The Exploration of Academic Procrastination from Self Regulated Learning Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Many people have an issue which is delaying or putting tasks off, so they face distress and concomitantly failure in different domains of life. Procrastination is a scientific term that explains the situation, and academic procrastination is the distinct type which is generally attributed to self-regulatory failure that refers to being successful in self-control, self-discipline, emotional regulation and cognitive process, so it is significant to analyze self-regulated learning and its perspectives. In this regard, Zimmerman, Winnie, Hadwin and Pintrinch are prominent scholars, who proposed SRL models that generally follow common phases which are task analysis, performing, monitoring and feedback. Also, intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation, self-efficacy, the control of beliefs, the fear of failure (test anxiety), cognitive and metacognitive learning abilities are fundamental components of SRL.

Key words: Procrastination, academic procrastination, self-regulatory failure, self-regulated learning.

INTRODUCTION

Procrastination is one of the serious and prevalent problems of modern day individuals since the current time requires them to live in a complex and fast flow. Pishchik as cited in Dautov stated that procrastination has become one of the remarkable subjects today because it has a direct relationship between the increased level of stress and anxiety that is due to rapid changes in life circumstances and academic activities that both require self-control and self-management skills. [1] Although it seems common among people, it is still an unclear term, and its framework has been in the process of construction, so it is better to provide an operational definition. Procrastination origins from in Latin word "Pro-crastinus" which means belonging to tomorrow and it also refers to putting things off intentionally and habitually. [2] In addition, it is defined as an intentional and irrational delay of some tasks even though it results in negative consequences that create discomfort for individuals who postpone. [3]

Although procrastination and laziness have been generally used in the same framework, and they are accepted as interchangeable terms, there is a considerable amount of research which shows that procrastination may not stem from being lazy. Alfred Binet considered that it is necessary to distinguish the term procrastination and laziness when he was developing a cognitive ability test, and he defined that despite laziness is a inertia which innate trait that seems in rare, procrastination is a provisional loss of motivation, and it is situational, rather than it is due to personality trait. [2,4] In addition, they differ from each other, because people, who are described as lazy, mostly do not feel guiltiness and discomfort to not start and to do the stuff which is assigned or required, however individuals who are procrastinators have severe culpability and shame to put off. [5, 6]

Procrastination can occur in various ways and frequency, for example, a person who has obesity or overweight may delay the day to start a diet, or an individual may postpone to clean the house, to quit smoking/alcohol, to start a project regarding a job task or to study exams or to do homework etc. (7) conducted a study that reveals %20 percent of the United States regardless of gender difference have chronic

procrastination. [7] In addition, (8) that the rate of individuals in Eurasia and North America who have procrastinative habits is 70-95% relative to the population, and %25 of them are chronic. [8]

Furthermore, procrastination may occur as comorbid with psychological dysfunctions and disorders, like depression, Obsessive Compulsive Behaviour (OCD), Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). Procrastinators delay tasks due to extreme obsessive thoughts which are what they are going to perform would be better. [9] Also, (10) state that there is a clear link between ADHD and procrastination since people, who have ADHD, are not sufficiently able to plan and organize tasks depending on a deficit in prospective memory. [10] In addition, since people who have major depression show a lack of energy with the accompaniment of the feeling of helplessness and hopelessness they procrastinate. [11]

Although procrastination is diversified, the majority of research in literature focuses on academic procrastination, and its prevalence rate and crucial impact on the life of individuals are two primary reasons for this. In this respect, for instance, (12) reached a valuable statistic that procrastination occurs more frequently among college students with a percentage of 70%. [12] Also, according to the study in (23), 80-95 % of students, who are in college, delay when they are required to do assignments and course work, like writing research papers or preparing a presentation. [13] Lack of motivation and poor learning strategies in students' abilities are two major reasons that explain why students have academic procrastination, so this paper aims to explore academic procrastination with a close lens for self-regulated learning models.

Academic Procrastination

Academic procrastination can be defined as delay specific to the school assignments which include doing homework, studying exams or other related works, so students feel strong unpleasantness. [14] Students who are procrastinators leave the assignment to the last day before the due date or put it off until minimum or insufficient time to complete although they are provided sufficient time at the initial. Also, it may result in giving up finishing the task, because they think that they already will not be able to complete it. When the literature is reviewed it can be seen that academic procrastination is divided into two categories active, which is delaying tasks deliberately and passive procrastination that refers to involuntarily not starting assignments or putting off required stuff.

In this respect, the scope and utility of procrastination have aimed to investigate by many researchers, and although the majority accepts that it is a negative factor that affects student's academic performance and other related domains, like self-esteem, there are some scholars that claim active procrastination can be a facilitator to reach success. Chu and Choi as cited in Seo differed active and passive procrastinators

since they have different cognitive, affective and behavioral patterns, and despite active procrastinators can work under time pressure by benefiting from stress, they can create efficacy, productivity and yield, people who are passive procrastinators are influenced adversely by the stress, so they develop psychological dysfunction, like depression, anxiety so on.[15] Moreover, in the light of Chu and Choi's study, Habelrih and Hicks (2015) conducted a research with 152 undergraduate students, who are selected the South Australia, Queensland and New South Wales, to explore the relationship between psychological well being, active and passive procrastination, and it was founded consistent result that students who have high self-confidence adopt active procrastination, but on the other hand, ones who are with low psychological well being due to tremendous self-criticism, self-judgment and distress, they show passive procrastination. [16]

Students may display a tendency to procrastinate with diversified reasons, and there are many factors that lead students to avoid starting their tasks. (17) Indicated that fear of being unsuccessful, defiance in decision making and risk-taking are some of the primary components that trigger academic procrastination. [17] Abu and Saral (2014) revealed that factors that lead students to academically delay can be categorized into two groups internal, which includes perfectionist personality trait, fear of failure and inability to study skills; and external, which involve inadequacy in social environments and physical circumstances. [18] Further, exaggeration or false assumption of how much time they have to complete the assignment or misbelieve of much more motivation and enthusiasm they must have to perform it are other reasons that are provided by academic procrastinators for why they put it off. [19]

Academic Procrastination and Self Regulated Failure

Although the etiology of academic procrastination can be attributed to other factors, it can be clearly observed when the literature is examined that academic procrastination is a result of self-regulatory failure (SRF), and the majority of research has explained it through this term and concomitantly the components of self-regulated learning theories. In this sense, (22) defines "self-regulation is the control of one's behavior through the use of self-monitoring, self-evaluation and self-reinforcement". [20] Individuals who have self-regulation are able to control their thoughts, impulses and emotions, so they can perform the intended task with effectiveness. [21]

On the other hand, self-regulatory failure is under-regulation which refers to not being able to start a work and misregulation when an individual's action results in ineffectiveness or failure. [22] (23) revealed that 25-95% of students postpone their academic assignments and exams due to self-regulation failure, thus it causes a decrease in their academic achievement. [23] Lack of time management skills, low self-control regarding

setting priorities, regulation of emotions and performance, and poor metacognitive and cognitive strategy use are some distinct characteristics of self-regulatory failure in academic procrastination. [24, 25, 26, 27] Within this context, since the notions of self-regulatory failure are associated with major concepts in the Self Regulated Learning approach and impact on student success, it can be beneficial to examine academic procrastination through SRL's modals/ theories.

Self -Regulated Learning Perspective

Self-regulated learning is defined as"an active process whereby learners construct goals for learning", and self-regulated learners are skilled to monitor, adjust, organize, and control their cognition, motivation, and actions. [28] A self-regulated learner was defined as an individual who is able to monitor their thoughts, emotions, behavior and motivation, so they are able to follow particular academic objectives. [29] In comparison to procrastinators, self-regulated learners are planful and motivated to start and complete the task due to having durable autonomy. [30] In addition, although self-regulated individuals are generally aware of their academic purposes, and they have sufficient encouragement to learn, students who procrastinate avoid engaging in academic exercises. [31] Although there are a number of different theories of self-regulated learning, each of them shares common characteristics with the consideration of cognitive, affective and motivational processes, so three salient SRL models are explained below.

Firstly, Zimmerman is one of the prominent scholars that proposed the cyclical phase's modal which is based on Albert Bandura's social cognitive perspective, so it focuses on the social and motivational part of self-regulated learning. There are three stages, which are forethought, performance control and self-reflection in the modal, which operates in a feedback loop. In the step of forethought, individuals are expected to analyze the task with self-motivational skills, so they establish their goals and determine strategic plans to reach them. In the performance stage, learners are provided with task strategies to develop skills to expand their attention span, and they develop the ability of self-observation, where they monitor their own performance and supply feedback to enhance. In the final phase, which is self-reflection, individuals make a self-judgment by comparing the result with goals that were set at the initial, so it shapes the future performance in a self-regulatory cycle. [32]

Also, Winne and Hadwin define self-regulated learning modal as metacognitive-driven behaviors that regulate cognitive tactics and strategies of the student when they face a task to complete, and there are four stages in the model, in the first stage, the individuals create perceptions about the task that they will perform, and they set goals and plans how to reach them in the second stage. Furthermore, in the third stage, they conduct the plans, strategies and tactics which are

determined, and in the last stage, the people take into account the experiences they have obtained in the previous stages and form cognitive structures related to the tasks to be acquired in the next action. [33]

Similar to those two models, Pintrich proposed a self-regulated learning approach that uses a taxonomy that follows task identification, planning, monitoring, control of learning strategies and reaction (reflection) phase. [34] Cognitive monitoring not only targets raising awareness about the actions of individuals and the consequences of them, but it also aims assessments for metacognitive awareness and learning. [34] In short, it can be clearly seen that self-regulated learning generally is shaped into three steps which are task analysis before what thing is going to conduct, performing with careful monitoring and giving feedback on your own.

Self Regulated Learning and Academic Procrastination

Self-regulated learning impacts academic procrastination through its components which are motivational and learning (cognitive). (35) That it is significant to examine the motivational and cognitive factors to find out why pupils delay assignments in academic settings. [35] In this sense, the value (motivation) component which includes intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation and task value, the expectancy component that contains control of learning beliefs, self-efficacy for learning and performance, and the affective component that involves test anxiety consists of the motivational aspect of the self-regulated learning in the scope of academic procrastination. In addition to this is that the other branch, which is learning strategies, is divided into two cognitive-metacognitive strategies, which involve rehearsals, elaboration, organization, critical thinking and metacognitive self-regulation, and resource management strategies. [36]

Intrinsic and extrinsic goal orientation

The dictionary of the (20) defines intrinsic motivation as an encouragement to participate in a certain activity with a pleasure that comes from a person himself, rather than it seeks benefits from external sources, like money or credits, so despite external motivation depends on reward and punishment, intrinsic goal orientation is a genuine interest. [37] Although intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in students both are indicators that reduce academic procrastination, people who feed from internal motivation sources rather than external are less likely to display delays in their tasks. [38]

(39) conducted research where it was revealed that intrinsic motivation, for example, students who accept studying as a reward in itself since it brings learning, is the more supportive factor that avoid them to develop academic procrastination, although extrinsic motivation, such as expecting the praise of other people increases academic procrastination, it has lower strength. [39] Students who have personal satisfaction,

enjoyment and pleasure from learning that have engaged have intrinsic motivation, so they don't show behaviors that reflect the characteristics of academic procrastination. [40]

Control of Learning Beliefs, Self Efficacy, Test Anxiety/Fear of Failure

Research has constructed a strong relationship between academic procrastination, the control of learning beliefs and self-efficacy, which refers to a subjective perception of someone for her/himself about the ability to achieve assigned tasks or intended results. In this respect, Albert Bandura as cited in Schunk and Pajares explained the term self-efficacy as individuals' belief about having control in practicing, so they are led to be more motivated to accomplish instead of delay. [41] (42) reached a result due to the study where students who are athletes worked, and it shows that athletes who have high academic success exhibit strong academic control and self-efficacy. [42] In the scope of a self-regulated learning approach, self-efficacy is associated with an individual's capability to set targets for the sake of her/her achievement, specifically to direct the learning process successfully. [43]

The research shows that there is a positive correlation between the fear of failure, test anxiety and academic procrastination. (44) observed that students who have lack self-regulation skills, such as self-evaluation or helping assistance develop stronger fear of failure in exams, so they do not fulfill their potential due to procrastination, and in this respect, it was also founded that male students are more likely to show academic procrastination than females. [44] Regarding test anxiety, students who procrastinate feel the anxiety to fail, and consequently, shame and disgrace. [45]

Cognitive and meta-cognitive strategy

Research that focuses on cognitive and metacognitive aspects of learning strategies in the scope of the self-regulated learning approach found that students who are unable to develop and use metacognitive strategies, such as elaboration, organization, planning or monitoring tend to adopt procrastinative habits. In this respect, learning strategies can be defined as a mental process that an individual can use to improve their own learning purposely and to figure out something new. [46] Self-regulated learning includes the capacity of controlling, managing, and directing students themselves when they are assigned a task, especially if it is more difficult, so academic procrastination is accepted as a failure in those learning strategies. [47] Furthermore, (30) establish a relationship between self-efficacy and learning strategies which are both components of the self-regulated learning modal, and it was found that SRL occurs in three steps where individuals use cognitive maps successfully, so student learning would improve and it leads them to monitor and control in which level they have learned, which is the metacognitive component in the second step, and they conduct adaptive attempts to reach the enhanced goal.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, procrastination is one of the problems that people face, and academic procrastination is the prevalent type when statistics and its impact on people are considered. Although there might be a variety of reasons that explain academic procrastination, such as misperception about the effort that is required to complete the tasks or comorbidity, like ADHD, OCD or depression, it was commonly accepted that self-regulatory failure is the major factor, so it is important to examine the self-regulated learning and its perspective toward academic procrastination. In this respect, Zimmerman, Winnie and Hadwin and Pintrich proposed SRL models which share an almost similar path that generally follows task analysis, performing, monitoring and feedback. Finally, in the light of those theories, academic procrastination is explained through the components, which are motivational, which are intrinsic/extrinsic motivation, self-efficacy and cognitive learning strategies that are rehearsal, elaboration, organization and critical thinking, metacognitive self-regulation of SRL.

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