

# Procrastination Amongst Undergraduate Students In Relation To Gender And Stream

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## Abstract:

Undergraduate education is an essential part of higher education system in India. Undergraduate students' psychological aspects influence their learning. Procrastination hampers an individual's ability to successfully complete tasks on time. A procrastinating person always tries to delay the task. The study aimed to examine the condition of procrastination and the effects of demographic variables (gender and stream) amongst undergraduate students in Kolkata & surrounding districts. It was a survey based on 667 undergraduate students (including 330 male students and 337 female students) from various affiliated colleges under University of Calcutta. Their age range was between 16 to 24 years and the average age was 19 years around. The tools were Procrastination Scale for Students constructed by researcher and information schedule used for collecting the data. Descriptive statistics like Mean, SD, percentage and inferential statistics like ANOVA were done for the analysis of data. Results showed that male and female students differed with regard to procrastination. Stream wise (i.e. Science, Commerce and Humanities) no difference was seen among the students in procrastination.

**Keywords:** Undergraduate student, procrastination, gender and stream.

## Introduction:

In this era of rapid technological advancement the pressure of time affects one's life. One tries to manage the things within limited time. Therefore, one puts off things or task for later time. The term procrastination came from the Latin verb "procrastinatus", a combination of "pro" means forth, forward, in favour of and "crastinus", belonging to tomorrow (Klein, 1971). From behavioural aspect procrastination becomes obvious when someone continues to fail in doing what someone ought to do to achieve certain desirable goals (Lay, 1986). In psychology, procrastination refers to performance of lower priority tasks instead of high priority tasks and delaying basic to a later time tasks rather than accomplishing some tasks which give enjoyment (Fiore, 2006). According to Klingsieck (2013) - procrastination is 'the voluntary delay of an intended and necessary and/or (personally) important activity, despite

expecting potential negative consequences that outweigh the positive consequences of the delay'. Steel, (2007) mentioned it as a self regulatory failure. According to him procrastination means voluntarily delay a person's intended course of action in spite of knowing the result of delay. Stress, loss of personal productivity, a feeling of crisis and guilt, in addition to inability to meet commitments are common outcome of this intentional delay (Steel, 2007). The amount of procrastination varied- 95% (Ellis & Knaus, 1977), 46% (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984) and 75% (Potts, 1987) the university students seemed as themselves tended to procrastination (Steel, 2007). However, students of undergraduate education tended to procrastinate (Duru & Balkis, 2017). 80 to 95% of college students engaged in procrastination (Ellis & Knaus, 1977; O'Brien, 2002; Steel, 2007). The college students' procrastination leads to late submission of the project or tasks or assignments. In the case of study some students have shown to study

throughout the year while some students start their study few days ago of starting exam (Wazid, Shahnawaz & Gupta, 2016). Previous research works suggested that procrastination was also connected with lacuna between action and intention (Dewitt & Lens, 2000), Lack of self regulation and time management (Wolters et al. 2017; Ferrari, 2001), low confidence about self (Steel, 2007), unmanageable negative emotions in difficult situations (Dionne, 2016; Stead et al. 2010), high level of anxiety, low motivation (Ferrari, 1991; Senecal et al., 1995; Milgram & Toubiana, 1999; Melgaard, Monir, Lasardo & Fagerstrom, 2021). While procrastination was negatively associated with student's academic performance (Richardson, Abraham & Vond, 2012; Rotenstein, Davis & Tatum, 2009; Steel, 2007) and their satisfaction towards academic field and self esteem (Wazid, Shahnawaz & Gupta, 2010). Weaker wellbeing and academic failure were seen among the students (Balkis & Duru, 2017; Balkis, 2013; Kim & Seo, 2015; Steel, 2007).

The reason behind the postponement or inability to complete the task is also relevant. Lack of motivation was one of the vital reasons to play this kind of lackadaisical behaviour among students (Ackerman & Gross, 2005). It acts as impediment to students' psychological and academic growth. As a result they are not able to follow effective coping strategies. Their productivity is also hampered and mental health can be affected. Apart from this negative approach, Chu & Choi (2005) investigated on 230 undergraduate students from three Canadian universities. They found procrastination as temporary relief from the pressure due to limited time related tasks and meeting the deadline. Tice and Baumeister (1997) mentioned that procrastination in academic field makes them resistance regarding stress in early period of semester (Balaji & Indradevi, 2017).

Gender wise differences were seen in various research works. Male students tended to procrastinate more when compared to female students (Shukla et al. 2020; Vijay & Kadhiravan, 2016; Balkis & Duru, 2016; Khan, Arif, Noor & Muneer 2014; Steel & Ferrari, 2013; Yong, 2010; Ozer, Demir & Ferari, 2009; Balkis & Duru, 2009; Hampton, 2005; Milgram et al. 1994; Senecal et al. 1995. Bashir & Gupta (2019); Wazid, Shahnawaz & Gupta (2016) showed in their study females tended to procrastinate more than male students. While

some research findings showed that gender was not influenced students' procrastination (Liu, Cheng, Hu, Pan & Zhao, 2020; Svartdal, Granmo & Færevag 2018; Balaji & Indradevi, 2017; Vij, 2016; Gohil, 2014; Islak, 2011; Haycock et al., 1998; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). Gadatia & Bera (2021) worked on 217 pupil-teacher of Sambalpur University in Odisha and found that no effect of gender was seen among the students.

Stream wise a little research works was found. Gadatia & Bera (2021) revealed that pupil teacher from science stream procrastinated more than arts students. Mallick & Singh (2015) investigated on 600 higher education students. They found that students from Commerce stream had low level of procrastination than arts and science students. Male students procrastinate more than female students. Roy (2016) explained that boys procrastinated more than girls. The boys who opted science stream procrastinated more than girls who opted science stream. The boys from Humanities stream procrastinated more than girl students from humanities. Commerce boy students tended more than commerce girls students. There was seen the difference among students who opted humanities in relation to procrastination.

Prior research works suggested that procrastination is a burning issue amongst students in higher education. The present study intends to see the effect of gender and stream of undergraduate students in relation to procrastination.

### **Objectives of the study:**

The study seeks to investigate

- ★ The status of procrastination among undergraduate students.
- ★ Whether there is any significant difference in procrastination of undergraduate students due to gender.
- ★ Whether there is any significant difference in procrastination of undergraduate students due to stream of study.

### **Hypotheses of the study:**

The present study intends to test the following hypotheses

H<sub>01</sub> : There is no significant difference in procrastination of college students due to gender.

H<sub>02</sub> : There is no significant difference in procrastination of college students due to stream of study.

### **Research design:**

The study has followed survey and quantitative research.

### **Methodology of the study:**

#### **Variables of the study:**

Dependent variable: Procrastination

Independent variable: Gender (male & female) and Stream of study (science, commerce & humanities).

### **Population:**

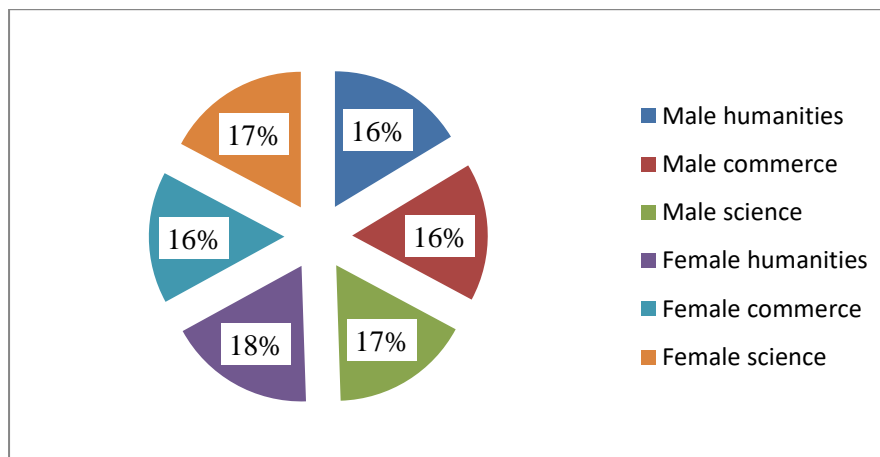
All undergraduate colleges under University of Calcutta in West Bengal were considered as population of the study.

### **Sample:**

The students in general streams, studying in undergraduate colleges in the districts of South Bengal were considered. Both male and female students in Science, Commerce and Humanities stream from urban and semi urban colleges were selected. From 800 data procured, 693 complete data were selected. After that box plot was done to eliminate outliers and then final sample size was 667.

**Table no. 1: Gender and Stream of study wise distribution of sample**

Stream of study	Male	Female	Total
Science	111	115	226
Commerce	111	105	216
Humanities	108	117	225
Total	330	337	667



**Figure no.1: Gender and Stream of study wise sample distribution**

### **Sampling technique:**

Stratified random sampling technique was used to draw sample from the population. The initial strata were district wise distribution of affiliated colleges under the University of Calcutta. 4 districts-Kolkata, South 24 Pargana, Hooghly, Howrah were taken as a strata. Randomly

31,12,5 and 5 colleges were taken from each stratum respectively to draw the sample.

### **Tools:**

1. **Personal information schedule:** To collect demographic data like age, gender, stream of study etc.
2. **Procrastination scale for students:** It was developed by the

researchers, named '**Roy & Banerjee Procrastination Scale for Students**'. This tool was based on various scales of procrastination like General Procrastination Scale-G.P. Lay (1986), Adult Inventory of Procrastination-Mc. Cown & Johnson (1989) and Decisional Procrastination Questionnaire-L. Mann (1982), Active Procrastination Scale- Choi & Moran (2009) and reviewed by researchers. It consisted of 76 items. Items were divided into positive and negative items. The scoring pattern for positive items were -5,4,3,2,1 and the scoring pattern in negative items were -1,2,3,4,5. It was in English and converted into Bengali. The dimensions of this tool were- General Procrastination, Decisional Procrastination, Procrastination before exam, Procrastination during exam, Active Procrastination. The reliability of this tool was .768, measured by Cronbach's Alpha. The inter rater agreement model (Gregory, 2005) was applied to

look into the reliability of the experts. The range of content validity was .79 to .82. The average was .81.

### **Delimitation of the study:**

The present study has been confined to-

- a. Under graduate college students of science, humanities and commerce stream in formal system.
- b. Urban and semi urban degree colleges under University of Calcutta in West Bengal.
- c. The present study was carried out only within 4 districts of West Bengal such as Kolkata, Howrah, South 24 Parganas and Hooghly.

### **Data Analysis& Findings:**

The normality test has been conducted. The normality test was required to consider statistical method for inferential statistics. The following were the results;

**Table no. 2: Tests of Normality**

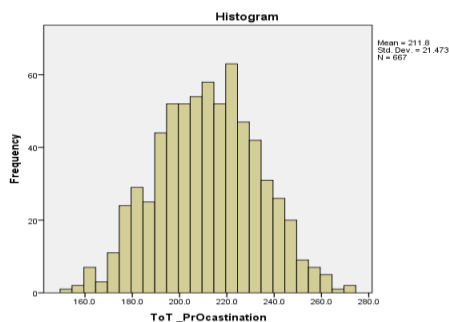
#### **Tests of Normality**

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
ToT _PrOcastination	.028	667	.200*	.998	667	.435

\*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

**Figure no 2. Histogram to See the Normality of the Scores of Procrastination**



**Table no.3: Showing the number of students above, below and between 1 Standard deviation from the mean as well as their percentage.**

Dependent variables	No. of students less than Mean-1 SD	No. of students > mean -1SD to Mean +1SD	No. of students > mean +1SD
<b>Procrastination</b>			
<b>no. of student</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>443</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>Percentage of the students</b>	<b>16.49</b>	<b>66.42</b>	<b>17.09</b>

From the Table no.3 , it can be seen that 16.49% of the students have scored less than the Mean – 1 SD implying low procrastination. Scores of 66.42% of the students ranged from Mean- 1SD

to Mean+1SD implying average procrastination. 17.09% of the students scored more than Mean+1SD implying high procrastination.

**Table no.4: Mean and SD of Procrastination Scores in relation to Gender & Stream of study**

Independent Variables	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	N (667)
Male	214.470	21.0422	1.186	330
Female	209.181	21.5990	1.171	337
Science	210.708	20.8926	1.423	226
Commerce	214.199	21.1221	1.476	216
Humanities	210.587	22.2715	1.430	225

From the above table no 4 we find that the mean score of procrastination for male students was 214.470 and SD was 21.0422. The mean score of procrastination for female students was 209.181 and SD was 21.5990. This pointed out a fact that female students were less prone to procrastinate than male students. But this difference was not significant, as can be seen from Table no. 5

The mean score of procrastination for Science stream students was 210.708 and SD was 20.8926. For commerce students the mean score was 214.199 and SD was 21.1221. For Humanities students the mean score was 210.587 and SD was 22.2715. This revealed that commerce students procrastinated more than science and humanities students.

**Table no. 5: Result of ANOVA for Procrastination in relation to Gender & Stream of study**

Sources	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Intercept	29563740.180	1	29563740.180	64688.674	.000
Gender	4529.891	1	4529.891	9.912	<b>.002</b>
Stream	1851.768	2	925.884	2.026	.133
gender * stream	355.994	2	177.997	.389	.678

### **Interpretation:**

For testing  $H_{01}$  with respect to Objective 2, from the table no 5 it can be said that the significant difference was seen found in procrastination of undergraduate college students due to gender ( $p < .05 = .002$ ).

For testing  $H_{02}$  with respect to Objective 3, from the table no 5 it can be said that no significant difference was seen in procrastination of undergraduate college students due to stream of study ( $p > .05$ ). The interaction effect of gender and stream of study on procrastination was not significant ( $p > .05$ ).

- ❖  $H_{01}$  was rejected. There was significant difference in procrastination of undergraduate college students due to gender.
- ❖  $H_{02}$  was not rejected. There was no significant difference in procrastination of undergraduate college students due to stream of study

### **Discussion & Conclusion:**

The findings of present study indicate that majority students have average level of procrastination. Procrastination is not gender free variable in this study. Male students tend more towards procrastination than female students. Similar findings have been reported by Vijay & Kadhavan, 2016; Wazid, Shahnawaz & Gupta, 2016; Balkis & Duru, 2009; Steel & Ferrari, 2013; Balkis & Duru, 2016; Ozer, Demir & Ferari, 2009; Hampton, 2005; Yong, 2010; Milgram et al. 1994; Senecal et al. (1995); Khan, Arif, Noor & Muneer (2014); Shukla et al. (2020) in which male students reported procrastinating more on academic tasks than female students. Probably their ineffective planning of time arrangement

and tasks tend to procrastinate than female students.

On the other hand different streams of study i.e. Science, Commerce and Humanities could not make any difference in undergraduate students' procrastination. It is commonly seen amongst undergraduate students irrespective of their streams.

### **Limitations of the study:**

- ★ Only quantitative data analysis was done by the researcher.

### **Scope for further research:**

Some suggestions are made by researcher based on the results of present study. These are;

- ★ Future research may be conducted with other universities and technical colleges independently.
- ★ Teacher trainee students may be considered in future research design.
- ★ It may be valuable in future research designs to obtain more demographic information regarding socio economic status, parental education, parental occupation, institutional environment, types of family i.e. joint and nuclear, birth order, locality of residence, and locality of educational institutions.
- ★ Qualitative data can be exploring this area immensely.
- ★ Various psychological variables may help to explore the area deeply.

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