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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Relationship among personality traits, procrastination and coping strategies

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Abstract

The current study explored the relationship among personality traits, procrastination and coping strategies in 200 students of Bahauddin Zakariya University, Sahiwal Campus. The convenience sampling technique was used. Participants completed the Big Five Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992), Cope Inventory by carver (1989) and Procrastination scale by Lay (1986). Descriptive statistics, correlation, independent sample t-test were applied to analyze the data. The results showed significant Negative correlation between personality traits such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness procrastination and positive correlation among personality traits such as extraversion, neuroticism and procrastination. Result established positive correlation between procrastination and avoidant coping strategies and negative correlation between procrastination and problem focused coping strategies. Extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness and openness are positively correlated with problem focused coping strategies. Neuroticism is negatively connected with problem focused coping and positively with avoidance coping strategies Finding indicated significant differences in personality traits and coping strategies relation to gender.

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INTRODUCTION

Students are exposed to multiple experiences in educational settings that influence their perceptions and behavior over their educational performances. One among the foremost necessary issues within the field of academic psychological science is to try to know why some students stop endeavor once they faced with educational difficulties, whereas others rise to the occasion exploitation ways and persistence, therefore achieving higher grades. Nowadays, it's noticeable that a lot of students simply surrender on their life and settle for failure resulting in frustration. Procrastination and personality traits like emotional stability; extraversion, conscientiousness, openness and agreeableness will have an effect on students' cope skills and ability to adapt to the ever difficult university life.

Personality

Personality has been conceptualized from a mixed bag of hypothetical points of view, and at different levels of deliberation or broadness (John, Hampson, & Goldberg, 1991; McAdams, 1995). Each of these levels has made one of kind commitments to our comprehension of individual contrasts in behavior and experience.

The Big Five are the ingredients that make up each individual's personality. A person might have a dash of openness, a lot of conscientiousness, a normal measure of extraversion, a lot of agreeableness and almost no neuroticism at all. On the other hand, somebody could be disagreeable, neurotic, introverted, conscientious and scarcely open at all. This is what every trait involves:

Procrastination

Procrastination has regularly been characterized as a quality or behavioral demeanor to put off or defer performing an assignment or deciding (Milgram et al., 1998; Haycock et al., 1998; Kachgal et al., 2001). Procrastination is an intricate wonder with intellectual, full of feeling and the behavioral parts (Rothblum, Solomon & Murakami, 1986). Johnson and Bloom (1995) have noted that procrastination has been examined along two distinct lines of exploration, the first relating hesitation to past execution and objective culmination, the second line taking a gander at the correlation between personality factors and procrastination. As a type of self-regulation disappointment, including the superfluous and willful deferral of vital undertakings with the end goal of fleeting mind-set repair (Sirois & Pychyl, 2013),

In general, analysis of procrastination explores two kinds of procrastination;

1. Tutorial procrastination that reflects domain-specific procrastination on a tutorial task like finding out for exams or writing a term paper; and
2. General, everyday procrastination, that reflects procrastination on non-academic life tasks like delaying the payment of a bill.

Coping

In view of anxiety-avoidance assessment model, individuals introductory evaluate the things they confront on the off chance that they are doing not have enough sources to treat that situation. They demonstrate a response with tension and take a gander at to maintain a strategic distance from the circumstance. In procrastination, thus avoiding recommends that to dispatch the tension trouble errand till once it's conceivable and this may develop to be a negative support to decline nervousness and it serves to keep up this activity pattern (Milgram & et al, 1998; cited in Van Eerde, 2002).

Procrastinators confront totally diverse tension things in venture with the quantity of their lingering in which they ought to utilize totally different coping strategies. Coping or psychological pressure refers to action and learning endeavors of an individual that adjustment for good in order to fulfill inner or outside needs of the person that are on the far side his assets and abilities (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984; cited in Sepehrian, 2008). Folkman & Lazarus (1986) examined and investigated an element on criterion queries of coping strategies and located out concerning 2 of them as follows:

- Task-oriented coping: a method within which associate individual tries to cope with disagreeable sources through approaching the matter and active reaction to that in order to resolve the matter.
- Emotion-oriented coping: a method of a technique for evading inside which an individual tries to control focusing on tensions and decrease his psychological anxieties.
- Avoidant coping: Endler & Parker (1990) consider avoiding from issues, on the grounds that the third principle class in adapting techniques amid this strategy, an individual alludes to the general public or will the other undertaking to stay himself off from troubling circumstance, then he copes with stress and so as to decrease anxiety might commit behaviors that cause more issues for him as an example, to decrease anxiety he or she might smoke, eaglet and abuse medication (Sepehrian, 2008).

Literature Review

Arif, Noor & Muneer (2014) conducted the research to measure the academic procrastination among male and female university and college students. Demographic variables were also examined. Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS) (Tuckman, 1991) was used to collect data. It was found that there is a significant difference among males and females on academic procrastination. The results also indicated that procrastination is high among college students than university students.

Sepehrian & Lotf (2011) conducted the research on academic procrastination regarding. Sample consisted of 310 students. The Lay academic procrastination scale (translated from English into Persian) was used to collect data. Findings suggest that coping strategies are the affective factor to predict academic procrastination.

Haskins & Susan (1988) Conducted research to examine the relationship between the procrastination involved in thesis writing and Jungian personality type. The sample comprised of 50 students. Procrastination was measured using the length of time taken to complete the thesis coupled with self-report. The 50 subjects were then administered the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, which measures Jungian personality type. No differences were found

on the first three scales (extraversion-introversion; sensation-intuition; thinking-feeling), but a significant difference was found on the judging-perceiving index ($p=.008$).

Islak (2011) Conducted research to determine the role of gender in the prediction of academic procrastination among talented and gifted college students. The results found that gender was not a significant predictor of academic procrastination among gifted and talented students.

In this study, the researchers are interested to investigate the relationship among personality traits, procrastination and coping strategies of university students. Students' favored behavioral styles, for example, procrastination and personality traits such as enthusiastic steadiness; extraversion or surgency, expository and appropriateness can influence students' coping skills and capacity to adjust to the always difficult university life.

There is a dearth of research on these variables in the Pakistani context has additionally incited the specialists to investigate this subject further. Since the Pakistani instructive arrangements and individuals accentuate on examinations and effective tertiary training, subsequently, local students may be influenced to embrace diverse administrative and behavioral ways of life in adjusting to the tough university learning environment. Results produced from Western nations may not be totally relevant in the Asian perspective. The general exploration target of this study is to profile the personality traits, procrastination and coping strategies of university students and to focus the distinctions in personality traits, procrastination and coping strategies in relation to gender. This study will further investigate the relationship among personality traits, procrastination and coping strategies in university students.

Objectives of the study

The present study was conducted to find out the relationship between personality traits, procrastination and coping style among university students. The present study is planned to achieve the following objectives.

- To find out the relationship among personality trait, procrastination and coping style among university students
- To measure differences among personality traits, procrastination and coping style related to demographic variables of gender.

Hypothesis

- 1- There would be a significant relationship among personality traits, procrastination and coping strategies.
- 2- There would be a significant differences in personality traits, procrastination and coping strategies in relation to demographic variables such as gender and program of study.

Method

Participants

A sample of 200 was selected through convenience sampling techniques from Bahauddin Zakariya University, Sahiwal campus.

Demographic aspects of total sample (N = 200)

Demographic Variables	Frequency	percentages
Age		
20 – 22	127	63.5
23 – 25	73	36.5
Gender		
Male	91	45.5
Female	109	54.5
No. of Siblings		
1 – 3	59	29.5
4 – 6	81	40.5
7 – 9	51	25.5
10 -12	9	4.5
Semester		
1 – 2	77	38.5
3 – 4	93	46.5
5 – 6	18	9.0
7 – 8	12	6.0

Instruments

Big Five Inventory (BFI). The big five inventory were consists of 44-item that measures an individual on the Big Five Factors (dimensions) of personality (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Questions were measured using five point likert scale, 1 indicate strongly disagree and strongly agree indicated by 5. The negatively stated questions were reversed. Scale has good inner reliability. The alpha for the scale is above 0.7. in the current study, the Cronbach alpha coefficient was 0.60.

Procrastination scale (PS). Procrastination was assessed as the score on the measure of Procrastination scale authored by (Lay, 1986). It is self-reported five point Likert scale contained 20 statements. The scale had high reliability. In the present study the Cronbach alpha coefficient was .85.

The Coping Orientation of Problem Experience Inventory (The COPE; Carver et al.,1989). The COPE was developed to measure individual styles of coping (Carver et al., 1989). It is a 52-item self-report questionnaire with a four-point Likert scale. The COPE measures 13 individual coping styles/subscales that can be grouped into three meta-strategies: problem-focused coping, emotional coping and less useful/avoidant coping. Reported Cronbach alpha coefficient ranged from .45 to .60. In the present study, the cronbach alpha coefficient was .46.

Procedure

The data were collected from university students. The biographic-form was administered to gather information about demographic variables. Members finished the measures of Big Five Inventory, Procrastination Scale, and Cope Scale. Participants were informed about confidentiality issues. Information was examined by utilizing Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS, version 20.0).

Results

The present study was carried out to study the relationship among personality traits, procrastination and coping strategies in university students. Descriptive statistics were utilized to depict scales averages and standard deviation and alpha reliability coefficients. Pearson correlation coefficient ascertained to look at the relationship around the variables (personality trait, procrastination and coping style). Finally, the t-test was conducted to measure variances in personality traits, procrastination and coping style in relation to the gender. Descriptive frequencies and percentages were processed for demographic variables.

Table 1.

Pearson correlation of Big five Inventory and procrastination

	1	2	3	4	5	6
extraversion	1	.073	.149	-.029	.127	.321*
Agreeableness		1	.140*	-.110	.063	-.378*
conscientiousness			1	-.380*	.075	-.350*
Neuroticism				1	.361*	.426*
Openness					1	-.418*
Ps						1

Note : PS= Procrastination scale *P< 0.05

Table 1 demonstrated correlation between Big five Inventory and procrastination scale. The statistics depicted negative correlation between, agreeableness $r = -.37^*$, conscientiousness $r = -.35^*$, openness $r = -.41$ and positive correlation between extraversion $r = .32^*$, Neuroticism $r = .45^*$ with procrastination scale .

Table 2.

Pearson correlation of procrastination scale and coping strategies.

	1	2	3	4
PS	1	.306**	-.334**	.063
Avoidant coping		1	.318**	.300**
Problem focused coping			1	.398**
Emotion focused coping				1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 showed correlation between procrastination scale and coping scale. The statistics depicted a positive correlation between avoidance coping $r = .306^{**}$ with procrastination and negative correlation between problem-focused coping $r = -.398^{**}$ with procrastination.

Table 3.

Pearson correlation of Big five Inventory and cope scale

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
extraversion	1	.073	.007	-.029	.127	.120	.329**	.020
agreeableness		1	.140*	-.110	.063	-.294*	.319**	.041
conscientiousness		*	1	-.123	.075	.073*	.385**	.026
neuroticism				1	.123	.267*	-.380*	.082
openness					1	.093	.313*	.045
Avoidant coping						1	.318**	.300**
Problem focused coping							1	.278**
Emotion focused coping								1

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2 shows correlation between Big five Inventory and cope scale. The statistics are depicting positive correlation between extraversion $r = .323^{**}$, conscientious $r = .385^{**}$, agreeableness $r = .319^{**}$, openness $r = .313^{*}$ and neuroticism $.380^{*}$ is negatively correlated with problem focused strategies. Results shows negative correlation between agreeableness $r = -.294^{*}$ and avoidance coping, neuroticism is positively correlated avoidance coping $r = .267^{*}$.

Table 4

Mean, Stander Deviation and t- values for Male and Female on Big five inventory, procrastination scale, cope Inventory, (N=200)

(N = 91)	Male		Female		t	p	95% CI	Cohen's d
Variables	M	SD	M	SD				
textraversion	3.13	.401	3.07	.442	1.003	.177	[-.058 .179]	0.142
tagreeableness	3.08	.400	3.35	.61	3.73	.000	[.128 .414]	0.523
tconscientiousnss	3.09	.434	3.11	.433	-.299	.884	[-.139 .103]	0.04
tneuroticism	3.08	.380	3.24	.49	2.56	.011	[.036 .280]	0.364
topenness	3.30	.431	3.24	.382	.966	.074	[-.057 .169]	0.147
tavoidantcoping	31.56	2.47	33.46	4.77	.966	.001	[.739 3.045]	0.474
tproblemfocuscoping	48.47	5.53	45.38	7.39	3.28	.005	[1.23 4.93]	0.473
temotionfocuscoping	48.22	4.52	49.97	5.74	2.40	.017	[.316 3.18]	0.338
tps	59.73	5.85	59.12	4.83	-.519	.153	[1.88 1.09]	0.0727

Note: tps = Total procrastination scale ; CS = cope scale

The results indicated significant differences in agreeableness, neuroticism, coping strategies and no differences in procrastination on the basis of gender.

Discussion

The results showed that personality traits such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness are negatively correlated with the procrastination. Literature also supports these findings. The most steady discoveries from the past studies that conscientiousness is a personality trait which can fundamentally anticipate procrastination as compared to the other personality domains. These studies reported that people who showed conscientiousness were observed to be less likely to procrastinate. Then again, the individuals who exhibited low levels of conscientiousness were reported to have higher tendency to procrastinate. (Johnson & Bloom (1995); Watson, (2001).

Openness to experience and agreeableness has a negative relationship with the procrastination. Literature also supports this finding, a large portion of the past studies demonstrated that openness to experience and agreeableness are not related to procrastination (Watson, (2001). It is not clear why these two personality traits were not connected with procrastination and thus further studies are vital. Vallerand, (1995) expressed that agreeableness has been characterized as a propensity to be more sympathetic towards others. People who score higher in these two personality traits are observed to will probably coexist with others. However, all the more critically they would trade off their own particular enthusiasm with other individuals. Subsequently, these sorts of personality traits might be irrelevant to the process of procrastination as agreeableness reflects an interpersonal style rather than a behavioral trait. (Steel, Brothen, & Wambach, (2001).

The result showed that personality traits such as extraversion and neuroticism are positively correlated with procrastination. Literature also supports this finding. In academic procrastination, this implies that understudies who show neuroticism may defer in submitting assignments and deferral in exam arrangement as they may not feel able or unrealistic to meet the expectation. (Rice, Richardson & Clark, (2012); Gallagher, (1996).

Extraversion is a personality trait which is entirely like emotional stability; be that as it may, it is more defenseless to a communicated, amiable, idealistic, active, outgoing, and exciting orientation. It was found that students who display higher levels of extraversion have lower coping skill for scholarly execution. Thus, it may lead them to have a higher tendency in procrastination. (Gallagher, 1996).

A result confirmed a positive correlation between procrastination and avoidant coping strategies. Literature also supports this finding. The present study showed that procrastinator students, mostly use avoidance-

oriented coping strategies which are similar to Oya & et al's study (2004). Whereas, Walters (2003) and Merford (2008) found that procrastination is mostly observed among people who use avoidance-oriented coping strategies.

This result showed a negative correlation between procrastination and problem- focused coping strategies similar with findings of Holloway (2009) and some other researches (Walters, Oya & et al, Ram, Atken, cited in Steel, 2007). Overall, it turned out to be clear that coping strategies of procrastinators are not completely created and they can't be embraced. The individuals who use task-oriented strategies systems break down the circumstance when they experience issues and by utilizing problem-solving strategies and attempt to remove the obstacles. These individuals program properly to do assignments when they face deadlines and do everything step by step. Therefore procrastinator does not use problem- focused coping strategies.

The results showed that four personality traits such as extraversion, conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness are positively correlated with problem- focused coping strategies. Literature also supports these findings. Agreeableness is connected to low interpersonal clash and along these lines less social anxiety (Asendorpf 1998). These propensities may encourage engagement coping methodologies that require considering new points of view, for example, subjective rebuilding and critical thinking, however, might likewise encourage utilization of withdrawal techniques, for example, unrealistic considering. Extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness all identify with seeing occasions as difficulties instead of dangers and to positive evaluations of coping resources (Penley & Tomaka 2002).

An association has likewise been drawn between extraversion and the approach temperament; some now see extraversion as reflecting relative affectability of a general methodology framework (Caspi & Shiner 2006, Caspi et al. 2005, Elliott & Thrash 2002). Agreeableness and conscientiousness seem to share an important property. It has been recommended that both of these attributes have caused in the effortful control disposition (Ahadi & Rothbart 1994, Caspi & Shiner 2006, Jensen-Campbell et al. 2002).

Conscientiousness predicts low-stress exposure most likely on the grounds that conscious person arrangement for unsurprising stresses and evade impulsive activities that can prompt monetary, well-being or interpersonal issues. Conscientiousness suggests steadiness, self-discipline, association, accomplishment introduction, and a deliberate methodology (Caspi et al. 2005, McCrae & John 1992). The planful, taught properties of this trait ought to encourage critical thinking and make a withdrawal less likely. The solid consideration regulation limit supporting conscientiousness (Derryberry et al. 2003) ought to predict the accomplishment at intellectual rebuilding, which requires an ability to separate from effective negative thoughts.

Neuroticism is negatively connected with issue focused coping and positively with avoidance coping strategies. Neuroticism, grounded in an evasion personality, reflects propensities to experience dread, trouble, sadness, and physiological excitement (McCrae & John 1992, Rothbart & Hwang 2005). Given this vulnerability to distress, neuroticism ought to prompt feeling centered coping and separation from risk. Disengagement may be strengthened through the fleeting help of distress. Neuroticism predicts presentation to interpersonal anxiety and propensities to assess occasions as exceedingly debilitating and coping assets as low (Grant & Langan-Fox 2007, Penley & Tomaka 2002, Suls & Martin 2005).

Neuroticism concerns the simplicity and frequency with which a man gets to be disturbed and upset. Moodiness, uneasiness, and sorrow reflect higher neuroticism. Neuroticism has been connected to the avoidance temperament talked about above (Caspi & Shiner 2006; Caspi et al. 2005; Evans & Rothbart 2007), recommending that anxiety and sensitivity to threat are indeed its emotional core. McWilliams et al. (2003) found that Emotion-oriented coping was associated with neuroticism. Agreeableness and two coping strategies have negative correlation such as avoidant coping and problem-focused coping except emotion focused coping that will have positively correlated with agreeableness. Literature also supports this finding. Quirk and McCormick (1998) stated that agreeable people exhibited the highest level of escape-avoidance coping and the lowest level of problem solving or positive reappraisal.

Findings showed significant differences in neuroticism and agreeableness on the basis of gender. Females gain higher on the Five Factor Model traits of Neuroticism and Agreeableness ([Costa, Terracciano & McCrae 2001](#)). The previous reflects trouble inclination and affinities toward the experience of a mixed bag of negative influence while the last reflects agreeableness, selflessness, trust, tender-mindedness, and consistence. Sex contrasts on these characteristics are of medium extent.

Neuroticism and Agreeableness are genetically based, species-invariant, and the outcome of change in accordance with determination weights which differ crosswise over men and women ([Buss, 1995](#)). [Budaev \(1999\)](#) proposed an evolutionary hypothesis that Neuroticism and Agreeableness together speak to a solitary measurement with low Neuroticism and low Agreeableness toward one side and high Neuroticism and high Agreeableness at the other. His information recommended men and women fall at inverse ends of this dimension.

Correlations at the total level of Extraversion and Openness are accordingly less important. Men and the ladies seem to vary little with either particular part of (Costa et al., 2001).

Results indicated differences in coping strategies in relation to gender, which is consistent with the previous research. The women scored significantly higher than the men on the emotional and avoidance coping styles and lower on rational and detachment coping. The men were found to have more emotional inhibition and problem focused than the women (Matud, 2004).

Washburn et al, (2004) showed that women tend to utilize emotion-focused coping and the "tend-and-befriend" reaction to stress though men tend to utilize problem-focused coping and the "fight-or-flight" response, perhaps because societal measures urge men to be more individualistic, while ladies are regularly anticipated that would be interpersonal.

Conclusion

Personality traits may influence the procrastination and effectiveness of coping strategies by facilitating or interfering with the successful implementation of the strategy. The results of this study can help instructors and students to outline a superior and more favorable learning environment later on.

Limitations and Suggestions

This study was only administrated among students in Bahauddin Zakariya Unversity Sahiwal campus. The present study has also small sample size and thus we cannot generalize the results to other universities of the country. Finally, the greater part of our comprehension is of relations among single personality traits, procrastination and coping responses. This is a poor impression of reality.

In view of the aftereffects of this study, suggestions for future examination can be offered. As portrayed in the limitations section, the sample size was insufficient for generalizing this examination on students. Future researches ought to be directed with larger, demographically more diverse samples from different universities, different faculties, and different ethnicities.

Research should consider the joint impact of traits on examining procrastination and coping, whether by investigating personality profiles, controlling for one trait when concentrating on others, or focusing at connections among traits. So also, future examination ought to additionally investigate joint and intelligent effects of numerous coping reactions.

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