

# RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MULTIDIMENSIONAL PERFECTIONISM, ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION, AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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## Abstract

**Background:** Research on the interplay between multidimensional perfectionism, academic procrastination, and life satisfaction has gained considerable attention, especially in academic settings. However, limited studies explore this relationship among university students in Pakistan. This research examines the relationships between multidimensional perfectionism, academic procrastination, and life satisfaction, among university students.

**Methods:** Data were collected from 700 students aged 18-25 years through cluster sampling. Participants completed standardized scales, including the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS), General Procrastination Scale, and Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS). Pearson correlation, regression analysis, and independent samples t-tests were used to analyze the data.

**Results:** The findings revealed a significant relationship between perfectionism, procrastination, and life satisfaction, with gender-specific differences indicating that male and female students experience these constructs differently.

**Conclusion:** The study underscores the importance of addressing perfectionism and procrastination in academic settings to enhance students' well-being. Recommendations include tailored interventions focusing on gender-specific strategies to manage perfectionism and reduce academic procrastination, ultimately improving life satisfaction among university students.

## INTRODUCTION

Everyone has a lot of tasks to complete, but these all tasks often get delayed for one reason or some another. The tendency to put off these tasks was called procrastination, and it involved avoiding tasks and making excuses for them. The Latin terms "pro" (in front) and "crastinus" (closest day) were the original source for the verb delay (Hewitt et al., 2015).

Originally referred to as the "single three multidimensional idea," perfectionism has long been connected to behavioral dysfunction and was a significant indicator of psychopathology. In 1989,

Hewitt et al. In terms of previous studies, achieving perfection is an intricate personality typical that can have positive as well as negative consequences (Curran & Hill, 2019; Harari et al., 2018). The majority of people show perfectionist tendencies at some time in their lives (Stoeber & Stoeber, 2009). Nevertheless, idealization as a personality trait results in people to act blindly since filling tasks (Limburg et al., 2017), and these causes addictive working for excellence (Hewitt et al., 2017). Perfectionism is a trans-diagnostic factor of common clinical illness, include

eating, stress, and mental disorders, according to a number of new research (Drieberg et al., 2019; Holden et al., 2021) and associate perfectionism with a wide range of mental illnesses (Curşeu et al., 2019). Procrastination was the postponement of routine tasks to the point where people begin to feel uncomfortable (Wolters et al., 2003). It can be permanent or temporary and can be defined as a delay in behavior or awareness of consequences, decisions, or reasons for action. Procrastination does not mean completing a task before a deadline or leaving it until it was finished. Procrastination can result in learning goals not being achieved on time, which can lead to personal stress. It can also lead to negative behaviors that prevent a person from effectively protecting the environment (Toa et al., 2017). 2021).

Academic procrastination was defined as intentional, unnecessary delay in the preparation of research studies, even if the results were negative and unfavourable (Steel and Klingsieck, 2016; Zacks and Hen, 2018). The decision to complete the work when the time comes was planned and desired (Nordby et al., 2019). Procrastination was often considered a personal problem among university students. According to Gallagher and Kelleher (1992), 52% of students reported that they needed help to overcome procrastination. More than 70% of university students experience the was delay, which was associated with poor academic performance (Qian, 2018). Evidence on compliance and procrastination was inconsistent. However, procrastination can have many negative effects on behavior, mind, and body (Shokeen, 2018; Khalid et al., 2019; Constantin et al., 2018). Procrastination can be psychologically damaging to students who struggle to complete assignments on time. It can also have a negative impact on people and create negative emotions due to the unequal division of labor (Dautov, 2020). Relationships suffer when deadlines and commitments were missed (Krause & Freund et al., 2014).

Better quality of life ratings indicate better quality of life than negative ratings. However, psychological factors (personal, social, and cultural) were useful in explaining life satisfaction (Myers and Diener, 1995). Of the psychological factors that affect happiness, self-esteem was ways related to life satisfaction, as shown

by studies conducted in almost all cultures (collectivist and individualist) (caivitasi, 2007).

Life satisfaction refers to the general outlook on life and experience and whether the person was satisfied with their achievements and experiences (Yao et al., 2014). In addition to predicting lower levels of psychological satisfaction, life satisfaction has also been shown to be a significant predictor of psychological problems and suicide attempts (Ferguson et al., 2015). Studies on university students have shown that depression and anxiety were important factors in life satisfaction, and those who show symptoms of depression and anxiety were more likely to exert pressure on their lives (Serin et al., 2011). Similarly, in terms of life satisfaction, greater self-criticism and positive achievement have been associated with greater anxiety, depression, and eating disorders. High perfectionism tendencies were thought to have a significant impact on psychological well-being and were also an important predictor of low scores in life. Narcissistic perfectionism was often associated with pride and the belief that one was the best, which in turn associated with life satisfaction (Rohmann et al., 2019).

The active and passive procrastination network in the academic context and provided empirical evidence on the specific contribution of each type of procrastination. Additionally, impulsivity and procrastination were examined in relation to the Big Five personality traits (neuroticism, agreeableness, extraversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience), lifestyle, number of siblings, and presented education. The impact of procrastination on student health was also investigated. Neuroticism and paternal upbringing were negatively associated with both active and passive procrastination. While active procrastination was negatively affected by openness and the number of siblings, passive procrastination was negatively influenced by extraversion and maternal education. Extraversion appears to increase active procrastination, whereas agreeableness, conscientiousness, and relatedness seem to increase passive procrastination. Both frequent and regular learning have a negative impact on students' learning, but learning appears to make them healthier (Mehmood et al., 2023).

The study evaluated the effect of self-efficacy and achievement on academic procrastination among Pakistani university students and gender differences. It was shown that self-efficacy and perfectionism will affect academic procrastination and students' perspectives on gender will be very different. The results showed that there were three variables: self-efficacy, achievement and academic suspension of university students. Perfectionism was related to learning to procrastinate. However, self-efficacy had no significant effect on learning to procrastinate. There was also no significant difference in students' gender attitudes. The research results provided important evidence to stakeholders to improve the academic procrastination problem of university students (Ashraf et al., 2023).

The study was examining the interaction between social withdrawal, parental control, academic delay, and underachievement. While social withdrawal was associated with academic delay and negative behavior, parental control plays an important role in the relationship between withdrawal, academic delays, and poor performance. Explanations and mediation were conducted. A significant relationship was found between social withdrawal, parental control, and academic delay. The findings also revealed a significant relationship between social withdrawal, parental control, and negative effect. Results indicate that parental control moderates the relationship between academic procrastination and low achievement (Annals of Human and Social Sciences, 2024).

Working on procrastination was common behavior among students who drop out of school for various reasons. The was lead to guilt, insecurity, depression and self\_doubt. A 2020 study surveyed 199 undergraduate students using the Graduate Student Assessment Test (PASS). The results showed that 61.3% of the participants exhibited procrastination behavior on average, and 63.81% sometimes postponed school activities. 49.74% of the participants expected their desire to postpone to decrease (Gohain et al.,2021).

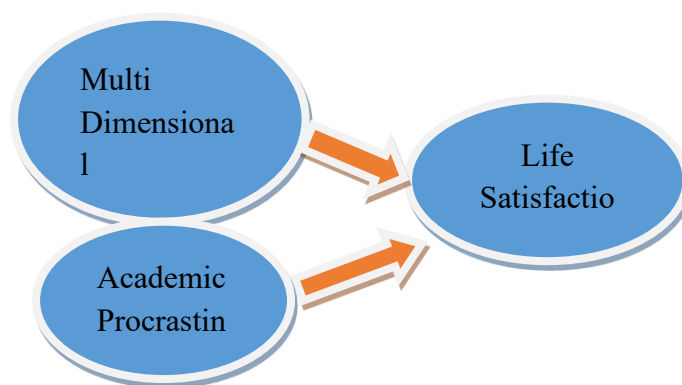
The study examined perfectionism and stress as predictors of academic delay in medical and dental

students. Results showed stress was a significant predictor of procrastination, while stress and procrastination negatively impacted students' GPA (Rezaei-Gazki et al.,2024).

The study examined the relationship between academic procrastination and academic satisfaction among college students in Kashmir. The research involved 800 undergraduates from different genders and disciplines. The results indicated a significant difference in study interruption and interest between male and female students, as well as among students from different academic fields. The study aimed to provided a better understanding for teachers, counselors, and administrators in developing intervention plans to promote learning and enhance students' enjoyment of their education (Bhat et al.,2023).

The study investigated how self-control, self-efficacy, life satisfaction, and hope contributed to learning delay in students. Using descriptive research methods and existing measurement models, the study found that education, self-control, and life satisfaction were key factors contributing to the regression model. The first step in the model did not predict learning delay well but was effective in reducing student behavior and improving performance (Kandemir et al., 2014).

Although isolation was effective measure to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and reduce the number of infections, it has a negative impact on the health and education of college students. The results showed that: (1) There was positive relationship between time spent at school and procrastination; (2) Time spent at school has no direct effect on academic procrastination, but it was significant predictor of negative behavior and self-efficacy; (3) School isolation duration affects the study procrastination level of college students through three indirect pathways: mediation of negative emotions, concordance of self-inefficacy, and chain concordance of negative emotions and self-deprecation. Study concluded that negative emotions and low self-esteem may mediate the relationship between time spent at school and academic procrastination among college students during the COVID-19 outbreak (Liu et al., 2023).



1.9 Conceptual Framework

### Objective

- To determine relationship between the multi dimensional perfectionism academic procrastination and life satisfaction among university students.
- To investigate differences in Multi dimensional perfectionism academic procrastination and life satisfaction on the basis of demographical variables (age and gender).

### Hypotheses

H1: There will be a significant relationship between multi dimensional perfectionism academic procrastination and life satisfaction among university students.

H2: There will be significant gender differences between multi dimensional perfectionism academic procrastination and life satisfaction among university students.

### Method

#### Demographical Information Form

The purpose of the demographical form was to gather personal information. The form included questions about the student s age, gender, field and level of education.

#### Sample

The sample included 700 students, both male and female, drawn from universities in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The age range of the sample was 18-25 years. The sample for this research was selected using cluster sampling, a subtype of probability sampling.

### Research Instruments

- General Procrastination Scale
- Satisfaction with Life Scale
- Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale

#### General Procrastination Scale:

Lodha et al. (2016) invented the General Procrastination Scale. Procrastination in four domains—academic, expert, healthcare, and civic responsibilities—is assessed through the scale, comprising a total as 23 items. Cronbach's Alpha of this scale is 0.80. A 5-point Likert scale, with 1 having the lowest possible value, can only be used to rate every component. A Perseverance Quality (PQ) can be assessed by the scores. The outcomes for items 5, 8, 12, 16, 18, 21, and 23 are inverted. Scores can range from 23 to 115 and are defined as the sum of the responses to each item. An greater average score across every component signifies higher levels of procrastinating on the side by the test-taker.

#### Satisfaction with Life Scale

Diener, Emmons, Larsen, and Griffin (1985) established the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) to measure individual general level of life satisfaction, regarded as an intellectual component of subjective well-being. This scale's Cronbach's Alpha values are 0.80 and 0.90. Five statements with which you may agree or disagree with made up the scale. Put an equal number on the line above each item to indicate the degree that you agree with it, using the scale of 1 to 7 below. Please react in an open and frank manner. A result of 1 represents extreme dissatisfaction 2 dispute, 3 slight dispute, 4 no agreement nor

disagreements, 5 slight acceptance, 6 acceptance, & 7 solid agreement.

### Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale

The MPS, as well as Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale A 35-item survey termed the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale was put together for measuring perfectionism. Worry over mistakes, private norms, expectations of parents, parental criticism, doubting one's own actions, and the organization are some of its other characteristics. According to Frost's statistical study, the overall perfectionism scale's alpha coefficient value is .90, subscale worry about errors .88, individual norms .83, expectations from parents .84, condemnation from parents .84, uncertainty about actions .77 and structure .9. The entire organization scale had the most impoverished pattern of intercorrelation with the remaining subscales and with the sum of the other categories in the perfection scale, although the reality that all six scales have strong connections with one another. Examples of scale items are "My parents had very high demands for me" and "It is important to me that I am thoroughly competent in everything I do" (Frost et al, 1990).

### Procedure

The researcher obtained consent from the respondents and explained the study's objectives and nature to them. Respondents were assured that their results would be kept confidential. After distributing the questionnaire, necessary instructions were provided, and respondents were asked to answer all statements without leaving any unanswered. They were also encouraged to express any concerns they had regarding the questionnaire.

### Data Analysis

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 21) was used to analyze the collected data. Analysis of variance and independent samples t-tests were used to look for differences. While correlation analysis investigated the connection between variables, regression analysis explored the link between predictor and arise variables.

### Results

The demographic breakdown of the participants in the study, which includes gender, level of study, age group, and major or field of study. **Gender** sample is equally distributed between male and female participants, with 50% (n = 350) identifying as male and 50% (n = 350) as female. **Level of Study** majority of participants are pursuing a Bachelor's degree (76.3%; n = 534), while a smaller portion is enrolled in Master's programs (23.7%, n = 166). **Age Group** participants fall within the 18-25 age range (71.4%; n = 500), with 28.6% (n = 200) aged between 26 and 35. **Major or Field of Study** largest group of participants is from the Social Sciences (44.1%; n = 309), followed by Natural Sciences (21.3%; n = 149). Engineering and Computer Science majors make up 21.0% (n = 147), and Management Sciences represent 21.3% (n = 149).

The correlation coefficients between Multidimensional Perfectionism (TMPS), its subscales (MSOP, MOOP, MSPP), Academic Procrastination (TGPS), and Life Satisfaction (TLSS) for the study sample (N = 700). Correlations indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between these variables. Multidimensional Perfectionism (TMPS) shows significant positive correlations with its subscales: MSOP (Self-Oriented Perfectionism) ( $r = .407$ ;  $p < .01$ ); MOOP (Other-Oriented Perfectionism) ( $r = .358$ ;  $p < .01$ ) & MSPP (Socially Prescribed Perfectionism) ( $r = .409$ ;  $p < .01$ ). The subscales are also highly correlated with one another, reflecting overlap in the aspects of perfectionism: MSOP and MOOP ( $r = .790$ ;  $p < .01$ ); MSOP and MSPP ( $r = .700$ ;  $p < .01$ ) & MOOP and MSPP ( $r = .700$ ;  $p < .01$ ). Academic Procrastination (TGPS) has very weak and nonsignificant correlations with TMPS and its subscales, indicating little to no relationship between perfectionism and procrastination. Life Satisfaction (TLSS) shows negative but weak correlations with TMPS and its subscales, particularly with MSOP ( $r = -.117$ ;  $p < .01$ ) & MSPP ( $r = -.092$ ;  $p < .05$ ), suggesting that higher perfectionism may slightly reduce life satisfaction. This table highlights that while perfectionism subscales are strongly interrelated, their relationships with academic procrastination and life satisfaction are weak or insignificant, indicating a



limited connection between these constructs in this sample.

The mean differences, standard deviations, and *t*-values comparing male (*n* = 350) and female (*n* = 350) participants. In Academic Procrastination (TGPS) Males have a mean score of 67.5 (*SD* = 11.3), while females have a mean of 67.79 (*SD* = 10.2). The *p*-value of .341 indicates no significant difference between genders in academic procrastination, with a *t*-value of -.300. In Multidimensional Perfectionism (TMPS) Males show a mean score of 191.62 (*SD* = 14.1), compared to females with a mean of 193.1 (*SD* = 14.2). The *p*-value of .986 suggests no significant difference in perfectionism levels between male and female participants, with a *t*-value of -1.14. In Life Satisfaction (TLSS) the mean score for males is 21.4 (*SD* = 5.6), while females have a significantly lower mean of 13.2 (*SD* = 2.9). The *p*-value of .000 indicates a significant difference between genders, with a *t*-value of 24.3, reflecting a substantial gap in life satisfaction levels between males and females. The confidence interval (UL = 8.88; LL = 7.55) further supports the significance of this finding. Overall, the findings show that while there are no significant gender differences in academic procrastination or multidimensional perfectionism, there is a substantial difference in life satisfaction, with males reporting higher levels than females. This table underscores the importance of considering gender when examining factors related to life satisfaction among university student.

### Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between multidimensional perfectionism, academic procrastination, and life satisfaction among university students. A total of 700 participants were involved, and data were collected through validated questionnaires. The results of the study, analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis, offer important insights into how these variables interact with each other. This chapter will discuss the findings in the context of existing literature and explore their implications for understanding student well-being.

### Multidimensional Perfectionism and Its Role in Life Satisfaction

The results of this study showed that multidimensional perfectionism, measured by the total score (TMPS) and its subscales (self-oriented perfectionism, other-oriented perfectionism, and social prescribed perfectionism), were negatively associated with life satisfaction. Regression analysis also confirmed that higher levels of improvement were associated with lower level of life satisfaction (Shafran & Mansell, 2001). This finding is consistent perfectionism—especially socially prescribed perfectionism is detrimental to people's health. For example, previous research suggests that individuals with high levels of health anxiety tend to set unrealistic expectations and often perceive failure to fully meet them as a detriment, shortening their overall lifespan (Flett & Hewitt, 2002).

The results align with theoretical frameworks suggesting that perfectionists often engage in maladaptive behaviors, including harsh self-criticism, fear of failure, and the pursuit of unattainable standards, all of which can negatively impact well-being (Shafran & Mansell, 2001). Self-oriented perfectionism, while sometimes associated with adaptive outcomes like achievement, was also negatively correlated with life satisfaction in this study. This reflects findings from studies that suggest the pressure to meet self-imposed high standards can lead to dissatisfaction when goals are not met, creating an ongoing cycle of stress and self-doubt (Dunkley et al., 2003). Therefore, it is essential to recognize that perfectionism, even in its self-oriented form, can be both a motivating force and a source of emotional distress, depending on how individuals manage their perfectionistic tendencies.

### Academic Procrastination and Its Limited Relationship with Perfectionism and Life Satisfaction

Contrary to some prior studies that have suggested a strong link between perfectionism and procrastination (e.g., Saddler & Sacks, 1993), this study found no significant correlation between multidimensional perfectionism and academic procrastination. The weak and nonsignificant correlations suggest that perfectionistic tendencies

among the students in this sample were not closely related to their procrastination behaviors. This could be due to the nature of the sample or cultural factors that influence how perfectionism manifests in academic settings. It may also suggest that procrastination in this population is influenced by other factors, such as time management skills or academic workload, rather than perfectionism.

Furthermore, academic procrastination was not a significant predictor of life satisfaction in the regression analysis, which contrasts with studies that have found procrastination to have a negative impact on well-being (Steel, 2007). One possible explanation is that procrastination may not always lead to immediate negative outcomes for students, particularly if they are able to complete tasks before deadlines or if their procrastination is more of a strategic delay than a maladaptive behavior. Alternatively, other psychological or environmental factors may play a stronger role in influencing life satisfaction than procrastination alone.

#### Gender Differences in Life Satisfaction

The study revealed a significant gender difference in life satisfaction, with male students reporting higher levels of life satisfaction compared to female students. This finding is consistent with research that has often found women to report lower levels of life satisfaction than men, potentially due to greater societal pressures, role expectations, or emotional burden. Moreover, some studies have suggested that women may experience higher levels of socially prescribed perfectionism, which could contribute to their lower life satisfaction (Hill et al., 2018).

The gender difference in life satisfaction observed in this study could also be tied to differences in coping strategies between males and females. Research has suggested that females are more likely to internalize stress and adopt maladaptive coping mechanisms, such as rumination, which may lower life satisfaction. In contrast, males may be more likely to use problem-focused coping strategies, which could contribute to their higher life satisfaction. Future studies could explore whether these coping strategies play a role in the gender differences observed in life satisfaction among university students.

#### Implications for Student Well-being and Interventions

The findings of this study have important implications for university students' mental health and well-being. Given that multidimensional perfectionism significantly predicts lower life satisfaction, interventions targeting perfectionism could be beneficial in improving student well-being. Cognitive-behavioral interventions, which aim to challenge and reduce maladaptive perfectionistic thoughts and behaviors, have been shown to improve life satisfaction (Egan et al., 2014). These interventions could be implemented through university counseling services to help students manage the stress and anxiety associated with perfectionism. Additionally, although academic procrastination did not show a significant relationship with life satisfaction in this study, helping students develop better time management and task prioritization skills could still be valuable in reducing academic stress. Procrastination can still have negative academic consequences, and providing students with tools to manage their workloads effectively could alleviate some of the pressures they face.

#### Limitations and Future Directions

The research focused only on university students. This means that the results might not apply to other age groups or populations, such as high school students or adults in the workforce. It would be beneficial for future studies to include a broader range of participants to see if similar results occur in different settings. The data was gathered through self-report questionnaires, which means that participants may not always provide accurate reflections of their behaviors or feelings. People might overstate or underestimate their procrastination or satisfaction levels. To gain a clearer understanding of these relationships, future research could consider using objective measures or a mix of methods, like interviews or observational studies.

#### Conclusion

In summary, this study found that multidimensional perfectionism is negatively associated with life satisfaction, while academic procrastination does not significantly predict life satisfaction among university

students. Significant gender differences were observed in life satisfaction, with males reporting higher levels than females. These findings contribute to the growing body of literature on perfectionism and well-being and highlight the need for targeted interventions to help students manage perfectionism and improve their overall quality of life.

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