

A STUDY OF PROCRASTINATION, HAPPINESS AND MENTAL HEALTH COLLEGE STUDENTS

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Abstract:

The present study explores gender differences in procrastination, happiness, and mental health among college students. A sample of 100 students (50 males and 50 females) from Nashik City, Maharashtra, aged 18-24 years (Mean = 21.84, SD = 2.03), was assessed using standardized tools: the Happiness Scale (HS-RHMJ), Samvaidna's Procrastination Scale, and the Mental Health Inventory. Statistical analysis revealed significant gender differences across all dimensions. Males exhibited significantly higher procrastination levels ($M = 123.50$, $SD = 8.44$) compared to females ($M = 109.84$, $SD = 7.12$, $t = 8.74$, $p < 0.01$). In contrast, females scored significantly higher on happiness ($M = 268.61$, $SD = 7.01$) than males ($M = 252.34$, $SD = 7.94$, $t = 10.86$, $p < 0.01$). Similarly, females displayed better mental health ($M = 159.08$, $SD = 6.77$) than males ($M = 147.63$, $SD = 5.69$, $t = 9.15$, $p < 0.01$). The findings suggest that gender differences in socio-cultural, psychological, and emotional factors may influence these behaviors. The study highlights the importance of targeted interventions to address procrastination in males and promote happiness and mental health across genders.

Keywords: *Procrastination, Happiness, Mental Health, Gender Differences, College Students.*

Introduction:

Importance of sport is evident and definite for people and societies, and its social, political and psychological aspects have been studied and a special attention has been paid to its connection with the psychological health. Many studies exist about the useful effects to sport and its relation to psychological happiness (Biddel, 1993; Thorlindsson, 1990) self-respect and self-controlling (Gil, 1986; Gilroy, 1989) and reduction to the negative and harmful behaviors such as smoking and drinking Alcohols (Marcus, 1993; Hastad, 1984) and increasing the age (Paffenbarger, 1986). Beside its valuable role in the physical health, sport also has a close relationship with the mental health specifically in preventing the mental disorders. People, who are not active, may face increasing risk of heart disease, mental problems, scruple and other health matters. (Vainio, 2002). Success in the various levels and aspects to life either personal or professional is a concern to whole people, who are physically and mentally normal. There are some definitions for the intelligence quotient (EQ) but the most comprehensive is that definition which has been suggested by (Ciarrochi, 2001) They consider the intelligence quotient as the ability to feel emotions to achieve practical emotions

which can help in evaluating thought, Procrastination, a ubiquitous phenomenon among college students, is defined as the intentional delay of tasks despite the awareness of potential negative consequences (Steel, 2007). It is often regarded as a behavioral tendency that affects academic performance, emotional well-being, and overall mental health. Among college students, who are frequently exposed to high academic demands, social pressures, and the challenges of transitioning into adulthood, procrastination can become a pervasive issue. Simultaneously, this developmental stage is also a time when individuals actively seek happiness and psychological stability, which are critical components of mental health. Understanding the interplay between procrastination, happiness, and mental health is essential to develop effective interventions and promote holistic well-being among this demographic.

The relevance of studying procrastination within the context of mental health and happiness lies in its multifaceted impact. Procrastination has been linked to increased stress, anxiety, and depression, which are key determinants of mental health (Sirois & Pychyl, 2013). Conversely, happiness, often conceptualized as a subjective state of well-being characterized by positive emotions and life satisfaction, has been associated with resilience and better mental health outcomes (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). College students, who are at a critical juncture in their emotional and cognitive development, often grapple with balancing their academic, social, and personal lives, making them particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of procrastination on their mental health and happiness.

Objectives:

1. The goal is to explore procrastination habits among male and female college students.
2. The goal is to investigate the levels of happiness among male and female college students.
3. To investigate mental health among male and female college students.

Hypotheses:

1. There will be no significant difference between male and female college students regarding the dimension of procrastination.
2. There will be no significant difference between male and female college students regarding the dimension of happiness.
3. There will be no significant difference between male and female college students regarding the dimension of mental health.

Literature Review:

Procrastination: A Behavioral and Psychological Perspective

Procrastination is not merely an act of delaying tasks but is deeply rooted in cognitive, emotional, and motivational factors. It is often influenced by personality traits such as low self-discipline, perfectionism, and fear of failure (Ferrari et al., 1995). These traits can lead to a cycle of avoidance, guilt, and heightened stress, thereby exacerbating the negative impact on mental health. Furthermore, procrastination has been linked to executive function deficits, such as poor time management and difficulty in prioritizing tasks, which can hinder academic and personal achievements (Steel, 2007).

The impact of procrastination extends beyond the academic realm, influencing various aspects of students' lives. For instance, chronic procrastination can result in missed opportunities, strained relationships, and diminished self-esteem, all of which contribute to poorer mental health outcomes. Studies have also highlighted the role of emotional regulation in procrastination, suggesting that individuals may delay tasks as a coping mechanism to avoid negative emotions associated with challenging or unpleasant tasks (Tice & Bratslavsky, 2000). This maladaptive coping strategy, however, often leads to a paradoxical increase in stress and anxiety, creating a vicious cycle of procrastination and emotional distress.

Happiness and Its Role in Mental Health

Happiness, as a subjective measure of well-being, encompasses both hedonic and eudaimonic aspects. The hedonic dimension refers to the presence of positive emotions and the absence of negative emotions, while the eudaimonic dimension emphasizes the fulfillment of one's potential and the pursuit of meaningful goals (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). In the context of college students, happiness is a critical factor influencing academic performance, social relationships, and overall life satisfaction. Research has shown that happier individuals are more likely to exhibit resilience, effective problem-solving skills, and better physical and mental health (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005).

The relationship between happiness and mental health is bidirectional. While happiness contributes to improved mental health, individuals with better mental health are also more likely to report higher levels of happiness. For college students, who often face academic pressures, social comparisons, and uncertainties about the future, cultivating happiness can serve as a protective factor against mental health challenges. Practices such as gratitude, mindfulness, and fostering social connections have been identified as effective strategies to enhance happiness and mitigate stress and anxiety (Fredrickson, 2001).

The Interplay Between Procrastination, Happiness, and Mental Health

The relationship between procrastination, happiness, and mental health is complex and interdependent. Procrastination, by increasing stress and reducing perceived control, can negatively affect happiness and mental health. Conversely, lower levels of happiness and poor mental health can perpetuate procrastination by diminishing motivation and emotional resilience. This interplay creates a feedback loop where procrastination undermines well-being, and diminished well-being further exacerbates procrastination.

For instance, students who procrastinate on academic tasks may experience guilt and anxiety, which can reduce their overall happiness and impair their mental health. In turn, this state of reduced well-being may make it more challenging for them to break free from the cycle of procrastination. Moreover, the relationship between these variables is influenced by individual differences such as personality traits, coping styles, and social support. Students with high emotional intelligence, for example, may be better equipped to manage the negative emotions associated with procrastination and maintain their happiness and mental health (Zeidner et al., 2008).

Significance of The Study

Understanding the interplay between procrastination, happiness, and mental health is crucial for developing targeted interventions aimed at improving the well-being of college students. Such interventions could include time management training, cognitive-behavioral strategies to address procrastination, and programs to enhance happiness through positive psychology techniques. Additionally, this research can inform educators, counselors, and policymakers about the need to address procrastination not just as an academic issue but as a broader mental health concern.

In conclusion, procrastination, happiness, and mental health are intricately linked, influencing each other in ways that significantly impact the lives of college students. By exploring these relationships, this study aims to shed light on the underlying mechanisms and identify strategies to foster resilience, happiness, and mental well-being among students. Such insights are essential for creating a supportive academic environment that nurtures both personal and professional growth.

Sample:

For the present study 100 Sample were selected from Nashik City, Maharashtra State. The effective sample consisted of 100 subjects, 50 subjects were male college students and 50 subjects were female college students. The age range of subjects was 18 to 24 years (Mean 21.84, SD = 2.03).

Research Tools:-

1) The Happiness Scale

The Happiness Scale (HS-RHMJ) developed by Himanshi Rastogi and Janki Moorjani in 2017 comprises 62 items categorized into five areas: I. Subjective Well-being, II. Social Well-being, III. Career Well-being, IV. Emotional Well-being, and V. Spiritual Well-being. The reliability of the scale was assessed using the Split Half method (odd-even method), resulting in a reliability coefficient of $r = 0.88$. Furthermore, the validity of the scale was found to have a correlation of $r = 0.91$.

2) Samvaidna's Procrastination Scale (Abraham, 2013):

Mental health inventory constructed by Abraham, 2013. The response was measured on a 5-point Likert Scale. A weight of 5 was assigned to the strongly agree response, 4 for agree, 3 for undecided, a weight for disagree and 1 for the strongly disagree response. The total scores are obtained by adding the weights assigned. The total range is from 30-150. If scores between 110-150 indicate high procrastination, 71-109 indicate average procrastination, 30-70 indicate low procrastination—a highly reliable and valid tool.

3) Mental Health Inventory:

Mental health inventory constructed by Dr. Jagdish and Dr. A K Srivastav. 56 items are in the questionnaire and each of the items has four responses – 1. Almost always true, 2. Some time true, 3. Rarely true and 4. Almost never true. The reliability of the inventory was determined by split-half method using odd-even procedure. Overall mental health reliability coefficients is .73 and Construct validity mental health inventory and general health questionnaire (Gold beig, 1978) it was found to be .54

Variable	
Independent variable-Gender	a) Male b) Female
Dependent Variable	1. Procrastination 2. Happiness 3. Mental Health

Statistical Interpretation and Discussion

Mean, Standard Deviation (S.D.), and "t" Value of Procrastination, Happiness, and Mental Health among College Students.

Dimensions	Male		Female			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	df	t
Procrastination	123.50	8.44	109.84	7.12	98	8.74**
Happiness	252.34	7.94	268.61	7.01	98	10.86**
Mental Health	147.63	5.69	159.08	6.77	98	9.15**

Significant at 0.01 = 2.62, 0.05* = 1.98**

The results indicate a significant difference in procrastination levels between male and female college students. The mean procrastination score for males is 123.50 with a standard deviation of 8.44, while females have a lower mean score of 109.84 with a standard deviation of 7.12. The calculated "t" value of 8.74 exceeds the critical value at both the 0.01 (2.62) and 0.05 (1.98) significance levels. This suggests that males tend to procrastinate more than females.

Happiness levels reveals that females have a significantly higher mean score (268.61) with a standard deviation of 7.01 compared to males, whose mean score is 252.34 with a standard deviation of 7.94. The "t" value of 10.86 also surpasses the critical values, indicating a statistically significant difference. This suggests that female college students experience greater happiness levels than their male counterparts.

In mental health, females again show higher scores, with a mean of 159.08 and a standard deviation of 6.77, compared to males, who have a mean score of 147.63 and a standard deviation of 5.69. The "t" value of 9.15 is statistically significant, indicating a meaningful difference in mental health levels between genders.

Gender differences across procrastination, happiness, and mental health dimensions among college students. The findings suggest that females exhibit higher levels of happiness and mental health while males are more prone to procrastination. These differences may stem from various socio-cultural, psychological, and biological factors influencing behavior and emotional well-being.

Conclusions:

- 1) Male college students have significantly higher procrastination levels than female students.
- 2) Female college students have significantly higher happiness than male students.
- 3) Female college students have significantly higher mental health levels than male students.

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