

Academic Procrastination among Undergraduate Nursing Students of Birgunj

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ABSTRACT

Background: Academic procrastination is a complex issue leading to decline in student's wellbeing, academic performance and overall success. The procrastination behavior leads to negative outcomes such as stress, guilt, poor academic performance, low self-esteem, diminished physical and mental health. The objective of the study was to assess the level of academic procrastination among undergraduate nursing students.

Methods: A descriptive cross-sectional study was adopted among 180 undergraduate nursing students selected by stratified proportionate random sampling technique from the selected nursing college, Birgunj. A self-administered structured questionnaire was used to collect data on socio-demographic information and standard tool Academic Procrastination Scale (APS) was used to assess the level of academic procrastination. The obtained data were entered in SPSS 16 version for data analysis and were analyzed by using descriptive statistics (mean, SD, frequency, percentage) and inferential statistics (chi-square test).

Results: The mean age of the respondents was 22.87±4.12. The study findings revealed that most (83.3%) of nursing students had low level of academic procrastination and 16.7% of respondents had high level of academic procrastination. There was significant association between the level of academic procrastination and academic year (p-value=0.044). However, there was no any association between the level of academic procrastination and other selected variables.

Conclusion: The study findings concluded that most of students exhibited low levels of academic procrastination, while only few demonstrated high procrastination behaviors. Academic procrastination tends to be associated with academic year. This finding highlights the importance of time management training and counselling, academic support, cognitive refraining, coping strategies training particularly in academic years where higher levels of procrastination are more likely to occur.

Keywords: Academic procrastination, Nursing students, Undergraduates

INTRODUCTION

Procrastination is the intentional delay of actions and behaviors that have a time limit within which they should be completed.¹ It is a pervasive human behavior, a common phenomenon experienced by people across various paths of life. In an academic setting, this behavior is termed "academic procrastination" which refers to the deliberate delay in a practical course of study or learning in spite of the expected deterioration.²

Academic procrastination is a common issue among the nursing field where students must complete numerous

exams, term papers, assignments and projects throughout their academic careers. A study conducted in Malaysia reported higher percentage of nursing students had moderate academic procrastination at 81.4% level.³

Nursing education is rigorous and demanding, requiring students to acquire a vast amount of knowledge and skills within a limited timeframe. In this context, academic procrastination might have its effect on physical and psychological well-being that eventually makes someone seek professional help.⁴ Poor sleep, high levels of stress, tardiness owing to time constraints, incomplete homework, perplexity, self-blame, feelings of guilt and

inadequacy, low self-esteem, anxiety, and despair are all signs of academic procrastination.⁵

Academic procrastination represents a significant concern within nursing education, with a consistently high prevalence reported across various studies. This behavior is associated with negative consequences concerning performance as well as physical and psychological well-being including stress, anxiety, low self-efficacy, poor time management, and the demanding nature of nursing programs. This study aimed to assess the level of academic procrastination among undergraduate nursing students and to measure the association of academic procrastination with selected demographic variables.

METHODS

A descriptive cross-sectional study was conducted among 180 undergraduates nursing students of Birgunj Nursing Campus located in Province no. 2, Birta-4, Birgunj, Nepal. The study population were all the undergraduate nursing students of Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.Sc. Nursing) and Bachelor in Nursing Science (BNS). The total available study population during study were 226. The sample size for the study was estimated by using Cochran formula, i.e. $n = z^2pq/e^2$. A stratified proportionate random sampling method was used for the selection of 180 sample. Considering the academic stream as a stratum, nursing students was selected from each stratum by simple random sampling method (lottery method). In the study, each stratum sample size was calculated by using the formula. Sample size (n^n) = $n/N \times N^n$. Data were collected from 2082/02/12 (05/25/2025) to 2082/02/24 (06/06/2025) by using standard self-administered structured questionnaire i.e. Academic Procrastination Scale. The tool consisted of two parts: Part I is related to: Socio-demographic Characteristics and Part II consisted of: Academic Procrastination Scale developed by Justin McCloskey and Shannon Scielzo (2011) which contains 25-items Likert type scale. The responses are measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Five items (1,8, 12,14, 25) are negative statements and their scored was reversed i.e. 5- strongly disagree to 1- strongly

agree. The total score was calculated by summing the scores for all items in the scale. The score ranged from 25-125. The score of 80 and higher indicates a higher level of procrastination. The level of procrastination was categorized as: High level procrastination: ≥ 80 score and Low-level procrastination: < 80 score.⁶

Data was collected after getting ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Committee (Ref. BSC-NMC/001/082-083) of National Medical College Teaching Hospital, Birgunj. Pretesting was done among 18 students who met the inclusion criteria at National Medical College Nursing Campus, Birgunj. Formal administrative approval was taken from the Campus chief of Birgunj Nursing Campus, before data collection. Self-introduction and objectives of study was explained to all respondents. The respondents in each class were chosen by lottery method. The selected students were placed in a separate classroom. Informed written consent was taken for voluntary participation from each student in the study. Data were collected at the library time and leisure activities in the classroom setting without disrupting the regular academic and clinical activities. The collected data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 16 version). The data was analyzed by using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) to describe the socio demographic characteristics and identify the level of academic procrastination and inferential statistics i.e. chi-square to measure the association with selected demographic variables

RESULTS

Socio-demographic information:

The total number of respondents were 180. Among them, 53.9% were of age below 23 years. 57.8% respondents were studying BSc. Nursing, 51.7% respondents were from 3rd year. Similarly, 55.6% were residing in the hostel and 75.0% of the respondents were living with friends. Parental characteristics of respondents revealed that 38.3% of respondents' mothers were educated up to secondary level, 47% of respondent's father were educated up to secondary level, 30.6% of respondent's

fathers occupation were business. Similarly, 73.3% of respondent's mother were homemaker and 43.9% of respondents' parental monthly income was in between Nepalese Rs 20,000- 50,000 which is presented in table 1 and 2.

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents n=180

Variables	Number	Percent
Age (in completed years)		
<23	97	53.9
≥23	83	46.1
Mean Age ± SD = 22.87 ± 4.12		
Stream		
B.Sc. Nursing	104	57.8
BNS	76	42.2
Academic year		
1 st year	65	36.1
2 nd year	16	8.9
3 rd year	93	51.7
4 th year	6	3.3
Area of residence		
Hostel	100	55.5
Home	9	5.0
Rented home	68	37.8
Relatives home	3	1.7
Living arrangement		
Parents	10	5.6
Relatives	4	2.2
Friends	135	75.0
Alone	31	17.2

Table 2: Parental characteristics of the respondents n=180

Variables	Number	Percent
Mother's educational level		
Illiterate	30	16.7
Primary	64	35.6
Secondary	69	38.3
Bachelor and above	17	9.4
Father's educational level		
Illiterate	7	3.9
Primary	37	20.6
Secondary	85	47.2
Bachelor and above	51	28.3

Variables	Number	Percent
Father's occupation		
Government Job	42	23.3
Private job	30	16.7
Business	55	30.6
Agriculture	32	17.8
Others [#]	21	11.7
Mother's occupation		
Homemaker	132	73.3
Government Job	22	12.2
Private job	8	4.4
Business	24	7.8
Others ^{##}	4	2.2
Parent's monthly income (in NRs)		
<20,000	22	12.2
20,000-50,000	79	43.9
50,001-1,00,000	66	36.7
Above 1,00,000	13	7.2

others[#]: army, priest, foreign employer, Trekking guide;
Others^{##}: Tailor, agriculture, foreign employer

Findings Related to Academic Procrastination:

Respondents response according to academic procrastination scale statements presented in table 3. Level of academic procrastination among the respondents presented in table 4.

Table 3 shows that more than half (58.3%) of the respondents agreed on the statement “I usually allocate time to review and proofread my work”, 40.0% of the respondents disagreed on the statement “I put off projects until the last minute”, 43.3% of the respondents agreed that “I concentrate on school work instead of other distractions”, half (50.0%) students disagreed that “I know I should work on school work, but I just don't do it”, more than half (50.6%) respondents disagreed the statement “When given an assignment, I usually put it away and forget about it until it is almost due”, more than one third (35.6%) respondents agreed the statement “I tend to put off things for the next day”, and more than one third (34.4%) respondents agreed that “I read the textbook and look over notes before coming to class and listening to a lecture or teacher”.

Table 3: Academic Procrastination among Respondents

n=180

Statements	SD N(%)	D N(%)	N N(%)	A N(%)	SA N(%)
I usually allocate time to review and proofread my work.	3(1.7)	14(7.8)	37(20.6)	105(58.3)	21(11.7)
I put off projects until the last minute.	12(6.7)	72 (40.0)	38(21.1)	49 (27.2)	9 (5)
I have found myself waiting until the day before to start a big project.	20(11.1)	78(43.3)	29(16.1)	47 (26.1)	6 (3.3)
I know I should work on school work, but I just don't do it.	18 (10.0)	90(50.0)	30(16.7)	35(19.4)	7(3.9)
When working on schoolwork, I usually get distracted by other things.	15(8.3)	46(25.6)	41(22.8)	64(35.6)	14(7.8)
I waste a lot of time on unimportant things.	13(7.2)	50(27.8)	43(23.9)	60(33.3)	14(7.8)
I get distracted by other, more fun, things when I am supposed to work on schoolwork.	12(6.7)	52(28.9)	34(18.9)	68(37.8)	14(7.8)
I concentrate on school work instead of other distractions.	3(1.7)	17(9.4)	67(37.2)	78(43.3)	15(8.3)
I can't focus on school work or projects for more than an hour until I get distracted.	11(6.1)	68(37.8)	37(20.6)	57(31.7)	7(3.9)
My attention span for schoolwork is very short.	14(7.8)	72(40.0)	43(23.9)	43(23.9)	8(4.4)
Tests are meant to be studied for just the night before.	41(22.8)	82(45.6)	22(12.2)	27(15.0)	8(4.4)
I feel prepared well in advance for most tests.	5(2.8)	30(16.7)	55(30.6)	76(42.2)	14(7.8)
"Cramming" and last minute studying is the best way that I study for a big test.	23(12.8)	88(48.9)	29(16.1)	31(17.2)	9(5.0)
I allocate time so I don't have to "cram" at the end of the semester.	5(2.8)	29(16.1)	50(27.8)	80(44.4)	16(8.9)
I only study the night before exams.	26(14.4)	94(52.2)	26(14.4)	26(14.4)	8(4.4)
When given an assignment, I usually put it away and forget about it until it is almost due.	36(20.0)	91(50.6)	26(14.4)	22(12.2)	2(2.8)
Friends usually distract me from schoolwork.	24(13.3)	81(45.0)	46(25.6)	27(15.0)	2(1.1)
I find myself talking to friends or family instead of working on school work.	16(8.9)	78(43.3)	44(24.4)	37(20.6)	5(2.8)
On the weekends, I make plans to do homework and projects, but I get distracted and hang out with friends.	15(8.3)	59(32.8)	43(23.9)	50(27.8)	13(7.2)
I tend to put off things for the next day.	10(5.6)	53(29.4)	47(26.1)	64(35.6)	6(3.3)
I don't spend much time studying school material until the end of the semester.	16(8.9)	68(37.8)	46(25.6)	46(25.6)	4(2.2)
I frequently find myself putting important deadlines off.	13(7.2)	89(49.4)	38(21.1)	37(20.6)	3(1.7)
If I don't understand something, I'll usually wait until the night before a test to figure it	22(12.2)	94(52.2)	18(10.0)	41(22.8)	5(2.8)
I read the textbook and look over notes before coming to class and listening to a lecture or teacher.	14(7.8)	32(17.8)	59(32.8)	62(34.4)	13(7.2)

SD: Strongly Disagree, D: Disagree, N: Neutral, A: Agree, SA: Strongly Agree

Table 4 shows that most (83.3%) of respondents had low level of academic procrastination and 16.7% of respondents had high level of academic procrastination.

Table 4: Level of academic procrastination among the respondents n=180

Level of Academic Procrastination	Number	Percent
High level (≥80)	30	16.7
Low level (<80)	150	83.3

Maximum possible score=125

Table 5: Association of academic procrastination level with selected variables n=180

Variables	Academic Procrastination Level		p-value
	High N(%)	Low N(%)	
Age in years			
<23	17 (17.5)	80(82.5)	0.738
≥23	13(15.7)	70(84.3)	
Stream			
B.Sc. Nursing	18(17.3)	86(82.2)	0.787
BNS	12(15.8)	64(84.2)	

Variables	Academic Procrastination Level		
	High N(%)	Low N(%)	p- value
Academic Year			
1 st year	6(9.2)	59(90.8)	0.044*
Others [#]	24(20.9)	91(79.1)	
Area of residence			
Hostel	18(18.0)	82(82.2)	0.592
Others	12(15.0)	68(85.0)	
Living arrangement			
Friends	24(17.8)	111(82.2)	0.488
Others [@]	6(13.3)	39(86.7)	

*significance at p value < 0.05, χ^2 =Chi square #others:2nd year, 3rd year, 4th year @:parents, relatives, alone

Table 5 depicts that there is significant association between the level of academic procrastination and academic year (p-value=0.044), whereas there is no significant association of level of academic procrastination with age, stream, area of residence and living arrangement.

Table 6: Association of academic procrastination level with parental characteristics of respondents n=180

Variables	Academic Procrastination Level		
	High N(%)	Low N(%)	p- value
Mother's educational level			
Illiterate and Primary	15(16.0)	79(84.0)	0.790
Secondary and above	15(17.4)	71(82.6)	
Father's educational level			
Illiterate and primary	6(13.6)	38(86.4)	0.535
Secondary and above	24(17.6)	112(82.4)	
Father's occupation			
Job holders	14(19.7)	57(80.3)	0.375
Others	16(14.7)	93(85.3)	
Mother's occupation			
Homemaker	19(14.4)	113(85.6)	0.175
Others	11(22.9)	37(77.1)	

*significance at p value < 0.05

Table 6 depicts that there is no significant association of level of academic procrastination with parent's educational level, parental occupation and parental monthly income.

DISCUSSION

The current study revealed that among 180 respondents,

most (83.3%) of respondents had low level of academic procrastination and 16.7% of respondents had high level of academic procrastination. The findings is in consistent with the study which revealed that 16% of the nursing students were high academic procrastinators.⁷ Another study conducted among undergraduate dental students of Malaysia revealed that only 28.5% had high procrastination.⁸ Similarly, another study conducted showed a 14.3% of nursing students have high level of academic procrastination.⁹ The study conducted in Kashan University of medical sciences revealed that 16.5% of undergraduate medical students have high level of academic procrastination.¹⁰ In contrast a study conducted among Nursing students in Karachi reported that 45.72% showed severe procrastination ¹¹ and a study conducted in Pakistan revealed that more than half (52.5%) of undergraduate medical students have high procrastination.¹² The variation in the findings may be due to the difference in study setting, population and the sample size.

In the present study, it is found that there is significant association of level of academic procrastination with academic year (p-value =0.044). The findings agree with the study which revealed academic year was associated with academic procrastination level (p value <0.001).⁶ The findings also align with the study which revealed that association of academic procrastination with educational level (p- value =0.047).¹³ These findings suggest that higher procrastination was found among second, third- and fourth-year nursing students as compared to first year nursing students. As the nursing students' academic years increase, apart from the regular academic work, the students get more involved in clinical activities in each shift. The academic demands and challenges increase. Various tasks and roles at the same time is one of the important factors that influences procrastination. Hence, this might be the reason that the students tend to procrastinate more in 2nd, 3rd and 4th year.

In current study, there was no significant association of academic procrastination with age, stream, area of residence, living arrangement, parent's educational level, parent's occupational level and parent's monthly income. The findings aligns with the study findings which revealed that there is no significant association of

academic procrastination with age (p –value = 0.632)¹⁴ and also there is no significant association of academic procrastination with age. ¹¹

This study is limited to only one Nursing college of Birgunj, which restrict the generalizability of findings to nursing students in other provinces in Nepal. The current study design was cross-sectional study that the data was collected for one time.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of findings of present study, it can be concluded that considerable proportion of nursing students have high levels of academic procrastination, r. it remains relevant concern due to its potential impact on academic performance and personal well- being. Nursing Students academic year tends to influence academic procrastination which indicates that procrastination tendencies may vary depending on students' level of study and possibly the academic demands and challenges they face. This finding highlights the importance of time management training and counselling, academic support, cognitive reframing, coping strategies training particularly in academic years where higher levels of procrastination are more likely to occur.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that no conflict of interests exist.

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