

Original Research Article

A CROSS -SECTIONAL STUDY TO ANALYSE THE REASONS OF ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION AMONG MEDICAL UNDERGRADUATES IN GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE OF INDORE

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ABSTRACT

Background: Procrastination is defined as a purposeful voluntary delay in beginning or finishing a task until the last minute or after the predetermined deadline, or indefinitely that would have been ideally completed in the present time (Freeman, Cox-Fuenzalida, & Stoltenberg, 2011; Gupta, Hershey, & Gaur, 2012; Rozental & Carl bring, 2013; Steel, 2007). Procrastination tendencies also give rise to poor self-esteem, poor self-confidence, anxiety, public and private self-consciousness, and concerns over public image. Procrastination is commonly seen in medical students which leads to development of stress and overburdening during exams. The objectives are to estimate the prevalence of procrastination among medical undergraduates. To determine the different areas of academic procrastination (3) To assess the various reasons for academic procrastination among medical students.

Materials and Methods: A cross-sectional study conducted out in Government Medical College of Indore in Indore district M.P. over 3 months. The subjects included 300 Undergraduate Students selected by simple random sampling. A pretested questionnaire regarding socio demographic characteristics and a standardized tool "PASS" Procrastination assessment scale was given to assess the degree and reasons for procrastination. Data was entered into Microsoft Excel and analysed by using JAMOWI software. Necessary appropriate statistical tests were applied.

Results: The majority of participants were female (56%) and 44% were male, indicating a slightly higher participation rate among female students. The majority of participants were in the 18–21 years age group (70%). Majority of the students were residing in the hostel (77%). Majority of the participants were from the 1st year (31%) followed by the 2nd, 3rd and final year MBBS students respectively. The overall prevalence of academic procrastination among students were 78%. Majority of the students are procrastinating in completing assignments (84%). Majority of the students (95%) mentioned time management as the major reason for academic procrastination.

Conclusion: The study reveals a high prevalence of academic procrastination (78%) among medical students, with time management being the major reason (95%). Completing assignments is the most common area of procrastination (84%). These findings suggest that targeted interventions, such as time management workshops and study skills training, are necessary to support students in overcoming procrastination and achieving academic success.

Keywords: Procrastination, Anxiety, Poor Self-esteem, Poor self confidence.

INTRODUCTION

Academic procrastination is voluntarily or needlessly delaying an academic task to an indefinite time which is needed to be completed at an assigned time. Various studies have shown that most university students procrastinate in their academic situations.^[1] There are various reasons for academic procrastination like lack of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, communication gap, illness, too much work, lack of guidance, home environment, lack of

coordination, work inability, unseen problems, teacher's attitude, perfectionism, negative comment, task averseness, dependence on technology. Using too much internet, laziness, task averseness, anxiety and life satisfaction, forgetting about the task, low-self-esteem and depression. These are the factors where students to procrastinate academic activities.^[2] Time inconsistency is also one of the major reasons among students who procrastinate academically.

Though academic procrastination is not always a major problem it can create undesirable stress, anxiety, frustration and prevent them from achieving their developmental tasks. Also, negative consequences like academic performance, decreased life satisfaction, withdrawal from course can occur.^[3] So, we have conducted this study to analyse the reasons of procrastination among medical undergraduates in Government Medical College of Indore.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This Cross-sectional study was carried out in Indore the state of Madhya Pradesh by the Department of Community Medicine MGM Medical College & MY Hospital, Indore, M.P. over a period of 3 months. The study participants were undergraduate students of Government Medical College (MGM Medical College) of Indore district. Based on the formula $n = Z^2pq / d^2$ taking expected prevalence (p) as 78 and margin of error (d) as 5%, considering non-response rate of 10%, sample size came out to be 289, rounded off to 300 using the simple random sampling method. The purpose of the study was explained and oral consent was obtained from the participants before enrolling them in the study. A pretested questionnaire regarding socio demographic characteristics and a standardized tool "PASS" Procrastination assessment scale was given to assess the degree and reasons for procrastination. Academic Procrastination Scale (PASS): The PASS is a 44-item instrument designed to measure the frequency of cognitive-behavioural antecedents of procrastination. It measures prevalence in six academic areas and reasons in the second part.^[4] Scoring: Scores on the 5-point Likert type scale ranges from 2 to 10 and across the six academics areas of academic functioning (12 to 60).

Data were entered into Microsoft Excel spread sheet and analysed by using JAMOV software. Appropriate statistical tests were applied wherever necessary. Descriptive statistics employed to establish sociodemographic characteristics. Descriptive data was presented in terms of means and percentages. Chi square test was applied to compare categorical data p value < 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

The present study was conducted among 300 participants including 132 males and 168 females to estimate the prevalence of procrastination among medical undergraduates. In addition, this study also tried to determine the different areas of academic procrastination and to assess the various reasons for academic procrastination among medical students.

[Table 1] shows out of total 300 subjects covered in the study 210(70%) subjects were between 18-20 years of age, 60(20%) subjects were between 21-23 years of age and rest 30(10%) were between 24-26 years of age. The mean age of study participants was 20.55 ± 1.78 (Years). The distribution of students across different professional years was as follows: 31% in the 1st professional year, 26% in the 2nd professional year, 25% in the 3rd professional year, and 18% in the 4th professional year. Regarding their current place of residence, 69(23%) of the students were residing at home, whereas a majority, 231(77%), were staying in hostels or rented accommodations.

From [Table 2] it was observed that in writing a term paper dimension, among 69.6% undergraduates were moderate to high procrastinators. In studying for an exam, around 67.2% of participants were procrastinators at moderate to high level. During reading assignments, 69.7% of undergraduates practiced procrastination. Likewise, in attending meeting 61.4% of participants were moderate to high level procrastinators. While accomplishing the administrative tasks, nearly 58.9% of the students were involved in procrastination from moderate-to-high level. Finally, our study findings revealed that 63.0% were also procrastinating in performing academic tasks.

[Figure 1] shows that the overall prevalence of academic procrastination among students was 78%. Majority of the students (84%) are procrastinating in completing assignments. 77% of the students procrastinate in preparing for next class. Around 40% of the students procrastinate in academic administrative tasks.

[Table 3] shows among the 300 medical students surveyed, the most common reason for academic procrastination is time management (95%) followed by dependency and aversion of task (67%), laziness (59%) and evaluation anxiety (57%).

Table 1: Socio-demographic Profile of U.G. Medical Students

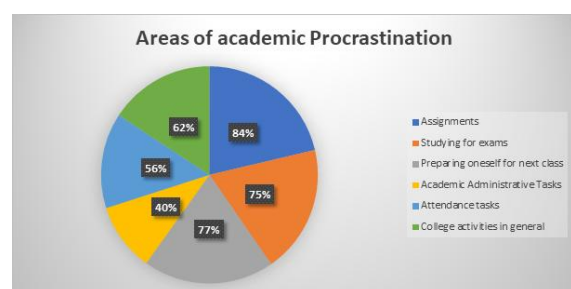
Socio demographic	Total	Percentage (%)
Age		
18-20	210	70
21-23	60	20
24-26	30	10
Sex		
Male	132	44
Female	168	56
MBBS Prof		
1st prof	93	31
2nd prof	78	26
3rd prof	75	25
4th prof	54	18
Current residence		
Home	69	23
Hostel	231	77

Table 2: Areas of Academic Procrastination

Areas of Academic Procrastination	Sometimes (%)	Nearly Always (%)	Always (%)	Sum (%)
Writing a Term paper	41.2	16.1	12.3	69.6
Studying for exams	31.3	19.5	16.4	67.2
Keeping up with Reading Assignments	32.4	20.5	16.8	69.7
Academic Administrative tasks	28.4	14.9	15.6	58.9
Attendance Meetings	32.4	14.3	14.7	61.4
College Activities in General	32.3	16.8	13.9	63.0

Table 3: Reasons for academic procrastination among students

Category/Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Evaluation Anxiety	171	57
Difficulty making decisions	132	44
Dependency	201	67
Time management	285	95
Lack of assertion	69	23
Rebellion against control	54	18
Low self esteem	105	35
Aversion of task	201	67
Risk taking	48	16
Fear of success	63	21
Laziness	177	59
Peer Pressure	69	23
Perfectionism	33	11
Total	300	100

**Figure 1: Areas of Academic Procrastination**

DISCUSSION

In the present study, majority of the students procrastinate in writing assignments which is similar to a study conducted by Hayat et al.^[2] Next most common areas where students procrastinate is preparing for next class and studying for exams. The most common type of academic procrastination is postponing writing papers or studying for exams. In the present study time management as the major reason for academic procrastination which is also reported by Gohain et al.^[5] and Limone et al.^[6]

Another study conducted by Roshanisefat et al.^[7] revealed that improper time management skills and test anxiety as the major reason for delaying tasks. Howell & Watson et al.^[8] also reported that difficulty in time management as one of the major reasons for academic procrastination.

CONCLUSION

Assignments and preparing for the next class are the focal areas where majority of the students procrastinate. Major reason why students procrastinate academically is due to improper time management. Understanding the reasons for academic procrastination will help the students in decreasing their behaviour. Counselling and continuous evaluation process can help in decreasing the procrastination. The results are useful in identifying potential focal areas of procrastination and also areas for intervention and to tackle changes in procrastination over time. Mentors can be made aware of their role in decreasing procrastination.

Recommendation Based on the findings of the present study, the following recommendations are proposed to address and mitigate reasons of academic procrastination among medical students:

1. Time Management Workshops: Offer workshops on time management and study skills to help students develop effective learning strategies.
2. Counseling Services: Provide guidance and counseling services to students to address underlying issues contributing to procrastination.
3. Self-Regulated Learning: Encourage students to develop self-regulated learning strategies to promote academic success.
4. Supportive Learning Environment: Foster a supportive learning environment that promotes academic achievement and well-being.

By addressing academic procrastination, medical colleges can support students in achieving their academic goals and promoting their overall well-being.

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