

Academic Procrastination Among Secondary School Students of Lower Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh

Gumyir Gara¹, Mini Meto²

¹Student, Education

²Research Scholar, Education, Rajiv Gandhi University, Rono Hills, Doimukh, Arunachal Pradesh

Abstract

Academic procrastination has emerged as one of the most critical challenges in contemporary education, particularly among school students. The present study investigates the prevalence and distribution of academic procrastination among secondary school students in the Lower Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh. Based on percentage analysis, the findings reveal that 52% of students exhibit high levels of academic procrastination, 45% fall under moderate levels, and only 2% demonstrate low procrastination tendencies. The dominance of moderate and high levels of procrastination indicates a widespread behavioral issue affecting academic performance, mental health, and learning outcomes. The study emphasizes the urgent need for structured interventions, including time management training, motivational enhancement, counseling services, and student-centered teaching approaches. The findings contribute to understanding procrastination as a psychological and educational concern and provide practical implications for educators, policymakers, and parents.

Keywords: Academic Procrastination, Secondary School Students, Time Management, Student Motivation, Self-Regulation, Academic Performance

Introduction

Academic procrastination refers to the deliberate delay in completing academic tasks despite knowing that such delays can lead to negative consequences. It is widely recognized as a form of self-regulation failure and is prevalent among students across different educational levels. Researchers such as Steel (2007) have identified procrastination as a complex psychological behavior influenced by motivation, personality traits, and environmental factors. In the context of secondary education, procrastination becomes particularly critical as students are at a formative stage where habits, attitudes, and learning behaviors are developed.

In regions like Lower Siang District, where educational resources and support systems may vary, understanding student behavior becomes essential. Academic procrastination not only affects academic achievement but also leads to increased stress, anxiety, and reduced self-confidence. Therefore, studying its prevalence among secondary school students is important for developing targeted educational interventions.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the level of academic procrastination among secondary school students of Lower Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh.
2. To analyze the distribution of students across different levels of procrastination.
3. To examine the implications of procrastination on academic performance and student well-being.

Methodology

The present study adopts a descriptive research design. Data were collected and categorized into three levels of academic procrastination: high, moderate, and low. The classification is based on score ranges, where scores of 66 and above indicate high procrastination, 29-65 indicate moderate procrastination, and scores up to 28 indicate low procrastination. The analysis is based on percentage distribution, which provides a clear understanding of the prevalence of procrastination among the student population.

Results and Analysis

The findings of the study indicate a significant prevalence of academic procrastination among secondary school students in Lower Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh. A majority of students (52%) fall under the high procrastination category, followed by 45% in the moderate category, and only 2% in the low category. This distribution clearly shows that procrastination is not an isolated issue but a widespread behavioral pattern among students.

Interpretation of Findings

High Academic Procrastination (52%): More than half of the students exhibit high levels of procrastination. This suggests that delaying academic tasks is a common habit among students. Such behavior often leads to last-minute preparation, poor understanding of concepts, and lower academic achievement. It may also contribute to increased stress and anxiety, especially during examinations.

Moderate Academic Procrastination (45%): A large proportion of students fall under moderate procrastination. These students occasionally delay tasks, which can disrupt their study routine and reduce learning efficiency. Although not as severe as high procrastination, it still affects consistency and academic engagement.

Low Academic Procrastination (2%): Only a small percentage of students demonstrate effective time management and proactive learning behavior. This indicates that self-discipline and academic responsibility are not widely developed among the majority of students.

Discussion

The findings highlight that academic procrastination is highly prevalent among students in Lower Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh. The combined percentage of moderate and high procrastination (97%) indicates a serious concern. This aligns with global research suggesting that procrastination is a widespread issue among students.

Several factors may contribute to this behavior, including lack of motivation, fear of failure, poor time management skills, academic pressure, and inadequate guidance. Additionally, environmental factors such as teaching methods, curriculum design, and lack of parental support may also influence student behavior.

Causes of Academic Procrastination

1. Lack of Intrinsic Motivation

Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity for its own sake, driven by interest, curiosity, or enjoyment. When students lack intrinsic motivation, they do not find academic tasks meaningful or engaging. As a result, they tend to delay or avoid such tasks.

Students who are not internally motivated often feel disconnected from their studies, perceive assignments as burdens rather than opportunities to learn, show minimal effort and engagement.

This lack of interest reduces their willingness to initiate or complete tasks on time. Instead, they prioritize activities that provide immediate satisfaction, such as social media, entertainment, or peer interaction. Over time, this leads to habitual procrastination and poor academic outcomes.

2. Fear of Failure and Low Self-Confidence

Fear of failure is a major psychological factor behind procrastination. Students who doubt their abilities often avoid tasks because they are afraid of making mistakes or receiving negative feedback.

This manifests in several ways like avoidance of challenging assignments, excessive delay in starting tasks, and perfectionism, where students wait for the “perfect time” to begin.

Low self-confidence further intensifies this fear. Students may believe they are incapable of performing well, which leads to anxiety and task avoidance. Ironically, procrastination becomes a coping mechanism to protect their self-esteem. However, this avoidance ultimately results in poor performance, reinforcing their negative beliefs.

3. Poor Time Management Skills

Effective time management is essential for academic success. Students who lack this skill often struggle to prioritize tasks, set realistic goals and allocate sufficient time for study.

Such students tend to underestimate the time required to complete assignments and overestimate their ability to work under pressure. This leads to last-minute work, rushed submissions, and incomplete understanding of concepts.

Poor time management also results in missed deadlines, increased academic workload and heightened stress levels.

Without structured planning, students fall into a cycle of delay and inefficiency, making procrastination a habitual behavior.

4. Academic Anxiety and Stress

Academic anxiety arises from pressure to perform well, meet expectations, and cope with academic demands. When students feel overwhelmed, they often respond by avoiding tasks rather than confronting them.

This anxiety may stem from examination pressure, high parental or teacher expectations and fear of poor grades.

Stress reduces students’ ability to focus and think clearly, making tasks seem more difficult than they actually are. As a result, students postpone their work to temporarily escape discomfort. However, this delay increases stress further as deadlines approach, creating a vicious cycle of anxiety and procrastination.

5. Ineffective Teaching-Learning Environment

The classroom environment plays a crucial role in shaping student behavior. An ineffective teaching-learning environment can significantly contribute to procrastination.

Factors include teacher-centered methods that limit student engagement, lack of interactive and practical

learning experiences, poor communication between teachers and students, and insufficient feedback and academic support.

When teaching methods fail to capture students' interest, they become disengaged and less motivated to complete tasks. Additionally, unclear instructions or lack of guidance can make assignments seem difficult, leading students to delay them.

A supportive and engaging learning environment, on the other hand, can reduce procrastination by encouraging active participation and accountability.

Overall Insight

These factors are interrelated and often reinforce one another. For example, lack of motivation can lead to poor time management, while anxiety can stem from low self-confidence. Together, they create a cycle that promotes procrastination behavior among students.

Educational Implications

The findings of the present study carry significant implications for educators, school administrators, and policymakers, particularly in the context of secondary education in the Lower Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh. Since a large proportion of students exhibit moderate to high levels of academic procrastination, it becomes essential to design and implement comprehensive strategies that address both academic and psychological aspects of learning.

Implementation of Time Management Training Programs and Study Skills Workshops: One of the primary implications of the study is the urgent need to equip students with effective time management and study skills. Many students lack the ability to plan, organize, and prioritize their academic responsibilities, which leads to habitual procrastination. Schools should organize structured training programs focusing on scheduling, prioritization, and task management, teach students how to break down complex assignments into smaller, achievable tasks, introduce techniques such as goal setting, self-monitoring, and reflective learning. Study skills workshops can also focus on note-taking strategies, effective reading and comprehension techniques, and examination preparation methods. These initiatives can significantly improve students' academic discipline and reduce their tendency to delay tasks.

Adoption of Interactive and Student-Centered Teaching Methods: Traditional teacher-centered approaches often limit student participation and engagement, which can contribute to disinterest and procrastination. Therefore, teachers should shift towards interactive and student-centered pedagogical practices.

Such approaches include activity-based and experiential learning, group discussions and collaborative projects, problem-solving and inquiry-based learning and use of digital tools, multimedia, and real-life examples

When students are actively involved in the learning process, they develop a sense of ownership and responsibility toward their studies. This increased engagement reduces boredom and enhances motivation, thereby minimizing procrastination.

Strengthening Counseling and Psychological Support Services: Academic procrastination is closely linked to psychological factors such as anxiety, fear of failure, low self-esteem, and lack of motivation. Therefore, strengthening counseling services within schools is crucial. Schools should appoint trained counselors to provide academic and emotional support, conduct regular counseling sessions and workshops on stress management, identify students at risk of chronic procrastination and provide targeted

interventions. Counseling can help students to develop positive self-beliefs, manage academic stress effectively, and build resilience and confidence. Addressing the psychological roots of procrastination ensures long-term behavioral change rather than temporary improvement.

Active Parental Involvement in Academic Monitoring: Parents play a vital role in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors toward education. Their involvement can significantly reduce procrastination by promoting discipline and consistency. Parents should monitor their children's daily study routines and homework completion, provide a supportive and distraction-free study environment at home, encourage and motivate students without imposing excessive pressure, and maintain regular communication with teachers to track progress. A collaborative relationship between parents and schools ensures that students receive consistent guidance and support both at home and in the classroom.

Policy-Level Interventions and Institutional Support: At the policy level, educational authorities should recognize academic procrastination as a significant issue affecting student performance and well-being. Policymakers can integrate life skills education, including time management and self-regulation, into the curriculum, provide training programs for teachers on innovative teaching strategies, ensure availability of counseling services in all secondary schools, and develop awareness programs for students and parents. Such systemic interventions can create a sustainable framework for addressing procrastination across educational institutions.

Overall Implication

The study highlights that academic procrastination is not merely an individual problem but a systemic issue requiring coordinated efforts from educators, institutions, families, and policymakers. By implementing structured educational strategies and fostering a supportive learning environment, it is possible to reduce procrastination and enhance students' academic performance, mental health, and overall development.

Suggestions for Improvement

- 1. Conduct Regular Workshops on Time Management and Goal Setting:** One of the most effective ways to reduce academic procrastination is to equip students with proper time management and goal-setting skills. Many students procrastinate not because they are unwilling to work, but because they lack the ability to plan and organize their academic tasks efficiently. Schools in districts such as Lower Siang District should organize regular workshops focusing on prioritizing academic tasks based on urgency and importance, breaking large assignments into smaller, manageable tasks, setting realistic short-term and long-term goals, developing daily and weekly study schedules. Such workshops can help students build self-discipline and accountability. When students learn to manage their time effectively, they are less likely to delay tasks and more likely to complete their work systematically.
- 2. Provide Academic Counseling and Mentoring Programs:** Academic procrastination is often linked to psychological factors such as anxiety, fear of failure, and low self-confidence. Therefore, providing structured academic counseling and mentoring programs is essential. Schools should appoint trained counselors to address students' emotional and academic concerns, conduct one-on-one mentoring sessions to guide students in their studies, identify students with high levels of procrastination and provide targeted support, mentoring helps students develop confidence and clarity in their academic goals. It also provides a safe space for students to discuss their difficulties, which can significantly reduce anxiety and avoidance behavior.

3. **Encourage Active Learning and Participation in Classrooms:** Traditional lecture-based teaching methods often fail to engage students, leading to boredom and disinterest, which can contribute to procrastination. To address this, teachers should adopt active learning strategies that involve students directly in the learning process.
 1. These may include group discussions and collaborative learning, project-based and activity-based learning, question-answer sessions and interactive teaching, use of digital tools and audio-visual aids. When students are actively involved in classroom activities, they develop a deeper understanding of the subject and feel more motivated to complete their tasks. Increased engagement reduces the tendency to postpone academic work.
4. **Develop a Supportive and Motivating Learning Environment:** A positive and encouraging learning environment plays a crucial role in shaping students' attitudes toward their studies. Students are more likely to complete tasks on time when they feel supported and motivated by their teachers and peers. To create such an environment, schools should foster positive teacher-student relationships, provide constructive feedback rather than criticism, recognize and reward timely completion of tasks, promote a culture of discipline and responsibility. A motivating environment reduces fear and anxiety, making students more confident in handling academic tasks. It also encourages consistent effort and reduces avoidance behavior.
5. **Involve Parents in Academic Monitoring:** Parental involvement is a key factor in improving students' academic behavior. Parents play an important role in shaping study habits and ensuring that students remain disciplined and focused. Schools should encourage parents to monitor their children's study schedules and homework completion, provide a quiet and supportive study environment at home, motivate and guide students rather than exert excessive pressure, and maintain regular communication with teachers. When parents actively participate in their children's education, students are more likely to stay organized and avoid procrastination. A strong home-school partnership ensures continuous support for the student.

Overall Recommendation

These suggestions should not be implemented in isolation but as part of a comprehensive strategy involving schools, teachers, parents, and students. By addressing both the behavioral and psychological aspects of procrastination, it is possible to significantly reduce its prevalence and improve students' academic performance and well-being.

Conclusion

The study concludes that academic procrastination is a major issue among secondary school students in Lower Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh. With a significant majority of students exhibiting moderate to high levels of procrastination, there is an urgent need for systematic interventions. Addressing this issue can lead to improved academic performance, better mental health, and overall development of students. The present study clearly establishes that academic procrastination is a widespread and significant issue among secondary school students in the Lower Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh. The findings reveal that a vast majority of students fall within the moderate to high categories of procrastination, indicating that delaying academic tasks is not an occasional behavior but a consistent and deeply rooted pattern among learners.

This high prevalence of procrastination reflects serious concerns regarding students' academic habits, self-regulation abilities, and motivational levels. Students who frequently postpone their academic responsibilities tend to engage in last-minute preparation, which compromises the quality of learning and reduces their ability to grasp concepts effectively. Consequently, this behavior not only leads to lower academic achievement but also limits opportunities for critical thinking, creativity, and long-term knowledge retention.

Moreover, academic procrastination has significant psychological implications. Continuous delay of tasks often results in increased stress, anxiety, and feelings of guilt among students. As deadlines approach, students experience heightened pressure, which negatively affects their mental well-being. Over time, this can lead to reduced self-confidence, lack of academic interest, and even burnout. Therefore, procrastination should not be viewed merely as a time-management issue but as a complex psychological and educational problem that requires comprehensive attention.

The study also highlights the urgent need for systematic and well-structured interventions within the school system. Educational institutions must take proactive steps to address this issue by integrating life skills education, particularly focusing on time management, goal setting, and self-regulation strategies. Teachers play a crucial role in this process by adopting engaging and student-centered teaching methods that enhance motivation and participation. Additionally, regular academic counseling and mentoring programs can help students overcome fear, anxiety, and lack of confidence.

Parental involvement is equally important in reducing procrastination. A supportive home environment that encourages discipline, consistency, and positive reinforcement can significantly influence students' study habits. Furthermore, awareness programs for both students and parents can help in identifying procrastination behaviors early and addressing them effectively.

Addressing academic procrastination can yield multiple positive outcomes. It can improve students' academic performance by promoting timely completion of tasks and deeper engagement with learning materials. It can also enhance students' mental health by reducing stress and anxiety associated with delayed work. Ultimately, reducing procrastination contributes to the holistic development of students by fostering responsibility, self-discipline, and a proactive approach to learning.

In conclusion, the study underscores that academic procrastination is a critical challenge among secondary school students in Lower Siang District. Tackling this issue requires a collaborative effort involving schools, teachers, parents, and students themselves. Through targeted interventions and supportive learning environments, it is possible to minimize procrastination and promote better academic and personal outcomes for students.

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