

The Role of Self-Control on Academic Procrastination: A Literature Review

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Abstract

There are five things that are frequently linked to high procrastination tendencies, including social anxiety, poor self-control, self-consciousness, low self-esteem, and self-efficacy. The key component of these five areas on which this study focuses is self-control. Since the method of this research is a literature review, then the objectives of this paper are to define academic procrastination and self-control, describe the variables that affect students' academic procrastination, list the aspects and kinds of self-control, and identify the impact of self-control on academic procrastination based on prior studies. The review of literature reveals that students' academic procrastination is significantly influenced by self-control techniques. The majority of earlier studies determined that there is a negative association between academic procrastination and self-control which means a student's self-control will be poor if academic procrastination is high, and vice versa.

Keywords: *self-control; academic procrastination; literature review*

INTRODUCTION

Procrastination is surely not a new matter anymore. This issue was acknowledged by William James around 120 years ago (Klasen, Krawchuk, & Rajani, 2008). Many theoretical perspectives have been used to study this issue, and plenty of causes and effects have been proposed.

Jansenn and Carton (1999) elucidated that there are five areas that are frequently linked to high procrastination tendencies, including social anxiety, poor self-control, self-consciousness, low self-esteem, and self-efficacy. The key component of these five areas on which this study focuses is self-control. It has long been believed that procrastination is a sign of poor self-control (Ursia, Siaputra, & Sutanto, 2013). Moreover, this is also supported by Zacks and Hen (2018) that based on some previous study procrastination, especially in academic context, can be viewed from a situational

viewpoint and as a deficiency in self-regulation.

According to Klasen, Krawchuk, and Rajani (2008), many of the recent studies on procrastination attribute procrastination to a lack of self-control (e.g., Senecal et al., 1995, Ferrari, 2001, Woltres, 2003, Steel, 2007). All of those studies revealed that procrastination is correlated with self-control, and that self-control represents one of the key components to understanding postponement.

The relationship between academic procrastination and self-control has been extensively studied by numerous experts, so the researcher has attempted to summarize all the findings in order to serve as a reading or reference guide for others who wish to learn more about the relationship or conduct additional research on the subject. And also, there are presently no journals that examine the literature specifically on the part of self-control in academic procrastination.

Therefore, based on the explanation above and the previous academic procrastination as well as self-control literature, this review of literature paper tried to define academic procrastination and self-control, describe the variables that affect student academic procrastination, list the aspects and kinds of self-control, and discuss the impact of self-control on academic procrastination based on prior studies.

METHOD

Since the objectives of this research are to define academic procrastination and self-control, describe the variables that affect student academic procrastination, list the aspects and kinds of self-control, and discuss the impact of self-control on academic procrastination based on prior studies, thus the appropriate method is a review of literature. According to Snyder (2019), a literature review as method of research can provide effect evidence of a problem, set standards for policy and practice, as well as serve as a foundation for theory building. Moreover, if a literature review as a research method properly conducted, it has the potential to spark fresh thoughts and perspectives for a relevant area which in this case is about self-control and academic procrastination.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The academic procrastination definition

An academic procrastination is a delay in finishing a task until the deadline is about to end (Aitken, 1982). Salomon and Rothblum (1984) defined academic procrastination as the propensity to begin postponing work completion by engaging in unrelated activities, causing the activity to become hindered, finish slowly, and be frequently late to submit. Academic procrastination, according to Schouwenburg (1995), is postponing a task. This postponing is implied by three behavioral manifestations: (1) a lack of promptness, either in intention or

behavior; (2) a discrepancy between intention and behavior; and (3) a preference for competing activities. Moreover, Steel (2007) indicated that academic procrastination is the deliberate delay of a task or piece of work by an individual despite his knowledge that it would negatively affect him. Therefore, an academic procrastination is the act of postponing a task even after realizing its consequences.

Factors that influencing student's academic procrastination

According to Ferrari, Johnson, and McCown (as cited in Ariyanto, Netrawati, & Yusri, 2019) the procrastination can be seen in the traits of putting off starting and finishing tasks, gaps in time between plans and execution, delays in creating tasks, and engaging in more fun activities. Visser, Korthagen, and Schoonenboom (2018), highlighted that personal and situational variables are the two main causes of academic procrastination. In terms of personal factors, they include depression, anxiety, self-handicapping, the Big Five factor neuroticism, afraid of failure, perceived competence, poor planning skill, low level of perseverance, lack of intrinsic motivation, lack of goal orientation, and pessimism. Additionally significant factors impacting students' procrastination are volitional control, social relatedness, and task competency. On the other hand, situational factors including the environment of the school, disorganized and slack teachers, imprecise work instructions, and task aversiveness might also have an impact on student academic procrastination.

Furthermore, in accordance to Solomon & Rothblum (in Ariyanto, Netrawati, & Yusri, 2019) anxiety, perfectionism, trouble making decisions, dependency and a constant need for assistance, poor decision-making, laziness, a lack of assertiveness, a fear of success, trouble managing time, a lack of self-control, and risks resulting from the influence of friends are some of the causes of academic

procrastination. Aznar-Diaz et al. (2020) also pointed that internet addiction is one of the factors that influences student academic procrastination. The result of their research showed that internet addiction has a significant positive correlation to the performance of academic procrastination ($p < .001$).

Shaked and Altarac (2022) published that there are three main factors that affect student academic procrastination, namely 1) the nature of assignments, they put off more tasks that were challenging, boring, frustrating, and ambiguous; 2) psychological factors like anxiety, low self-esteem, a propensity for defeatism, fear of failure, or overly ambitious goals; and 3) personal and motivational factors that are impulsivity and low self-control.

The definition of self-control

According to Rachlin (1974) the term “self-control” frequently used to describe making choices amongst alternatives with varying delivery schedules. It means our ability to control ourselves in every situation and opportunity. According to Meriam-Webster Dictionary, self-control refers to a person's capacity to manage their emotions, wants, and inclinations. Goldfried and Merbaum (as cited in Nirwana and Mandasari, 2019) stated that the self-control is the ability to plan, direct, organize, and compose actions that can result in favorable outcomes.

Based on Duckworth et al. (2019) the term self-control refers to the voluntary management of one's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors when temporarily more satisfying aims clash with long-term values. Self-control defined as the capacity to postpone receiving an immediate lower reward in favor of a larger one later (Ainslie, 1975; Mischel et al., 1989; Kirby & Herrnstein, 1995; Gillebaart, 2018). In accordance to Marsela and Supriatna (2019), self-control described as a capability that people can acquire and employ during processes in life, including in

coping with conditions in the immediate environment, is the capacity to collect, guide, organize, and steer types of conduct that can have positive outcomes.

Ghufron and Risnawati (as cited in Marsela & Supriatna, 2019) claimed that there are two factors that affect self-control, namely internal factor and external factor. Internal factor include personality, age (As a youngster grows older, the community that influences him expands along with the variety of social interactions he has, causing self-control to gradually come from within the child) and intellectual abilities (the procedures of a person using his or her mind and knowledge to achieve a process and the correct techniques or strategies that have been worked out). On the other side, the external factors consist of experience, environment (Every person in a given environment will be influenced by the culture there) and family (Relationships with parents provide evidence that parents influence their children's self-control).

Aspects and kinds of self-control

According to Acocella and Calhoun (1990), there are five aspects of self-control, as follows: (1) **Behavioral control**, the ability to influence and modify unpleasant situation. In this case, the control behaviour means to determine who is in control of the situation, himself, other people, or something outside himself. By reacting at the appropriate time or reducing the severity of the issue, these unpleasant occurrences can be avoided or prevented; (2) **Cognitive control**, the ability to manage undesirable information by understanding, evaluating, or integrating an event in a cognitive framework as a psychological adaption or to lessen stress. People attempt to evaluate and analyze a scenario utilizing their knowledge of unpleasant circumstances by emphasizing happy or neutral thoughts or subjectively focusing on the situation's positive elements; (3) **Decision control**, the capacity to make a decision based on what is accepted or

believed. When given the chance, freedom, or ability to select from a variety of potential (alternative) activities, self-control in making decisions will work well; (4) **Informational control**, the chance to learn about stressful events, including when they will happen, why they will, and what will happen as a result. By reducing one's dread of the unknown and improving one's capacity to forecast and plan for the future, information control can help people feel less stressed; (5) **Retrospective control**, the capacity to make indirect references to theories regarding what or who caused a traumatic event after it occurred.

Moreover, Guvron and Risnawati (as cited in Marsela & Supriatna, 2019) explained

that there exist three kinds of self-control, they are (1) **Over control**; Over control is when someone holds back significantly from reacting to stimuli as a result of exercising self-control in an excessive manner; (2) **Under control**; Under control is the propensity of people to act spontaneously and without thought; (3) **Appropriate control** Individual restraint used to correctly control impulses is referred to as appropriate control.

Ikhsan (2019) explained several characteristics of people that have low, medium, and high self-control.

Table 1. The characteristics of low, medium, and high self-control

Low self-control	Medium self-control	High self-control
Easy to lose control, easily irritated, prone to exploding emotions, or incapable of performing tasks effectively owing to uncontrolled emotions.	Already capable of addressing it calmly and fairly	Can anticipate issues, give helpful responses, and create more favourable relationships.
Incapable of enduring a variety of challenges or severe circumstances.	Capable of handling pressure properly, does not impair work procedures or results	May act as a leader or be able to control others and yourself
While you can control your emotions, you cannot effectively channel them.		

Previous studies on the effect of self-control on academic procrastination

Self-control has a crucial part in determining performance in the academic environment. A procrastinated student had a lack of self-control in their behaviour, cognitive, and motivation (Park and Sperling in Wijaya and Tori, 2018). Based on the research result by Solomon and Rothblum (1984), people who have low self-control tend to postpone their tasks. In 1995, Senecal, Koestner, and Valleran conducted study on the relationship between self-control and academic procrastination. They discovered

that procrastination was lower among students with intrinsic incentive for completing academic activities than among those with less self-motivated motivation (external regulation and amotivation). This indicates that procrastination is a motivational issue including factors other than ineffective time management or inherent laziness. According to Galla and Duckworth (2015), Student self-control has a positive impact on study habits, homework completion, higher school grades, as well as GPA and persistence in college. This also affirmed by Candeias et al. (2017), they confirmed that in both primary and secondary schools, self-control is

positively correlated with academic self-efficacy and school satisfaction.

Wijaya and Tori (2018) in their research stated that self-control determine an important role in academic and general procrastination. It has a negative correlation with procrastination and is logically seen as a predictor of procrastination. Moreover, Steel (2007), indicated that academic procrastination has a strong negative correlation with self-control ($r=-0.85$). This result is also in line with the research conducted by Ursia, Siaputra, and Sutanto (2013), they discovered that self-control has a negative correlation with general procrastination ($r = -0.663$) and academic procrastination ($r = -0.504$). Moreover, Endrianto (2014), in his research also revealed that This study found a negative correlation between self-control and academic procrastination ($r = -0.465$, $p < 0.05$). While, Mandasari and Nirwana (2019) also found out the same result that there was a significant relationship between students' self-control onto academic procrastination with a -0.141 correlation coefficient and a 0.020 significance level.

Therefore, it can be implied that self-control is one of the factors that has a

significant role on student academic procrastination (Ghufron, 2003). Averill (in Ariyanto, Netrawati, & Yusri, 2019) described that students who have high self-control can control their behaviour to do their task right away. Most of the previous research determined that the correlation between academic procrastination and self-control shows a negative correlation. It means that if the student's academic procrastination is high, then the student's self-control will be low and vice versa.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that self-control has a significant role on student academic procrastination. This paper emphasized the idea that academic procrastination can be influenced by the level of self-control. The majority of earlier studies determined that there is a negative association between academic procrastination and self-control. It implies that a student's self-control will be poor if academic procrastination is high, and vice versa. Each individual has a big responsibility to manage themselves, so that their academic performance can increase.

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