measured intelligence was controlled.

Results disclosed that no gender differences found among men and women, which were contrary to the findings of Zarin, et al. (2020) in which he explored that men are more prone towards academic procrastination. Both men and women have fear of being negatively evaluated with self-concept clarity. Results of the current research also demonstrated a significant inverse relationship between conceptual self- clarity and being evaluated negatively which suggest that students with clear thoughts and

processing have confidence in themselves are not afraid to take part in any job (Mcintyre, Mattingly, Lewandowski, 2017; Stopa, Brown, Luke, Hirsch, 2010).

Conclusions and Recommendations

Finding of the present study has led towards the development of positive relationship between procrastination and the fear of negative evaluation but there was a significant negative relationship found among conceptual self-clarity and the fear of being judged. Student's clarity regarding to its academic self-concept is an important contributor in developing motivation regarding his academic performances (Patall et al., 2012). Furthers, outcomes also explored that there was a highly significant negative relationship found between grade point average (GPA) and fear of negative evaluation. Findings embarks upon on notion for future researchers to investigate how perfectionism can contribute to procrastination and ambiguity in self-clarity. The results showed that GPA, monthly income and self-concept clarity predicts the fear of negative evaluation.

No gender differences were found in the study. Near to dead line of assignment students feel pressure which can decrease precision and punctuality that negatively impacts the academic results (De Vries et al., 2008). This analysis gives students understanding of how their postponement is affecting their GPA and causing stress and burnout. Rational Emotive Behavior Theory postulates that human behaviors manifest as result of interplay between one's cognitions, emotions and behaviors (Ellis, 1979) and change in any component has its own impact on other cognitive faculties (Ellis, 1996). Present study revealed lower self-concept clarity will have higher fear of negative evaluation.

Current research will help to increase the awareness to concentrate on student's self-concept and motivates them not to procrastinate in any task and share their ideas without any fear of negative evaluation.

This study has shown helpful results that are applicable to the literature. It does have some limits that need to be taken into account. The recommendations proposed for this study are deemed able to facilitate an awareness and appreciation of the pause or omission of long-term practices. These restrictions will offer valuable guidelines for future study. Sample size of the research was limited Cultural and other biases may affect the research findings. Further surveys in other cities with larger and more diverse demographics can be more reflective and can validate results from the study. Future studies with students from multiple universities, diverse areas and different variables can be combined to investigate more aspects of procrastination.

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Conflict of Interest

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