

Relationship Between Positive Psychological Capital, Procrastination and Perfectionism

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College students often face high academic and personal demands, which may influence their achievement standards and study behaviours. To meet these demands, some may set unrealistic goals with pressure to attain it, some may use procrastination to cope up with the situation. This study examines the relationship among positive psychological capital, perfectionism, and procrastination in female college students, with a focus on understanding their impact on their psychological well-being. In order to study the relationship between the variables of the study, a research survey was conducted to a sample of 100 female college students using convenience sampling method. Positive Psychological Capital Questionnaire (2007), The Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale, and Procrastination Scale were used for data collection. Ex post facto and correlational research design was used. The results reveals that procrastination has a significant negative relationship with resilience, hope and self-efficacy.

Keywords: psychological capital, procrastination, perfectionism

College students form the majority of the population in many countries. Among them, India has the largest youth population in the world. People under the age of 35, contribute to its 65% of the population (Government of India, n.d.). India as a country and Tamil Nadu as a state, is constantly working on empowering the youth population through various schemes and regulations to improve their quality of life, physically, socially, financially and academically. There is still a need for them to give attention to the mental health of the college students. For many students, a number of potential stressors are associated with their college and related activities. Some of the stressors may include academic overload, high personal standards, fear of failure, relentless pursuit of goals, financial distress, peer pressure etc.

(Vázquez et al., 2012). When people try to achieve such mastery-avoidance goals, it may result in adverse processes such as procrastination, maladaptive perfectionism, and negative activity emotions, poor achievement etc. Students exhibit high level of procrastination, which is an intentional yet illogical postponement of a course of action, despite knowing that the delay in starting or finishing a task, has negative effects.

They use this to cope with stress, specifically academic, while older adults may put off just about everything (Ferrari & Tibbett, 2020). They may also procrastinate as a way to avoid potential failure or negative evaluation, mainly when they fail to meet the demands of their own maladaptive perfectionism, where they set unrealistic high expectations of themselves. Procrastination

is also associated with several affective, cognitive and behavioural aspects such as weak time management skills, lack of impulse control, work inefficiency, lack of work discipline etc (Schouwenbrg et al., 2004). This shows how essential it is for one to have healthy coping to stress.

Recently, researches have revealed that psychological capital (PsyCap) as a significant emerging core construct connected with positive results at personal and organizational level (Luthans et al., 2010). Psychological capital is “an individual’s positive psychological state of development that is characterized by: (1) having confidence (self- efficacy) to take on and put in the necessary effort to succeed at challenging tasks; (2) making a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; (3) persevering toward goals and, when necessary, redirecting paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; and (4) when beset by problems and adversity, sustaining and bouncing back and even beyond (resilience) to attain success” (Luthans et al., 2007). According to Krasikova et al. (2015) there happens an increase in mental health issues such as substance abuse, PTSD, anxiety and depression, with reduced levels of PsyCap. Especially, the female population, when compared to male present increased rates of mental illnesses such as depression, anxiety etc. (Seedat et al., 2009). In fact, researches on psychological capital mainly focusing on women population are generally low. Based on this emerging theoretical foundation, we derive our hypotheses for the study as follows:

Hypotheses

H1: There would be a significant negative relationship between Positive psychological capital and Procrastination among female college students.

H2: There would be a significant positive relationship between Positive psychological capital and Perfectionism among female college students.

H3: There would be a significant relationship between Procrastination and Perfectionism among female college students.

Method

Sample

A sample of 100 female college students from Tamil Nadu were selected using convenience sampling method with their consent for the participation in the study.

Measures

Positive Psychological Capital Questionnaire by Luthans, Avolio, Avey, Norman (2007). It is a 24-item measure with Cronbach’s Alpha > 0.70, indicates adequate reliability (internal consistency and test-retest) for all the 4 facets. i.e., Self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience. Confirmatory factor analysis supports the validity of the tool (Luthans et al., 2007)

The Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale – FMPS by Stober (1998). It is a 35-item measure grouped into 6 subscales namely, Concern over mistakes, Personal standards, Parental expectations, Parental criticism, Doubts about Actions, and Organization. It has shown strong evidences of reliability of internal consistency with Cronbach’s Alpha value 0.87 and of construct validity (Franco et al., 2014)

Procrastination Scale by Lay (1986). It is a 20-item scale, with Cronbach’s Alpha 0.80 for test-retest reliability and discriminant validity (Hasanagic et al., 2018)

Procedure

Ex-post facto research design was employed in the study. Data were collected through survey method as the questionnaires

are self-reporting. The collected data were cleaned, and analysed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS. Pearson's correlation method was used to analyse the data and infer results.

Results

Table 1. Correlation between Positive Psychological Capital with its 4 facets, Procrastination and Perfectionism

Positive Psychological Capital	Procrastination	Perfectionism
Overall	-.204*	-.05
Self-Efficacy	-.41*	-.05
Hope	-.31*	-.05
Optimism	-.14	-.31*
Resilience	-.19*	-.12*

*p<.05, **p<.01

Table 2. Correlation between Perfectionism with its 6 subscales, Positive Psychological Capital and Procrastination

Perfectionism	Positive Psychological Capital	Procrastination
Overall	-.05	-.17
Concern over mistakes	-.23*	-.04
Doubt	-.16	.14
Parental expectations	-.11	-.16
Parental criticism	-.02	-.07
Personal standards	.42**	-.29**
Organization	.19*	-.23**

*p<.05, **p<.01

Table 3. Correlation between facets of Positive Psychological Capital and subscales of Perfectionism

	Concern over mistakes	Doubt	Parental expectations	Parental criticism	Personal standards	Organization
Self-Efficacy	-.28**	-.27**	-.03	-.24**	.47**	.35**
Hope	-.23*	-.24*	-.03	-.17	.43**	.42**
Optimism	-.40**	-.19	-.12	-.45**	.21*	.38**
Resilience	-.31**	-.30**	-.12	-.11	.32**	.13

Note. *p<.05, **p<.01

Discussion

From Table 1, we can infer that Positive psychological capital and procrastination have a significant negative relationship. Procrastination, can also be used to cope with fear of failure, whereas positive psychological capital is characterized by bouncing back from adversity and beyond that to attain success (Hicks & Wu, 2015). People with high self- efficacy, are often characterized by their strong belief and hope in his/her abilities to execute behaviours required to produce specific performance attainments (*Teaching Tip Sheet: Self-*

Efficacy, n.d.). They will be more willing to start and complete tasks. When they are hopeful, they are able to see multiple strategies forward to reach goals (Bozgun & Baytemir, 2022). This shows the negative relationship, self-efficacy and hope have with procrastination (Table 1). In a similar way, Resilience and procrastination have a significant negative relationship (Table 1). According to APA (n.d.) Resilience is characterized by the process and outcome of adapting to difficult or challenging life experiences, mainly through flexibility in one's

behaviours and emotions. Some studies have also shown positive relationships between resilience and procrastination with control as one of the key dimensions. Control, including individual's beliefs, thoughts and actions, to solve the current problem in his/her own life till the very last moment, can influence resulting in procrastination or no procrastination (Öksüz & Güven, 2014). Notably, Optimism is not significantly related to Procrastination. It is very evident that optimism, as a belief, alone does not push someone into action. An optimistic student can think, "*It'll all work out in the end*" and can still delay working. At the same time, a pessimistic student can think, "*I'll fail this exam*" and can still study for it.

Perfectionism is not significantly related to Positive psychological capital. With High Positive psychological capital, People tend to make a positive attribution (optimism) about succeeding now and in the future; They often persevere toward goals and, when necessary, redirect paths to goals (hope) in order to succeed; (Luthans et al., 2007). It has significant negative relationship with concern over mistakes (Table 2). People with high concern over mistakes, usually have low confidence, more negative mood, believe others would perceive them as less competitive, and also less willing to share their performance results (Frost et al., 1995). Personal standards have a significant positive relationship with positive psychological capital (Table 2). Characteristics of personal standards such as striving for excellence, high and positive expectations on oneself, forward-looking are qualities conceptually associated with positive psychological capital (Luthans et al., 2007)

It has been found that Perfectionism is not significantly related to procrastination.

Sometimes setting extraordinary personal standards and systematic approaches can

result in less procrastination (Hicks & Wu, 2015). Perfectionistic individuals can sometimes be highly motivated, ambitious towards the completion of the task, which may reduce their levels of procrastination (Çapan, 2010). This can also be evidence for personal standards having a significant negative relationship with procrastination (Table 2). Thus, both procrastination and perfectionism not always seem to be arising from the same causes.

According to Harris & Sutton (1983) Procrastination in organizational settings depends upon three situational variables. i.e., Characteristics of the focal task (Task difficulty, Task appeal, Task ambiguity, Deadline Pressure), The focal task and other tasks, the focal task and organizational attributes. The organizational attributes which cover the reward system, hands-off management and macro management styles which provides more autonomy to the individuals can reduce the levels of procrastination (Table 2). Though procrastination is viewed with negative connotations, there may also be some positive outcomes. For those who follow monotonous lifestyle, procrastinating can be the only way they could find variety and control in their daily tasks. It can also aid people who are into highly challenging jobs

that need creative solutions and ideas (Harris & Sutton, 1983). Thus, it can also be fruitful to the organizations in improving quality of work and in paving way towards finding solutions.

Conclusion

It has been found that Positive Psychological Capital has a significant negative relationship with Procrastination. Perfectionism is not significantly related to Positive Psychological Capital. Perfectionism is not significantly related to procrastination. College health services can employ interventions, focusing on enhancing

psychological capital in students, which can help them perform better. Further studies can be done using large sample, including a wide range of geographical area. Heterogeneity in population such as including both genders, extended age category may provide rich results. Sampling done using Random sampling methods could have better generalizability.

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