

## The Relationship between Academic Procrastination and Academic Performance of Libyan Undergraduate EFL Students at Misurata University

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### المستخلص:

تركز هذه الدراسة على تحديد درجات التأجيل لدى طلاب البكالوريوس الدارسين للغة الإنجليزية كلغة أجنبية في جامعة مصراتة في ليبيا، مع النظر في العوامل التي تؤدي إلى هذا السلوك. علاوة على ذلك، فإنه يدرس تأثير تأجيل أداء الفروض الأكاديمية على المستوى الأكاديمي للمشاركين الذين كانوا مجموعة من طلاب وطالبات البكالوريوس المسجلين في فصول دراسية مختلفة في قسم اللغة الإنجليزية، كلية الآداب، جامعة مصراتة. تم استخدام استبيان كأداة لجمع البيانات في هذه الدراسة. أظهرت نتائج هذا الاستبيان أن 51% من الطلاب لديهم درجات تأجيل أكاديمي عالية، في حين أن 49% منهم لديهم مستويات تأجيل منخفضة. علاوة على ذلك، فيما يتعلق بالعلاقة بين تأجيل أداء الفروض الدراسية ومستويات الأداء الأكاديمي، وجد أن الطلاب الذين لديهم درجات عالية من التأجيل يؤدون أداء أكاديميا أسوأ من الطلاب الذين لديهم درجات تأجيل منخفضة. أخيرا وليس آخرا، يبدو أن معظم المشاركين لديهم هذا السلوك بسبب مجموعة من الأسباب، أهمها هي خوفهم من الفشل ورغبتهم في تحقيق الكمال. نتيجة لهذه النتائج، يقترح إجراء بعض التغييرات في المناهج الدراسية، والحفاظ على أنشطة أكثر إثارة للاهتمام وتوفير جلسات توعية بآثار ونتائج تأجيل أداء الفروض الدراسية لكل من المعلمين والطلاب من شأنها أن تقلل من أضرار هذه الظاهرة الإشكالية على متعلمي اللغة الإنجليزية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التأجيل، التأجيل الأكاديمي، الأداء الأكاديمي، الطلبة الليبيين الدارسين للإنجليزية.

### ABSTRACT:

This study concentrates on determining the procrastination degrees of undergraduate EFL students at Misurata University in Libya while looking at the factors which result in this behavior. Furthermore, it examines the effect of academic procrastination on the academic performance of the participants. The participants were male and female undergraduate students enrolled in different semesters in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts at Misurata University. A questionnaire was used as a tool to collect data. The results of this study show that 51% of students have high procrastination levels, whereas, 49% of them have low procrastination levels. Moreover, concerning the relationship between procrastination and academic performance degrees, it was found that students with high levels of procrastination perform worse academically than students who have low procrastination levels. Last but not least, most participants appear to have this behavior because of a wide range of reasons, but the main ones are their fear of failure and perfectionism. As a result of these findings, it is suggested that changes in the curriculums, maintaining more interesting activities, and providing procrastination awareness sessions for both teachers and students would decrease the amount of this problematic phenomenon.

**Keywords:** Procrastination, academic procrastination, academic performance, Libyan EFL, learners.

## 1. Introduction:

Human beings have a lot of things in common, for example, there are various actions and responsibilities which need to be taken to achieve certain goals during multiple stages of life. On the contrary, humans differ in the way and the amount of time they take to deal with things that need to be done. Some people tend to complete their missions in an allotted amount of time, while others prefer to leave them until the last minute. The process of putting off or delaying starting and finishing tasks instead of doing them immediately during a specified time is called procrastination. More simply, it means leaving important things to



be done later despite the consequences. The word “procrastinate” comes from the Latin word “procrastinus” which arose from the prefix “pro” meaning “forward” and “crastinus” meaning “off tomorrow”. (Karen, 2016, p. 67).

Procrastination is a term that has a negative connotation to it. A gap between what people intend to do and what they actually do is one explanation for procrastination. Laeus (2015: 37) states that procrastination is ‘the avoidance of completing a task’. He goes on to say that procrastination is the act of doing more pleasurable activities instead of less pleasurable ones or doing fewer essential chores instead of more urgent ones, so deferring important tasks till later.

Hanghbin (2015) distinguishes procrastination as a behaviour or as a trait:

1. Procrastination behaviour is an unnecessary postponement of a task, even though it was meant to be started or completed.
2. Procrastination trait is the long-term persistent propensity to put off activities or decisions across a variety of tasks, despite the initial intention to do so. This habit is frequently unreasonable and accompanied by negative feelings and can lead to poor performance or personal dissatisfaction with the outcome.

Procrastination is an act everybody takes part in every day, regardless of their situation in life. According to Kagan (2009), there are types which are used to categorise procrastination based on different criteria, and the main ones in this study

are:

1. Chronic procrastination: This is a pattern of behaviour that causes emotions of helplessness and inadequacy in the individual as he or she attempts to cope with the surroundings regularly.
2. Situational procrastination: a behaviour which occurs at specific times of life.

Kagan (2009) further divides situational procrastination into:

1. General procrastination which includes postponement related to common concerns such as non-payment of bills and taxes, being late for appointments, leaving a mission that needs to be done by Monday for Tuesday or the following days, and forgetting to buy a gift or call a family member.
2. Academic procrastination which is defined by Solomon and Rothblum (1984) as delaying basic academic tasks such as preparation for an exam or doing a term paper, contributing to academic activities, etc. for different reasons.



Moreover, there are many reasons for people to procrastinate just like how there are different settings for people to procrastinate in. Hence, Sapadin (1999) mentions that types of procrastinators are numerous and there are six styles of procrastination:

1. The perfectionist: a person who cannot start or finish his tasks because he fears that he will not meet the high expectations he has set for his work.
2. The dreamer: someone who is good at planning and scheming but unable to do the practical part and start working.
3. The warrior who is overwhelmed by making decisions and changes.
4. The crisis-maker who thinks that the best work is done under pressure.
5. The definer who thinks that the given work is not worth his time and he is not obligated to do it.
6. The over-doer who is committed to do many things but does not really have enough time to do all of them and cannot prioritize them.

Regardless of many categories of procrastination and procrastinators mentioned above, the focus of this study will be mainly on procrastination which occurs inside academic fields, precisely among university students. Procrastinating academic work is a common phenomenon that is well experienced by students at universities who suffer from procrastination apart from other issues. It is well known that university students must have some sense of responsibility and seriousness for their academic chores in order to pass and graduate. However, plenty of students do not bother to have any of these two and choose to leave their required duties till the last moment or past their deadline regardless of the consequences that come as a result.

According to Yong (2010: 63) academic procrastination is defined as ‘The irrational tendency to delay at the beginning or completion of an academic task. Many tertiary students intend to finish their academic assignments on time, but they lack the enthusiasm to begin’. On the other hand, academic procrastination can also be seen as knowing that someone is supposed to and even wants to complete an academic task but failing to accomplish the activity in the appropriate time.

Since the academic environment is full of changes and obstacles, every action made by students will have a direct or indirect impact on their academic performance, achievement, and success, whether if it is positive or negative. Hence, it seems that there is a correlation between undergraduate students’ academic procrastination and their academic



performance. Furthermore, procrastination in educational settings has the potential to affect not only students' academic achievement but also their health and future professional success. (Contreras et al., 2011; Quant and Sánchez, 2012; Scher and Ferrari, 2000; Semb, Glick, and Spencer, 1979; Tice and Baumeister, 1997).

Academic performance and achievement can be affected by various reasons and procrastination is one of them, but there's a distinction between these two terms that should be put into consideration: Academic performance is defined by Pizzaro (1985) as a measure of the indicative and responsive capabilities that conveys, in an estimated way, what a person has learned as a result of an educational or a training process. Moreover, academic performance is typically measured using the grade point average (GPA) (Pike and Saupe, 2002). On the other hand, academic achievement refers to the amount to which a person has met certain goals that were the focus of activities in educational settings. (Steinmayr et al 2014).

Since it is unknown if academic procrastination has a significant positive or negative relationship with students' performance, Chu & Choi (2005) have distinguished between two types of procrastination illustrated as:

1. Active procrastination: when a person is capable of acting on his judgement in a timely manner, but they delay their work to finish other activities on purpose. It describes how a student uses procrastination for his or her advantage.
2. Passive procrastination: the procrastinator does not have a choice except to frequently postpone completing his tasks because he is unable to make a judgement or work swiftly. It refers to the actions of students that show how they are uninterested in these advantages.

Finally, it was observed that passive procrastination has a noticeable negative association with academic performance, whereas there is not such a relationship with active procrastination. (Kim et al., 2017).

### **Research questions:**

This study is designed to assess levels of procrastination among undergraduate Libyan students in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts at Misurata University. Additionally, the study aims to determine the reasons behind their academic procrastination



and investigate whether there is any effect of this procrastination on their academic performance. To be more specific, the study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. To what extent do students procrastinate during their academic journey?
2. What is the impact that procrastination leaves on students' academic performance?
3. Why do students procrastinate and what are the reasons behind this behaviour?

### **Hypotheses**

1. It is hypothesised that almost every student has relied on procrastinating their duties at least once in their life.
2. It is hypothesised that academic procrastination can strongly affect students' level in a negative way; hence their performance becomes lower because of this habit. In contrast, there are some rare cases where procrastination does have positive outcomes.
3. It is hypothesised that the reasons behind this behaviour of delaying academic tasks change according to each individual.

### **Research Design**

The recent descriptive correlational research uses the most common type of method which is a survey method. A descriptive correlational study describes variables and the natural relationships that exist between them (Noah, 2021). A survey method is known as "the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions" (Check & Schutt, 2012, p. 160). The recent study specifically adopts this method to assess levels of academic procrastination among EFL students from different semesters. as well as, to identify reasons for their behavior and determine the relationship between academic procrastination and academic performance of the students.

### **Participants and Setting**

The participants were Libyan undergraduate EFL (English as Foreign Language) students of the Department of English, Faculty of Arts, Misurata University from different semesters and the study was done in 2022. One Hundred and Fifty-eight students (males and females) were chosen as respondents in this study. This study was conducted at Faculty of Arts, Misurata University in Misurata city, Libya.



## Research Instrument

One instrument was used in this study which is a modified version of the Academic Procrastination Questionnaire (APQ) of Abu Ghazal (2012). The questionnaire contains four sections (Appendix I) starting from the first page with a section where participants are required to describe the profile of each one in terms of their gender and semester. The next section has a 5 – point Likert scale with 20 statements about academic procrastination which ask the subjects to choose from (1) always, (2) often, (3) sometimes, (4) rarely, and (5) never. Ten (10) items positively support procrastination and another (10) items negatively do not support procrastination. In addition, the other page affords nineteen reasons behind the academic procrastination behavior with a twentieth reason which respondents can write on their own. Respondents can tick more than one relevant reason for their behavior. Lastly, participants are asked to write their grade point average (GPA) in the last part of the questionnaire to see the effect of their procrastination on their academic performance.

## Review of Related Literature

### Language Learning, Attitude and Behaviour

According to Giordon (2008: 165) “Learning is an individual action which confronts the learners with the risk of going to an unknown place in the end” (as cited in Sen, 2013). Language learning is thought to be the cornerstone of human existence, according to some. Understanding the language can assist us in expressing our thoughts, hopes, and even fantasies (Tavil, 2009). Moreover, students learn a language through using it to express their thoughts, feelings, and experiences, form relationships with family, friends and to make sense of their surroundings. Learning a new language is a powerful tool that can help students change their behavior to meet society's desires and expectation (Sultan et al. 2020). Ellis (1989) claims that age, aptitude, intelligence, cognitive style, attitudes, motivation and personality are said to be common factors which have an impact on second language learning.

Owing to the fact that attitude is believed to be one of the most important determinants in language learning success, various research studies on students' attitudes toward language learning have been done (Anwar, 2017). A person's thoughts, beliefs, feelings, and behavior toward a subject, person, object, institution, or event are described as





human attitude. (Cherry, 2019). Ellis (1989) further illustrates that attitude refers to a person's ideas about things like the target language culture, their own culture, and, in the case of classroom learning, their teachers, as well as the learning task they are assigned.

Abidin, Pour-Mohammadi and Alzwari (2012) imply that the three components of attitudes, namely behavioral, cognitive, and emotional characteristics, are intertwined, and that learning is viewed as a shift in emotional, behavioral, and cognitive personality domains.

1. Cognitive component of attitude. Is an individual's thoughts, perceptions or opinions about the object of an attitude.
2. Affective component of attitude. Is concerned with the emotional reaction or feelings of someone toward the object of the attitude.
3. Behavioural or conative component of attitudes. Is the behaviour in response to the attitude's target. After learning about a subject, object, institution, or event, one must decide what to do or not do based on his or her emotional and behavioral responses. Plans, intentions, and commitments to a planned behavior are examples of these.

Over and above, Attitude and behavior are inextricably linked, humans' behaviour is influenced by their attitude. As a result, it was considered that comprehending someone's behavior hinged on attitude. (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1918; Watson, 1925). Even more, Levities, William, Lidicker and Freund (2009:10) report that "behavior is the internally coordinated responses, actions or inactions, of whole living organisms, individuals or groups, to internal or external stimuli". Students have some learning behaviors and a learning behavior can be thought of as "a behavior that is necessary in order for a person to learn effectively in the group setting of the classroom". (Ellis and Todd, 2018). Looking at the above, Pala (2011) considers Procrastination as an example for an extremely prevalent students' behavior.

### **Academic Success and Academic Performance**

Academic success and good grades are among the most important goals at all levels of education, with favorable effects for both students and educational systems and it has been highlighted for its direct bearing on students' positive results after graduation. In fact, Fleetwood & Shelley (2000), Renter & Kober (2001) confirm that students with strong degrees or high levels of education are more likely to be hired and paid a higher income than



those who have not achieved academic success. In the same way, Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq and Berhanu (2011) insist that all educators' top priority is pupils' academic performance.

Regier (2011) justifies that being academically successful is crucial because it is closely tied to the positive outcomes we seek. Academic success can be characterized in a variety of ways, such as the accomplishment of the learning process; gaining subject knowledge; and developing employability skills (Cachia, Lynam & Stock, 2018). Despite the term's vagueness, definitions have highlighted a number of components of "academic success" over time that are used interchangeably with "student success". It involves academic achievement, attainment of learning objectives, acquisition of desired skills and competencies, satisfaction, persistence, and post-college performance (Kuh et al., 2006) and (York et al., 2015).

There are multiple factors that contribute to academic success and academic performance which is influenced by a variety of factors such as socioeconomic situation, student temperament and motivation, peer support, and parental support is one of them. (Masud, Mufarrih, Qureshi, Khan & Khan, 2019). Rono (2013) maintains that student academic performance is a critical aspect of education and that it is the center around which the entire educational system revolves. Narad and Abdullah (2016) refer to Academic performance as the information obtained as measured by a teacher's marks and/or educational goals set by students and teachers to be met during a specified time period. Even further, they opine that supplementally the success or failure of every academic institution depends on the academic performance of its students. Supplementary, Singh, Malik, and Singh (2016) claimed that student academic performance has a direct impact on a country's socio-economic development. It is also affirmed that pupils' academic success serves as a foundation for acquiring knowledge and developing abilities. (Farooq, Chaudhry, Shafiq & Behanu, 2011).

Olufemi, Adediran and Oyediran (2018) comment that students' learning skills, parental background, peer influence, teachers' quality, learning infrastructure among others can significantly impact their academic performance. In today's more globalized and competitive world, student performance is critical in creating the highest-quality graduates. It has been discovered that assessing pupils' previous educational outcomes is one of the most important predictors of future accomplishment (Faust, 2010). Ali, Haider, Munir, Khan and Ahmed (2013) comment that such educational institutions have long been interested in





determining the factors that have a substantial impact on student success. As a result of the fact that educational institution performance is based on its pupils' academic achievements. Alfifi and Abid (2017) concur that there are internal and external elements that influence a student's academic performance:

4. Internal factors. Contain personal circumstances and study habits, both of which are primarily student-related and may contribute to strong academic performance (Yigermal, 2017).
5. External factors. Include aspects relating to the student's home, school, and teacher, and contribute to the students' external environment that are beyond their control. In addition to, family stress (Erdem, 2013).

### **Academic Procrastination and Academic Performance**

Procrastination is a human phenomenon that has piqued the interest of experts since the mid-nineteenth century (Klassen, Krawchuk, & Rajani, 2008). Stead, Shanahan, and Neufeld (2010) declare procrastination as a delay in performing a task. Likewise, Milgram, Mey-Tal and Levison (1998) define procrastination as a behavioral trait or flaw that involves delaying a task or making a choice. Looking at the same thing, Pourabdol, Sobhi-Gharamaleki and Abbasi (2015) view procrastination to be a habit of delaying what is required to achieve a goal; in other words, it is the act of deferring work that we have resolved to complete. Among the types of Procrastination, Academic contexts have the most widespread form, notably in situations where students must meet assignment deadlines, which necessitates students' time and concentration. (Gafni & Geri, 2010). For Dietz, Hofer, and Fries (2007: 903), the choice of how to complete academic assignments was thought to be the "first essential step in the way to academic performance".

Rothblum, Solomon & Murakami (1986) oppose this idea by saying what matters is that such a decision has the potential to either prevent or encourage academic procrastination. This sort of procrastination is defined as a persistent desire to postpone academic activities, and it is nearly always accompanied by anxiety. Deferring studying till the night before the exam is an apparent example, and the student suffers as a result of the subsequent rush. Academic procrastination is pointed out as a "student syndrome" by Ariely and Wertenbroch (2002) since many students work on a task right before the deadline. Binder (2000) confirms that academic procrastination is any academic task that is delayed



or avoided as a result of a disparity between intention and actual action to the extent that it causes bad effect in the procrastinator.

According to research, academic procrastination is found at all levels of education. However, it is more common among university undergraduate students with more than 70% of college students procrastinating on a regular basis. (Schraw, Wadkins & Olafson, 2007). Ferrari (2001) discovers that nearly 20% of adults suffer from chronic procrastination, with at least 70-95 percent of undergraduate students experiencing serious academic procrastination. Solomon and Rothblum (1984) point out that 46 % of American university research participants procrastinate on writing a term paper at least once a week, 30.1 % procrastinate on reading weekly assignments, and 27.6% procrastinate on studying for tests.

Furthermore, Klassen, Krawchuk, and Rajani (2008) carried out a study at a Canadian university and came to the same conclusion that "almost all of the students defined themselves as procrastinators, with 89% of students reporting more than 1 hour of procrastination per day". Bojuwoye (2019) confesses in his data analysis that indecision, time management, lack of motivation, fear of failure, poor organizational skills, high stress, poor coping strategies and peer influence are factors which result in academic procrastination. At the same time, Ellis and Knaus (1977) emphasise that nearly every procrastinator unavoidably goes through eleven elemental steps:

1. Wishing to accomplish a task.
2. Making a decision to do it.
3. Needlessly delaying doing it.
4. Observing the disadvantage.
5. Continuing to postpone working on the tasks.
6. Scolding oneself for procrastination.
7. Continuing to procrastinate.
8. Completing tasks at a last minute, or never complete.
9. Feeling uncomfortable.
10. Assuring oneself about not procrastinating again, and lastly.
11. Shortly thereafter, engaging in procrastination again.

Jones and Blankenship (2021) associate students' academic procrastination with dysfunctional learning, including low academic performance, low quality of academic work, lack of knowledge, time pressure, dropout and lengthened course of study. In addition, it has



a wide range of effects on people's lives and has objectively significant consequences such as lower scores and lack of participation or inactive participation in classes and class discussions (Michinov et al, 2011) beside poor academic performance (Hussaein and Sultan, 2010) and (Michinov, Brunot, Bohec, Juhel and Delaval, 2011). Academic performance is the sum of a pupil's test scores, academic rank, and academic honor. For this purpose, many studies state that academic procrastination has a negative relationship with grade score and grade point average (GPA) which are elements of academic performance. (Tice and Baumeister, 1997; Prohaska et al., 2000; Howell and Watson, 2007; Klassen, Krawchuk and Rajani, 2007; Zarick and Stonebraker, 2009).

Researchers note that pupils continue to portray poor study habits like procrastinating academic tasks in spite of, the negative consequences that accompany them (Solomon and Rothblum, 1984; Rothblum, Solomon, and Murakami, 1986). Regardless of the numerous mentioned researchers who prove that procrastination hinders academic performance by reducing the quantity and quality of work, a great deal of studies find that procrastination has no effect on individuals' academic performance and highlighted boredom due to extended semesters and duties that were unnecessary to academic needs as factors for their behavior (Schraw & Wadkins, 2007). To support this, Schraw and Wadkins researched third- and fourth-year college students and discovered that there is no correlation between poor academic performance and high-level procrastinators. In fact, they have greater academic ability and it has an insignificant effect on their grades and performance.

### **Related Studies**

Balkis and Duru (2017) conducted a study at Pamukkale University, Turkey which examined more than the relationship between academic procrastination and academic performance. It investigated the gender differences in relation to academic procrastination, academic performance and academic life satisfaction among students from different departments of Education Faculty which is not covered in this recent research. However, their study did not observe the reasons behind this behaviour. The researchers used a demographic information form to gather participants' demographic information such as age, gender, and major field. In addition to a Turkish version of the Aitken Procrastination Inventory (API) to determine students' level of academic procrastination and it included 16 items. Also, the Grade Point Average (GPA) which they attained from the previous semesters was written by the students



as a reference for their academic performance. Finally, Academic Satisfaction Scale (ASS) was used to determine students' satisfaction with academic life. The ASS contains a 5- item self-report using a scale for responses which starts with 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). (Schmitt, Oswald, Friede, Imus, & Merritt, 2008).

A more specific study by Bojuwoye (2019) similarly focused on academic procrastination factors by pupils with learning disabilities without paying attention to the others in the secondary schools of Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State, Nigeria. The related study explored the gender effects of these factors as well, but it did not concentrate on the level of their procrastination unlike the current one. This study relied on using self-report questionnaires to assess behavioural tendencies causing procrastination either in academic tasks or in daily tasks and developed a self-questionnaire report titled "Causes of Academic Procrastination Questionnaire" divided into two sections, one for gathering demographic information including the participants' gender and other relevant data. Whereas the second section contained a 4-point Likert scale with statements illustrating different causes or reasons for academic procrastination. The purpose of the study was to reduce the negative consequences of academic procrastination by outlining its causes.

## Procedures

### Data collection

The researchers distributed the questionnaire for their specific targets. Most students spent about 15 minutes answering the questions while the others took it home with them. The completion of retrieval and obtaining the overall number of students was on March 20, 2022. Following the collection of the essential data, an appropriate statistical tool was used to analyze the data.

### Data analysis

The present study deals with quantitative and qualitative data. Alternatively, the researchers used a variety of techniques in collecting and analyzing the given data. They utilized frequency and percentage distribution as a statistical tool to show the degrees of academic procrastination among university undergraduate students, and the causes of these degrees. The participants' GPAs are considered in this study as an indicator of their academic level and performance, besides dividing students into different groups. The researchers also



used a linguistic analysis to describe and explain the results, and to explore the relationship between respondents' academic procrastination and their academic performance. Lastly, highlight the most relatable reasons that students have chosen. In the same way, they analyzed the negative or positive impact of high/low levels of academic procrastination on the students' performance for every group.

The classification and measurement of academic procrastination levels was done by grading and calculating the participants' frequency answers out of 5 on the 5-point Likert scale. They measured how many always, often, sometimes, rarely, or never were ticked on every statement. Afterward, the percentages for each choice were determined and recorded. On another side, the level of procrastination was assessed by separating the statements that positively support procrastination from the statements that negatively oppose with procrastination. Positive statements (PSs) include item statements 2, 4, 5, 7, 10, 12, 14, 16, 17 and 18. Negative statements (NSs) include 1, 3, 6, 8, 9, 11, 13, 15, 19, and 20 in the questionnaire (Appendix I).

The next step was to calculate each participant's score according to a certain formula. If the answer to a PS was (always, often or sometimes), one point value is added to the participants' score. On the contrary, when the answer to a PS is (rarely or never), no points are added to their score. Conversely, when the answer ticked for a NS is (rarely or never), one point value is added. And in contrast, the answers (always, often or sometimes) take no points when it comes to NSs. Consequently, the total score should be out of 20, then is divided by 4, and the final score is out of 5. Participants who got 2.5 or higher out of 5 were classified as having high levels of procrastination, while the ones who got lower than 2.5 were considered as having low levels of procrastination.

The following step was grouping the participants according to their academic performance by depending on their GPAs. Whether they have an excellent, very good, good, average or less GPA. For instance, students who have 85-100 GPAs are considered as excellent students who belong to the same group, very good students with 75-85 GPAs are put in another group, others who have good 65-75 GPAs are in one group, students with average 50-65 GPAs in their own group and the last group involves the ones with less 50-0 GPAs. Over and above, the percentage for each group's levels of procrastination was calculated, after isolating the high leveled procrastinators from the low leveled



procrastinators and making a comparison between students' academic procrastination levels and their academic performance was done in each group afterwards.

The final stage was enumerating the answers that participants have picked to be the reasons for their procrastination. The researchers counted the answers to every statement and determined the most popular and relevant as well as the least popular and relevant ones. The blank statement on no. 20 labeled 'other' also provided valuable input on why these students do procrastinate as well.

## Results and Discussion

The participants' answers on the procrastination levels scale are illustrated in Table 1 below. It is observed that the statements on this scale are divided into two categories, the first being ten statements that display typical procrastinator behaviors. The other statements, on the contrary, represent non-procrastinator behaviors. The scale is dissected into 5 classifications to measure each respondent's procrastination level score out of 5, to distinguish between high and low procrastination degrees. To determine the nature of the relationship between academic procrastination and academic performance, a comparison between high or low procrastination levels and students' GPAs is done.

Table 1: Percentages and Numbers of the Frequency Scale Responses.

No.	Statements	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	I do my assignments daily and regularly, so I am punctual with my course work.	16%	42%	35%	5%	2%
2	When exam time approaches, I find myself busy with other things.	18%	28%	32%	14%	8%
3	I hurry to complete my academic missions long time before the deadline.	16%	26%	28%	23%	7%
4	I always keep telling myself that I will complete my assignments tomorrow.	15%	23%	28%	9%	9%
5	I postpone my duties till the last moment.	15%	24%	29%	19%	13%
6	I finish my duties before the deadline.	35%	24%	26%	11%	4%
7	I try to find excuses to justify my delay in doing study assignments.	10%	27%	28%	18%	17%
8	I usually start doing study duties immediately after getting them.	10%	31%	33%	16%	10%
9	I follow the plan I set for completing my assignments.	23%	34%	23%	14%	6%
10	I always waste time.	22%	14%	33%	22%	9%
11	I always finish my important assignments and I have extra time.	19%	28%	30%	16%	7%
12	I delay doing duties without justification even if they are important.	7%	20%	38%	21%	14%
13	I dedicate two hours daily for studying.	16%	14%	29%	22%	19%





14	I always think I have enough time later, so it is not necessary to actually start studying.	22%	27%	24%	15%	12%
15	I do not postpone a duty I think is necessary to do.	21%	23%	37%	8%	11%
16	I do lots of entertaining activities, so I do not have enough time for studying.	10%	17%	31%	29%	13%
17	I delay doing duties regardless of their nature (exciting or not).	12%	23%	35%	18%	12%
18	Postponing academic duties is considered a real problem which I suffer from.	15%	25%	34%	14%	12%
19	I abstain from leaving tasks till the last minute to avoid working under pressure.	14%	29%	36%	12%	9%
20	I go to my classes prepared.	19%	31%	29%	16%	5%

In statement 1, the researchers want to find out if there is a regularity and students are punctual at doing their course work. The results showed that 58% always and often do this while 7% of them rarely or never do it. The purpose of statement 2 is to investigate how many students occupy themselves with other things during exams' time, and it is noticed that 46% relate to this while 22% do not. At the same time, the findings of statement 3 demonstrate that 42% always and often finish their tasks long time before the deadline, but 30% do this rarely or never. Furthermore, it is obvious in statement 4 that 38% of respondents always or often postpone their missions to the other day, but 18% do not relate to this behavior.

Conversely, 39% of the total do everything in the last minute as it shown in statement 5. The sixth statement concluded that 15% of the participants rarely or never finish their duties long time before the deadline. Moreover, 37% of the students admit that trying to justify their submission delay is something they tend to do in the seventh statement. While demonstration of statement 8 illustrates that respondents who always or often finish their tasks immediately are about 41%. On top of that, statement 9 proves that 57% of subjects complete assignments by following a plan they have set before. 36% of the same students confess their tendency to waste time as it is seen in statement 10.

The eleventh statement checks whether students know how to arrange their priorities, decide what is important or urgent, and if they have good time management skills. The findings display that 47% of them finish their most urgent tasks early and even have some free time to spend afterwards, while 23% say they do not manage to do so. The twelfth statement, on the other hand, aims to see how many undergraduates postpone academic



duties till last minute regardless of their urgency. Results show that about 27% of students tend to do so, whereas 35% rarely or never delay academic matters without reasonable justifications.

Statement thirteen's motive is to see how much time of the day students assign for studying, turns out 30% of them dedicate 2 hours every day to do academic work and keep up with their textbooks. Time management and efficiency are the objectives of statement fourteen. 49% of the respondents admit that they tend to think they have plenty of time later on, so it is not necessary to actually start studying, though 27% rarely or never miscalculate timing organization. Discovering the number of students that never holds up on doing necessary academic chores is the cause behind the fifteenth statement, which is revealed to be 44% of them opposing to 19% that delay and stall.

In statement 16, researchers want to learn if entertainment consumption takes up a considerable amount of study time, thus see if it is a procrastination inducing factor. Participants' answers indicate that 27% do spend the majority of their time on fun activities, leaving no ample chances for them to be studying productively. The following statement focuses on the nature of the assignment needed to be finished, whether it is exciting or not and if it influences students' productivity. Here, the findings illustrate that 35% of the respondents give no interest to the task's kind, they simply leave it to last minute notwithstanding it being enjoyable to them or not.

The 18<sup>th</sup> statement inspects students' self-awareness levels and if they fully do acknowledge their procrastination dilemma, which was validated to be 40% of them disclosing procrastination as a serious issue they suffer from. The nineteenth statement's goal is examining the ratio of students who can manage to work under pressure, and the ones that contrary wise avoid being put in such situation with all costs. 43% confessed having to do the work at last minute is stressful to them and that they abstain from leaving tasks until then. Lastly, the 20<sup>th</sup> statement explores students' readiness for each class they attend, how many of them struggle with tardiness, who walks into class prepared and who does not. The outcome of the students' answers confirms that 50% attend their classes equipped and prepared.

The second table concerns groupings of students according to their GPAs after selecting the frequency with which each statement is applicable to them on the procrastination scale. The two columns labeled "Procrastination Levels" contain percentages

which indicate results of different groups. The findings of table 2 provide conclusive evidence that the academic procrastination can negatively impact the academic performance of students. To support this, the table demonstrates that less than average GPAs group which involves 67% students with a high procrastination level and 33% with low ones.

There has been a 20% significant increase in the high procrastination level among average GPAs students' group with a 20% drastic decline in the low level. Supplementary, regarding good and very good GPAs groups, high procrastination levels fluctuate between 52% and 56%. At the same time, it shifts from 48% to 44% in the low levels. Finally, there is a dramatic decrease in high levels of procrastination with the excellent group which stands at 26% and an opposing upward movement in the low levels. Overall, it is proved that students with high academic procrastination levels perform less academically. Hence, get low GPAs and vice-versa.

Table 2: Groupings of Students and Percentages of Procrastination Levels According to their GPAs.

GPA Groups	High Procrastination Level	Low Procrastination Level	Total
Excellent 100-85	26% (12)	74% (34)	46
Very Good 85-75	56% (22)	44% (18)	40
Good 75-65	52% (23)	48% (21)	44
Average 65-50	87% (20)	13% (3)	23
Less than Average 50-0	67% (2)	33% (3)	5

Table 3 below presents and discusses the most related reasons for the procrastination phenomenon with taking into consideration that respondents are allowed to tick more than one or two reasons. For starters, reason 4 that declares "I want to do my tasks perfectly." is highlighted by 50% of participants as the most common factor contributing to their procrastination behavior. Reason 1, on the other hand, indicates that students have a fear of failure, follows after it with 43% votes. Furthermore, the ninth "I do not know how to start.", tenth which suggests students do not enjoy studying for exams and nineteenth reasons that claims students do not like being told what to do stand at 32% of related participants and reduce slightly in the reason 14 which assumes the curriculum is boring. Therefore, the big

majority of students procrastinate because they want to perform perfectly, have a fear of failure, do not know how to start nor enjoy studying for exams and being told what to do. Similarly, 30% of students procrastinate because they find the curriculum boring and 28% of them picked reasons number 2, 3 and 8 to justify their behavior.

The reasons being them not having ample time or having other priorities or because the size, length and complexity of the tasks problematize them. Whereas the percentages slightly went down by 4% in reason 17 which supposes students' high standards are the motive behind their actions and 2% in reason 7 that says, "I get distracted easily". Even more, it is reduced to be 20 % in reason 5 saying that harsh critique is troubling them. Reason 18 which states "I resent people setting deadlines for me." was chosen by 16% of participants and the percentages plunged to 12% in reason 6 "I have a low self-esteem", reason 12 confirming they have a fear of success and reason 13 proclaiming their issue is struggling with disorganization. The total of answers continued to drop at 10% in the sixteenth reason, 7% in reason 11 which is being indecisive and 15 that clarify disinterest with educational matters in general. Finally, reason 20 was chosen by no one because it let students add any other unmentioned reasons. As you can see, factors and causes which make students procrastinate change from each individual to another.

Table 3: Most Relevant Reasons for Academic Procrastination According to Respondents

No.	Procrastination Reasons	Number of Students	Percentage
1	I have a fear of failure.	68	43%
2	I do not have ample time.	45	28%
3	I have other priorities.	45	28%
4	I want to do my tasks perfectly.	80	50%
5	I do not want to be criticized.	32	20%
6	I have a low self-esteem.	20	12%
7	I get distracted easily.	35	22%
8	Size, length, and complexity of the task problematize me.	45	28%
9	I do not know how to start.	51	32%
10	I do not enjoy studying for exams.	51	32%

11	I am extremely indecisive.	11	7%
12	I have a fear of success.	19	12%
13	I struggle with disorganization.	20	12%
14	The curriculum is boring.	48	30%
15	I do not care about my education.	11	7%
16	My tasks and assignments make me feel overwhelmed.	39	10%
17	I set very high standards for myself, and I worry about not being able to meet those standers.	39	24%
18	I resent people setting deadlines for me.	25	16%
19	I do not like being told what to do.	51	32%
20	Other reasons	0	0%

The bar graphs below represent the twenty potential reasons contributing to the students' procrastination behavior. The graphs 1 and 2 illustrate the number of respondents relating to each reason and it is observed that the causes behind this phenomenon vary from one to another.

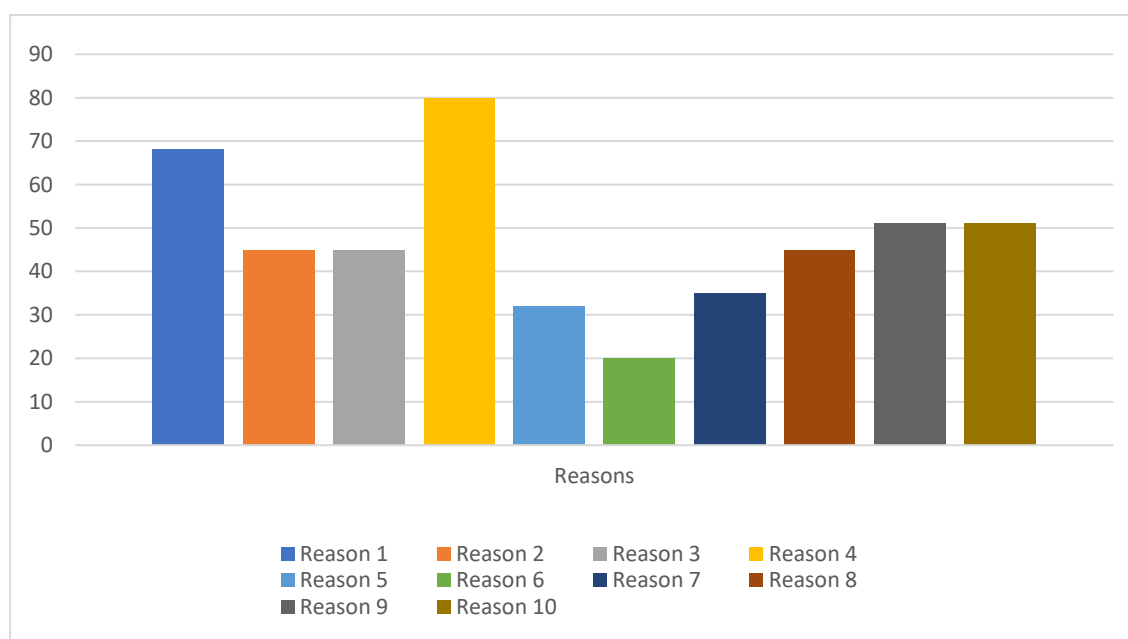


Fig1. Number of Students Relating to Reason from 1-10

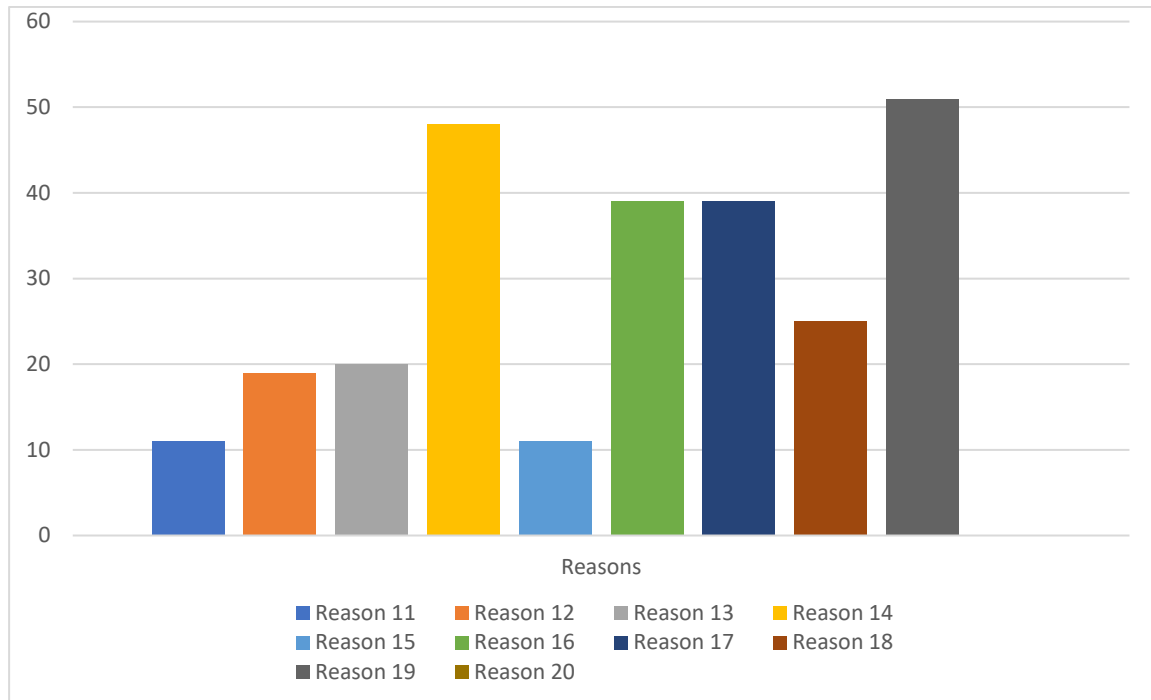


Fig2. Number of Students Relating to Reason from 11-20

## Conclusion

University students consciously and unconsciously suffer from many problems which impact their performance. On top of that, maintaining a good academic performance as undergraduate EFL students is important for their future careers. Academic procrastination is one of the most prevalent phenomena which influence academic settings since the way these learners handle their academic missions and tasks will determine their academic performance development. The study investigated the relationship between academic procrastination and the academic performance of students and the frequency of this behavior among them to define the causes of it.

Using a modified version of Abu Ghazal's Procrastination Questionnaire (APQ), it was concluded that 51% of students have high levels of procrastination while the other 49% have low ones. Also, the questionnaire proves that academic procrastination negatively impacts the academic performance of students since participants who procrastinate less have better GPAs than students who procrastinate more. Lastly, the results show that there is a variety of reasons for procrastination in academic settings and a big majority of them procrastinate due to their fear of failure and perfectionism.





## Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions gleaned from this study, the following are recommended:

1. Educational institutions should provide awareness sessions for both students and teachers about this procrastination behavior to make students recognize the consequences of this pattern.
2. Teachers should teach students some techniques and strategies about time management which enable them to avoid procrastinating their tasks and submit their assignments on time.
3. Students need motivation and to be involved in more interesting activities.
4. Curriculums and lessons must be student-centered instead of being teacher-centered.

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## Appendix I

### Academic Procrastination Questionnaire

Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

#### First: Procrastination Level Assessment:

No.	Statements	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
1	I do my assignments daily and regularly, so I am punctual with my course work.					
2	When exam time approaches, I find myself busy with other things.					
3	I hurry to complete my academic missions long time before the deadline.					
4	I always keep telling myself that I will complete my assignments tomorrow.					
5	I postpone my duties till the last moment.					
6	I finish my duties before the deadline.					
7	I try to find excuses to justify my delay in doing study assignments.					
8	I usually start doing study duties immediately after getting them.					
9	I follow the plan I set for completing my assignments.					
10	I always waste time.					
11	I always finish my important assignments and I have extra time.					
12	I delay doing duties without justification even if they are important.					
13	I dedicate two hours daily for studying.					
14	I always think I have enough time later, so it is not necessary to actually start studying.					
15	I do not postpone a duty I think is necessary to do.					
16	I do lots of entertaining activities, so I do not have enough time for studying.					
17	I delay doing duties regardless of their nature (exciting or not).					
18	Postponing academic duties is considered a real problem which I suffer from.					
19	I abstain from leaving tasks till the last minute to avoid working under pressure.					
20	I go to my classes prepared.					





Using the 5-point scale shown below, rate the following statements by ticking the boxes:

### Second: Procrastination Reasons Investigation:

Despite the extent of your procrastination, choose one or more from the following reasons that are applicable to you:

- I have a fear of failure.
- I do not have ample time.
- I have other priorities.
- I want to do my tasks perfectly.
- I do not want to be criticized.
- I have a low self-esteem.
- I get distracted easily.
- Size, length, and complexity of the task problematize me.
- I do not know how to start.
- I do not enjoy studying for exams.
- I am extremely indecisive.
- I have a fear of success.
- I struggle with disorganization.
- The curriculum is boring.
- I do not care about my education.
- My tasks and assignments make me feel overwhelmed.
- I set very high standards for myself, and I worry about not being able to meet those standers.
- I resent people setting deadlines for me.
- I do not like being told what to do.

Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

### Last: The Academic performance:

Would you kindly write your overall grade point average (GPA)? \_\_\_\_\_%