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Prof. K.N. Shelke

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A detailed illustration of a quill pen resting on a scroll of parchment. The quill is positioned diagonally across the frame. The scroll is tied with a red ribbon and has a red wax seal. In the background, a lit candle in a brass holder provides a warm glow. In the foreground, there is a glass inkwell with a quill pen inside it, and a red wax seal with a wooden handle. The entire scene is set on a wooden surface.

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With this aim Research Innovator, Multidisciplinary International Research Journal (RIMIRJ) welcomes research articles from the areas like Literatures in English, Hindi and Marathi, literary translations in English from different languages of the world, arts, education, social sciences, cultural studies, pure and applied Sciences, and trade and commerce. The space will also be provided for book reviews, interviews, commentaries, poems and short fiction.

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Procrastination and students**Dr. Kavita Varma***Professor, Amity institute of Education. Affiliation- Amity University, Lucknow campus, (U.P.) India***Abstract**

Scientists have studied procrastination in everyday life and most extensively, in academic endeavors. Some have labeled procrastination as a "self-defeating" behavior, even proposing intervention steps, as if procrastination were an illness. Others assert that procrastination has real benefits, including higher quality of work brought on by the pressure of an impending deadline. Academic procrastination also underestimate the time it takes to complete a project and believe that working at the last minute will make them more creative, which they typically are not, college students who procrastinate have also claimed that their procrastination has a significant impact on their academic standing, ability to understand class material and the overall quality of their lives (Ferrari, 2001).

Key Words: procrastination, academic, self-defeating, creative

Procrastination and students

While academic procrastination is not a special type of procrastination, procrastination is thought to be particularly prevalent in the academic setting, where students are required to meet deadlines for assignments and tests in an environment full of events and activities which compete for the students' time and attention. More specifically, a 1992 study showed that "52% of surveyed students indicated having a moderate to high need for help concerning procrastination". R P Gallagher, S Borg, A Golin and K Kelleher (1992). It is estimated that 80%-95% of college students engage in procrastination, approximately 75% consider themselves procrastinators. Procrastination is a behavior that most, if not all, professional and non-professional in India fall prey to. Studies done by Vodanovich and Sieb (1997) on procrastination have shown that approximately 15-25% of the

adult population procrastinate sometimes in their lives.

Procrastination

Procrastination is derived from the Latin word procrastinate which literally means to put off or postpone for another day (De Simone, (1993) as cited in Ferrari, Johnson and McCown, 1995). Procrastination is a behavior which is characterized by the deferment of actions of tasks to a later time. Psychologists often cite procrastination as a mechanism for coping with the anxiety associated with starting or completing any task or decision. Scientifically, procrastination is defined as "postponing the completion of a task to the point of feeling uncomfortable about one's delay" (Johnson and Bloom, 1995).

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procrastination as a "self-defeating" behavior, even proposing intervention steps, as if procrastination were an illness. Others assert that procrastination has real benefits, including higher quality of work brought on by the pressure of an impending deadline.

According to McCown (1986) in Roman times procrastination did not possess the negative connotation that it does today. Today, behaviorists typically define it as a learned habit derived from a human preference for short-term rewards. As a society, we generally do not consider procrastination a problem even though a research by Marano (2003) has indicated that at least 20 percent of people classify themselves as such.

College students of professional and non-professional course are not strangers to procrastination. Studies have shown that 70 percent of the college population procrastinates on their schoolwork (Ellis and Knaus, 1977) and the likelihood of procrastination increases from freshman to senior year (Hill, Hill, Chabot and Barrall, 1978). These students' tend to procrastinate when writing papers, studying for tests and when completing assignments {Soloman and Rothblum, (1984); as cited in Senecal, Lavoied and Koentner,(1997)}, assignments that are often considered effortful and anxiety producing (Ferrari and Scher, 2000). Academic procrastination also underestimate the time it takes to complete a project and believe that working at the last minute will make them more creative, which they typically are not, college students who procrastinate have also claimed that their procrastination has a significant impact on their academic standing, ability to

understand class material and the overall quality of their lives (Ferrari, 2001).

Some Facts about Procrastination

There are many ways to avoid success in life, but the most surefire just might be procrastination. Procrastinators sabotage themselves. They put obstacles in their own path. They actually choose paths that hurt their performance.

Twenty percent of people identify themselves as chronic procrastinators. For them procrastination is a lifestyle, albeit a maladaptive one. And it cuts across all domains of their life. They don't pay bills on time. They miss opportunities for buying tickets to concerts. They don't cash gift certificates or checks. They file income tax returns late. They leave their festival shopping until the last moment and so on and so forth. We will look into some aspects of such behaviors which will help in getting a deeper insight into procrastinators and their procrastinating behavior.

1-It's not trivial, although a culture we don't take it seriously as a problem. It represents a profound problem of self-regulation. And there may be more of it in India than in other developed countries because we are so nice; we don't call people on their excuses ("my grandmother died last week") even when we don't believe them.

2-Procrastination is not a problem of time management or of planning. Procrastinators are not different in their ability to estimate time, although they are more optimistic than others. "Telling someone who procrastinates to buy a weekly planner is like telling someone with chronic depression to just cheer up."

3-Procrastinators are made not born. Procrastination is learned in the family milieu, But not directly. It is one response to an authoritarian parenting style. Having a harsh, controlling father keeps children from developing the ability to regulate them. From internalizing their own intentions and they learning to act on them. Procrastination can even be a form of rebellion, one of the forms available under such circumstance. What's more, under those household, conditions, procrastination turn more to friends than to parents for support, and their friends may reinforce procrastination because they to be tolerant of their excuses.

4- Procrastination predicts higher levels of consumption of alcohol among those people who drink. Procrastinators drink more than they intend to-a manifestation of generalized problems in self-regulation. That is over and above the effect of avoidant coping styles that underlie procrastination and lead to disengagement via substance abuse.

5-Procrastinators tell lies to themselves. Such as, "I'll feel more like doing this tomorrow." Or "I work best under pressure." But in fact they do not get the urge the next day or work best under pressure. In addition, they protect their sense of self by saying "this isn't important." Another big lie procrastinators indulge is that time pressure makes them more creative. Unfortunately they do not turn out to be more creative; they only feel that way. They squander their resources.

6-Procrastinators actively look for distractions, particularly ones that don't take a lot of commitment on their part. Checking e-mail is almost perfect for this purpose.

They distract themselves as a way of regulating their emotions such as fear of failure.

7- There's more than one flavor of procrastination. People procrastinate for different reasons. Marano (2003), Ferrarand Timothy Pynchyl (2003) has identified three basic types of procrastinators.

8-*Arousal Types*, or thrill-seekers, which wait to the last minute for the euphoric rush.

9- *Avoiders*, who may be avoiding fear of failure or even fear of success, but in either case, are very concerned with what others think of them; they would rather have others think they lack effect than ability.

10-*Decisional Procrastinators*, who cannot make a decision. Not making a decision absolve procrastinators of responsibility for the outcome of events.

11-There are big costs to procrastination. Health is one. Just over the course of a single academic term, procrastinating college students had such evidence of compromised immune systems as more colds and flu, more gastrointestinal problems. And they had insomnia. Procrastination has a high cost to others as well as oneself. It shifts the burden of responsibilities onto others, who become resentful. Procrastination destroys teamwork in the workplace and private relationships.

12- Procrastinators can change their behavior - but doing so consumes a lot of psychic energy. And it doesn't necessarily mean one feels transformed internally. It can be done with highly structured cognitive behavioral therapy

Characteristics Traits of Procrastinators

Individuals who indulge in procrastination tend to identify with the following characteristics. However, they need not identify with all of them in order to be a chronic procrastinator but only a few of them.

1. Disappointment is a way of life for them. They contently disappoint other people and themselves by not keeping promises that they make.
2. They constantly seek excitement and attention through the negative attention generated by their passive aggressive behavior. The excitement comes from not knowing how the person they have "wronged" will react when they see him / her again.
3. They constantly place people in a position of power over themselves by default.
4. They have taken on the role of nice but ineffectual individuals.
5. They do not like to be depended upon.
6. They are regularly late for appointments
7. They regularly procrastinate greatly over the things they have to do. For example, in school this tendency results in incomplete grades, at work in projects that get delayed or dropped, at home in a disheveled place where they are embarrassed to bring people to.
8. They tend to put off making decisions. Many of their decisions are made for them by them by the process of indecision - life's inevitable way of making the decisions for them whether they like it or not.
9. They tend to stay single to a late age or not to get married at all, tend to greatly

breaking off inappropriate relationships, and /or tend to avoid committed relationships.

10. They tend to above concentrating on projects at hand, engaging in daydreaming or switching to other less important tasks.

The above mentioned characteristics are those which would match or resonate with just about anyone in our urban /western society.

They are more a sign of the times than a useful diagnosis.

One source of procrastination is underestimating the time required to analyses research. Many students devote weeks to gathering research for a term paper. But are unable to finish writing it because they have to review many contradictory opinions can offer. Despite knowing how to consult resources. They struggle to perform their own analysis. Burka, Jane B. (2008)

Student syndrome refers to the phenomenon that many students will begin to fully apply themselves to a task only just before a deadline. Ariley, Dan; Wertenbroch, Klaus (2002). This leads to wasting any buffers built into individual task duration estimate. The principle is also addressed in agile software development.

Types of Procrastinators-

The Relaxed Type

The relaxed types of procrastinators view their responsibilities negatively and avoid them by directing energy into other tasks. It is common, for example, for relaxed type procrastinating children to abandon schoolwork but not their social lives.

Students often see projects as a whole rather than breaking them into smaller parts. This type of procrastination is a form of denial or cover-up; therefore, typically no help is being sought. Furthermore, they are also unable to defer gratification. The procrastinator avoids situations that would cause displeasure, indulging instead in more enjoyable activities. In Freudian terms, such procrastinators refuse to renounce the pleasure principle, instead sacrificing the reality principle. They may not appear to be worried about work and deadlines, but this is simply an evasion of the work that needs to be completed.

The Tense-Afraid Type

The tense-afraid type of procrastinators usually feel overwhelmed with pressure, unrealistic about time, uncertain about goals, and many other negative feelings. They may feel a sense of malaise. Feeling that they lack the ability or focus to successfully complete their work, they tell themselves that they need to unwind and relax, that it's better to take it easy for the afternoon, for example, and start afresh in the morning. They usually have grandiose plans that aren't realistic. Their 'relaxing' is often temporary and ineffective, and leads to even more stress as time runs out, deadlines approach and the person feels increasingly guilty and apprehensive. This behavior becomes a cycle of failure and delay, as plans and goals are put off, penciled into the following day or week in the diary again and again. It can also have a debilitating effect on their personal lives and relationships. Since they are uncertain about their goals, they often feel awkward with people who appear confident and goal-oriented, which

can lead to depression. Tense-afraid procrastinators often withdraw from social life, avoiding contact even with close friends.

The Effects of Procrastinating

Procrastination affects every aspect of our lives. Some of the effects are positive while others are negative.

Positive Effects

Procrastination has largely been viewed as the cause of negative outcome. However, Tice and Baumeister (1970) have been able to cite some advantages. In their study of procrastination versus health and stress, they found that at the beginning of the term procrastinators had a power level of stress, which rose as the deadline of the assignment became more immediate. Procrastinators were also healthier early in the semester, as shown by lower number symptoms reported (an average of 2.8 symptoms/week for non-procrastinators vs. 1.4 symptoms/week for procrastinators he start of the semester.) For procrastinators, the beginning of a term is often care-free, as opposed to that of those who started working immediately. Increasing level of stress and health problems began right away for non-procrastinators. Therefore, procrastinators retain good health as long as the deadline is not near. In addition, material learned closer to the deadline may be useful for writing a paper. Procrastinators also claim that an imposed deadline marked them more efficient and more motivated to do well.

Negative Effects

These short-term benefits have long-term costs, however. Procrastination is correlated

with several health problems. Depression, vulnerable self-esteem and anxiety are related to those who procrastinate. Anxiety levels are especially high for procrastinators near exam period, and these same individuals feel the most relief once they turn in important papers. While procrastinator's stress level and health are good at the beginning of a semester, procrastinators reported an average of 8.2 symptoms per week, while non-procrastinators only had 5.2 symptoms per week (Tice and Baumeister, 1997.)

In the same study, 44 college students were given a due date for a paper. They were also told that they could get extensions. Researchers found differences in performance levels, even when the same amount of time was spent on a task.

Overall, procrastinators had considerably lower grades on the one paper and two exams assigned during the semester. Therefore, procrastinators produce inferior work, contrary to beliefs that the best work is done under pressure. Researchers have suggested that possibly the ones who procrastinate are the less intelligent students; however, studied by Ferrari (1991) found that in no way intelligence level correlate with procrastination.

When students underestimate the amount of time needed, less effort is often to the task at hand. Also, setbacks do the most damage when one is starting a task late, when compared to the early starter who has more than enough time to deal with the delay and continue as planned.

Causes of Procrastination

Psychological Causes

The psychological causes of procrastination vary greatly, but generally surround issues of anxiety, low sense of self-worth, and a self-defeating mentality. Burke, Yuen (1983, 2008). Procrastinators are also thought to have a lower-than-normal level of conscientiousness, more based on the "dreams and wishes" of perfection or achievement in contrast to realistic appreciation of their obligations and potential.

Author David Allen (2001) brings up two major psychological causes of procrastination at work and in life which are related to anxiety, not laziness. The first category interruption in the flow of things, and for which there are low-impact workarounds' an examples might be organizing a messy room. The school category comprises things too big to control, tasks that a person might fear, or for which the implications might have a great impact on a person's life; and example might be the adult children of a deteriorating elderly parent deciding what living arrangement would be best or a student facing an important exam for their education. A person might unconsciously overestimate or underestimate the scale of a task if procrastination has become a habit.

From the behavioral psychology point of view, James Mazur (1996, 1998) has said that procrastination is a particular case of "impulsiveness" as opposed to self control. Mazur states that procrastination occurs because of a temporal discounting of a punisher, as it happens with the temporal discount for a reinforce. Procrastination, then, as Mazur says, happens when a choice has to be made between a later larger task

and a sooner small task; as the absolute value of the task gets discounted by the time, a subject tends to choose the later large task.

Physiological Causes

Research on the physiological roots of procrastination mostly surrounds the role of the prefrontal cortex. This area of the brain is responsible for executive brain functions such as planning, impulse control, attention, and acts as a filter by decreasing distracting stimuli from other brain regions. Damage or low activation in this area can reduce an individual's ability to filter out distracting stimuli, ultimately resulting in poorer organization, a loss of attention and increased procrastination. This is similar to the prefrontal lobe's role in attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), where under activation is common. Strub, R. L. (1989).

Tips for Avoiding Procrastination

As is evident from the results of our study that procrastination effects both stress and health adversely thus it is important to overcome procrastination behavior. Following the simple tips will enable not only college students but everyone in overcoming the tendency of procrastinating. These guidelines will purely help to overcome the habits of procrastination and hence. An individual can focus upon work regularly without an interruption.

1-Every task has to be prioritized on a daily basis: The decision regarding the things to be done, have to be done and which the individuals like to do have to be taken promptly. The worst things have to be sorted out immediately. The completion of the

“must do” jobs has to be done on a priority basis. By doing this, the individuals get enough time for the completion of the remaining jobs at hand. It is recommended that, the individuals prepare a list of all the jobs that have to be accomplished in a day.

2-Reward yourself for every job done: The individuals have to make a habit of rewarding themselves for every job that is done. The rewards can be in terms of taking some time off and indulging in recreational activities. It can be self appreciation and self motivation –a pat on your own back.

3-Look closely at Procrastination habits: Looking closely at the procrastinating habits is also important. Things such as surfing the web, while doing the reports are some of the habits that demonstrate procrastination in the people. Once these habits of procrastination are figured out, it becomes easy to find out how to avoid procrastination by decimating such behaviors.

4-Maintain a daily planner: The things that are done and the time taken to do them have to be maintained in a daily planner. A look at the done things motivates the individuals. The things that are completed in the entire day have to be written down at the end of the day. This in itself is a reward for the work done by the individuals and motivates them to increase their accuracy. The growing list is prompting enough to look for ways on how to avoid procrastination. Also, list of the goals for the coming days, months and years has to be charted out by every individual. After doing this, the things that stops the individuals from reaching their goals have to be noted down.

5-Creating Urgency: If the people were under great Pressure to achieve something, they may probably much focus and they may not waste their time... Hence, in order to achieve something, by making a sense of urgency and concentrating just on the goals, an individual can beat procrastination.

6-Avoid Multitasking: Multitasking is the activity of doing several things at one time. Many people can say that may do many assignments just the once, but actually they won't do any of them properly and landing up with incomplete assignments. Hence, it is suggested to focus on one assignment and finish completely and take up the new one.

7-Admitting Procrastination: It sounds very simple and indeed it does not even sound as

through a suggestion, yet it is the best tip to beat procrastination. Often, people get incorporated with the habits of procrastination, since they don't admit or recognize they are procrastination, hence they cannot even instigate to overcome it. Hence, in order to get rid of procrastination, the individual needs to admit their own procrastination, so that they come to know what all opportunities they missed out due to adoption of procrastination habits.

These suggestions will really help the people to beat procrastination habits in their life. It is to be remembered that even the successful people do procrastination. But occasionally procrastination habits are not an enduring condition. However, it can be cured with the help of the suggestive measures.

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