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Research Paper

Unemployment Anxiety in Emerging Adults: The Predictive Roles of Emotional Intelligence, Procrastination, and Fear of Failure

Ms. Yashswini Pulgar[1]*, Ms. Tanya Raj[1], Mrs. Dhiyaneshwari R.P.[2]

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to investigate the psychological factors associated with unemployment anxiety in young adults, with a focus on emotional intelligence, procrastination, and fear of failure. A sample of 200 young adults aged between 22- 30 years were taken. The He Wi's Unemployment Anxiety Scale (HUAS) – Final Version, Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale - 10 (BEIS-10), Procrastination Scale (Lay,1986) and The Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory were used to assess the variables. Descriptive statistics, followed by Pearson's correlation analysis to examine correlation among the variables. Results revealed a significant negative correlation between unemployment anxiety and emotional intelligence ($r = –0.581$), and a significant positive correlation between unemployment anxiety and procrastination ($r = 0.393$). Emotional intelligence was also negatively correlated with procrastination ($r = –0.580$) and fear of failure ($r = –0.180$), while procrastination and fear of failure showed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.518$). However, the correlation between unemployment anxiety and fear of failure was weak ($r = 0.092$). A multiple regression analysis was conducted to predict procrastination based on emotional intelligence and unemployment anxiety. The model was significant ($F(2, 197) = 50.97$, $p < .001$, $R^2 = .341$). Emotional intelligence significantly predicted lower procrastination ($\beta = –0.53$, $p < .001$), while unemployment anxiety showed no significant effect. The study recommends incorporating emotional intelligence training into academic and career services to help lower anxiety, reduce avoidance, and encourage active pursuit of career goals.

Keywords: *Unemployment Anxiety, Emotional Intelligence, Procrastination, Fear of failure*

In today's swiftly evolving economic landscape, unemployment in society has emerged as a major stressor, particularly for young adults who are at a crucial stage of personal and professional development.

Unemployment anxiety is defined as the constant concern, worry, and psychological distress associated with the prospect of being unemployed. Moving from academic life to the workforce is often marked by unpredictability, heightened competition, and societal expectations of success. When these external pressures clash with an individual's reality, they can heighten stress and contribute to anxiety.

[1]Student, M.Sc. Clinical Psychology, Jain (deemed-to-be) University, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India
[2]Assistant Professor, Department of Psychology, Jain (deemed-to-be) University, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India.
*Corresponding Author

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Unemployment profoundly affects individuals, causing not only financial hardship but also psychological distress that undermines self-perception, self-worth, and future prospects.

Furthermore, in interdependent culturally oriented countries such as India, where societal norms and family expectations play an important role in shaping career-related choices.

This highlights the need to look into the mental health effects of unemployment anxiety and to explore the factors that could affect or lessen its impact. In a society where success is often measured with professional achievement, unemployment can lead to feelings of inadequacy and social comparison. Young adults may attribute their unemployment as a personal failure, which can severely affect their motivation, emotional well-being, and mental health.

Examining how unemployment anxiety interacts with other psychological concepts like emotional intelligence, procrastination, and fear of failure is crucial considering these advances. Better interventions, career support networks, and mental health services catered to the requirements of this susceptible group can be developed with an understanding of the causes and effects of unemployment anxiety in young adults.

Emotional Intelligence (EI)

EI "refers to the ability to perceive, comprehend, regulate, and effectively utilize one's own emotions while also recognizing and responding to the emotions of others."

Mayer and Salovey initially introduced the concept in 1990. Later, Daniel Goleman emphasized its significance in various life domains, particularly the workplace. According to Goleman, individuals with high emotional intelligence tend to manage stress more effectively, communicate more clearly, and perform better in professional environments.

Emotional Intelligence has 5 Pillars:

1. **Self-Awareness** - is the capacity to identify and reflect on one's own emotional states, thoughts, and behavioral patterns. It involves a clear understanding of personal strengths, limitations, and emotional triggers.
2. **Self-Regulation** - involves managing emotional reactions, maintaining composure, and staying focused, especially during challenging or uncertain times. This skill is especially critical during periods of unemployment.
3. **Motivation** - particularly when it is internal or self-driven, plays a crucial role in emotional intelligence. It helps individuals remain committed to their goals, even in the face of repeated challenges, such as prolonged job searches.
   In this context, this means continuously upskilling, revising resumes, applying consistently, and not allowing setbacks to define self-worth. Such motivation counters despair and keeps hope alive, which is vital for mental well-being and success.
4. **Empathy** - is the skill of understanding and sharing the feelings of others by adopting their perspective. It enhances social interactions by fostering compassion and effective communication.
5. **Social Skills** - encompass the ability to interact harmoniously with others through effective communication, cooperation, conflict resolution, and influence. These competencies are essential during job searches, networking, and interviews, enabling young adults to present themselves confidently and maintain supportive relationships.

Procrastination

Procrastination has been described as a "complex maladaptive reaction to various perceived stressors." It is the "voluntary delay of an intended action despite expecting to be worse off for that delay." It is a frequently observed behaviour that affects individuals across different ages and contexts, but it tends to be particularly prominent among young adults, especially in stressful situations such as unemployment or academic pressures.

"It is often mistakenly seen as laziness or poor time management; however, research suggests it is better viewed as an **emotion-regulation strategy**, particularly when individuals face stress, fear of failure, or a lack of self-confidence" **(Sirois & Pychyl, 2013)**. "For young adults, especially those experiencing unemployment or transitional stress, procrastination may become a coping mechanism used to avoid the discomfort associated with job searching, interview preparation, or networking" (Hen & Goroshit, 2018).

From a psychological perspective, procrastination reflects a tension between mitigating negative emotional states in the immediate term and striving towards long-range objectives. "When faced with tasks that are perceived as difficult or emotionally taxing, individuals tend to seek instant gratification—like engaging in distractions—to escape the uncomfortable emotions associated with those tasks" (Tice & Baumeister, 1997).

"Chronic procrastination is also linked to broader mental health challenges, such as higher levels of stress, lower self-esteem, and symptoms of depression and anxiety" (Sirois, 2014). Understanding procrastination as a **maladaptive emotional coping strategy**—rather than a personality flaw—can help develop more effective interventions.

Fear of Failure - "The fear of failure, also known as Atychiphobia is an irrational and persistent fear of failing, which often leads individuals to avoid situations where their abilities might be evaluated." (Conroy et al., 2007). "This fear can originate from internal pressures—such as perfectionism and self-imposed standards—or external influences like societal expectations and fear of judgment from others" (Birney, Burdick, & Teevan, 1969). "This cognitive-emotional pattern can negatively affect one's motivation, resulting in behaviors like procrastination, excessive self-criticism, and avoidance of growth opportunities" (Sagar & Stoeber, 2009).

Moreover, fear of failure is closely tied to self-worth. "Many individuals equate success with personal value, and any failure is perceived as a direct reflection of inadequacy. Consequently, they may unconsciously engage in self-handicapping behaviors, such as delaying applications or not preparing adequately, to avoid the emotional impact of potential failure" (Martin & Marsh, 2003).

In the context of unemployment, fear of failure can exacerbate job search stress, contributing to increased anxiety and reduced proactive behavior. Understanding this fear, its emotional underpinnings, and its behavioral consequences is crucial for developing strategies to support young adults in overcoming these barriers and fostering resilience.

"Interplay Between Unemployment Anxiety and Psychological Constructs"

Unemployment anxiety among young adults is a growing concern in today's uncertain and highly competitive job market. This anxiety doesn't arise in isolation; rather, it interacts with

multiple psychological factors that influence how individuals perceive and respond to employment-related stress.

The Psychological Circle

These constructs — emotional intelligence, procrastination, and fear of failure — are deeply interconnected. Low emotional intelligence may lead to poor regulation of fear and stress, increasing the likelihood of procrastination and intensifying the fear of failure. Likewise, high levels of fear and prolonged procrastination can further erode emotional control and self-belief.

This creates a psychological loop where one factor feeds into another, reinforcing a cycle of distress. For instance, a young adult with low emotional intelligence may feel anxious about job interviews, procrastinate applying, then feel guilt or shame about the delay, which reinforces the fear of failure and worsens the anxiety. Understanding this loop is critical to designing effective mental health.

Purpose of the Study

In the contemporary socio-economic landscape, marked by uncertainty, heightened competition, and shifting career trajectories, young adults are increasingly vulnerable to psychological challenges related to employment. While the issue of unemployment is often examined from an economic or structural perspective, there is a growing recognition of its psychological dimensions, especially in how it affects the emotional well-being, motivation, and self-perception of individuals transitioning into adulthood. The purpose of the present study is to explore the interrelationships and interactive effects of unemployment anxiety, emotional intelligence, procrastination, and fear of failure among young adults. This study focuses on individuals aged between 22 and 30, a period that falls within what developmental psychologist Jeffrey Jensen Arnett (2000) conceptualized as "Emerging Adulthood". According to Arnett, emerging adulthood is a distinct developmental stage between adolescence and full adulthood, typically ranging from 18 to 29 years, characterized by identity exploration, instability, self-focus, and uncertainty about future roles and careers.

Some of the previous studies are included as follows:

Hemalatha and William Dharma (2024) developed the Unemployment Anxiety Scale to specifically capture the emotional distress experienced by individuals facing joblessness, something general anxiety measures often overlook. Using a methodical process involving item generation, expert review, and statistical validation, they created a culturally relevant and reliable tool tailored to the Indian context. The scale highlights key concerns such as financial insecurity, loss of identity, and fear of social judgment. Their work provides researchers and mental health professionals with a focused instrument to better understand and address the psychological impact of unemployment.

Wanberg (2012) provides a comprehensive overview of the psychological and behavioural effects of unemployment on individuals, emphasizing that job loss is more than just an economic event—it deeply affects one's identity, mental health, and daily structure. The paper explores how people react emotionally and behaviourally to unemployment, highlighting stages of distress, coping strategies, and the influence of personal and situational factors. Importantly, Wanberg calls attention to how prolonged joblessness can

erode motivation, increase anxiety or depression, and impact future employability, making it a critical area of concern for both researchers and policymakers.

Paul and Moser (2009) conducted a large-scale meta-analysis to examine the link between unemployment and mental health, finding strong evidence that joblessness significantly impairs psychological well-being. Their analysis of multiple studies revealed that unemployed individuals consistently report higher levels of depression, anxiety, and psychosomatic symptoms compared to their employed counterparts. The study also showed that the longer a person remains unemployed, the greater the negative impact on their mental health. This paper underscores the urgent need to address the emotional and psychological consequences of unemployment, not just its economic implications.

Käärt and Kõiv (2021) explored the psychological impact of unemployment in the Estonian context, providing evidence that job loss significantly affects mental well-being. Their study found that unemployed individuals experienced increased stress levels, reduced life satisfaction, and increased symptoms of depression and anxiety. The research highlighted how economic insecurity and social isolation contributed to these outcomes, particularly in younger and less educated groups. The study emphasizes the importance of targeted mental health support and employment policies to buffer the psychological toll of unemployment.

Dooley, Prause, and Ham-Rowbottom (2000) examined the long-term psychological effects of underemployment, focusing particularly on its relationship with depression. Their longitudinal study revealed that not just unemployment but even being employed in positions that underutilize skills or offer insufficient hours, can significantly increase the risk of depressive symptoms. The authors emphasized that underemployment is an overlooked but serious stressor that negatively impacts mental health over time. This research broadens the understanding of employment-related distress by showing that job quality matters as much as job status.

Peláez-Fernández, Rey, and Extremera (2021) investigated how personal psychological resources—specifically emotional intelligence, resilient coping, and self-esteem—can buffer against depressive symptoms during periods of unemployment. Their findings revealed that individuals with higher emotional intelligence and coping resilience were better equipped to manage the emotional strain of joblessness. These protective traits not only reduced the likelihood of depression but also helped maintain a sense of personal stability during uncertain times. The study emphasizes the importance of strengthening emotional skills as part of mental health support for the unemployed.

Gómez-Hombrados and Extremera (2023) explored how emotional intelligence influences mental health and job search behavior during periods of unemployment. Their study found that individuals with higher emotional intelligence reported better mental well-being and were more proactive and persistent in their job search efforts. Emotional intelligence served as a buffer against the psychological stress of unemployment and encouraged adaptive behaviors like resilient coping and sustained motivation. The findings suggest that fostering emotional intelligence could play a key role in improving both emotional stability and employability among the unemployed.

Peláez-Fernández, Rey, and Extremera (2020) examined how emotion regulation skills influence employability, with a particular focus on the mediating role of ambition. Their study found that individuals who effectively manage their emotions are more likely to maintain higher levels of ambition, which in turn enhances their ability to navigate the challenges of the job market. The research highlights that emotional competence is not only beneficial for mental health but also serves as a driving force behind career-related behaviors and success, especially during times of unemployment or career transition.

Gómez-Hombrados and Extremera (2025) focused on how emotional intelligence contributes to the mental health and overall well-being of unemployed individuals, particularly highlighting age as a moderating factor. Their findings revealed that emotional intelligence plays a protective role by helping individuals manage stress, maintain emotional balance, and cope more effectively with the psychological challenges of unemployment. Notably, younger individuals appeared to benefit more from emotional intelligence in terms of mental health outcomes. The study underscores the value of emotional intelligence training in interventions aimed at supporting the unemployed.

Sverke, Hellgren, and Näswall (2002) conducted a comprehensive meta-analysis examining the effects of job insecurity on employee outcomes. Their review found that perceived job insecurity significantly correlates with increased psychological distress, reduced job satisfaction, and poorer physical health. The study emphasized that even the fear of losing one's job—without actual unemployment—can lead to serious emotional and behavioral consequences. By synthesizing findings from various studies, the authors underscored job insecurity as a major stressor that affects both individual well-being and organizational performance.

Conroy, Willow, and Metzler (2002) developed a more nuanced understanding of the fear of failure by creating a multidimensional scale that captures the emotional and cognitive complexity behind it. Rather than seeing fear of failure as a simple anxiety about failing, their work revealed that it often stems from deeper concerns—like the fear of feeling ashamed, letting others down, or losing self-worth. By validating the Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (PFAI), they offered a tool that helps researchers and practitioners better understand how fear of failure impacts behavior, especially in academic and performance settings. Their work reminds us that behind every hesitation or avoidance behavior, there may be a person struggling with inner fears shaped by past experiences and social expectations.

Smith (2022) explored the complex relationship between fear of failure, mindfulness, and procrastination, highlighting how internal emotional struggles can quietly shape everyday behaviors. Through their research, Smith found that individuals with a high fear of failure often procrastinate—not out of laziness, but as a way to avoid the possibility of failing. Interestingly, mindfulness was shown to reduce this avoidance behavior by helping individuals become more aware of their emotions without being overwhelmed by them. The study underscores the importance of emotional awareness and self-compassion in breaking the cycle of fear-driven procrastination.

Erdinç Duru, Murat Balkis, and Sibel Duru (2024) study delves into the subtle emotional dynamics between fear of failure, academic satisfaction, and the mediating roles of emotion regulation difficulties and procrastination. The authors suggest that when students fear

failure, it's not just about poor grades—it's about the internal pressure of not meeting expectations or disappointing others. This fear often leads to struggles in managing emotions, which in turn fuels procrastination. As a result, academic satisfaction decreases, creating a frustrating cycle. The research paints a deeply human picture of how emotional struggles, if left unaddressed, can quietly erode motivation and self-confidence in academic settings.

Bangar, Sekhon, and Narula (2024) investigated how fear of failure influences academic procrastination among college students, uncovering a pattern familiar to many: when students are afraid of not succeeding, they often delay starting tasks, not out of disinterest but out of emotional avoidance. The study highlighted that this procrastination is not simply poor time management, but a coping mechanism to shield one's self-esteem from the possibility of failure.

Zhang and Zhou (2023) explored the intriguing connection between age, procrastination, and fear of failure. They uncover that younger individuals tend to procrastinate more, largely due to heightened fear of failure. Their study suggests that as people age, they often develop better emotional regulation and a stronger sense of self, which helps reduce fear-driven procrastination.

Elliot and Church (1997) introduced a hierarchical model of achievement motivation that distinguishes between approach goals (striving for success) and avoidance goals (avoiding failure). Their research demonstrated that fear of failure often drives individuals toward avoidance-oriented goals, which can lead to anxiety, low performance, and procrastination. In contrast, those motivated by the desire to achieve tend to experience more positive outcomes.

Lay (1986) offered one of the earliest in-depth explorations of procrastination as a consistent behavioral pattern, not just a momentary lapse in time management. Through this seminal study, he developed the Procrastination Scale, which helped distinguish between occasional delay and chronic procrastination. Lay emphasized that procrastination is often emotionally driven, linked to self-doubt, task aversion, and underlying anxiety.

Steel (2007) offers a comprehensive meta-analytic and theoretical review that reshapes how we understand procrastination—not as laziness, but as a breakdown in self-regulation. By analysing data across numerous studies, Steel identifies key psychological factors like impulsiveness, low motivation, and fear of failure as core drivers of procrastination. He introduces the Temporal Motivation Theory, which explains why people tend to delay tasks that are unpleasant or lack immediate rewards.

Ferrari, Johnson, and McCown (1995) provided one of the foundational texts on procrastination and task avoidance, framing these behaviors as more than just poor time management—they are psychological habits rooted in fear, self-doubt, and emotional avoidance. Their book combines theory, research, and real-world insights to explore why people delay tasks and how such patterns become chronic.

Tice and Baumeister (1997) conducted a longitudinal study that revealed the hidden costs of procrastination over time. While procrastinators initially experience less stress and even report feeling better in the short term, the study found that this relief is temporary. As

deadlines approach, procrastinators tend to suffer from increased stress, lower performance, and worse health outcomes.

Hypotheses for the study involves:

- **H1:** There is a significant relationship between unemployment anxiety and emotional intelligence among young adults.
- **H2:** There is a significant relationship between unemployment anxiety and procrastination among young adults.
- **H3:** There is a significant relationship between unemployment anxiety and fear of failure among young adults.
- **H4:** Procrastination is significantly associated with emotional intelligence among young adults.
- **H5:** Fear of failure significantly associated with emotional intelligence among young adults.
- **H6:** Emotional intelligence and unemployment anxiety significantly predict total procrastination.

METHODOLOGY

Sample

The sample for the present study comprised 200 young adults, selected through a simple random sampling technique.

Instruments

The measures were used in this study,

1. **Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory (PFAI): to measure general fear of failure:** The Fear of Failure Scale is a psychological assessment tool that measures an individual's emotional and cognitive responses related to the anticipation of failure.
2. **HeWi's Unemployment Anxiety Scale (HUAS):** The Unemployment Anxiety Scale is a validated measure developed to assess the psychological distress and apprehension individuals experience due to current or anticipated unemployment.
3. **Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale - (BEIS-S):** The Brief Emotional Intelligence Scale-10 (BEIS-10) is a concise assessment tool created to measure emotional intelligence efficiently.
4. **Procrastination Scale (Lay, 1986):** The Procrastination Scale used in this study is a standardized self-report instrument designed to assess the tendency to delay or postpone tasks unnecessarily. It evaluates various aspects of procrastinatory behavior, including avoidance, lack of time management, and difficulty in initiating or completing tasks.

Procedure

A study was conducted to investigate the relationship between unemployment anxiety, emotional intelligence, procrastination, and fear of failure in young adults. Data was collected through an online survey using Google Forms, which included an informed consent form, a demographic questionnaire, and four standardized psychological tools. The survey was distributed across various online platforms and targeted young adults aged 22-30. Participants provided digital consent and were encouraged to respond honestly. The data

was then analyzed using SPSS, with descriptive statistics and Pearson's correlation coefficient used to examine the correlations between the variables.

RESULTS

Table No. 1 Tests of Normality for Study Variables by Gender (N-200)

		Kolmogorov–Smirnov			Shapiro–Wilk		
Variable	**Gender**	**Statistic**	**df**	**Sig.**	**Statistic**	**df**	**Sig.**
Unemployment Anxiety	1	.052	99	.200*	.990	99	.655
	2	.072	101	.200*	.978	101	.085
Emotional Intelligence	1	.056	99	.200*	.986	99	.355
	2	.053	101	.200*	.990	101	.658
Procrastination	1	.054	99	.200*	.989	99	.550
	2	.048	101	.200*	.992	101	.823
Fear of Failure	1	.051	99	.200*	.993	99	.896
	2	.083	101	.086	.984	101	.252

Note. Gender: 1 = Male, 2 = Female. *This is a lower bound of the true significance.

Tests of Normality were conducted using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests to examine the distribution of scores for Total Unemployment Anxiety, Emotional Intelligence, Procrastination, and Fear of Failure across gender indicating no significant deviation from normality.

Table No. 2 Descriptive analysis for Study Variables: Unemployment Anxiety, Emotional Intelligence, Procrastination, and Fear of Failure.

(N-200)

Variable	**M**	**SD**	**Range**
Unemployment Anxiety	59.07	12.59	60
Emotional Intelligence	34.96	8.60	40
Procrastination	55.99	11.49	70
Fear of Failure	14.68	4.98	30

Note. *M* = Mean; *SD* = Standard Deviation.

Table no. 2 provides descriptive statistics for the study's main variables (N = 200). The mean score for **Unemployment Anxiety** was 59.07 (SD = 12.586), suggesting a moderately high level of anxiety among young adults regarding job uncertainty. **Emotional Intelligence** showed a mean of 34.96 (SD = 8.596), indicating variability in individuals' emotional regulation and awareness. **Procrastination** had a relatively high mean of 55.99 (SD = 11.485), reflecting a tendency among participants to delay tasks. The **Fear of Failure** mean was 14.68 (SD = 4.983), indicating a lower but present level of apprehension related to performance and self-worth.

Table No. 3 Pearson's Correlation study for Unemployment Anxiety, Emotional Intelligence, Procrastination, and Fear of Failure Among Young Adults.
(N-200)

Variables	Unemployment Anxiety	Emotional Intelligence	Procrastination	Fear of Failure
Unemployment Anxiety		- .581**	.393**	.092
Emotional Intelligence	- .581**		-.580**	-1.80*
Procrastination	.393**	- .581**		.518**
Fear of Failure	.92	-.180*	.518**	

Note:- 0.05* -> 95% ; 0.01** - 99%

As shown in Table no. 3, **Unemployment Anxiety** was found to be:

- **Negatively correlated** with **Emotional Intelligence** ($r = -0.581$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that individuals with higher emotional intelligence experience lower unemployment- related anxiety.
- **Positively correlated** with **Procrastination** ($r = 0.393$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that those who tend to procrastinate also tend to report higher levels of unemployment anxiety. **Not significantly correlated** with **Fear of Failure** ($r = 0.092$, n.s.), implying no strong association in this sample.
- **Emotional Intelligence** was significantly **negatively correlated** with **Procrastination** ($r = -0.580$, $p < 0.01$) and **Fear of Failure** ($r = -0.180$, $p < 0.05$), meaning that individuals with greater emotional intelligence might be more resilient to both of these behaviors.
- **Procrastination** was **positively correlated** with **Fear of Failure** ($r = 0.518$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that individuals who fear failure more are also more likely to delay tasks.

Table No. 4 Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Total Procrastination from Total Emotional Intelligence and Total Unemployment Anxiety.
(N = 200)

Predictor	B	SE B	β	t	p
(Constant)	76.33	6.33	—	12.07	<.001
Total Unemployment Anxiety	0.08	0.06	0.08	1.19	.237
Total Emotional Intelligence	-0.71	0.10	-0.53	-7.47	<.001

Note. $R = .584$, $R^2 = .341$, Adjusted $R^2 = .334$, $F(2, 197) = 50.97$, $p < .001$.

The overall model was significant, $F(2, 197) = 50.97$, $p < .001$, and accounted for approximately 34.1% of the variance in procrastination scores ($R^2 = .341$, Adjusted $R^2 = .334$).As shown in Table 3, total emotional intelligence was a significant negative predictor of procrastination ($\beta = -0.53$, $t = -7.47$, $p < .001$), indicating that higher levels of emotional intelligence were associated with lower levels of procrastination. In contrast, total unemployment anxiety did not significantly predict procrastination ($\beta = 0.08$, $t = 1.19$, $p = .237$).

DISCUSSION

H1 - There is a significant relationship between unemployment anxiety and emotional intelligence among young adults.

Unemployment Anxiety and Emotional Intelligence

A study found a strong negative correlation between unemployment anxiety and emotional intelligence, suggesting individuals with higher emotional intelligence manage distress better. The study also found that age moderated the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and depressed symptoms, with younger participants having a higher association. However, no similar pattern was found for happiness.

H2: There is a significant relationship between unemployment anxiety and procrastination among young adults.

Unemployment Anxiety and Procrastination

A study found a moderate positive correlation between unemployment anxiety and procrastination, suggesting that increased anxiety may lead to increased task avoidance. This could be a self-protective behavior, as individuals delay career-related efforts due to stress or fear of inadequacy. The study also found that conscientiousness was linked to stronger intentions and more favorable task perceptions, while procrastination predicted lower job-search behavior. Task characteristics and task pleasantness moderated these effects.

H3: There is a significant relationship between unemployment anxiety and fear of failure among young adults.

Unemployment Anxiety and Fear of Failure

The study found a weak and insignificant correlation between unemployment anxiety and fear of failure, suggesting that these constructs may operate independently. Fear of failure, though not directly linked to unemployment anxiety, is connected to procrastination and is more common in people with lower emotional intelligence.

H4: Procrastination is significantly associated with emotional intelligence among young adults.

Emotional Intelligence and Procrastination

Emotional intelligence is linked to a decrease in procrastination, suggesting that individuals with higher emotional intelligence have better self-regulation, time management, and goal-orientation skills. A study in Nashik City, Maharashtra, found that students with higher emotional intelligence procrastinate less and experience better mental health, highlighting the importance of emotional intelligence in controlling procrastination and promoting academic achievement and mental well-being, including stress management and procrastination prevention.

H5: Fear of failure significantly associated with emotional intelligence among young adults.

A weak but significant negative correlation was found between emotional intelligence and fear of failure ($r = -0.180$, $p < .05$). This suggests that individuals with greater emotional intelligence may have a healthier relationship with failure, viewing it as a growth opportunity rather than a threat to self-worth.

Procrastination and Fear of Failure are significantly associated:
A significant positive correlation emerged between procrastination and fear of failure ($r = 0.518$, $p < .01$), indicating that fear of failure may act as a driver of procrastinatory behavior. Individuals who fear making mistakes or being judged negatively may delay action as a defense mechanism, thereby reinforcing procrastination as an avoidant coping strategy.

H6 - Emotional intelligence and unemployment anxiety significantly predict total procrastination.

Multiple Regression Analysis
The findings indicate that emotional intelligence plays a significant role in reducing procrastination behaviors. Individuals with higher emotional intelligence may be better equipped to regulate their emotions and manage stress, which in turn helps them stay focused and avoid task delay. The result is consistent with previous research highlighting the protective role of emotional regulation in academic performance.

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Conflict of Interest

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