



THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEPRESSION AND ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION IN EFL CLASSROOM

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Abstract

Depression among students is a common issue that is believed to have a great impact on their academic performance. In the academic environment, depression among students leads to another problem such as procrastination, which causes academic failure. This kind of procrastination is called academic procrastination. The current study aimed to have a deep investigation into the relationship between students' depression and their academic procrastination. In collecting the data, it applied the quantitative method through the distribution of a questionnaire to 100 students or research subjects. Then the data was analyzed by SPSS. In the analysis, the correlation test was carried out which resulted in $r = .356$, $p = .001$. This shows that there is a positive correlation between depression and academic procrastination. Students with high levels of depression have high levels of procrastination.

Keywords: *Depressio; Procrastination; Academic procrastination; EFL classroom*

INTRODUCTION

Research on procrastination has increased in the half-century since this topic was published by an Australian psychologist in 1966. Later then, this issue has been popularly known and studied in many fields of research, not only psychology, but also of medical, business, and education. Procrastination is defined in many ways by different authors. Amin (2019) states that procrastination refers to voluntarily and intentionally delaying the start or completion of a task until the last minute, or ideally to a predetermined date or time when it should have already been completed. Cahyaratri, Saktini, Asikin, & Sumekar (2022) define it as “a learner's tendency to delay learning-related activities, which in many cases eventually causes anxiety and stress.” Thus, in short, procrastination refers to the postponement of a task or work due to mental distress. Procrastination appears to cause students to procrastinate in their studies, put off academic work, become disengaged, and neglect academic responsibilities. It seems common for students to procrastinate with their studies: they procrastinate in preparing and submitting assignments and presentations, completing projects, and even preparing for exams (Hussaina & Sultan, 2010). The studies also showed that these behaviors can cause mental disorders such as depression.

Depression refers to a psychiatric disorder with a very high rate of prevalence (Faiziyyah & Ampuni, 2018). It relates to mood disorders and causes a persistent feeling of sadness and loss of interest (Salik I, Marwaha R. StatPearls, 2022; Singh R, Volner K, Marlowe D. StatPearls, 2022), and more negative states of feeling such hopeless, worthless and helpless which could last for a long period (Jones, 2015), and might leads to a further psychological problem which could

risk people mental health, career, and social life. Depression might be caused by many factors. These factors might be internal, and/or external factors. Internal factors include genetics, personality, cognitive, and interpersonal skill. The external factor refers to social pressure (Hankin & Abela, 2005); which is associated with social expectations, and parenting style (Laboviti, 2015).

Students in their college life, face many challenges which might cause depression, such; as facing difficult assessments, adapting to new social environments, managing time, living independently, and pressure to high academic performance. These challenges put you at a higher risk of developing mental health problems. These challenges put you at a higher risk of developing mental health problems (Khubchandani, Brey, Kotechi, Kleinfelder, & Anderson, 2015). Depression is the most common issue that is faced by them. Depression often occurs among students, because they have a great responsibility in completing all assignments (Qonitatin, Widyawati, & Asih, 2011). According to Solomon and Rothbulum (1984), one of the causes of academic delays is the frequent occurrence of failures in the academic field on campus. In addition, depression also causes several other disorders, namely psychological disorders, somatic disorders, and psychomotor disorders (Mardiya, 2011). Mental issues such as anxiety and too much stress can even make you depressed.

Depression is a disorder that occurs as a result of life events and causes long-term stress (contain, at All, 2011). The inability to determine social and family pressure, even low self-esteem and level of confidence can lead to more stressful conditions and reduce productivity. Depression can affect anyone regardless of age. Even teenagers are also prone to depression. The reason is that many problems arise during adolescence (Baskoro, 2010). Many other disorders can be caused by depression. These include psychological, somatic, and psychomotor disorders (Mardiya, 2011). Academic performance is one major aspect of a student's academic life. It becomes a measurement to define a student's level of knowledge, intellectual aptitude, and academic success. Moreover, high academic performance in past education also gives students more access to higher education such as applying for scholarships and being accepted in reputable universities. Academic performance refers to a student's achievement of academic work or output done optimally by the student. According to Talib & Sansgiriy (2012), it is the degree to which a student, instructor, or institution has met their short-term or long-term educational goals is known as academic performance or achievement, and it is assessed by continuous assessment or cumulative grade point average (CGPA). Good academic achievement is often associated with good mental health such as high self-confidence and self-esteem, and low levels of anxiety, and depression (Regier, 2012). Students with good mental conditions show better performance in academic life, while those with mental health problems tend to feel doubt and are afraid to show their best. Therefore, to maintain students' academic performance, their mental health issues should be taken into priority for the sake of education quality and successful teaching-learning.

One of the factors associated with academic failure is academic procrastination (Mandias, 2015 Sari & Suryani, 2020); Kim and Seo, 2015). Thakkar (2009;2) points out that Academic procrastination is a condition where students consciously do not perform optimally in carrying out academic

assignments which they know are bad for their psychology and future prosperity. Academic procrastination is connected to depression. It is associated because a depressed person lost energy and interest to do their work, therefore they would likely postpone the work till close to the deadline instead of starting doing it early or immediately. Students who experience elevated levels of unease and melancholy tend to involve themselves in an increased amount of pessimistic, recurring thoughts. This habit could lead to the postponement of tasks since they are preoccupied with sorrowful or distressing reflections of their previous experiences.

Some studies correlated to this case have been carried out. Some revealed that academic procrastination may be caused by many things whether internal or external factors which come within individual minds, and/or environmental pressure. Bojuwoye (2019) Participants rated indecision, time management, lack of motivation, fear of failure, poor organizational skills, high levels of stress, poor coping skills, and peer influence (in descending order of importance or priority) academically. I discovered what I thought was the cause of my procrastination. Therefore those individual skills, as well as social are important skills for students to avoid or deal with academic problems such as academic procrastination. Furthermore, Wirajaya, Padmadewi, & Ramendra (2020) conducted a study investigating the academic procrastination of EFL students by employing an embedded mix-method with an explanatory design. The study revealed that EFL students mostly had a high level of procrastination. The main reasons EFL students engage in academic procrastination were; Time management (28%), aversiveness of the Task (24%), Sincerity (22%), and Personal Initiative (26%); and (3) there was a strong, negative correlation between students' academic procrastination and self-efficacy. The studies above showed that procrastination is very common among university students. This attitude is supported by many factors such as personal choice or mental health disorders such as anxiety, and depression.

In a different research, however, contradictory results were found. A study was carried out by Amin (2019) concerning factors that influence academic procrastination among students from Cikarang, Bekasi. The study demonstrated that the use of the internet, motivation, and stress caused by time management do not have a significant effect on procrastination in academics. Akpur (2020) investigated the effect of procrastination on academic performance. The research was limited to articles examining the correlation between procrastination and academic achievement. A correlation coefficient was given as an index for determining the size of the effect. Results showed that the variables were negatively correlated with each other.

In further research, Mardini & Arslan (2022) assess the level of academic procrastination among Turkish EFL learners, and how it varies depending on their proficiency level of Turkish EFL learners. The responses of the participants were based on their English level. Procrastination was significantly negatively correlated with self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-regulation. Moreover, Fajhriani (2022) researched to determine whether students are delaying their studies in the area of assignments. Quantitative research has been carried out using 40 students' survey methods. In the results of research carried out by researchers, it has been found that students in Islamic guidance counseling services do not enjoy a high

level of academic procrastination.

Based on the review of the research above, there were contradictions in the finding of different research regarding subjects, or settings. Therefore, the following research aimed to do more investigation into academic procrastination among English students. The finding of this study doesn't close the possibility for a broader interpretation, even though to be more precise, this research subject was limited to English Education Department students of STKIP Muhammadiyah Aceh Barat Daya through the formulation of the following research problem: What is the relationship between students' depression and their academic procrastination?

METHOD

The research method used in this study is quantitative research methods. According to Creswell (2012), Quantitative research refers to "a means for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables". This research study has two main variables, they are depression and academic procrastination. The subjects of this study were 100 students of the English Language Education Study Program STKIP Muhammadiyah Aceh Barat Daya. The sampling technique used is convenience sampling. The method of data collection is the distribution of questionnaires. The questionnaires related to two variables; depression, and academic procrastination. So, there are two questionnaires used in this study; the depression questionnaire, and the procrastination questionnaire. The depression questionnaires were adapted from the Depression Anxiety Stress Scale-24 (DASS24). The depression questionnaires used consisted of 21 items. Subjects were asked to give a scale of 0-3 (0=Never, 1=sometimes, 2=often, 3=always) in the depression questionnaire, while in the procrastination questionnaire, the subjects were asked to give a scale of 1-5 (1=Never, 2=Rarely, 3=sometimes, 4=often, 5=always). The total score is obtained by adding up all the scores for each item in each questionnaire.

In analyzing the data, each participant's response score on each questionnaire item was scored. The total response score on each questionnaire item of all respondents was found. Then the score was circulated to indicate the degrees of agreement in the depression and procrastination questionnaire. Then the results of both questionnaires were compared to see the relationship between variables.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed at investigating the relationship between depression and students' academic procrastination among EFL students. To support this research, a review of previous work has been done which finally shows similar and contradicting findings to this study. The discussion and comparison of this finding to the previous research work were elaborated.

The result of this study showed that regarding depression levels. The dominant responses toward depression level were Normal (39%), and Moderate (31%). Then followed by Severe (16%) and Mild (12%), and finally the response to the last category; critical is only 2%. Then regarding depression level, the lowest 3 subjects (3%) did academic procrastination, 37 subjects (37%) did academic procrastination at a moderate level, 31 subjects (31%) did academic

procrastination at a high level and 29 subjects (29%) did academic procrastination at a high level. If added together, 60% of all subjects carry out academic procrastination at a high to highest level after. After all, the correlation test showed that depression and academic procrastination have a positive correlation.

The findings of this research support Bytamar & Khakpoor (2020) who found that procrastination is associated with difficulty in emotion regulation, especially individuals' subjective appraisals about their ability to modify the situation. Depression indicates someone's disability to manage emotions due to stress. The current study showed that mental problem such as depression relates to academic procrastination. It indicates that students struggle with academic work leads to mental distress. In addition Regier (2012), and Cahyaratry, Saktini, Asikin, & Sumekar (2022) revealed similar findings; there are significant relationships between stress, anxiety, and depression with academic procrastination. Good academic performance is frequently linked to mental health, including high self-confidence and self-esteem, and low levels of anxiety and depression. This finding is also in line with Cjuno, Palomino-Ccasa, Silva-Fernandez, Soncco-Aquin, Lumba-Bautista, & Hernández (2023) which revealed that increased levels of academic procrastination raise mental problems such; suicidal thoughts in college students.

However, this research finding was contradicted by the following authors. Fajhriani (2022) in the findings of a research investigation into academic procrastination among students, students do not have a high level of academic procrastination. Similarly, contradicting result was also found by Mardini & Arslan (2022). Their study looked at the extent of academic procrastination among Turkish EFL learners and how it fluctuates based on their competence level. According to the responses of the participants depending on their English level the research showed that procrastination was strongly adversely connected with self-esteem, self-efficacy, and self-regulation.

The important point to be highlighted regarding the findings of the present research is that depression and academic procrastination are positively correlated. It supported the findings of some previous research works. However, the finding was also contradictory to several types of research, but most research reviewed show similar findings.

CONCLUSION

Based on the result of the analysis that has been carried out, it can be concluded that students have an average level of depression and procrastination. Therefore the relationships between variables are positive. It means students with high levels of depression are more likely to have academic procrastination. Moreover, the recommendation can be made for educators to help students overcome their depression in academic settings and create intervention programs to improve students' mental health, which could improve their academic performance. Future research should do more elaboration on different variables and settings.

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