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Research Paper

# Dispositional Predictors of Academic Procrastination: A Correlational Analysis in Adolescents

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## ABSTRACT

Academic procrastination has become increasingly common among adolescents and is influenced by multiple psychological factors, including personality traits. The present study examined the relationship between academic procrastination and the Big Five personality traits among school-going adolescents in Shimla city. A sample of 400 adolescents (200 males and 200 females) aged 15–18 years was selected from Classes 9 to 12. The Academic Procrastination Scale and the NEO-FFI Personality Inventory were administered, and data were analyzed using correlational, t-test, and regression techniques. Results revealed significant correlations between academic procrastination and all five personality traits. Neuroticism showed a positive relationship, whereas Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness demonstrated negative relationships with procrastination. No significant gender differences were found in academic procrastination. Multiple regression analysis indicated that personality traits significantly predicted academic procrastination, accounting for approximately 45% of its variance, with Conscientiousness emerging as the strongest negative predictor. The findings underscore the role of dispositional characteristics in procrastination and contribute empirical evidence within the Indian adolescent context. Implications for educational practice and future research directions are discussed.

***Keywords:*** *Academic procrastination, Personality traits, Big Five, Adolescence, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, Gender differences, Predictors*

Procrastination derives from the Latin "pro," meaning ahead, and "crastinus," signifying of tomorrow (Mish, 1994). It is a propensity to procrastinate, evade, or defer tasks. It has been defined as “delaying task completion to the point of experiencing subjective discomfort” (Ferrari, 1992), an “intentional delay of an intended course of action” (Klassen, Krawchuk & Rajani, 2008), or as a stable personality trait with adverse effects (Choi & Moran, 2009). Procrastination is recognized as a regular pattern of postponing actions irrespective of outcomes (Van Eerde, 2003). In several societies, particularly within American society, where individuals prioritize performance and outcomes, procrastination may be harmful to individuals. Research indicates that 20% of individuals suffer from chronic procrastination (Klassen et al., 2008).

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### *Academic Procrastination*

Academic procrastination is possibly the most well researched and widespread form of procrastination. Academic procrastination refers to the inclination to postpone or defer educational tasks and activities. Academic procrastination manifests among students of all ages, encompassing those in primary schooling as well as individuals seeking various educational qualifications or degrees. Research indicates that procrastination is quite prevalent among college students (Schraw et al., 2007). Furthermore, the abundant presence of students in a school environment facilitates the study of academic procrastination. Academic procrastination is a distinct form of procrastination. Individuals procrastinate across several tasks and contexts, whether delaying project completion, grading assignments, or departing for a meeting. Nonetheless, distinct forms of procrastination, particularly in academia, may arise if individuals frequently postpone tasks in certain domains. Distinct avenues of procrastination have attracted the attention of academics focused on elucidating the behavioural and dependent consequences of procrastination (Tuckman, 1991). Particular avenues of procrastination can be examined with more ease.

Personality is a fundamental concept in psychology, embodying unique, stable, and consistent behavioural, cognitive, and emotional patterns that distinguish individuals from one another. Decades of empirical research have elucidated its latent structure (e.g., Tupes & Christal, 1992; Guilford, 1975; Goldberg, 1982, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1987), and current consensus situates personality within a five-factor model, commonly referred to as the Big Five or OCEAN taxonomy (McCrae & John, 1992). These dimensions—extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience—are regarded as neither inherently adaptive nor maladaptive; rather, distinct personality configurations provide situational advantages across interpersonal, cognitive, and task-related domains (McCrae & Costa,2003).

The Big Five framework has shown to be very useful for predicting many life outcomes, such as career paths (Judge et al., 1999; Semeijn et al., 2020), academic success (Malykh, 2017; Sobowale et al., 2018), job performance and satisfaction (Chandrasekara, 2019; Paleczek et al., 2018; Sartori et al., 2017), social status and interpersonal functioning (Anderson et al., 2001; Louvet et al., 2019; Swaminathan & Kubat Dokumaci, 2021), health and well-being (Han, 2020; Nikčević et al., 2021; Stead & Bibby, 2017), political orientation (Gerber et al., 2010), and online behaviour (Azucar et al., 2018). These findings illustrate persistent interactions between genetic predispositions and environmental influences that mold personality throughout development, with theorists constantly underscoring early life as pivotal for personality formation.

In the Big Five system, extraversion is linked to sociability, assertiveness, and positive affectivity, whereas its low pole, introversion, is characterized by reservation and a desire for isolation (McCrae & Costa, 2003; Matthews, 2020; Nielsen et al., 2017). Agreeableness signifies inclinations towards collaboration, friendliness, and interpersonal trust (Graziano & Tobin, 2002; Robinson, 2010). Conscientiousness encompasses self-regulatory mechanisms associated with planning, organization, impulse regulation, and goal attainment, while diminished levels correlate with disorganization and procrastination (Costa & McCrae, 1995). Neuroticism refers to emotional instability and a predisposition to unpleasant emotions, such as anxiety, guilt, and irritation (Costa & McCrae, 1995; Özdemir & Dalkiran, 2017). Openness to experience includes curiosity, inventiveness, intellectual engagement, and sensitivity to beauty (Costa & McCrae, 1995).

Adolescence is a developmental stage characterized by substantial biological, cognitive, and psychosocial changes (Steinberg, 2014). Adolescents aged 14 to 18, who attend school, have increased academic pressures while also navigating identity development, the pursuit of autonomy, and peer influences (Eccles & Roeser, 2011; Brown & Larson, 2009). During this period, advancements in executive functions, including planning, inhibitory control, and metacognitive monitoring, transpire; yet, these advances manifest unevenly due to neurobiological asynchronies between socioemotional and regulatory systems (Casey et al., 2008; Luna et al., 2010). These developmental traits influence diversity in academic engagement, self-regulation, and motivation in teenagers. Adolescence is acknowledged as a pivotal phase for the establishment of personality traits, with the Five-Factor Model characteristics exhibiting enhanced structural coherence and significance for academic adaptation and behavioural control (Roberts et al., 2006; Soto & Tackett, 2015). These developmental characteristics highlight the significance of analyzing behavioural patterns and individual variances among school-aged adolescents in educational research settings.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Mahmoud (2015)** examined correlations between academic procrastination and Big Five personality traits in 200 first-year secondary school students (mean age 15.7 years) from Mansoura Governorate, Egypt, using the Academic Procrastination Scale and Personality Test Based on Adjectives. Pearson correlations revealed no significant associations across neuroticism ($r = .025$, $p = .724$), conscientiousness ($r = .036$, $p = .610$), extraversion ($r = -.109$, $p = .123$), agreeableness ($r = -.080$, $p = .261$), or openness to experience ($r = .177$, $p = .085$).

**Dacka and Filipiak (2022)** investigated personality's impact on procrastination in 530 early adolescents (aged 13–15 years, 53.5% girls) from Polish primary schools, employing the Ten-Item Personality Inventory and Pure Procrastination Scale. Boys showed higher emotional stability than girls ($p < .001$), while regression analysis indicated conscientiousness and emotional stability predicted procrastination in girls ($R^2 = .20$), and agreeableness and conscientiousness in boys ($R^2 = .21$).

**Brekci (2022)** conducted cluster analysis on Big Five traits and academic procrastination in 580 Turkish high school students (55% female), utilizing the Big Five Personality Traits Scale and Academic Procrastination Scale. Two clusters emerged: Cluster 1 (65.2%) had higher procrastination and neuroticism, while Cluster 2 (34.8%) showed elevated systematic studying, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness; procrastination positively correlated with neuroticism ($r = .140$, $p < .01$) and negatively with other traits.

**González-Brignardello et al. (2023)** performed a scoping review of 79 empirical studies on academic procrastination in children and adolescents under 18 years, identifying self-regulated learning, personality factors (e.g., self-efficacy, perfectionism), and parental influences as key correlates, predominantly in secondary education samples from Eastern countries.

**Winarno and Goeritno (2017)** investigated the relationships among academic procrastination, academic self-efficacy, and personality traits in a sample of 207 students. Using the Academic Procrastination Scale (APS), the Academic Self-Efficacy Questionnaire, and the Big Five Inventory (BFI), their results demonstrated that specific personality dimensions—extraversion, conscientiousness, and neuroticism—along with academic self-efficacy significantly predicted academic procrastination.

**Sau Keng et al. (2015)** examined the predictive associations among academic self-handicapping, personality traits, and self-esteem as a mediating construct in a sample of 62 participants. Measures were selected according to their psychometric relevance to the study variables. Findings demonstrated a significant positive relationship between academic self-handicapping and personality characteristics—particularly neutral personality—while self-esteem functioned as a mediator in the relationship between academic self-handicapping and relational personality traits.

## METHODOLOGY

**Aim:** To examine the relationship between academic procrastination and personality dimensions among school-going adolescents.

### *Objective*

**Primary Objective:** To examine the relationship between academic procrastination and Big Five personality traits among school-going adolescents in Shimla city.

**Specific Objectives**

1. To examine the relationship between academic procrastination and Big Five personality traits among school-going adolescents.
2. To compare male and female adolescents on levels of academic procrastination.
3. To identify personality traits that significantly predict academic procrastination among school-going adolescents.

### *Hypotheses*

- **H1:** Academic procrastination will be significantly correlated with personality traits among school-going adolescents.
- **H2:** There will be a significant difference in academic procrastination between male and female adolescents.
- **H3:** Big Five personality traits will significantly predict academic procrastination among school-going adolescents.

### *Sample*

- **Total Sample Size:** 400 participants
- **Sex Distribution:** 200 males and 200 females
- **Age Range:** 15–18 years
- **Educational Level:** School-going adolescents (Classes 9th to 12th)

### *Variables:*

- Academic Procrastination (Dependent variable).
- Personality Traits (Independent variable).

### *Procedure*

A total of 400 adolescents attending school (Grades 9–12; aged 15–18 years) from Shimla city were solicited for data collection following the acquisition of consent from school officials. Participants were apprised of the study's objective and guaranteed confidentiality. Approval from the institution and parents, together with student consent, was secured as mandated.

Data were gathered in group settings during academic hours. Rapport was built, uniform instructions were disseminated, and participants were informed that there were no correct or incorrect responses. Questionnaires evaluating academic procrastination and personality qualities were distributed, and inquiries were addressed to guarantee completion.

Following data collection, questionnaires were evaluated according to the test instructions, and scores were recorded in an Excel spreadsheet for subsequent statistical analysis.

***Expected Outcome***

The research seeks to explain the correlation between academic procrastination and personality factors in adolescents attending school (Grades 9–12). Certain personality qualities, including diminished conscientiousness and elevated neuroticism, are expected to correlate with increased academic procrastination. The study aims to elucidate gender disparities in academic procrastination and to uncover personality factors that substantially forecast procrastination in teenagers.

***Research Gap***

Current studies on academic procrastination have primarily concentrated on college or university students and have generally taken place within Western cultural frameworks. Research on academic procrastination among Indian adolescents in Grades 9 to 12 is scarce. Moreover, research including personality factors as correlates and predictors of academic procrastination in teenage populations is comparatively underexplored. The evidence about gender disparities in procrastination within this demographic is both inconsistent and inadequate. Therefore, empirical research is necessary to investigate the relationship between personality factors and academic procrastination among Indian teenagers, as well as to determine the influence of certain qualities and gender differences on variations in procrastinatory behaviour.

## RESULT ANALYSIS

***Table 1: Descriptive Statistics***

***Table 1.1 Overall Mean and Standard Deviation of Academic Procrastination and NEO-FFI Personality Traits (N = 400)***

| Variable | Mean (M) | SD | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic Procrastination** | 71.48 | 21.52 | 0.47 | −0.68 |
| **Neuroticism** | 22.18 | 4.79 | 0.12 | 0.23 |
| **Extraversion** | 27.43 | 8.14 | 0.13 | 0.19 |
| **Openness to Experience** | 30.76 | 3.66 | 0.01 | −0.15 |
| **Agreeableness** | 29.89 | 2.59 | 0.09 | 0.16 |
| **Conscientiousness** | 26.55 | 5.40 | 0.09 | −0.71 |

**Table 1.1** displays the descriptive statistics for academic procrastination and the Big Five personality characteristics for the entire sample (N = 400). The mean score for academic procrastination was moderate (M = 71.48, SD = 21.52). Openness to Experience (M = 30.76, SD = 3.66) and Agreeableness (M = 29.89, SD = 2.59) exhibited comparably elevated levels, But Conscientiousness (M = 26.55, SD = 5.40) was notably lower. The skewness and kurtosis values for all variables were within acceptable limits (–1 to +1), suggesting nearly normal distributions and justifying the use of parametric analyses for future correlation, t-tests, and regression techniques.

***Table 1.2 Mean and Standard Deviation of Male and Female Adolescents on Academic Procrastination and NEO-FFI Personality Traits (N = 400)***

| Variable | Male (n = 200) M | Male SD | Female (n = 200) M | Female SD |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic Procrastination** | 70.79 | 20.91 | 72.18 | 22.14 |
| **Neuroticism** | 22.23 | 4.58 | 22.14 | 5.00 |
| **Extraversion** | 28.29 | 8.12 | 26.57 | 8.08 |
| **Openness to Experience** | 29.37 | 3.40 | 32.15 | 3.38 |
| **Agreeableness** | 29.14 | 2.52 | 30.63 | 2.45 |
| **Conscientiousness** | 26.76 | 5.42 | 26.34 | 5.39 |

**Table 1.2** indicates that females had somewhat elevated academic procrastination ratings compared to males. Females had superior scores in Openness to Experience and Agreeableness, whereas males demonstrated elevated scores in Extraversion. Neuroticism and Conscientiousness had comparable levels across genders. These patterns suggest possible gender disparities that need inferential testing for validation.

***Table 2 Difference Between Male and Female Adolescents on Academic Procrastination (N = 400).***

| Variable | Gender | N | Mean (M) | SD | t | p-value | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Academic Procrastination** | Male | 200 | 70.79 | 20.91 | −0.65 | 0.52 | Not Significant |
| | Female | 200 | 72.18 | 22.14 | | | |

**Interpretation**

The t-test result indicated no statistically significant difference in academic procrastination between male and female adolescents, $t$ (398) = −0.65, $p$ = .52. Thus, both groups demonstrated comparable levels of procrastination.

***Table 3 Pearson Correlation Matrix Between Academic Procrastination and NEO-FFI Personality Traits (N = 400)***

| Variables | AP | Neuroticism | Extraversion | Openness | Agreeableness | Conscientiousness |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **AP** | 1.00 | 0.40** | −0.33** | −0.39** | −0.31** | −0.46** |
| **Neuroticism** | | 1.00 | −0.10* | −0.22** | −0.13* | −0.24** |
| **Extraversion** | | | 1.00 | 0.12* | 0.08 | 0.13* |
| **Openness** | | | | 1.00 | 0.27** | 0.11* |
| **Agreeableness** | | | | | 1.00 | 0.16** |
| **Conscientiousness** | | | | | | 1.00 |

$p < .05$ = *
$p < .01$ = **
Note: AP = Academic Procrastination

**Table 3** shows that academic procrastination correlated positively with Neuroticism and negatively with Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. The

strongest association was observed with Conscientiousness, indicating that adolescents who are more organized and disciplined tend to procrastinate less. Overall, the results suggest that personality traits are significant correlates of academic procrastination.

***Table 4 Model Summary:***

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Change Statistics | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | | R Square Change | F Change | df1 | df2 | Sig. F Change |
| **1** | .672[a] | .451 | .444 | 16.046 | .451 | 64.717 | 5 | 394 | .000 |

a. Predictors: (Constant), Conscientiousness_Score, Openness_Score, Extraversion_Score, Agreeableness_Score, Neuroticism_Score

The model summary indicated that the Big Five personality traits significantly predicted academic procrastination among adolescents, explaining approximately 45% of the variance. The overall model was statistically significant, confirming that personality factors contribute meaningfully to procrastinatory behavior.

***Table 5 Multiple Regression Predicting Academic Procrastination from Big Five Personality Traits (N = 400)***

| Predictor | B | SE B | β (Standardized) | t | p |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Constant** | 177.58 | 12.48 | — | 14.23 | < .001 |
| **Neuroticism** | 1.06 | 0.18 | .23 | 5.98 | < .001 |
| **Extraversion** | −0.58 | 0.10 | −.22 | −5.79 | < .001 |
| **Openness to Experience** | −1.37 | 0.23 | −.23 | −5.86 | < .001 |
| **Agreeableness** | −1.26 | 0.33 | −.15 | −3.87 | < .001 |
| **Conscientiousness** | −1.28 | 0.16 | −.32 | −8.25 | < .001 |

a. Dependent Variable: Academic_Procrastination_Score

Regression coefficients showed that Neuroticism positively predicted academic procrastination, while Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness negatively predicted it. Conscientiousness was the strongest negative predictor, suggesting that adolescents who are more organized and disciplined tend to procrastinate less. These findings support the hypothesis that personality traits are important predictors of academic procrastination.

***Table 6 Summary of Hypothesis Testing***

| Hypothesis | Statistical Test Used | Findings | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| **H1: Academic procrastination will be significantly correlated with personality traits.** | Pearson's Correlation **(Table 3)** | Academic procrastination significantly correlated with all five traits ($p < .001$). | **Accepted** |
| **H2: There will be a significant difference in academic procrastination between male and female adolescents.** | Independent Samples t-test **(Table 2)** | No significant gender difference found ($p = .52$). | **Not Accepted** |
| **H3: Big Five personality traits will significantly predict academic procrastination.** | Multiple Regression **(Table 4 & 5)** | Regression model significant; traits predicted AP ($p < .001$). | **Accepted** |

***Explanation***

- H1 was accepted as significant correlations were observed between academic procrastination and all five personality traits (refer Table 3).
- H2 was not accepted as the t-test revealed no significant difference in academic procrastination between males and females (refer Table 2.1).
- H3 was accepted since the multiple regression model demonstrated that personality traits significantly predicted academic procrastination and explained substantial variance in the outcome variable (refer Tables 4 & 5).

## DISCUSSION

Academic procrastination has become a common concern among adolescents and young adults. Prior research has linked procrastination to personality characteristics, self-regulation, emotional functioning, and motivational factors, indicating that procrastination is influenced by stable dispositional tendencies rather than occurring in isolation. However, much of this work has been conducted in Western contexts and predominantly with college students, leaving limited evidence on Indian adolescents. The present study addressed this gap by examining the associations and predictors of academic procrastination among school-going adolescents in Shimla, with specific focus on the Big Five personality traits.

The study involved 400 adolescents aged 15–18 years, and data were collected using standardized measures of academic procrastination and personality traits. Correlational findings indicated that academic procrastination was significantly associated with all five personality traits. Neuroticism showed a positive relationship, whereas Extraversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness demonstrated negative relationships. These findings align with existing research emphasizing the roles of emotional stability and self-regulation in procrastination.

Gender differences in academic procrastination were also examined. Although females had slightly higher mean scores, no statistically significant differences were found, suggesting that procrastination tendencies may not be strongly influenced by gender during adolescence. This is consistent with literature reporting mixed or context-dependent results regarding gender and procrastination.

Multiple regression analysis further demonstrated that personality traits significantly predicted academic procrastination, accounting for approximately 45% of its variance. Conscientiousness emerged as the strongest negative predictor, followed by Openness, Neuroticism, and Extraversion, with Agreeableness showing the weakest but still significant effect. These results highlight that adolescents who are better organized, emotionally regulated, and socially engaged are less likely to procrastinate, supporting theoretical perspectives that view procrastination as a self-regulation failure shaped by personality.

In conclusion, the findings suggest that personality traits are significant correlates and predictors of academic procrastination, while gender does not play a major role in shaping procrastination behavior. The study contributes empirical evidence from an Indian adolescent context and emphasizes the importance of dispositional factors in understanding procrastinatory tendencies.

***Implications***

The findings suggest that personality traits play a substantial role in academic procrastination during adolescence. This highlights the importance of addressing self-

regulatory and emotional factors in school settings. Educational and counselling professionals can use these insights to design interventions that enhance time management, self-discipline, and coping strategies, ultimately promoting better academic engagement.

***Recommendations***

1. Implement school-based programs on time management and study skills.
2. Provide counselling support for students exhibiting emotional instability or poor self-regulation.
3. Encourage parental involvement in structuring academic routines at home.
4. Create teacher awareness regarding procrastination tendencies and supportive instructional practices.
5. Offer psychoeducational workshops to enhance self-awareness and academic responsibility.

***Limitations***

The study relied on self-report measures, which may involve response bias. The sample was limited to adolescents from selected schools in Shimla, restricting generalizability. The correlational design prevents causal conclusions, and other relevant variables (e.g., motivation, academic stress) were not examined.

***Future Research***

Future studies should include more diverse samples and regions, explore additional psychological variables, and employ longitudinal or experimental designs to determine causality and intervention effectiveness. Qualitative approaches may provide deeper insights into procrastination experiences in adolescence.

## CONCLUSION

The study demonstrated that personality traits significantly correlate with and predict academic procrastination among school-going adolescents, while no gender differences were found. Conscientiousness emerged as the strongest negative predictor. Overall, the findings emphasize the role of dispositional factors in procrastinatory behaviour and contribute evidence from an Indian adolescent context.

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