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Examining the Relationship Between Academic Procrastination and Perceived Stress among University Students: A Comparative Analysis of Hostellers and Non-Hostellers

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Abstract: This study investigates the relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress among university students, with a specific focus on comparing hostellers and non-hostellers. Drawing on a sample of 235 participants, the research utilized the Academic Procrastination Scale (APS) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) to assess procrastination tendencies and stress levels, respectively. Pearson correlation analysis revealed a significant positive relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress ($r = .331$, $p < .01$), indicating that higher procrastination is associated with greater perceived stress. However, independent samples t-tests found no significant differences between hostellers and non-hostellers in either perceived stress ($p = .413$) or academic procrastination ($p = .085$). These findings suggest that while procrastination and stress are closely linked, living arrangements do not significantly influence these variables. The study emphasizes the need for interventions focusing on emotional regulation and time management to mitigate procrastination and stress among students.

Keywords: *Academic Procrastination, Perceived Stress, University Students, Hostellers, Non-Hostellers, Time Management*

1. Introduction

The transition from school to university often brings about a significant shift in autonomy, academic expectations, and social adaptation. This period is marked by the need for students to juggle various roles and responsibilities, leading to substantial psychological and emotional challenges. Two major difficulties faced by university students during this transition are academic procrastination and stress, both of which can severely impact academic performance and overall well-being. The current study explores these challenges, specifically investigating the relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress, with a focus on how these issues differ between hostelers and non-hostelers.

Academic procrastination is characterized by the voluntary delay of academic tasks, despite awareness of the negative consequences of such delays (Steel, 2007). This behavior is not merely a result of poor time management but is often driven by psychological factors such as fear of failure, perfectionism, low self-esteem, and emotional avoidance (Senécal, Koestner, & Vallerand, 1995). The university environment, particularly for first-year students, presents a significant shift in workload and the necessity to self-regulate, making students particularly susceptible to procrastination. This study aims to explore how academic procrastination manifests in university students and its relationship with stress, examining the differential experiences between hostelers and non-hostelers.

Stress, as described by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), arises when an individual perceives that the demands placed upon them exceed their available coping resources. However, perceived stress is a more subjective concept—it focuses on how stress is experienced and interpreted, rather than the objective existence of a stressor. Two individuals may face the same academic challenge, but one may find it manageable, while the other may perceive it as overwhelming. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is commonly used to measure this perception, emphasizing personal appraisal over objective measurement (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein, 1983).

Sources of stress among students can generally be classified into four categories: academic (e.g., exams, workload), interpersonal (e.g., conflict with peers or faculty), environmental (e.g., noise, living conditions), and intrapersonal (e.g., self-doubt, fear of failure) (Chehrzad et al., 2017). When left unaddressed, these stressors can lead to emotional exhaustion, reduced academic motivation, and in many cases, an increased tendency to procrastinate as a temporary escape from stress-inducing tasks.

1.1 *Aim*

To examine the relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress among university students, with a focus on comparing these variables between hostellers and non-hostellers.

1.2 *Objectives*

- To examine the relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress among university students.
- To compare the levels of perceived stress between hostellers and non-hostellers.
- To compare the levels of academic procrastination between hostellers and non-hostellers.

1.3 *Hypotheses*

H1: There is a significant relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress among university students.

H2: There will be a significant difference in perceived stress between hostellers and non-hostellers.

H3: There will be a significant difference in academic procrastination between hostellers and non-hostellers.

2. Review Of Literature

Cao et al. (2025) carried out a cross-sectional study with 1,308 vocational nursing students in China to explore the link between perceived stress and academic procrastination. The research revealed that 82% of the participants admitted to procrastinating on academic tasks. The study identified a strong positive relationship between perceived stress, negative emotional states, and procrastination, while positive emotions were found to have a negative association with procrastination behavior. These results highlight the importance of emotional regulation in addressing procrastination among nursing students. Based on their findings, the researchers suggest that educators should adopt approaches that enhance positive emotional experiences and reduce negative emotions to help minimize academic procrastination.

Zhang et al. (2024) investigated how positive and negative emotions mediate the connection between perceived stress and academic procrastination among vocational nursing students. The results showed that negative emotions—like frustration and fear of failure—intensified the influence of stress on procrastination behavior. In contrast, positive emotions

served to lessen procrastination tendencies. These outcomes indicate that the ability to regulate emotions plays a key role in addressing academic procrastination.

Saxena and Chandra (2024) carried out a study in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh, India, to explore the extent and contributing factors of academic procrastination among college students. The research focused on identifying procrastination levels and how they differed based on demographic factors such as gender, type of academic program, residential background, and family setup. The survey involved 100 undergraduate and postgraduate students from both public and private colleges affiliated with MJP Rohilkhand University. Results indicated that most participants displayed moderate (40%) or below-average (25%) levels of procrastination, while fewer reported low (10%) or very low (10%) levels. The analysis showed that male students tended to procrastinate more than their female counterparts, with a statistically significant gender gap. The study emphasized that individual traits like motivation and self-discipline had a stronger influence on procrastination than demographic variables. To reduce procrastination, the researchers suggested practical approaches such as establishing clear goals, using planners, limiting distractions, incorporating breaks, and offering rewards for completing tasks.

3. Methodology

3.1 Variables

Independent Variables

The independent variable in this study is living arrangement, categorized as hostellers and non-hostellers, indicating whether students reside in hostels or live elsewhere.

Dependent Variables

- Perceived Stress – This reflects the extent to which students perceive their academic and personal lives as stressful. It is typically measured using standardized instruments such as the **Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)**.
- Academic Procrastination – This refers to the intentional delay in completing academic tasks, including studying, attending classes, or submitting assignments. It is commonly assessed using standardized tools such as the **Academic Procrastination Scale**.

3.2 Data Collection Instruments

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS): A standardized instrument used to measure the perception of stress.

Academic Procrastination Scale (APS): A validated tool used to assess the tendency to delay academic tasks.

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection will involve the use of two standardized tools: the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and the Academic Procrastination Scale (APS). The study will target university students as participants, and the surveys will be distributed either face-to-face or via a secure online portal. Ethical considerations such as obtaining informed consent and maintaining participant confidentiality will be carefully upheld during the entire process.

Academic Procrastination Scale (APS)

The Academic Procrastination Scale (APS) was developed by McCloskey and Scielzo (2007) to assess the frequency with which students delay academic tasks such as assignments, studying, and attending classes. The scale consists of 20 items rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from "not at all" to "very often." Higher scores reflect greater levels of academic procrastination.

Reliability and Validity:

The APS has shown strong internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .85 to .92. Test-retest reliability ranges between .76 and .82.

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was developed by Cohen (1983) to measure the degree to which individuals perceive their lives as unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded. Available in 14-, 10-, and 4-item versions, it uses a 5-point Likert scale from "never" to "very often." It evaluates perceived stress over the past month. The PSS includes both positively and negatively worded items. Higher scores indicate higher perceived stress.

Reliability and Validity:

The PSS demonstrates good internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .77 to .91 for the PSS-10 version. Test-retest reliability has been reported between .68 and .86. The scale correlates strongly with measures of psychological distress such as the DASS-21 and GAD-7, supporting its convergent validity.

3.4 Data Analysis

For this study, SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). software will be used for statistical analysis. Descriptive statistics will be conducted to summarize the data. To examine the relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress, Pearson's product-moment correlation analysis was employed. Furthermore, independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to compare levels of perceived stress and academic

procrastination between hostelers and non-hostelers. These analyses were used to test the study's hypotheses and derive conclusions based on the data collected.

4. Results

The aim of the present study was to explore the relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress among university students and to examine whether these variables differ based on students' living arrangements (hostellers and non-hostellers). The hypotheses were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and independent samples t-tests, conducted on data collected from 235 university students.

The first hypothesis proposed that there would be a significant relationship between academic procrastination and perceived stress. This was examined using Pearson's correlation analysis between the total scores of the Academic Procrastination Scale for Students (APSS) and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS). The results revealed a significant positive correlation between the two variables. This indicates that as the level of academic procrastination increased, the level of perceived stress also increased. In other words, students who delayed academic tasks and exhibited procrastination behaviors were more likely to report higher stress levels in their daily academic life. These findings support the main hypothesis and highlight that academic procrastination may act as a contributing factor to perceived stress among university students.

Table 1: *Pearson Correlation between Academic Procrastination and Perceived Stress*

	APSSScore	PSSScore
APSSScore	1	.331**
PSSScore	.331**	1

Note. $N = 235$. $p < .01$ (2-tailed).

There is a statistically significant positive correlation between academic procrastination and perceived stress, supporting Hypothesis 1.

The second hypothesis proposed that there would be a significant difference in perceived stress levels between hostellers and non-hostellers. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the perceived stress scores of hostellers and non-hostellers. The results showed that hostelers reported slightly higher levels of perceived stress ($M = 22.21$, $SD = 6.63$) compared to non-hostellers ($M = 21.49$, $SD = 6.65$), but the difference was not statistically significant. These findings suggest that perceived stress is not significantly

influenced by students' living arrangements. Hence, the second hypothesis was not supported by the data.

Table 2: *Group Differences in Perceived Stress*

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t (df=233), p
Hostelers	95	22.21	6.633	.820, .413
Non-Hostelers	140	21.49	6.654	

The third hypothesis suggested that there would be a significant difference in academic procrastination levels between hostellers and non-hostellers. To test this, an independent sample t-test was carried out to compare the academic procrastination scores of the two groups. Results indicated that hostelers had higher procrastination scores ($M = 78.61$, $SD = 20.05$) than non-hostellers ($M = 74.14$, $SD = 19.04$). However, this difference did not reach statistical significant. Although the mean scores suggested a trend toward higher procrastination among hostellers, the difference was not large enough to confirm a significant effect. Therefore, the third hypothesis was also not supported.

Table 3: *Group Differences in Academic Procrastination*

Group	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t (df=233), p
Hostelers	95	78.61	20.047	1.728, .085
Non-Hostelers	140	74.14	19.044	

Together, these findings provide empirical evidence for the role of academic procrastination in contributing to perceived stress among university students, while suggesting that living arrangements do not significantly influence perceived stress or procrastination behavior. The results highlight the importance of addressing academic procrastination as part of stress management and student well-being programs in higher education.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the connection between academic procrastination and perceived stress among university students, as well as to assess the potential impact of living arrangements whether a student lives in a hostel or at home on these experiences. The findings reveal a clear link between procrastination and stress, with

students who tend to delay academic tasks also reporting higher levels of stress. This relationship highlights that procrastination is not just a time management issue but is often rooted in deeper emotional challenges, such as anxiety, low motivation, or uncertainty regarding task completion.

Also, the study found no significant difference in stress or procrastination levels between hostellers and non-hostellers. This suggests that the type of living arrangement may not be as impactful as previously assumed. While living in hostel may come with challenges such as homesickness and the adjustment to communal living, it also offers advantages such as peer support and a sense of independence. On the other hand, students living at home may face unique pressures, such as balancing academic duties with family responsibilities. It appears that how students emotionally cope with their living situation is more influential than the living arrangement itself. Although not explored in depth in this study, another potential factor for future research is family structure whether students come from joint, nuclear or single parent families. This aspect could provide valuable insight as family dynamics often influence how students manage stress, decision making and time management. Further investigation in this area could offer a richer understanding on how different family environments shape students behaviors and coping mechanisms.

Hence, the study contributes to the growing body of research that emphasizes the strong correlation between procrastination and stress. It also highlights the need for universities to provide more than just academic support. Mental health services, emotional coping strategies and practical tools for managing stress and procrastination should be prioritized. By addressing the emotional roots of these behaviors, educational institutions can create environments that promote both academic achievement and overall well being for students.

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