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RESEARCH ARTICLE

# The Relationship of Academic Procrastination Behavior to School Burnout, Psychological Well-Being, and Academic Achievement

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#### **Abstract**

Academic procrastination is a problem that is frequently seen in students and causes negativities. One of the student groups in which academic procrastination is common is university students. In this context, in this study, the effect of university students' academic procrastination behavior on school burnout, psychological well-being, and academic achievement was examined. The participant group of the study consisted of 532 university students (385 females/147 males). Correlation and regression analysis were used in the analysis of the data of the study. In the study, it was found that academic procrastination had a positive effect on school burnout and a negative effect on psychological well-being and academic achievement. The results were discussed in the context of the literature, and suggestions

Keywords: Academic achievement, academic procrastination behavior, psychological well-being, school burnout, university student

## Introduction

In addition to being an educational and instructive process for students, university life can be a process where some problems are experienced. During university education, individuals may experience mental problems as well as academic-based problems. It is seen that academic procrastination behavior is among the academic-based problems experienced by university students (Balkıs et al, 2006; Steel & Klingsieck, 2013; Ulukaya & Bilge, 2014).

Procrastination behavior is defined as delaying a task that needs to be completed or done in a certain time period (Flett et al, 1995). Individuals exhibiting procrastination behavior can either keep their work and responsibilities on hold until the last moment or are unable to complete those (Burka & Yuen, 2007). Therefore, these individuals experience problems both in their social and working lives and make the work of the people around them difficult (Bui, 2007). The form of procrastination seen in students in the educational environment is described as academic procrastination behavior (Schouwenburg, 1995).

Academic procrastination is when a student does not complete a task, homework, or responsibility on time and postpones it with the thought that he will do it later (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). Senécal et al (1995) define academic procrastination as an individual's failure to postpone his/her academic responsibilities until he/she experiences a high level of anxiety. Steel, on the other hand, states that academic procrastination behavior is actually a common and self-regulated failure that is not fully understood. Since academic procrastination is a concept that includes procrastination related to the learning and study process, it is also described as a type of behavior expressed as student procrastination (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016).

It is stated that academic procrastination behavior is a common problem in university students as well as in all students (Day et al, 2000; Farran, 2004). It is claimed that 75% of students engage in academic procrastination and occasionally exhibit this problematic behavior (Ferrari et al, 1995; Potts, 1987). Ellis and Knaus (1977) stated that students have a tendency to exhibit academic procrastination behavior at a rate close to 95%. Onwuegbuzie (2004) found in the study that students exhibit academic procrastination behavior in the range of 40-60%. In this context, it can be said that academic procrastination behavior is a common problem among students.

There may be some reasons that pave the way for students to show academic procrastination behavior frequently. For example, it is noteworthy that students with a perfectionist personality tend to exhibit procrastination behavior more intensely due to the anxiety of being able to do an assignment or responsibility in the best way (Abdollahi et al, 2020; Jadidi et al, 2011; Saddler & Sacks, 1993). Students with low self-regulation skills (Çetin & Ceyhan, 2018; Senécal et al. 1995), motivation (Klassen et al, 2010; Lee, 2005), and low self-efficacy (Filiz & Doğan, 2021; Klassen et al, 2008) exhibit academic procrastination they often do. It is seen that the individual's low self-perception (Batool et al, 2017; Beck et al, 2000) and self-doubt (Duru & Balkıs, 2014) also lead to academic procrastination behavior. In addition, it is noteworthy

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that students with low time management skills also exhibit academic procrastination behavior more frequently (Ocak & Boyraz, 2016; Shih, 2017). As a result, it is seen that there are many factors that lead to academic procrastination behavior. One or more of these factors may increase the tendency of students to show academic procrastination behavior.

According to the psychoanalytic theory, academic procrastination behavior is explained as the avoidance of the id, ego, and superego trio that the ego sees as a self-threatening situation (Aydoğan & Özbay, 2012, Ferrrai et al, 1995). It has been stated that individuals with high levels of anxiety and fear will be more procrastinating due to avoidance (Fee & Tangney, 2000). According to the cognitive behavioral theory, academic procrastination behavior emerges as a result of the irrational thoughts of the individual, such as I am unsuccessful, I must be perfect, I must do my best, etc. (Flett et al, 2012). In fact, cognitive distortions and irrational thoughts of the individual underlie the academic procrastination behavior of individuals (Flett et al, 2016). According to social learning theory, the individual learns academic procrastination behavior from other people through observation (Klingsieck et al, 2013). When evaluated in this context, if the status, closeness, and similarity of the modeled person are high, individuals imitate this person more and exhibit academic procrastination behavior more frequently.

# Relationships Between Academic Procrastination Behavior with School Burnout, Psychological Well-Being, and Academic Success

Academic procrastination has many negative effects on students (Rabin et al, 2011; Schraw et al, 2007). Academic procrastination behavior can cause students to feel tired and bored during the education process (Niazov et al, 2022). As a result, students may experience some problems such as school burnout (Ocal, 2016). Studies have found that academic procrastination leads to school burnout. For example, Balkıs (2013) concluded that academic procrastination in Turkish university students causes school burnout and has a positive effect on school burnout. Lee and Choi (2014) found that academic procrastination behavior has a positive effect on school burnout in Korean students and that academic procrastination behavior causes school burnout. Garavand (2021), in research on adolescents attending high school, found that academic procrastination causes school burnout. The explanations in the literature and related studies show that academic procrastination has a role in increasing students' school burnout. In this context, in this study, it is aimed to examine whether academic procrastination has a positive predictive role on school burnout.

It is noteworthy that one of the negative consequences of academic procrastination behavior reflected on students is the decrease in students' psychological well-being (Bu et al, 2021). This situation of students exhibiting academic procrastination causes uneasiness, and the well-being of the student decreases (Zacks & Hen, 2018). Duru and Balkıs (2017) concluded in their research that the academic procrastination behavior of university students has a negative effect on their well-being. In a similar study, Berber-Çelik and Odacı (2020) concluded that university students' academic procrastination behavior negatively affects their subjective well-being. A longitudinal study conducted on university students concluded that academic procrastination decreased and negatively affected students' emotional well-being (Krause & Freund, 2014). As a result, it is seen that academic procrastination behavior has a negative effect on the psychological wellbeing of individuals. In this study, it was aimed to examine whether academic procrastination has a negative predictive role on psychological well-being.

Academic procrastination not only causes school burnout and has a negative effect on psychological well-being but also negatively affects students' academic success (De Paola & Scoppa, 2015; Orpen, 1998). Studies in the literature have revealed that academic procrastination has

a negative effect on academic achievement. For example, Grunschel et al (2016) found in their research on university students that academic procrastination negatively affects the academic achievement of students, and the academic success of students with intense academic procrastination behavior also decreases. In the meta-analysis study conducted by Kim and Seo (2015), it was concluded that there is a negative relationship between academic procrastination and academic achievement and that academic procrastination has a negative predictive effect on academic achievement. In another study conducted by Balkıs and Duru (2010) on Turkish university students, it was found that academic procrastination behavior has a negative effect on academic achievement. As a result, it is seen that academic procrastination behavior has a negative predictive effect on students' academic success. In this context, it was aimed to examine whether academic procrastination behavior has a negative effect on academic achievement in the present study.

# Significance and Purpose of Current Research

Academic procrastination behavior is a problem seen in university students as well as in all student groups. It is stated that academic procrastination has negative effects on students and has a role that increases students' experiencing different problems (Niazov et al, 2022; Schraw et al, 2007; Zacks & Hen, 2014). Among these problem situations, as reported above, the increase in the frequency of students' school burnout and the decrease in psychological well-being and academic achievement draw attention. It can be thought that focusing on students experiencing academic procrastination behavior less will have positive reflections on students. In this context, the present study aimed to reveal the effect of academic procrastination on school burnout, psychological well-being, and academic achievement. It is evaluated that the results of the study can be a guiding data source for preventive guidance and psychological counseling services and for educators in schools to reduce academic procrastination behavior in students. In addition, there are limited studies examining the relationship between academic procrastination behavior and school burnout (Balkıs, 2013), psychological well-being (Berber-Çelik & Odacı, 2020), and academic achievement (Balkıs & Duru, 2010) in Turkish culture. In this context, it can be stated that the present study will contribute to the gap in the literature. The subproblems of the present study to be answered are as follows:

- Is there a significant relationship between academic procrastination behavior, school burnout, psychological well-being, and academic success?
- Is academic procrastination a significant predictor of school burnout, psychological well-being, and academic achievement?

# Methods

In the present study, the correlational model, one of the quantitative research method designs, was used. In this context, this study is a relational study examining the relationship between university students' academic procrastination, school burnout, psychological wellbeing, and academic achievement scores. In correlational studies, it is examined whether a variable has a predictive role on another variable (Mertens, 2019). In this study, it was investigated whether academic procrastination behavior has a predictive role on school burnout, psychological well-being, and academic achievement.

#### **Participants**

The study was carried out on students continuing their university education. Students who continue their university education in different faculties (education, science and literature, theology, economics, and administrative sciences) participated in the study. In this context, the study group consists of a total of 532 university students, 385

(72.4%) female and 147 (27.6%) male, whose age range is between 18 and 30.

# **Data Collection Tools**

#### Personal Information Form

A personal information form was prepared within the scope of the research in order to determine the gender, age, department, and faculty of the students participating in the study and the overall grade point average. The variables in question were obtained from the personal information form.

## Academic Procrastination Scale Short Form

The scale is a Likert-type, 5-item, and one-dimensional measurement tool developed by McCloskey (2011). Adaptation of the scale to Turkish culture was carried out by Balkıs and Duru (2022) on university students. In the adaptation study, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be .88. The correlation coefficient for criterion-related validity was found to be .77. In the adaptation study, fit indices were also found to be at a good level ( $\chi^2/df = 1.453$ , RMSEA=.04 (.00-.10), SRMR=.02, GFI=.99, CFI=1, TLI =.99, NFI=. 99, and RFI=.98). In this study, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be .86.

## Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Form

The scale was developed by Schaufeli et al (2002) to assess students' school burnout. Adaptation to Turkish culture Capri et al. (2011) adapted to Turkish culture. The scale is a Likert-type measurement tool consisting of 13 items and 3 factors: "exhaustion (5 items)," "depersonalization (4 items)," and "efficacy (4 items)". In the adaptation study, Cronbach's alpha value of the scale was found to be .76 for the first subfactor, .82 for the second subfactor, and .61 for the third subfactor. In the adaptation study, the fit indices were also found to be at a good level ( $\chi^2/df = 2.87$ ; RMSEA=.049; TLI=.97; CFI=.98; GFI=.97; AGFI=.95; SRMR=.037). Within the scope of this study, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency value was found to be .89, .86, and .66 for the subdimensions, and .89 for the whole scale, respectively.

# **Psychological Well-Being Scale**

The scale is a Likert-type, 8-item, and one-dimensional measurement tool developed by Diener et al (2010). Adaptation of the scale to Turkish culture was done by Telef (2013). As a result of the exploratory factor analysis, the total explained variance was calculated as 42%. The factor loads of the scale items were found to be between .54 and .76. In the adaptation study, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was calculated as .80, and the reliability coefficient of the test-retest result was calculated as .86. In the adaptation study, fit indices were also found to be at a good level ( $\chi^2/df = 4.645$ , RMSEA=.08, SRMR=.04, GFI=.96, NFI=.94, RFI=.92, CFI=.95, and IFI=.95). In this study, Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficient was found to be .86.

# **Procedure and Data Analysis**

After obtaining the ethics committee approval regarding the ethical suitability of the study (Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University Ethics Committee decision dated August 26, 2022, and numbered 2022/10.07) and the necessary data collection permissions, the data collection phase was started. The purpose and scope of the research were explained to the participants by the researcher. It was also emphasized that participation in the study was on a voluntary basis and that the participant could withdraw from the study at any time. The study was conducted with 532 university students who voluntarily filled in the scales.

The analysis of the data of the study was carried out with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 22) program. Data analysis was performed using correlation and regression analysis. A criterion for the normal distribution of the data was that the kurtosis and skewness values were between -1.5 and +1.5 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). For the regression analysis, the criterion of having a relationship of less than .90 between the binary variables was taken into account so that there would be no multicollinearity problem (Büyüköztürk, 2007; Kline, 2015). In addition, the assumptions of "covariance, linearity, extreme values, independence of errors and singularity," which are the prerequisites of the regression analysis, were checked (Büyüköztürk, 2007; Kline, 2015). It was examined whether there were extreme values in the data, it was seen that there were no extreme values, and the analyzes were made on the data set of 532 people.

## Results

In this section, the descriptive statistics of the variables of the study and the results of the correlation and regression analysis are given.

When Table 1 is examined, the academic procrastination average of the students participating in the study was found to be 14.47, the overall grade point average was 3.02, the average of psychological wellbeing was 39.79, the average of exhaustion was 14.79, the average of depersonalization was 10.47, and the average of efficacy was 11.73. In addition, it is seen that the kurtosis and skewness values vary between -1.5 and +1.5 for all variables, and the data show a normal distribution (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

When Table 2 is examined, as a result of the correlation analysis, there is a negative and significant relationship between academic procrastination and overall grade point average (r=-.30, p<.01) and psychological well-being (r=-.33, p < .01). It was found that there is a positive and significant relationship between exhaustion (r=.43, p < .01), depersonalization (r=.40, p < .01), and efficacy (r=.34, p < .01), which are the subdimensions of school burnout. The fact that the bilateral relations between the variables are less than .90 can be interpreted as there is no multicollinearity problem (Büyüköztürk, 2007; Kline, 2015).

When Table 3 is examined, as a result of the regression analysis, academic procrastination predicted negatively General Grade Average (GGA)  $(B=-.02, \beta=-.30, R^2=.09, p < .001)$  and psychological wellbeing  $(B=-.58, \beta=-.30, R^2=.09, p < .001)$ . In other words, academic procrastination had a negative effect on GGA and psychological well-being. In addition, academic procrastination positively predicted exhaustion (B=.46,  $\beta=.43$ ,  $R^2=.19$ , p < .001), depersonalization  $(B=.33, \beta=.40, R^2=.16, p < .001)$ , and efficacy  $(B=.20, \beta=.34,$  $R^2$ =.12, p < .001) which are the subdimensions of school burnout. In other words, academic procrastination behavior had a positive effect on school burnout.

| Table 1.                          |     |       |      |      |       |       |       |  |  |  |  |  |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-------|------|------|-------|-------|-------|--|--|--|--|--|
| Descriptive Statistics            |     |       |      |      |       |       |       |  |  |  |  |  |
|                                   | N   | Mean  | SD   | Min. | Max.  | Skew. | Kurt  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Academic procrastination behavior | 355 | 14.47 | 4.77 | 5.00 | 25.00 | .310  | 561   |  |  |  |  |  |
| General grade<br>average          | 355 | 3.02  | .37  | 1.48 | 3.95  | 546   | .966  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Psychological well-being          | 355 | 39.79 | 8.40 | 8.00 | 56.00 | 905   | 1.278 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Exhaustion                        | 355 | 14.79 | 5.03 | 5.00 | 25.00 | .446  | 845   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Depersonalization                 |     | 10.47 | 3.92 | 4.00 | 20.00 | .624  | 341   |  |  |  |  |  |
| Efficacy                          | 355 | 11.73 | 2.76 | 4.00 | 18.00 | 239   | 212   |  |  |  |  |  |

| Table 2.                                   |       |       |      |       |       |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Correlation Analysis                       |       |       |      |       |       |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 1     | 2     | 3    | 4     | 5     | 6 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1. Academic procrastination behavior (APB) | _     |       |      |       |       |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. General grade average (GGA)             | 30**  | _     |      |       |       |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. Psychological well-being (PWB)          | 33**  | .14** | _    |       |       |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. Exhaustion (EXH.)                       | .43** | 14**  | 35** | _     |       |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. Depersonalization (DEP.)                | .40** | 16**  | 41** | .77** | -     |   |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 6. Efficacy (EF.)                          | .34** | 27**  | 47** | .26** | .33** | _ |  |  |  |  |  |  |

#### **Discussion and Conclusion**

Academic procrastination behavior is common among students and has different negative effects on students (Steel, 2007). Therefore, it is thought that it is important to examine academic procrastination behavior and to make the subject of research what the consequences may be. In this context, the predictive effect of academic procrastination on school burnout, psychological well-being, and academic achievement was examined in this study.

In the present study, it was concluded that academic procrastination had a positive predictive effect on school burnout. It can be stated that this finding shows that academic procrastination has a role that further increases students' school burnout. In other words, students who constantly postpone their homework and some tasks in school processes by exhibiting academic procrastination behavior may experience school burnout more frequently as a result. Saplavska & Jerkunkova (2018) state that academic procrastination causes anxiety and fatigue in individuals during the education process. It is suggested that postponing their duties and responsibilities further triggers and increases students' burnout (Knaus, 1985). In addition, it is stated that students exhibiting academic procrastination behavior increase their anxiety and stress due to not being able to complete their tasks on time, and as a result, they experience more problems in the school process (He, 2017; Rahardjo et al, 2013). These anxiety and stressful situations can cause the student to become tired and depleted. The result of the present study also revealed this situation. Similar results were obtained in previous studies in the literature (Balkıs, 2013; Garavand, 2021; Lee & Choi, 2014). In this context, the result of this study is consistent with the literature. Both the results of previous studies in the literature and the result reached in this study revealed that academic procrastination behavior further increased school burnout in students.

In the study, it was concluded that academic procrastination had a negative predictive effect on psychological well-being. This result can be interpreted as the academic procrastination behavior exhibited by the students lowers their psychological well-being and causes them to feel bad mentally. In the literature, it has been suggested that academic

procrastination causes negative consequences on students' mental states (Eisenbeck et al, 2019; Glick et al, 2014). It has been stated that one of the negative results is that academic procrastination negatively affects and decreases psychological well-being (Bu et al, 2021). In addition, it has been emphasized that an individual feels restless and unhappy due to his inability to fulfill his duties and responsibilities (Higgins, 1987). When evaluated in this context, it can be stated that academic procrastination behavior causes students to feel unhappy. The result of this study also demonstrates this result. Findings in this study show parallelism with previous research findings (Berber-Çelik & Odacı, 2020; Duru & Balkıs, 2017; Krause & Freund, 2014). In this context, it can be stated that the psychological well-being of students who frequently exhibit academic procrastination behavior decreases.

In the present study, it was concluded that academic procrastination had a negative predictive effect on academic achievement. This result of the study shows that students who show academic procrastination experience academic failure in their educational processes. Orpen (1998) states that among the common negative consequences of academic procrastination behavior is a decrease in students' academic success. Steel (2007) argues that academic procrastination negatively affects academic achievement in particular, resulting in a serious decrease in student performance. This result was also reached in the present study. The result reached in the current study is consistent with previous research findings (Balkıs & Duru, 2010; Grunschel et al, 2016; Kim & Seo, 2015). As a result, it can be argued that academic procrastination negatively affects a student's academic success.

# **Recommendations and Limitations**

It is thought that this research has important results that will contribute to the gap in the literature, as well as research that has some limitations. First of all, in the current study, it is seen that female participants are more concentrated in the participant group. The number of male and female participants may be more balanced in new studies. A second limitation is that the data of the study were collected only from university students. Considering that academic procrastination behavior is seen in all students, the research process can be planned by including students from different levels in new studies. Another limitation of the study is that data were collected from the participants only with self-report scales. In order to examine the subject in more depth in new studies, this limitation can be reduced by collecting data from qualitative methods such as observation and interview.

The result of the present study shows that academic procrastination causes some negativity in students. In this context, some suggestions can be put forward. First of all, guidance and psychological counseling services can be given priority to prevent academic procrastination behavior among students. Thus, the necessary preventive services are provided before the problem situation arises, and the problems that academic procrastination will cause in students can be prevented. For students who frequently exhibit academic procrastination behavior, time management and problem-solving skills can be gained in both one-on-one and group activities. Third, for students who exhibit academic

Table 3. Findings on Regression Analysis

|           | GGA                               |        |             | PWB                |             | EXH.  |                    |                 | DEP.            |                   | EF.      |                |             |                |     |
|-----------|-----------------------------------|--------|-------------|--------------------|-------------|-------|--------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|-------------|----------------|-----|
| Predictor | В                                 | $SE_B$ | β           | В                  | $SE_B$      | β     | В                  | $SE_{B}$        | β               | В                 | $SE_{B}$ | В              | В           | $SE_{B}$       | β   |
| Constant  | 3.36                              | .05    |             | 48.19              | 1.10        |       | 8.17               | .63             |                 | 5.71              | .50      |                | 8.89        | .36            |     |
| APB       | 02                                | .01    | 30***       | 58                 | .07         | 33*** | .46                | .04             | .43***          | .33               | .03      | .40            | .20         | .02            | .34 |
|           | $R^2 = .09$ $F_{(1-530)} = 51.50$ |        | $R^2 = .11$ |                    | $R^2 = .19$ |       | $R^2 = .16$        |                 | $R_{2}^{2}=.12$ |                   |          |                |             |                |     |
|           |                                   |        |             | $F_{(1-530)} = 64$ | .45         | F     | $_{(1-530)} = 122$ | $F_{(1-530)} =$ |                 | $_{.530)} = 101.$ | 01       | $F_{\epsilon}$ | 1-530)=68.9 | <del>)</del> 4 |     |

*Note.* \*\*\*p < .001.

APB=Academic Procrastination Behavior; DEP=Depersonalization; EF.=Efficacy; EXH.=Exhaustion; GGA=General Grade Average; PWB=Psychological Well-Being; SE=standard error.

procrastination behavior intensely, cooperation with experts can be made for expert support, and these students can be provided with support from the experts in question. Considering that the students in the educational environment exhibit the behavior of procrastinating due to their intense homework and course activities, the educational processes can be designed in a more planned and level-appropriate manner.

Ethics Committee Approval: Ethics committee approval was received for this study from the ethics committee of Niğde Ömer Halisdemir University (date: 26/08/2022, number: 243613).

**Informed Consent:** Written informed consent was obtained from XXXXXXXX who participated in this study.

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