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## ONLINE SERVICE FAILURES IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT INSTITUTIONS: A CRITICAL INCIDENT ANALYSIS

**Deepika Shrivastava\***

\*Assistant Professor, Ghanshyam Singh Arya Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Durg,  
Chhattisgarh, India

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### **Abstract**

Procrastination is rampant in every walk of life. It involves intentional postponement of an activity, irrational delay during the activity and unnecessary deferring of its completion (Ackerman 2005, Shraw 2007). It is commonly seen among students in their academic tasks and activities. Procrastination comes in different forms and has causes and consequences. It could be a personality trait or could be due to indecision and clutter. The negative consequences have a wide spectrum that includes failure in fulfilling commitments, fear, shame, feeling of guilt and anxiety. Academic procrastination of students is often due to their preference to short-term advantages over long term benefits. It is a complex phenomenon and researchers have extensively explored its motives, correlates and consequences. One of the quantitative scales (Bashir and Gupta 2019), namely Academic Procrastination Scale, takes into account time management, task aversiveness, sincerity and personal initiative as four dimensions. Though procrastination involves waiting, pausing or delaying, time management skills are not found to be of much help. Therefore, the author examines the prevalence of academic procrastination among high school girl students to find out how the four sub-scales are correlated with each other and with the overall scale. The study was conducted on 120 randomly selected high school girl students from 4 high schools of Durg.

## **Introduction**

Procrastination is a tendency to delay the start or completion of a desired task to the point of

experiencing discomfort (Ferrari and Tibbett 2017). Academic procrastination (AP) is a special form that appears in the academic settings. Among students it is found to be linked to poor study habits, test anxiety, being late in course and project works. Researchers have studied the role of personality traits and gender (Zhou 2019). They associate it with emotional intelligence (Chow 2011), rational and irrational beliefs (Li 2019). Whatever be the cause, it certainly has serious consequences like poor academic performance, sense of guilt, anxiety and depression.

Since it involves delays, it would appear to be logically related to time management (Eerde 2015). Some models use time management as a predictor of academic procrastination (Ocak 2016). But Ferrari (2018) finds it to be different from delay, pausing, waiting, pondering, or prioritizing and does not think that time management may be a way to overcome procrastination. In fact, according to him the time management skill serves only as a “Band-aid” for chronic procrastinators. Some theoretical models of procrastination (Watson 2001) propose that it follows from fear of failure, aversiveness of task, rebellion against control, dependency, and difficulty in making decisions. There is an extensive review (Behnagh 2019) of four decades of behavioral correlates to procrastination that summarizes its types and possible causes.

On the basis of various reviews, Bashir and Gupta (2019) have developed a scale for the quantitative study of AP. This scale is based on the following four dimensions:

- Time Management (TM)- the process of planning and exercising conscious control,
- Task Aversiveness (TA)- aversion to tasks which are frustrating, difficult or causes discomfort,

- Sincerity (S)- the quality of not getting distracted by external factors,
- Personal Initiative (PI)- quality of being pro-active and self-initiated.

This Academic Procrastination Scale (APS) uses TM as one sub-scale. The current study uses APS for examining whether TM can have some bearing on AP. The goal of this work is to study the correlation of the four sub-scales with the overall APS and also to specifically verify Ferrari's claim that time management skills are of limited usefulness.

### **Method**

The data for this study was collected using the standardized AP inventory. The survey tool consists of 30 Likert items divided into 4 dimensions, each dimension having 7 or 8 items. The scoring scheme is defined in the tool and the scale is claimed to be valid and reliable. The questions in each dimension are posed in a manner such that a high score for positively worded questions and a low score for negatively worded questions reflect high value of procrastination. So, for example, a high score in TM sub-scale indicates high contribution to the overall APS.

The sample comprised of 120 randomly picked Class 10 girl students from 4 high schools in Durg. Since the current study was conducted for examining the correlation, data collection was simplified by omitting demographic variables. After getting the APS score by adding up TM, TA, S and PI sub-scale scores, descriptive summary statistics were computed. Correlation matrix based on Pearson's R and scatter plots were drawn along with the regressions lines.

### **Results**

The data characteristics are summarized in the following table.

	mean	sd	median	min	max	range	skew	kurtosis	se
Time Management (TM)	22.83	5.3	22	11	42	31	0.28	0.07	0.48
Task Aversiveness (TA)	25.49	7.26	25.5	11	38	27	-0.01	-1.28	0.66
Sincerity (S)	20.09	3.11	21	14	27	13	-0.09	-0.78	0.28
Personal Initiative (PI)	17.43	4.14	18	9	27	18	-0.1	-0.88	0.38
Academic Procrastination	85.84	16.83	84	52	114	62	0	-1.25	1.54

The sample mean for PI is the lowest. The mean and the standard deviation (sd) are the highest for TA. Except for TM, all other sub-scales have almost zero skewness implying that the distribution is almost symmetric. TA, S, PI and APS appear flatter than the corresponding normal curves.

The computation of the bi-variate correlations (Pearson's r) between sub-scales and the overall scale shows significant (at significance level 0.001) and strong positive correlations. The correlation matrix is tabulated below.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Time Management	-				
2. Task Aversiveness	.73***	-			
3. Sincerity	.50***	.58***	-		
4. Personal Initiative	.62***	.60***	.51***	-	
5. Academic Procrastination	.87***	.92***	.72***	.80***	-

Note. \* p < 0.05; \*\* p < 0.01; \*\*\* p < 0.001

It is obvious from the above table that-

- all sub-scales show strong positive correlation with APS,
- while TA has the strongest correlation with APS, S has the lowest,
- TM sub-scale has slightly higher correlation with TA than all other intra-scale correlations,
- TA, S and PI have moderate positive correlations with each other.

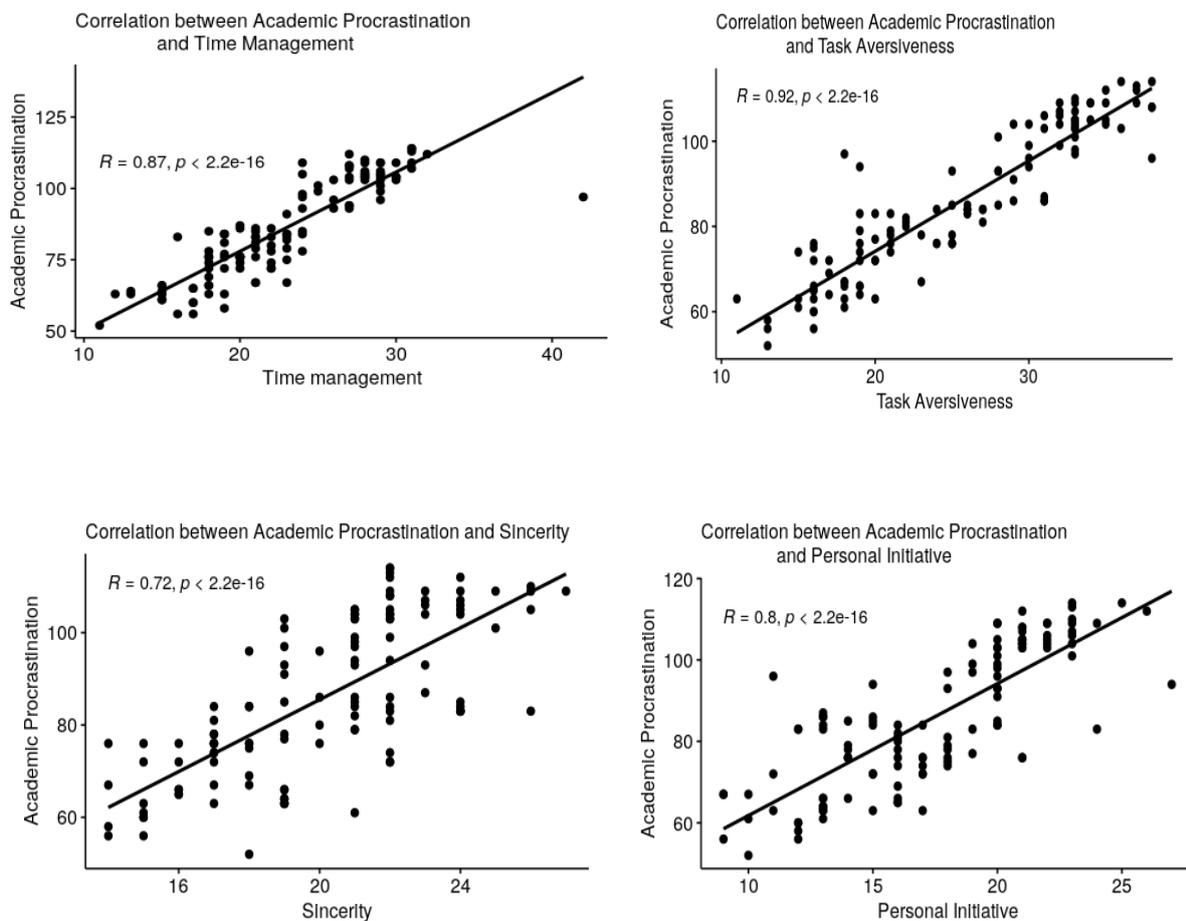
The strength of correlation was interpreted as per the table given below.

**Table 3. Interpretation of correlation**

Correlation range	Interpretation
.90 – 1.00	Very strong positive
.70 - .90	Strong positive
.50 - .70	Moderate positive
.30 - .50	Weak positive
.00 - .30	Negligible

The scatter plots of sub-scales versus APS and the regression lines are plotted. Strong positive correlation is evident the following plots.

**Figure 1. Scatter plots of sub-scales versus APS with regression lines**



## Discussion

Academic procrastination, as a complex phenomenon, have been studied for decades (Behnagh 2018). Wide range of empirical studies on students have led to better theoretical understandings of its forms, causes and impacts. The main aim of this research was to find whether the time management skills is related to academic procrastination among students. According to the findings of Ferarari (2010), better time management can only serve as a temporary “band-aid” like remedy for procrastinators. But, some quantitative studies on procrastination take it as “sore-throat” which has causes and consequences, and look for time management as its cure. By looking at the correlation of the time management dimension with procrastination, this brief study reveals that at least for high school students, who are unlikely to have turned into chronic procrastinators, time management has significant association with academic procrastination. Interventions for improving time management skills should be attempted. A longitudinal study of the effectiveness of such interventions may help in examining the relationship between academic procrastination and time management.

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