

## Decision Making Styles and Academic Procrastination of Undergraduate Students

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**ABSTRACT.** This study aims to examine the relationship between decision-making styles and the level of academic procrastination of undergraduate students. The present research is a correlation research with research subject of psychology student of University X in Malang with the sample of 77 students. Academic Procrastination Scale (APS) and General Decision-Making Styles Questionnaire (GDMSQ) were used as the instruments of the research. The data were analyzed using Product Moment correlation analysis. The results showed that there is no significant relationship between decision-making style and academic procrastination ( $r = -.128$ ;  $p > .05$ ). There is an insignificant inverse relationship between decision-making styles and academic procrastination.

**Keywords:** Decision-making styles, academic procrastination, undergraduate students.

### Introduction

There is phenomenon that is commonly experienced by undergraduate students nowadays in the attempt to appear as intellectual candidates. Based on the observation and interviews, procrastination is found among undergraduate students when dealing with task completion in the academic setting. Procrastination leads to decreased performance, late to collect assignments, decreased academic performance, low levels of health, wealth and life satisfaction. (Schubert & Stewart, 2000; Balkis & Duru, 2007; Steel & Ferrari, 2013; Paola, 2014; Wulan, Dyah. A.N. & Abdullah, Sri. M., 2014; Risdiantoro, 2016). Procrastination tendency can also cause anxiety, low self-esteem, low public and personal awareness and anxiety about the public image (Ferrari, 2001).

In academic or educational setting, procrastination is often seen directly and indirectly in the undergraduate students. According to Ferrari et al (1995), academic

procrastination can be manifested in specific indicators and observed through specific traits, that is delay, to start completing the task to be done, too late in completing the task doing another that more fun than the task to be done; and time gap between the established plan and the real action in doing task.

Studies on academic procrastination are very important to do. Based on the assumption, academic procrastination in a relatively long period and left without relevant treatment at a certain level will have a negative impact on the image and stereotype of a college. According to the result of the general population survey, it indicates that one-third of the population consider procrastination as a major problem in the educational institutions (Steel & Ferrari, 2013). It can occur in undergraduate and postgraduate students. Academic procrastination of postgraduate students is in the high category (Aziz, 2015). Procrastination is not only done by individuals, but also in groups thus affecting group productivity (Skowronski & Mirowska, 2013).

Some researchers have identified that procrastination as a disposition of characteristic that has cognitive, behavioral and emotional components (Aremu et al., 2011; Schubert & Stewart, 2000). Procrastinator are often unable

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to manage time wisely and fail in setting or prioritizing goals, thus ignoring responsibility which is needed in a timely manner (Balkis & Duru, 2007). There are major factors affecting procrastination, namely, internal factors and external factors (Fauziah, 2015).

Internal factors come from individuals that shape procrastination including physical and psychological factors. Psychological factors which are often associated with procrastinating are self-managing skills, personality traits of cognitive processes (Balkis, 2007), low self-efficacy, lack of persistence, unresolved anxiety, irrational beliefs, dependence, fear of failure, negative evaluation, learning disabilities, perfectionism (Schubert & Stewart, 2000; Steel, 2007; Steel & Ferrari, 2013) as well as a decision-making style that is part of the sub-component of cognitive style (Kozhevnikov, 2007).

The result of previous studies conducted by Ugurlu (2013) showed that decision-making styles generally affect procrastination. Decision-making is a condition for making choice from multiple choices (Ugurlu, 2013). Decision-making styles is not a trait of personality but a patterns of response from habits that are demonstrated by a person when confronted with a decision-making situation (Scott & Bruce, 1995). Scott & Bruce (1995) divide decision-making styles into 5 kinds rational, intuitive, dependent, spontaneous, and avoidant.

Based on some opinions, this study will examine the relationship between decision-making styles and academic procrastination. In contrast to Ugurlus (2013) research with the subject of school administrators and examined the procrastination generally, however, this study focuses on undergraduate students and examines procrastination behavior in academic setting. This study contributes a knowledge by exploring the relationship between decision-making styles to the level of academic procrastination in undergraduate students.

## Literature review

### *Academic Procrastination*

Procrastination is a tendency to delay in initiating or completing an overall performance for other unnecessary activities, resulting in poor performance, never completing tasks on time, and often late in attending meetings (Solomon and Rothblum, 1984). Wolters (2003)

also states that procrastinator is actually aware that he is facing important and beneficial tasks for himself (as a primary task), but deliberately delaying repeatedly (compulsively) so that he feels discomfort, anxiety, and guilty. In addition, in principle, as long as there is no delay in completing the task and it does not affect the quality of work (Tice & Baumeister, 1997), thus, it can be said that procrastination does not always have negative impact on the effectiveness of one's performance. The notion of academic procrastination in this study is limited as a deliberate and repetitive dysfunctional delays, to perform other activities that are not required in the completion of academic tasks, so as to generate negative emotional consequences.

Furthermore, Salomon & Rothblum (1984) divide the area of academic procrastination behavior as follows:

1. Writing tasks that include delays in performing obligations or writing assignments, such as writing papers, reports, or other composing.
2. The task of studying the exam involves delaying study for examination, such as midterm examination, final examination, and weekly repetition.
3. The reading assignment includes a delay in reading a book or reference relating to the required academic tasks.
4. Performance of administrative tasks, such as writing notes, enrolling in presence and returning books in library.
5. Attend meetings, such as a delay in attending lessons/lectures.
6. Postponement of overall academic performance, such as a delay in completing academic tasks as a whole.

## Decision-Making Styles

Scott & Bruce (1995) defined decision-making style as a pattern of responses from the habits shown by a person when faced with a situation to decide. Decision-making style is not regarded as trait of personality, but as a basic tendency of habit in reacting with specific way including how to decide in certain circumstances. Personality trait differences affect each individual to produce different decision-making styles with various social and psychological constructs. Clearer distribution was observed in decision-making styles based on Scott and Bruce (1995); rational, intuitive, dependent, spontaneous and avoidance-

making style.

According to Scott & Bruce (1995), rational decision-making is the nature of search or traceability and alternative assessment logically. Rational decisions are based on in-depth information search and systematic alternative assessment. An intuitive decision is described as a tendency to believe in feelings. dependent decisions are marked by the search for advice from others before deciding. Avoiding decision makers tend to delegate decision-making to others. Meanwhile, individuals with spontaneous styles are the ones who quickly decide with the pressure and deadlines.

### **Academic Procrastination and Decision-Making Style**

The style of decision making and procrastination has been examined in relation to various other variables. Balkis (2007), found that procrastinators tend to relate to their thinking and decision-making styles. Deciding styles can determine task delays and other fundamental reasons. A study by Ugurlu (2013) suggests that there is a negative relationship between rational, dependent, spontaneous, and procrastination decision-making styles. There is a positive relationship between the intuitive decision-making style and the avoidance of procrastination.

### **Research Hypothesis**

This study used hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between decision-making styles and the level of academic procrastination.

### **Research Methods**

#### *Research Design*

This research uses quantitative approach with correlation research. This research is designed by using the pattern of relationship between decision-making style and academic procrastination on the students. Decision-making styles become the predictor variable (explaining variables) whereas academic procrastination becomes the criterion variable (explained variables).

#### *Research Subject*

The subjects were undergraduate students (S1) of University X who are enrolled as fully-registered students and are actively taking part in the daily lectures. The 107 subjects comprise of second, fourth, and sixth semester students in the department of psychology of university x.

#### *Research Instruments*

The Academic Procrastination Scale (APS) was used to measure academic procrastination compiled by McCloskey & Scielzo (2015) consisting of 25 items on the original instrument. While in this study, 22 items include aspects: psychological beliefs about abilities, disorders, social factors, time management, personal initiative, and laziness. This instrument uses Likert scale with choices from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). The statements on items 9, 11 and 22 are unfavorable items. The scale is utilized by summing the scores of each item to get the total score. High scores mean high academic procrastination while low scores mean low academic procrastination. Original reliability is 0.94 while in this research the reliability is 0,91. Data on decision-making styles are obtained by using General Decision-making Styles Questionnaire (Scott & Bruce, 1995) with five subscale tests including five styles of decision-making - rational, intuitive, dependent, avoidant and spontaneous - with the number of items 25 with 5 questions for each type. This instrument also employs Likert scale with choices from 1 up to 5 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). The scale is utilized by summing the scores of each item to get the total score of subscale.

### **Data Analysis**

The data in this research were analyzed using correlation analysis. Correlation analysis is used to analyze direct relationships. The direct link in this research is the decision-making style with the academic delay. Analysis was done by using data processing program. Correlation analysis is performed for each variable and correlation used for each variable. The + and - marks on the correlation coefficient are used to determine the direction of correlation.

**Results**

Table 1. Description of Research Subject Statistics

Sex	Frequency	Percent
Female	62	80.5%
Male	15	19.5%
Total	77	100%

The table above shows that the number of female subjects is 80.5% and the male subject is 19.5% from the population.

The result of correlation between variables is presented as follows:

Table 2. Correlation Test Results among Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
Academic Procrastination	63.5	9.8						
Rational	16.4	3.3	-.414**					
Intuitive	12.2	2.5	-.218	.691**				
Dependent	12.3	3.0	-.043	.623**	.610**			
Avoidant	8.6	1.5	.225*	.403**	.537**	.631**		
Spontaneous	14.4	2.2	.199	.210*	.505**	.463**	.496**	
Decision Making	64.0	10.0	-.128	.806**	.863**	.864**	.725**	.634**

\* p <0.05 (2-tailed)

\*\* p <0.01 (1-tailed)

The correlation test results showed that the correlation between the rational decision-making style and the level of academic procrastination indicated negative relation significantly ( $r = -0.414$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). The relationship between the intuitive decision-making style and the level of academic procrastination showed negative relationship insignificantly ( $r = -0.218$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). The relationship between the decision-making style is tied to the level of academic procrastination and showed negative relation value insignificantly ( $r = -0.043$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). The relationship between the decision-making style of avoidance and the level of academic procrastination showed positive relationship significantly ( $r = 0.225$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). The relationship between the spontaneous decision-making style and the level of academic procrastination showed positive relation insignificantly ( $r = 0.199$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ). The relationship between the decision-making style and the level of academic procrastination showed negative relationship insignificantly ( $r = -0.128$ ;  $p > 0.05$ ).

**Discussion & Coclution**

The purpose of this study is to obtain empirical data about the relationship between decision-making styles with the level of academic procrastination among undergraduate students. Conceptually, the tendency of procrastination associated with trait conscientiousness reflects the ability to be responsible (i.e., the fulfillment of prioritized goals). It makes the tendency of procrastination very interesting, because it can provide a view of the relationship between the characteristics of the student's decision-making style and the procrastination.

The results of this study indicate that there is negative correlation between the decision-making style and the level of academic procrastination but not significantly. These results suggest that the higher the score on decision-making style variables leads to lower scores on academic procrastination variables. Similar to the findings of a study undertaken by Ugurlu (2013) which suggests that decision-making styles with procrastination tendencies have an insignificant negative relationship, the study also found that decision-making styles have a significant effect on procrastination. A similar study by Handayani (2017) also suggests that decision-making style affects academic procrastination.

Findings of this study reveal that decision-making styles and its sub-dimensions are related to procrastination. As expected, students who are persevere in making decisions have little possibility to procrastinate tasks. Similar with the results of a research conducted by Balkis (2007) and Ugurlu (2013), which shows that there is a negative relationship between rational decision-making style and procrastination. There is a positive relationship between avoidant decision making style and procrastination. From the analysis of sub-dimensional decision-making styles, it is closely related that avoidant decision-makers will be more likely to indicate procrastination. Someone is more dependable, organized and responsible, he or she is better at achieving tasks on campus. Another result of the negative relationship between the rational decision making and procrastination shows similarity with the results of similar research, which indicate a negative relation between being responsible and procrastination (Karataş, 2015; McCloskey & Scielzo, 2015). Results of this study confirm that undergraduate students with avoidant decision-making styles are more

likely to procrastinate. It is found that relation intuitive and dependent decision-making styles are negatively and related insignificant on procrastination.

In contrast to Ugurlu (2013) research, which showed a significant positive relationship between intuitive decision making style and procrastination, in this study found a negative but not significant relationship. In other words, if a person tends to use intuition to make decisions, then level on academic procrastination more lower, although this result was not significant.

It can be concluded that there is no significant relationship between the decision making style and level of academic procrastination found that, there is a negative relationship between rational decision making style and procrastination. For this reason, researchers suggest for undergraduated students, it is better to follow the training to be able to make rational decision so as to systematically can manage their academic tasks and can lower the level of academic procrastination.

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