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Impact Of Academic Stress, Mental Health And Emotional Intelligence On Academic Procrastination Among Intermediate Students

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Abstract

Aim: Impact of academic stress, mental health and emotional intelligence on academic procrastination among intermediate students. **Objective:** To assess the impact of academic stress, mental health and emotional intelligence on academic procrastination among intermediate students. **Sample:** The sample of the present study consisted of 400 adolescents in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh State were selected in the age group of 18-21 years and using simple random sampling technique. **Tools:** Procrastination scale was developed by Priyanka Datta and Banerjee, Mita (2016), academic stress scale developed by Sreenivas and Kumar (1999), Mental health status is assessed by using mental health Status Inventory designed by Jagadish and Srivastava (1983) and emotional intelligence Scale developed by Nutankumar Thingujam, and Usha Ram (1999) were used. **Design:** As there are three independent variables i.e., academic stress (low & high), mental health (poor & good) and emotional intelligence (low & high) each variable is divided in to two categories, a 2×2×2 factorial design was employed. **Statistical Analysis:** The obtained data was analyzed statistically in order to test the hypotheses using Means, SD's, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were calculated. **Conclusions:** Students with high academic stress have high academic procrastination than the students with low academic stress. Students with poor mental health have high academic procrastination than the students with good mental health and Students with low emotional intelligence have high academic procrastination than the students with high emotional intelligence.

Key Words: - Academic Stress, Mental Health, Emotional Intelligence, Academic Procrastination and Intermediate Students

Introduction

Academic stress has become a prominent concern among intermediate students, a stage of education often characterized by heightened academic demands, competitive environments, and crucial career-related decisions. The pressure to achieve high academic performance, meet parental and societal expectations, and prepare for future educational pathways frequently exposes students to significant levels of stress. When unmanaged, academic stress can negatively influence students' mental health, emotional functioning, and overall academic engagement.

Mental health plays a vital role in students' ability to cope with academic challenges. Issues such as anxiety, depression, emotional exhaustion, and reduced self-esteem are increasingly reported among intermediate students. Poor mental health not only affects cognitive processes like concentration, memory, and decision-making but also disrupts motivation and persistence in academic tasks. As a result, students experiencing psychological distress may struggle to maintain consistent study habits and academic discipline.

Emotional intelligence, defined as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively, has emerged as a key protective factor in academic settings. Students with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage stress, maintain emotional balance, and adapt to academic pressures. They are more likely to employ effective coping strategies, sustain motivation, and build positive relationships with peers and teachers. Conversely, lower levels of emotional intelligence may intensify emotional distress and hinder effective stress management.

Academic procrastination, the tendency to delay or postpone academic tasks despite knowing the potential negative consequences, is a common behavioral outcome associated with academic stress and poor mental health. Procrastination can serve as an avoidance strategy to escape stress, fear of failure, or emotional discomfort related to academic work. Over time, this pattern may lead to reduced academic performance, increased stress, and a vicious cycle of emotional and academic difficulties.

Understanding the interrelationship among academic stress, mental health, emotional intelligence, and academic procrastination is particularly important for intermediate students, as this developmental stage significantly influences their future academic and personal trajectories. Exploring these variables can provide valuable insights for educators, counsellors, and policymakers to design effective interventions aimed at enhancing emotional intelligence, promoting mental well-being, reducing academic stress, and minimizing procrastination behaviours among students.

Review of Literature

Paker and Gür (2015) indicated that emotional intelligence is inversely related to procrastination, especially in time management and initiation of tasks, two of the most frequently impaired areas in procrastination. Students with high EI are able to plan, prioritize, and carry out tasks more effectively, thus avoiding postponing crucial academic work. Duru and Balkis (2017) discovered that students with greater levels of EI were less prone to procrastination. This is due to the fact that emotionally intelligent people have more self-regulation and emotional consciousness, which enable them to deal with stress and prevent avoidance activities, including procrastination. Olesia Stoliarchuk et al., (2022) studied that the dynamics of academic procrastination and its impact on the mental health of students during the transition to distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. At the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, it was identified a declining tendency of overall rates of academic procrastination and at the same time increase in the number of carriers of mid and high levels of academic procrastination. It was documented that students' academic procrastination is accompanied by a steady negative emotional tension. During the transition to distance learning, the intensity of students' learning activity has increased, which altogether causes stress as one of the main reasons for the academic procrastination among future psychologists. The study identified a risk

of academic procrastination manifestation among students for their mental health, which provides a basis for developing and testing a program to prevent the phenomenon of academic procrastination among degree-seeking students. Samuel Chavez-Fernandez et al., (2024) analyzed the relationship between Emotional Intelligence (EI) and Academic Procrastination (AP) in university students and to generate a predictive model. This study has a quantitative approach and a cross-sectional predictive design. Two hundred fifty-four students from different professional schools in Peru participated, whose ages fluctuated between 18 and 30 years. The Brief Emotional Intelligence Inventory for Seniors (EQ-I-M20) and the Academic Procrastination Scale were administered. The findings show that 52 % of the participants have a high level of emotional intelligence, and 51.2 % have a high level of academic procrastination. The association between emotional intelligence and academic procrastination was significant and negative. The dimensions of emotional intelligence significantly predict academic procrastination, except for the intrapersonal dimension. Asima Sayeed and Namita Srivastava (2025) investigated that the predictive relationship between EI, procrastination, and stress among university students. A quantitative research design was employed, utilizing standardized self-report measures to assess EI, procrastination tendencies, and perceived stress levels. Correlation and regression analyses revealed a significant negative relationship between EI and procrastination, indicating that students with higher emotional intelligence are less likely to delay tasks. Additionally, EI emerged as a strong predictor of stress, with emotionally intelligent students reporting lower stress levels. These findings suggest that self-awareness, emotional regulation, and effective coping strategies are key factors in reducing academic procrastination and managing stress. The results highlight the need for universities to incorporate EI development programs, such as emotional regulation training and stress management workshops, to support students in navigating academic challenges.

Rationale of the Study

The intermediate stage of education is a crucial transitional phase in students' academic and personal lives, marked by increased academic demands, intense competition, and heightened expectations regarding future career paths. These pressures often result in elevated levels of academic stress, which can adversely affect students' mental health and lead to maladaptive academic behaviours such as academic procrastination the tendency to delay academic tasks despite awareness of their negative consequences. Academic stress, arising from heavy workloads, examination pressure, and fear of underachievement, can overwhelm students' coping capacities, contributing to anxiety, emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, and avoidance of academic responsibilities. Such prolonged stress negatively impacts mental health by impairing concentration, emotional regulation, self-efficacy, and decision-making abilities, thereby increasing students' vulnerability to procrastination and poor academic performance. In this context, emotional intelligence emerges as a vital personal resource, as students with higher emotional intelligence are better equipped to understand and regulate their emotions, manage stress effectively, and sustain motivation during academic challenges, reducing their tendency to procrastinate. Therefore, investigating the integrated impact of academic stress, mental health, and emotional intelligence on academic procrastination at the intermediate level is essential to inform educators, counsellors, and policymakers in designing effective interventions that promote students' psychological well-being, academic engagement, and overall performance.

Objective

1. To find out the impact of academic stress, mental health and emotional intelligence on academic procrastination among intermediate students.

Hypotheses

1. There would be significant impact of academic stress on academic procrastination among intermediate students.
2. There would be significant impact of mental health on academic procrastination among intermediate students.
3. There would be significant impact of emotional intelligence on academic procrastination among intermediate students.

Variables Studied

Dependent Variable

1. Academic Procrastination

Independent Variables

1. Academic stress
2. Mental Health
3. Emotional Intelligence

Tools

1. Assessment of Procrastination: Procrastination scale was developed by Priyanka Datta and Banerjee, Mita (2016) which consists of 24 items. The reliability for the scale was found to be 0.86 using test -retest method.

2. Assessment of Academic Stress Scale (ASS): Academic Stress of the subjects were be assessed by using academic stress scale developed by Sreenivas and Kumar (1999), which consists of 40 items. The reliability of the instrument was established by test -retest method and it is 0.84.

3. Assessment of Mental Health: Mental health status is assessed by using mental health Status Inventory designed by Jagadish and Srivastava (1983), and the scale consists of 56 statements. The reliability of the test was established by test-retest method and it is 0.82

4. Assessment of Emotional Intelligence: The emotional intelligence of the Subjects was assessed by using emotional intelligence Scale developed by Nutankumar Thingujam, and Usha Ram (1999). It consists of 33 items. The reliability of the instrument 0.90 was established by test-retest method and the validity is 0.78.

Research Design

As there are three independent variables i.e., academic stress (low & high), mental health (poor & good) and emotional intelligence (low & high) each variable is divided in to two categories, a 2×2×2 factorial design was employed.

Statistical Analysis

The obtained data was analyzed statistically in order to test the hypotheses using Means, SD's, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Results and Discussion

Table-I: Means and SDs for scores on academic procrastination among intermediate students.

Emotional Intelligence		Academic Stress			
		Low		High	
		Mental Health		Mental Health	
		Poor	Good	Poor	Good
Low	Mean	76.15	72.00	**85.61**	75.98
	SD	24.36	22.35	16.25	17.50
High	Mean	71.25	**68.23**	70.55	69.24
	SD	23.04	21.98	19.35	18.21

Grand Means

Low Academic Stress= (M:71.90) High Academic Stress= (M:75.35)	Poor Mental Health = (M:75.89) Good Mental Health = (M:71.36)
Low Emotional Intelligence = (M:77.43) High Emotional Intelligence = (M:69.81)	

A close observation of table-I shows that the subjects with high academic stress, poor mental health and low emotional intelligence obtained a high score of 85.61 indicates that their high academic procrastination compared to other groups. Subjects with low academic stress, good mental health and high emotional intelligence obtained a low score of 68.23 that their low academic procrastination compared to other groups.

In terms of academic stress, subjects with high academic stress (M=75.35) high academic procrastination than the subjects with low academic stress (M=71.90). In terms of mental health, subjects with poor mental health (M=75.89) high academic procrastination than the subjects with good mental health (M=71.36). In terms of emotional intelligence, subjects with low emotional intelligence (M=77.43) high academic procrastination than the subjects with high emotional intelligence (M=69.81).

Table-II: Summary of ANOVA for scores on academic procrastination among intermediate students.

Source of Variance	Sum of Squares	df	MSS	F-Values
Academic Stress (A)	2832.408	1	532.408	9.64**
Mental Health (B)	3898.800	1	398.800	7.22**
Emotional Intelligence (C)	4200.833	1	400.833	7.25**
(A x B)	667.408	1	467.408	8.46**
(A x C)	122.008	1	352.008	6.33**
(B x C)	740.033	1	340.033	6.15**
(A x B x C)	11505.208	1	455.208	8.24**
Within	120466.467	472	55.226	--
Total	144433.167	479	--	--

**- Significant at 0.01 level *- Significant at 0.05 level

Hypothesis-1: There would be significant impact of academic stress on academic procrastination among intermediate students.

It is evident from table-II that the obtained 'F' value of 9.64 is significant at 0.01 level indicates that academic stress has significant impact on academic procrastination among intermediate students. As the 'F' value is significant, the hypothesis-1, which stated that academic stress has significant impact on academic procrastination among intermediate students, is accepted as warranted by the results.

The probable reason might be high academic stress can lead to increased academic procrastination due to overwhelmed coping capacities, anxiety, and fear of failure. When students experience excessive stress, they may feel paralyzed, leading to avoidance behaviours like procrastination. This is supported by research showing a positive correlation between academic stress and procrastination. Students with high stress often struggle with time management, motivation, and self-efficacy, further exacerbating procrastination tendencies. In contrast, students with low academic stress tend to feel more confident, motivated, and able to manage their workload effectively, reducing their likelihood of procrastination.

Hypothesis-2: There would be significant impact of mental health on academic procrastination among intermediate students.

Table- II clearly indicates that the obtained 'F' value of 7.22 is significant at 0.01 indicates that mental health has significant impact on academic procrastination among intermediate students. As the 'F' value is significant, the hypothesis-2, which stated that academic stress has significant impact on academic procrastination among intermediate students, is accepted as warranted by the results.

Students with poor mental health are more likely to experience high academic procrastination due to symptoms such as anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion, which can impair cognitive functioning, motivation, and self-regulation. Poor mental health can lead to difficulties in concentration, decision-making, and time management, making it challenging for students to initiate and complete academic tasks. Additionally, students struggling with mental health issues may use procrastination as a coping mechanism to temporarily escape from stress and emotional distress, ultimately exacerbating their academic struggles and reinforcing a cycle of procrastination. In contrast, students with good mental health tend to possess better coping strategies, resilience, and self-efficacy, enabling them to manage academic demands more effectively and reduce procrastination.

Hypothesis-3: There would be significant impact of emotional intelligence on academic procrastination among intermediate students.

As shown in table-II that the obtained 'F' value of 7.25 is significant at 0.01level indicates that emotional intelligence has significant impact on academic procrastination among intermediate students. As the 'F' value is significant, the hypothesis-3, which stated that emotional intelligence has significant impact on academic procrastination among intermediate students, is accepted as warranted by the results.

Students with low emotional intelligence are more likely to experience high academic procrastination due to difficulties in recognizing and regulating their emotions, managing stress, and maintaining motivation. They may struggle to cope with academic pressure, leading to avoidance behaviors and procrastination. In contrast, students with high emotional intelligence can effectively manage their emotions, develop adaptive coping strategies, and maintain a positive mindset, reducing their tendency to procrastinate. They are better equipped to handle stress, stay motivated, and achieve their academic goals, thereby minimizing procrastination.

It is evident from the table-II that the 'F' values of 8.46 academic stress and mental health (AXB); 6.33 academic stress and emotional intelligence (AXC) and 6.15, mental health and emotional intelligence (BXC) of first order interaction are significant. The 'F' value of 8.24, academic stress, mental health and emotional intelligence (AXBXC) of second order interaction is significant at 0.01 level implied that there

is significant interaction among three variables i.e., academic stress, mental health and emotional intelligence is causing the effect on academic procrastination.

Conclusions

1. Students with high academic stress have high academic procrastination than the students with low academic stress.
2. Students with poor mental health have high academic procrastination than the students with good mental health.
3. Students with low emotional intelligence have high academic procrastination than the students with high emotional intelligence.

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