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SLOVAK CUMHURİYETİ'NDEKİ ÖĞRETMEN
ADAYLARINDA GENEL VE AKADEMİK
ERTELEME

Silvia BARNOVÁ*

Slávka KRÁSNA**

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* Assoc. Prof. Dr., DTI University, barnova@dti.sk

** Assoc. Prof. Dr., DTI University, krasna@dti.sk

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GENERAL PROCRASTINATION AND ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION IN
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SLOVAK CUMHURİYETİ'NDEKİ ÖĞRETMEN ADAYLARINDA GENEL VE
AKADEMİK ERTELEME

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Silvia BARNOVÁ

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Slávka KRÁSNA

Abstract: In the proposed research study, the authors reflect on the current knowledge in the fields of general procrastination and academic procrastination in pre-service teachers and presents the partial results of a research carried out in the Slovak Republic. The research findings make a contribution to the current knowledge in the discussed field and provide a broad framework for new opportunities for research on general and academic procrastination in relation to a range of variables.

Key Words: Concept, concept definition, concept image, euclidean space, line.

Öz: Önerilen araştırma çalışmasında yazarlar, öğretmen adaylarında, genel erteleme ve akademik erteleme konusundaki mevcut bilgileri yansıtmakta ve Slovak Cumhuriyeti'nde yürütülen bir araştırmanın kısmi sonuçlarını sunmaktadır. Araştırma bulguları, tartışılan alandaki mevcut bilgilere katkıda bulunmakta ve bir dizi değişkenle ilgili olarak genel ve akademik erteleme üzerine araştırmalar için yeni fırsatlar için geniş bir çerçeve sağlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Erteleme, akademik erteleme, genel erteleme, üniversite öğrencileri, öğretmen adayları.

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"COPE-Dergi Editörleri İçin Davranış Kuralları ve En İyi Uygulama İlkeleri" beyanları: Bu çalışma için herhangi bir çıkar çatışması bildirilmemiştir. Bu çalışma için etik kurul onayı gerekmemektedir. Sorumlu Yazar: Silvia BARNOVÁ

Introduction

A thorough analysis in the field of academic procrastination (Barnová & Krásna, 2018, 2019; Barnová, Krásna, & Gabrhelová, 2019) showed that no research in the field of academic procrastination in pre-service teachers had been conducted in the conditions of the Slovak Republic and, therefore the authors of the study carried out a pilot research on a sample of university students – future teachers – using a valid and reliable author-constructed questionnaire. The results indicate that the phenomenon of academic procrastination in the target group of pre-service teachers can be considered a specific and persisting problem and experience shows that it can have a direct impact on their teaching practice in the future. So, dealing with the issues of academic procrastination represents a challenge in the field of pre-service teachers' pre-gradual education, but also in the process of in-service teachers' further education and lifelong learning activities. In the research study, the most up-to-date partial results of a research – the aim of which was to collect first data regarding academic procrastination in pre-service teachers in Slovakia – focusing on associations between general and academic procrastination in future teachers are presented. As there are many aspects of academic procrastination which deserve attention, it is an implication for further research.

General procrastination in everyday life

Even though procrastination is a part of almost everyone's daily life, its definition is a challenge as it is difficult to find the borderline between natural "laziness" and chronic procrastination. Ludwig (2013) in this context highlights the Latin origin of the notion of procrastination – pre-crastinus, i.e. belonging to the future. Vion (2016) and Nývtlová (2014) agree that procrastination can be considered a "disease of today", it can be perceived as a coping mechanism in the context of increasing demands on work performance, new challenges in private life, etc. – i.e. as one of the consequences of modern lifestyle.

According to Saplavská and Jerunková (2018), general procrastination is a complex, psychologically heterogeneous phenomenon including behavioural, affective, and cognitive components. In general, it can be assumed that almost everyone is a procrastinator (Chovanová, 2020). Zengevald (2020), Jarrett (2020), and Ludwig (2013) define it as a significant and chronic tendency of an individual to delay accomplishing tasks or duties – especially those associated with negative emotions. Vion (2016) considers procrastination any voluntary delay of planned activities despite the fact that it can negatively affect individuals' performance, as well as their experiencing. Similarly, Sirios and Pychyl (2016) define procrastination as a voluntary delay of a planned or assigned activity despite being aware of the risk of a decrease in the quality of performance, but also of the loss of satisfaction from accomplishing a task or achieving a goal. Gabrhelík, Vacek, and Miovský (2006) claim, that individuals procrastinate when they delay starting or finishing an activity. What is interesting, procrastinators – in contrast to lazy individuals – do not want to avoid a task completely, they intend to fulfil it (Ludwig, 2013) – they only postpone it for later without any objective reason.

Many authors point to the differences between occasional and chronic procrastinators. Chronic procrastination can have a direct or indirect negative impact on procrastinating individuals, as well as on their social environments (Zengevald, 2020; Jarrett, 2020; Ludwig, 2013;

Sirios, 2015). Chronic procrastination was identified in the research by Ferrari et al. (2005) in 20% of the adult population in the USA, UK, and Australia. 40% of their respondents experienced some kind of negative impact on their life caused by procrastination. According to Steel (2017), almost 95% of the whole population procrastinates occasionally and 15-20% can be considered chronic procrastinators. Also Vion's (2016) findings show that in 20% of the population, procrastination is a habit and a research by Dias-Morales and Ferrari (2015) showed that 20-25% of the population is formed by procrastinators.

Based on available research, it can be assumed that – for many individuals – procrastination is some kind of an “adrenaline sport”, lifestyle, life philosophy, or a challenge, but there are also many other reasons for procrastination – e.g. anxiety, dissatisfaction with the quality of the output, waiting for a stimulus in a helpless situation, etc. There are certain cases, when procrastination can be beneficial, e.g. it can help prevent hasty action, give time for thinking over a strategy, and new circumstances may arise as well.

Academic procrastination in pre-service teachers

Academic procrastination is the result of procrastinating tendencies and occurs in cases when students needlessly delay tasks related to their academic duties, such as working on projects or studying for exams (McCloskey & Scielzo, 2015). Academic procrastination is usually associated with poorer academic achievement, decreased levels of academic well-being, or increased stress. Moslemi, Ghomi, and Mohammadi (2020) define academic procrastination as any irrational and voluntary delay of duties in the academic environment as a common phenomenon in university students associated with many variables, including personality and behaviour. Naturil-Alfonso et al. (2019) point out the link between procrastination and bad time management in university students and claim that academic procrastination is related to delaying academic work till the last possible moment. According to Saplavska and Jerkunkova (2018), academic procrastination is manifested in educational activities and it leads to poorer academic achievement. Gabrhelík, Vacek, and Miovský (2006) found out that the prevalence of academic procrastination in the group of university students ranges from 20% to 70%, while one half of students procrastinates repeatedly. The results by Steel and Klingsieck (2016) show that 95% of university students have at least some experience with certain forms of academic procrastination, and they most frequently delay writing assignments. They also found out that university students' academic duties are often associated with negative emotions and inefficient time management, and among the most common reasons for procrastination are fear of failure and lack of self-confidence. As stated by Saplavska and Jerkunkova (2018), available data show that 46% - 95% of secondary school and university students are among those procrastinators, which need professional help.

Öksüz and Güven (2014) point out that academic procrastination can have a positive effect in short term as it can function as a protective factor providing time for creative thinking, acquiring new knowledge, and – in this sense – it can increase the quality of outputs.

In the context of the discussed topic, research findings regarding the role of university students' gender and the level of university studies in relation to their tendency to procrastinate presented in available resources are interesting as well.

From the aspect of university students' – future teachers' – gender, several studies (e.g. Pala, Akyıldız, & Bağcı, 2011; Akdemir, 2019; Saracaloglu et al., 2018; Certel, Bahadır, & Özgönül, 2016; Efe & Efe, 2018) showed that male teacher trainees procrastinate significantly more than their female colleagues, which explains their poorer academic achievement. On the other hand, Ganda and Bouruchovitch (2015) found a higher degree of procrastination in female teacher trainees compared to male students. Also the results by Özer and Yetkin (2018), Dietrich and Latzko (2020), and Karatas and Bademcioğlu (2015) are interesting – in their research, no associations between the gender of respondents and their procrastinating tendencies in the academic environment were found.

When examining the relations between levels of academic procrastination and the level of university studies, Pala, Akyıldız, and Bağcı (2011) did not find any significant differences. Akdemir (2019) claims that there are statistically significant differences between the group of teacher trainees in the first to years of their studies and the group of teacher trainees in the third and the fourth year of studies in the field of academic procrastination. Their results show that students in the third and fourth years of their studies procrastinate more than their younger colleagues. Similar results were obtained by other authors as well, e.g. Saracaloglu et al. (2018), Certel, Bahadır, and Özgönül (2016), and Ganda and Bouruchovitch (2015).

Research on general and academic procrastination in pre-service teachers

In Slovakia, no research on academic procrastination in teacher trainees had been conducted prior to the realization of the presented research. Therefore, using an author-constructed questionnaire – University Students' Academic Procrastination (Krásna, 2017, as cited in Krásna, 2020), an investigation into this field of teacher trainees' academic life was carried out with the aim to collect first data about future teachers' procrastinating tendencies, but one part of the research was focused on general procrastination in university students enrolled in teacher training programmes. This part of research was oriented on the respondents' private spheres of life and the intention of the members of the research team was to examine the relations between general and academic procrastination.

In the questionnaire, the respondents were instructed to reflect on their typical behaviour, first, in their private and subsequently, in their academic lives. The questionnaire consists of 5-point Likert scale items (ranging from 5 – never to 1 – always). The Cronbach's alpha for the dimension of general procrastination is $\alpha = 0.862$. Four dimensions of academic procrastination are investigated into (Lessons, Preparation for Exams, Time management, and Administrative tasks (Cronbach's alpha $\alpha = 0.947$). Based on the calculated reliability for both parts of the questionnaire, the author-constructed research tool has high internal consistence, is reliable, the obtained results are valuable and well-interpretable.

One of the research goals was to find out about the associations between general procrastination and academic procrastination in teacher trainees. Convenience sampling was used as the respondents participated in the research voluntarily and their selection was intentional (teacher trainees). Among the total of 748 respondents, 439 (58.69%) were female teacher trainees and 309 (41.31%) respondents were males. 353 (47.2%) students studied in bachelor programmes and 395 (52.8%) in master study programmes. The research sample is evenly distrib-

uted in both variables and the results can be considered valuable, reliable and valid for the research sample with a limited validity for the whole population of teacher trainees in Slovakia.

In the boxplot (Figure 1), the levels of general procrastination and academic procrastination in relation to the arithmetic mean are displayed and in Figure 2, correlations between general procrastination and academic procrastination are presented. Table 1 contains correlations between general procrastination and academic procrastination (Pearson's correlation coefficient), including the examined dimensions.

Figure 1. Levels of general procrastination and academic procrastination in relation to the arithmetic mean.

(Source: Authors)

Figure 2. Correlations between general procrastination and academic procrastination.

(Source: Authors)

By means of correlation analysis, the relation between general procrastination and academic

procrastination was examined. Its results are in Table 1.

Table 1

Correlation between general procrastination and academic procrastination

Variables	<u>Correlation</u>	<u>Pearson</u>	<u>Spearman</u>	<u>Wilcox-pcor</u>
General procrastination	<i>Academic procrastination</i>			
	Correlation coefficients	0.689	0.529	0.689
	Statistical significance p	0.000	0.000	.000
	N	748	748	748

Source: Authors

The values of correlation coefficients are high enough (>0.5). P-values are lower than the standard significance level ($\alpha=0.05$). The relation is statistically significant (Figure 2). For a more detailed linearity analysis, the below scatter plot was used (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Linearity analysis – scatter plot.

Source: Authors

Based on the above, it can be assumed that there is a statistically significant mutual linear relation between general procrastination and academic procrastination in teacher trainees and there is a strong correlation between them (Pearson's correlation coefficient $p=0.689$).

The findings indicate that the phenomenon of academic procrastination cannot be separated

from general procrastination, which means that individuals who tend to procrastinate in their private lives will most likely procrastinate in the academic environment, too, and vice versa. The determination coefficient (Figure 2) explains 47.5% of variance ($R^2=47.5\%$). The presented findings correspond with the research results by Saracaloglu et al. (2018) – there are slightly positive correlations between academic procrastination and the general tendency to procrastinate. It means that the level of general procrastination influences the individual's level of academic procrastination, and vice versa.

Conclusion

The results show that there is a relation between general and academic procrastination, i.e. if individuals tends to procrastinate in their private lives, they will probably procrastinate in the academic environment as well. We agree that the probability of the occurrence of general procrastination increases with the development of the society as such, and so, it will probably come to its further increase with the accessibility of the virtual environment for larger masses and with the new opportunities it provides.

Combatting procrastination must start with self-reflection, but in this process, objective feedback has an important role to play – individuals are often unaware of the pathology of their procrastinating tendencies. Experience shows that many students do not consider neither general nor academic procrastination an issue, and so, we believe that our respondents provided true responses as the administered questionnaire could have been the first impulse to reflect on this issue.

We are aware of the limits of our research which stem from the fact that the participants provided subjective responses and there is a risk that they opted for the socially acceptable ones (for more details, see Jablonský, 2018). Despite the limits of research, the obtained findings represent a contribution to the current knowledge in the field of general and academic procrastination in teacher trainees in Slovakia and have several implications for further research, e.g. there is no available data supporting the idea that with starting university studies, individuals procrastinate more than before; about factors in students' personal lives, which have the potential either to increase or decrease the frequency of procrastination in the academic environment; or about the factors in teacher trainees' academic lives, which increase or decrease their level of general procrastination. Another implication for research is to examine the perceived difficulty of university studies in teacher trainees and explore the relations between it and academic procrastination, academic motivation, academic achievement, academic satisfaction, etc.

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