

Procrastination and Academic Achievement of Freshmen CEAS Students: A Basis for an Intervention Program

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This study was conducted to determine the effects of procrastination to the academic achievement of freshmen College of Education, Arts and Sciences (CEAS) students from a local college. The researchers used a descriptive correlational design. There were 94 freshmen students who were randomly selected during their first semester in the academic year 2018-2019. The study used an adopted instrument and facilitated data gathering through survey. The data were then subjected to statistical treatment using SPSS 22. The findings of the study were as follows: the respondents were English major, belonged to 15-20 years old age bracket, were mostly females, were first born, have an average family monthly income of Php 5,001-10,000, were Roman Catholics, came from public schools and were scholars. The respondents agreed that they procrastinate in their academic activities. In terms of academic performance, professional education subjects got the lowest average and the major subjects got the highest. It was also found out that program and religion got significant differences. A low negative relationship was also observed between academic procrastination, general education subjects, professional education subjects and grade point average (GPA). From the findings of the study, an intervention program for the department was suggested together with other pertinent recommendations.

Keywords: procrastination, academic achievement, freshmen, intervention program

Introduction

The 21st century offers a variety of changes especially in the behaviors and attitudes of students. However, there is one idea that has been proliferating through the years; it is about procrastination. McCloskey and Scielzo (2015) provided a simple definition of procrastination. With the different gadgets and equipment that thrive along the way, learning and studying will definitely be affected to some extent. However, other factors do play along with the ever-growing strain of academic perseverance of students.

Procrastination can affect all forms of academic misconduct (Patrzek, Sattler, van Ven, Gruncchel & Fries, 2015), factors influencing learning process (Visser, Korthagen & Schoonenboom, 2018), and demographic characteristics (Kim & Seo, 2015). However, Kim, Hong, Lee and Hyun, (2017) posited that time perspective has an indirect effect on procrastination.

In terms of relationship, procrastination is associated with coping (Sirois & Kitner, 2015), negatively related with academic performance (Balkis & Duru, 2017; Kim & Seo, 2015), and course achievement (You, 2015). But procrastination can also be associated with other factors such as self-esteem, depression and loneliness (Shi, Wang, Liu, Zhang, Chen & Cai, 2018), and socially prescribed perfectionism and self-oriented perfectionism (Closson & Boutilier, 2017). Yerdelen, McCaffrey and Klassen (2016) showed the relationship of procrastination and anxiety and at the same time low levels of self-efficacy for regulation. On the other hand, Kim, Fernandez and Terrier (2017) found out that extraversion and neuroticism are related to active procrastination.

Gender plays a role between academic procrastination and academic performance (Balkis & Duru, 2017). Additionally, Umerenkova, Fuente, Amate, Paoloni, Fadda and Perez (2018) endorsed that self-regulation predicts procrastination positively and negatively. You (2015) also predicted that academic procrastination regarding course achievement and predictability is increased as time passes. Furthermore, perfectionism predicted academic engagement and procrastination (Closson & Boutilier, 2017). Kim, Fernandez and Terrier (2017) extrapolated that active procrastination predicts GPA. However, the trajectories of procrastination and anxiety were not predicted according to Yerdelen, McCaffrey and Klassen (2016). In addition, in the case of Lowinger, Kuo, Song, Mahadevan, Kim, and Liao, (2016) collective coping style, avoidant coping style, academic self-efficacy and English language proficiency predicted academic procrastination in non-Indian Asian international students.

Other relative findings include the tendency of procrastination in terms of year level (Stewart, Stott & Nuttall, 2016), motivation of students to persist academic procrastination (Wu & Fan, 2015), problematic smartphone use predicted academic procrastination (Yang, Asbury & Griffiths, 2018), and college students with psychosocial problems are more vulnerable to procrastination (Shi, Wang, Liu, Zhang, Chen & Cai, 2018). However, Olano and Parrado (2017) showed that online SMART-type goal clarification can lead to positive changes in academic procrastination of college students.

The main objective of this study is to assess the level of procrastination of the freshmen students in the College of Education, Arts and Sciences and at the same time determine the effects of procrastination to their academic achievements based on the results of their GPAs in three different areas, namely: major subject(s), general education subjects and their professional education subjects. From the findings of the study, the researchers formulated an intervention program that helps students in their academic performances.

The study also intended to create a harmony in the academic performances of the students by giving the instructors the idea on the subjects the students have difficulty in dealing with most of the time. This result of the study can also benefit students and parents by providing them idea on how to cope up with the stress of accomplishing and complying with the requirements of the subject areas.

Methodology

Research Design

This study made use of a descriptive-correlation design using a survey questionnaire as its main instrument in obtaining pertinent information related to the main objectives of the research. Since the study intends to assess the effects of procrastination to the academic achievements of freshmen students, the descriptive design is anticipated for it tries to analyze or describe a definite characteristic or trait of a certain population or group.

Respondents

A total of 94 freshmen students from the College of Education, Arts and Sciences (CEAS) participated in this study using a purposive sampling technique. The respondents were students of the

department, regardless of whatever course they were enrolled in the current semester of the academic year 2018-2019.

Instrument

The researchers adopted and modified an instrument from McCloskey and Scielzo’s (2015) Academic Procrastination Scale (APS) to gauge the prevalence of procrastination of the respondents. Prior to administration of the survey, the instrument was first pre-tested to other college students who were not part of the study for any ambiguous or misunderstood terms or words.

Statistical Treatment

In this particular study, frequency count, percentage, mean, t-test, ANOVA, and Pearson-r were used to analyze and interpret the gathered and tabulated data using SPSS version 22.

Results

The researchers gathered data, tabulated and subjected them to statistical treatment for analysis. The following tables represent the results of the data from the respondents.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Program		
BSED-Science	12	13
BSED-Mathematics	6	6
BSED-English	43	46
BCAEd	10	11
BPEd	23	24
Total	94	100
Age		
15-20 years old	84	89
21-25 years old	7	8
26-30 years old	1	1
31 and above	2	2
Total	94	100
Sex		
Male	40	43
Female	54	57
Total	94	100
Birth Order		
First Born	36	38
Second Born	25	27
Third Born	19	20
Fourth Born	8	9
Fifth Born and Beyond	6	6
Total	94	100
Average Family Income		
PhP 5,000 below	22	23

PhP 5,001-10,000	26	28
PhP 10,001-20,000	21	22
PhP 20,001-30,000	13	14
PhP 30,001 above	12	13
Total	94	100
Religion		
Roman Catholic	56	59
Iglesia ni Kristo	12	13
Born Again Christian	14	15
Others	12	13
Total	94	100
Former High School		
Public	70	74
Private	24	26
Total	94	100
Scholar Status		
Yes	49	52
No	45	48
Total	94	100

Table 1 shows the demographic characteristics of the respondents for this study. As seen, most of the respondents were English major students. Majority of the students were aged between 15-20 years old. The female dominates the male respondents. There are more first-born respondents. The average family monthly income is between 5,001-10,000 pesos. Roman Catholics dominate the rest of religious beliefs. The majority also came from public schools during their high school days. Last, there are more scholars in the study.

Table 2. Academic Procrastination Scale results

Statement	Mean	Descriptive Interpretation
I usually allocate time to review and proofread my work. *	3.11	Agree
I put off projects until the last minute.	2.63	Agree
I have found myself waiting until the day before to start a big project.	2.54	Agree
I know I should work on school work, but I just don't do it.	2.30	Disagree
When working on schoolwork, I usually get distracted by other things.	2.80	Agree
I waste a lot of time on unimportant things.	2.50	Agree
I get distracted by other, more fun, things when I am supposed to work on schoolwork.	2.74	Agree
I concentrate on school work instead of other distractions. *	2.80	Agree
I can't focus on school work or projects for more than an hour until I get distracted.	2.43	Disagree
My attention span for schoolwork is very short.	2.30	Disagree
Tests are meant to be studied for just the night before.	2.66	Agree
I feel prepared well in advance for most tests. *	2.66	Agree
"Cramming" and last-minute studying is the best way that I study for a big test.	2.53	Agree
I allocate time so I don't have to "cram" at the end of the semester. *	2.64	Agree
I only study the night before exams.	2.65	Agree
If an assignment is due at midnight, I will work on it until 11:59.	2.50	Agree
When given an assignment, I usually put it away and forget about it until it is almost due.	2.30	Disagree
Friends usually distract me from schoolwork.	2.34	Disagree
I find myself talking to friends or family instead of working on school work.	2.52	Agree
On the weekends, I make plans to do homework and projects, but I get distracted and hang out with friends.	2.54	Agree
I tend to put off things for the next day.	2.59	Agree
I don't spend much time studying school material until the end of the semester.	2.29	Disagree

I frequently find myself putting important deadlines off.	2.46	Disagree
If I don't understand something, I'll usually wait until the night before a test to figure it out.	2.39	Disagree
I read the textbook and look over notes before coming to class and listening to a lecture or teacher. *	2.67	Agree
Overall Mean	2.55	Agree

*Likert Scale: 1.00-1.49 – Strongly Disagree; 1.50-2.49 – Disagree; 2.50-3.49 – Agree; 3.50-4.00 – Strongly Agree

Table 2 represents the result of the academic procrastination survey. As seen from the table, 17 out of the 25 items of the survey garnered a response of “agree”. The remaining 8 items gathered a response of “disagree”. Overall, the academic procrastination of the respondents falls under the response of “disagree”. This only means that the respondents admit the fact that they do exercise the concept of academic procrastination from time to time.

Table 3. Average grades per subject areas of the respondents

	Mean	SD
General Education Subjects	89.16	4.34
Major Subjects	89.69	3.19
Professional Education Subjects	85.96	4.04
Grade Point Average (GPA)	88.47	3.01

Table 3 shows the average grades of the respondents per subject areas. It is observed that the average rating for the general education subjects was 89.16 ($SD = 4.34$) while the major subjects got an average rating of 89.69 ($SD = 3.19$). However, professional education subjects got an average rating of 85.96 ($SD = 4.04$). To cap it all up, the grade point average (GPA) got an average rating of 88.47 ($SD = 3.01$). This result only shows that the respondents have a harder time studying in professional education subjects since they got a lower average score in this area.

Table 4. T-test for significant differences when respondents are grouped according to profile variables

	Academic Procrastination		
	M	SD	t- value
Male (n=40)	2.63	0.35	1.91
Female (n=54)	2.50	0.29	
Public (n=70)	2.57	0.34	0.65
Private (n=24)	2.52	0.27	
Yes (n=49)	2.60	0.31	1.30
No (n=45)	2.51	0.33	

$df = 92; p > 0.05$

Table 4 represents the *t*-test to compare the scores of academic procrastinations and the profile variables of the respondents. There was no significant difference in the scores of males ($M = 2.63, SD = 0.35$) with that of the females ($M = 2.50, SD = 0.29$); $t(92) = 1.91, p = .06$. There is also no significant difference in the scores for public school ($M = 2.57, SD = 0.34$) and private school ($M = 2.52, SD = 0.27$); $t(92) = 0.65, p = 0.52$. There is also no significant difference in the scores between a student scholar ($M = 2.60, SD = 0.31$) and non-student scholar ($M = 2.51, SD = 0.33$); $t(92) = 1.30, p = 0.20$.

Table 5. ANOVA for significant differences on respondents' academic procrastination when grouped according to demographic characteristics

		SS	dF	MS	F value
Program	Between Groups	1.14	4	.29	3.02*
	Within	8.38	89	.09	
	Total	9.52	93		
Age	Between Groups	.49	3	.16	1.63
	Within	9.03	90	.10	
	Total	9.52	93		
Birth Order	Between Groups	.23	4	.06	0.55
	Within	9.29	89	.10	
	Total	9.52	93		
Average Monthly Family Income	Between Groups	.47	4	.12	1.17
	Within	9.05	89	.10	
	Total	9.52	93		
Religion	Between Groups	.911	3	.30	3.18*
	Within	8.61	90	.10	
	Total	9.52	93		

* $p < .05$

Table 5 shows the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to compare the academic procrastination of the respondents with their profile variables. The result of the ANOVA indicated that there was significant difference observed in terms of program, $F(4, 89) = 3.02, p = .02$, and religion $F(3, 90) = 3.18, p = .03$. However, there is no significant difference found in age, $F(3, 90) = 1.63, p = 0.19$; birth order, $F(4, 89) = 0.55, p = .70$; and average family monthly income, $F(4, 89) = 1.17, p = .33$. Post hoc analysis using Tukey post hoc indicated that the Mathematics program has a significantly lower procrastination result ($M = 2.24, SD = 0.32$) than the other programs such as Science ($M = 2.57, SD = 0.27$), English ($M = 2.53, SD = 0.30$), Cultural Education ($M = 2.78, SD = 0.41$) and Physical Education ($M = 2.58, SD = 0.30$). In the case of Religion, post hoc analysis using Tukey yielded that Iglesia ni Cristo got a significantly lower procrastination result ($M = 2.33, SD = 0.32$) than the other mentioned religion like Roman Catholics ($M = 2.59, SD = 0.30$), Born Again Christians ($M = 2.49, SD = 0.24$) and Other religious denomination ($M = 2.68, SD = 0.40$).

Table 6. ANOVA for significant differences on respondents' academic procrastination when grouped according to subject areas

		SS	dF	MS	F value
Major Subjects	Between Groups	458.07	29	15.80	0.78
	Within	1294.83	64	20.23	
	Total	1752.90	93		
General Education Subjects	Between Groups	298.43	29	10.29	1.02
	Within	644.99	64	10.08	
	Total	943.42	93		
Professional Education Subjects	Between Groups	613.67	29	21.16	1.50
	Within	900.94	64	14.08	
	Total	1514.61	93		
Grade Point Average (GPA)	Between Groups	312.69	29	10.78	0.19
	Within	528.62	64	8.26	

Total	841.31	93
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$p > .05$

Table 6 represents the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to compare the academic procrastination of the respondents and the different subject areas. There is no significant difference in terms of the major subjects, $F(29, 64) = 0.78, p = .77$; general education subjects, $F(29, 64) = 1.02, p = .46$; professional education subjects, $F(29, 64) = 1.50, p = .09$; and grade point average (GPA), $F(29, 64) = 1.31, p = .19$.

Table 7. Correlation matrix between respondents' academic procrastination and subject areas

	1	2	3	4	5
Academic Procrastination	1				
Major Subjects	-.04	1			
General Education Subjects	-.28**	.28**	1		
Professional Education Subjects	-.26**	.36**	.77**	1	
Grade Point Average	-.24*	.67**	.87**	.88**	1

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

Table 7 shows the correlation matrix between the academic procrastination of the respondents and the different subject areas. Based on the results of the study, academic procrastination is related to general education subjects, $r = -.28, p < 0.01$; professional education subjects, $r = -.26, p < .05$; and grade point average (GPA), $r = -.24, p < .05$. However, only the major subjects did not yield a relationship with academic procrastination ($r = -.04, p > .05$).

Discussion

The main aim of this study is to assess the academic procrastination of freshmen students and its effect to their academic achievement. The result could be a basis for an intervention in the programs that were included in the study.

It was found in the study that the respondents agree that they do exercise academic procrastination at some point in their college life. In relation, Patrzek, et al. (2015) indicated that academic procrastination affects the frequency of all forms of academic misconduct. However, Nordby, Klingsieck and Svartdal (2017) suggested in their study that social and environmental factors should be given attention to reduce and prevent academic procrastination.

Performance of the respondents in the three subjects' areas was chosen as basis for academic achievement to see if academic procrastination has an effect of such. To verify on this matter, Balkis and Duru (2017) stipulated in their study that academic procrastination has a negative relation to academic performance. However, based on the result of the study, the average grade per area does not vary that much except on the area of professional education subjects. In connection, Alfonso, Peñaranda, Vicente, and Jimenez (2018) showed that academic grades did not reveal differences to their respondents, as procrastination was the same.

Differences in the academic procrastination scales of the respondents when grouped according to their demographic characteristics were seen to some aspects like in their program and religion. However,

related literatures like Stewart, Stott and Nuttall (2015) indicated that there was no significant difference between male and female, which was also observed in the study. Since the study was only conducted in just a semester, Yerdelen, McCaffrey and Klassen (2016) exposed that procrastination among students were related at the beginning of the semesters. However, Stewart, Stott and Nuttall (2015) concurred that procrastination tendency is higher in the second year which does not coincide with the result of this study.

In terms of relationship, there has been a low negative relationship seen between academic procrastination of the respondents with the subject areas, namely: professional education subjects, general education subjects and the Grade Point Average (GPA). In association to the study's result, Mahasneh, Bataineh and Al-Zoubi (2016) found out that few students showed high level of academic procrastination; over half of the students showed medium levels and approximately a quarter of students showed low level of academic procrastination. Nevertheless, Visser, Korthagen, and Schoonenboom (2018) showed the importance of looking at differences on how students deal with factors, which negatively influence their learning.

With the results of the study, other pertinent literatures also provided some insights that may or may not support the concepts of this research. There are varied factors that affect the academic procrastination of a student. Some can root from the parenting styles (Mahasneh, Bataineh & Al-Zoubi, 2016) and behavior of the individual (Xie, Yang & Chen, 2018). However, there are some cases that procrastination can be used in other ways; Hong, Hwang, Kuo and Hsu (2015) stated that procrastination negatively predicted students' self-monitoring, goal setting and pursuing goals relevant to self-regulated learning. However, Wu and Fan (2015) suggested ways to motivate students to persist in academic self-efficacy and subjective task value through their relationships with academic procrastination.

Finally, academic procrastination can be seen as a context, which affects and plagues students. In this study, the researchers did a simple assessment if such event is prevalent and the study showed some significant results.

Conclusion

Based on the following results, the researchers were able to conclude the following:

- 1) The respondents are English major, belong to 15-20 years old age bracket, were mostly females, first born, have an average family monthly income of Php 5,001-10,000, were Roman Catholics, came from public schools and were scholars.
- 2) The academic procrastination response of the respondents falls under the category of "agree".
- 3) The respondents' academic performance includes the following scores: for general education subjects, 89.16, for major subjects, 89.69, for professional education subjects, 85.96 and for grade point average (GPA), 88.47.
- 4) There is a significant difference found when the respondents' academic procrastination response is grouped according to the program and religion.
- 5) There is a low negative relationship between academic procrastination and the subject areas of general education subjects, professional education subjects and the grade point average (GPA).

Recommendations

With the forgoing conclusions, the researchers then formulated the following recommendations:

- 1) Students must practice time management and behavioral modifications like avoiding “cramming” or last-minute efforts to finish requirements or projects. They must finish the requirements as early as possible so as not to pile up with other school activities.
- 2) Instructors and professors should assess the capabilities of their students and provide a suitable requirement. Constant reminders and firm classroom policy regarding passing of requirements should be upheld consistently. Sanctions for misconducts should be implemented.
- 3) Parents and guardians should provide continuous guidance and support to their students and at the same time reminders for different school matters and provide time also to see to it that their students are doing what they ought to do.
- 4) For college, an intervention program should be designed to help alleviate and minimize student procrastination.
- 5) The school guidance counselor should play an active role in behavioral change/ modification of students towards academics.
- 6) For the curriculum, a firm but flexible way of employing strategies, principles and techniques should be applied since the learners are diverse and possess different intelligences.

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