

Sociological Analysis of Academic Procrastination among Graduate Students from the Perspective of Faculty Members: (A Case Study of Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz)

Tayebeh. Nikvarz ¹, Masoumeh. Bagheri ^{2*}, Ali. Boudaghi ³, Marziyeh. Shahryari ⁴

¹. Instructor, Department of Social Sciences, Faculty of Law and Social Sciences, Payame Noor University, Tehran, Iran

² Associate Professor Department of Economy and Social Sciences Faculty, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Ahvaz, Iran

³ Assistant Professor Department of Economy and Social Sciences Faculty, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Ahvaz, Iran

⁴ Assistant Professor Department of Sociology and Social Sciences Faculty, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Ahvaz, Iran

* Corresponding author email address: m.bagheri@scu.ac.ir

Article Info

Article type:

Original Research

How to cite this article:

Nikvarz, T., Bagheri, M., Boudaghi, A., & Shahryari, M. (2025). Sociological Analysis of Academic Procrastination among Graduate Students from the Perspective of Faculty Members: (A Case Study of Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz). *Quarterly Journal of Research and Planning in Higher Education*, 31(3), 35-54.



© 2025 the authors. Published by Institute for Research and Planning in Higher Education (IRPHE), Tehran, Iran. This is an open access article under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) License.

ABSTRACT

The factors and processes influencing academic procrastination can be analyzed across a wide range of disciplines, including sociology. While this phenomenon has been extensively studied in psychology, the sociological aspects of academic procrastination, despite their relevance, have been largely overlooked. This study adopts a grounded theory approach to provide a sociological analysis of academic procrastination among graduate students. The participants included 15 faculty members from Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, selected through purposive sampling until theoretical saturation was achieved. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and analyzed using three stages of coding: open, axial, and selective. Findings revealed that factors such as poor academic literacy, inefficient educational structures, teaching methods, academic alienation, misaligned socialization processes, unpredictability of conditions, and individual psychological traits act as causal conditions for academic procrastination. Intervening conditions included academic deviance, stereotypical beliefs, and familial support, while contextual conditions encompassed online education, student-teacher ratios, environmental factors, and students' socioeconomic status. In response to students' procrastination, educational system employed facilitative, strict, and follow-up strategies. The consequences of academic procrastination included improved academic performance for some, normalization and perpetuation of procrastination, and the formation of an "academic proletariat."

Keywords: Academic Procrastination, Grounded Theory, Graduate Students, Sociology of Higher Education



Introduction

Higher education, as the most crucial educational phase, bears significant responsibilities for the growth and progress of societies. With the emergence of fourth-generation universities and the emphasis on social responsibilities, the quality of education and research in universities has come under scrutiny. One of the significant challenges facing higher education is the phenomenon of *academic procrastination*, which refers to the delay in initiating and completing academic tasks and can impact students' academic performance and success. While previous research has primarily focused on the psychological and individual factors of this phenomenon, this study, with a sociological approach and emphasizing grounded theory, investigates the social and structural dimensions of procrastination among graduate students at Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz. The aim of this study is to identify the contextual, structural, and cultural factors influencing procrastination, as well as the strategies of actors (faculty members) in dealing with this phenomenon.

Methodology

This qualitative study employed the grounded theory method with a Strauss and Corbin approach. Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews with 15 faculty members at Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz and analyzed using open, axial, and selective coding techniques. Participants were selected purposefully and until theoretical saturation was achieved. To ensure the validity of the data, multiple researchers' concurrent evaluation was used, and results and analyses were also shared with some of the participants. Furthermore, a 0.85 agreement rate was obtained between the two coders, indicating the acceptable reliability of the findings.

Findings

The analysis of data revealed that academic procrastination is influenced by several factors, which are categorized into four general themes: causal conditions, the context, intervening conditions, and actors' strategies. Causal conditions include weaknesses in academic literacy, an inefficient educational structure, faculty teaching style, academic alienation, incongruent educational socialization, unpredictable circumstances, and individual and psychological characteristics. The context refers to the settings and circumstances in which procrastination occurs, such as the virtualization of education, student-to-faculty ratio, climatic and environmental conditions, and students' socio-economic backgrounds. Intervening conditions encompass academic deviance (the presence of workaround patterns and shortcuts), stereotypical beliefs, and family support. Additionally, three types of strategies (*laissez-faire*, strict, and persistent) used by the educational system to address student procrastination were identified. These strategies can have varying consequences at different levels. Improved academic performance is a positive outcome of adopting a persistent approach, while the normalization and reproduction of procrastination in society and the formation of an academic proletariat are negative consequences of inappropriate strategies.

Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that academic procrastination is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon rooted in structural, cultural, and social factors, and it cannot be reduced solely to individual and psychological traits. The findings underscore the importance of understanding procrastination within the university and society and highlight the need to consider contextual, structural, and cultural factors in designing effective interventions. Furthermore, the academic system needs to adopt more comprehensive and realistic approaches to address this phenomenon, so that approaches based on encouragement and motivation, as well as the continuous monitoring of students' activities, replace negative and strict approaches. Finally, this research clearly demonstrated that procrastination is a social matter that is a function of social structure, educational system, and individual characteristics, and that university actors also play a determining role in this phenomenon.

References

- Abbaszadeh, M., Banifateme, H., Alizadeh-Aghdam, M. B., & Boudaghi, A. (2016). The underlying commitment factors influencing research ethics among graduate students in Tabriz University: A Grounded Theory approach. *Quarterly Journal of Research and Planning in Higher Education*, 22(1), 75-98. https://journal.irphe.ac.ir/article_702891_en.html
- Ahmadian Chashemi, M., Niazazari, K., & Salehi, M. (2021). Designing the model of Fourth-generation University to Improve Education and Research Quality in Higher Education. *Educational Development of Judishapur*, 11(4), 901-911. https://edj.ajums.ac.ir/article_127529.html?lang=en
- Azizzadeh Forouzi, M., Shahmohammadipour, P., Heidarzadeh, A., Dehghan, L., & Taheri, Z. (2016). The Relationship between the Quality of Learning Experience and Academic Burnout and Achievement among Students of Kerman University of Medical Sciences. *Iranian Journal of Medical Education*, 16, 84-93. https://ijme.mui.ac.ir/browse.php?a_code=A-10-2654-2&slc_lang=en&sid=1
- Balkis, M., & Duru, E. (2017). Gender Difference in the Relationship between Academic Procrastination, Satisfaction with Academic Life and Academic Performance. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 15(1), 105-125. <https://doi.org/10.14204/ejrep.41.16042>
- Boudaghi, A., Abbaszadeh, M., Banifateme, H., & Alizadeh-Aghdam, M. B. (2020). Sociological Study of the Determinants of Normalization of Research Misbehavior. *Quarterly Journal of Research and Planning in Higher Education*, 26(3), 97-124. https://journal.irphe.ac.ir/article_703008_en.html?lang=fa
- Bourdieu, P. (2014). *Theory of Action: Practical Reasons and Rational Choice*. Naqsh o Negar.
- Chatrakamollathas, S., Moha, K. P., & Choochom, O. (2022). Academic procrastination behavior among college undergraduates: Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). *Kasetsart Journal of Social Sciences*, 43(1), 223-230. <https://doi.org/10.34044/j.kjss.2022.43.1.30>
- Collins, K. M., Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Jiao, Q. G. (2008). Reading ability as a predictor of academic procrastination among African American graduate students. *Reading Psychology*, 29(6), 493-507. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0270710802168568>
- Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Pearson. <https://www.academia.edu/download/31111669/MCTE690-syllabus-summer2003.pdf>
- Fakouhi, N. (2005). *Pierre Bourdieu's views on the question of knowledge and intellectualism* (Vol. 2). https://social.um.ac.ir/article_38913_en.html?lang=en
- Farasatkah, M. (2016). Students Lived Experience and Perception of the University: A Case Study of Iranian University. *Ihej*, 7(2), 25-70.
- Fazeli, N. (2018). Creative Writing: The Missing link of Humanities; An Analysis of Necessity of Paying Attention to the Role of Writing in Iranian Humanities and Social Sciences. *Society Culture Media*, 7(26), 46-58. https://www.jscm.ir/&url=http://scm.iaocsc.ir/article_77451.html?lang=en
- Haririan Tavakoli, E., Farasatkah, M., Shirzad Kebria, B., & Hamidifar, F. (2022). The Transition from State-Centered Governance to Good Governance in Higher Education: A Grounded Theory Study. *Quarterly Journal of Research and Planning in Higher Education*, 28(4), 43-68. <https://doi.org/10.22034/irphe.2022.705220>
- He, S. (2017). A Multivariate Investigation into Academic Procrastination of University Students. *Open Journal of Social Sciences*, 5, 12-24. <https://doi.org/10.4236/jss.2017.510002>
- Hosseini Largani, M. (2017). Analysis of student's academic burnout in Iran's public higher education system: identification of determinants and strategies. *Quarterly Journal of Research and Planning in Higher Education*, 23(3), 43-69. https://journal.irphe.ac.ir/article_702930.html?lang=en
- Hussain, I., & Sarwat, S. (2010). Analysis of procrastination among university students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 5, 1897-1904. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2010.07.385>
- Jaeggi, R. (2016). *Alienation: New Orientations in Critical Theory*. Ahmad Tadein.
- Kandemir, M. (2014). Reasons of Academic Procrastination: Self-Regulation, Academic Self-Efficacy, Life Satisfaction and Demographics Variables. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 152, 188-193. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.09.179>
- Khajedadmir, A., Nastiezaie, N., & Pourgaz, A. (2016). The relationship between classroom management and graduate students' academic procrastination. *Journal of Medical Education Development*, 9(23), 10-19.
- Khoshkalam, N. (2019). *Qualitative Study of Telegram Impact on Couples' Emotional Relationships* MSc Thesis Sociology]. University of Ayatollah Aalozma Boroujerdi.
- Kohen, B. (2008). *Introduction to sociology*. SAMT.
- Koppenborg, M., & Klingsieck, K. B. (2022). Social factors of procrastination: group work can reduce procrastination among students. *Social Psychology of Education*, 25(1), 249-274. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11218-021-09682-3>
- Liu, G., Cheng, G., Hu, J., Pan, Y., & Zhao, S. (2020). Academic self-efficacy and postgraduate procrastination: A moderated mediation model. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 1752. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01752>
- Melgaard, J., Monir, R., Lasrado, L. A., & Fagerstrøm, A. (2022). Academic procrastination and online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Procedia Computer Science*, 196, 117-124. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.procs.2021.11.080>
- Mohammad Pour, A. (2021). *Anti-Method: Philosophical Contexts and Practical Procedures in Qualitative Methodology*. Logos.
- Nejati Hosseini, S. M. (2017). *University Citizenship in Iran*. Institute for Cultural and Social Studies.
- Noughani Dokht-Bahmani, M., Mohammadi, F., & Kermani, M. (2019). *Theory construction in Qualitative Studies: An Applied Approach to Grounded Theory*. Ferdowsi University of Mashhad Press.
- Özer, B. U., & Saçkes, M. (2011). Effects of academic procrastination on college students' life satisfaction. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 12, 512-519. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.02.063>
- Pappenheim, F. (2018). *The alienation of modern man*. Majid Madadi.
- Parfenova, A., & Romashova, S. (2020). The role of procrastination in students' consumer behavior: Budget planning and impulse buying. *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy*, 40(1/2), 133-144. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-10-2019-0199>
- Pirozan, A. (2021). University Literacy and the Iranian University.
- Raïisi, F., & Riyassi, M. (2022). Predicting the rate of procrastination of university students based on internet addiction and metaphorical perception of time during the Corona virus outbreak. *Shenakht Journal of Psychology and Psychiatry*, 9(1), 73-83. <https://doi.org/10.32598/shenakht.9.1.73>



- Roshanzadeh, M., Tajabadi, A., Mazhari Dehkordi, B., & Mohammadi, S. (2022). Investigating the Role of Internet Addiction in Predicting Academic Procrastination in Nursing Students. *JMIS*, 8(1), 26-35. http://jmis.hums.ac.ir/browse.php?a_id=344&sid=1&slc_lang=en&html=1
- Serrano, D. M., Williams, P. S., Ezzeddine, L., & Sapon, B. (2022). Association between Problematic Social Media Use and Academic Procrastination: The Mediating Role of Mindfulness. *Learning: Research and Practice*, 8(2), 84-95. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23735082.2022.2100920>
- Sharp, J. G., Hemmings, B., Kay, R., Murphy, B., & Elliott, S. (2017). Academic boredom among students in higher education: A mixed-methods exploration of characteristics, contributors and consequences. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 41(5), 657-677. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0309877X.2016.1159292>
- Solomon, L. J., & Rothblum, E. D. (1984). Academic procrastination: Frequency and cognitive-behavioral correlates. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 31(4), 503-509. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.31.4.503>
- Steel, P. (2007). The nature of procrastination: a meta-analytic and theoretical review of quintessential self-regulatory failure. *Psychological Bulletin*, 133(1), 65-94. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.133.1.65>
- Steel, P., & Klingsieck, K. B. (2016). Academic procrastination: Psychological antecedents revisited. *Australian Psychologist*, 51(1), 36-46. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ap.12173>
- Stones, R. (2000). *Great Thinkers in Sociology*. Mehrdad Mirdamadi.
- Tamadoni, M., Hatami, M., & Hashemi Razini, H. (2010). General self efficacy, academic procrastination and academic achievement in University students. *Educational Psychology*, 6(17), 66-88. <https://www.sid.ir/paper/112189/en>
- Tavassoli, G. A. (2004). *An analysis of Pierre Bourdieu's thought about the conflictual social space and the role of sociology* (Vol. 3). <https://www.sid.ir/paper/2353/en>
- Zokaei, M. S., & Esmaili, M. J. (2015). *Young People and Academic Alienation*. Institute for Cultural and Social Studies.