



Procrastination among Moroccan EFL Learners

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ABSTRACT: This research paper intended to explore procrastination among Moroccan university students. The method implemented in this study was quantitative as it dealt with numbers and statistics. The sample of this study consisted of male and female students with an age range between 18 and 24 years old. The findings of this survey shows that the majority of Moroccan university student tend to procrastinate. It also gives insight into the factors and the eras of procrastination among the participants of this study.

KEYWORDS: Procrastination, Academic Performance,

I. INTRODUCTION:

Academic performance of students is affected by many factors. One of the main factors that directly affect students' academic achievements is procrastination. Sultan & Hussain (2010) claims that procrastination is a common practice among students. According to Steel (2007), more than 85% of college students procrastinate. These statistics should be taken seriously in order to overcome a phenomenon that limits students' productivity. It should be mentioned that academic procrastination includes homework, paper writing, reading, attendance, and preparing for exams (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984).

Many researchers (Shah, 2000; Laeus, 2015; Langton, 2016) define procrastination as the practice of unjustifiably postponing tasks until the last moments before the deadline. This practice is viewed as a characteristic of undisciplined students. George (2005) numerates three trait components of procrastination: cognitive, behavioral, emotional. Chu and Choi (2005) differentiate between passive and active procrastination. The former refers to delaying the activity to avoid doing it; whereas, the

latter refers to rationally postponing the activity to the future in order to get better results.

Different factors lead to procrastination. This latter can be seen as the result of the lack of commitment, motivation, and time management. According to Sultan & Hussain (2010), lack of commitment, lack of guidance and encouragement, inappropriate time management skills, emotional stress, social problems, overconfidence and illness are the main reasons behind academic procrastination among students. Other researchers (Haycock, McCarthy, and Skay, 1998; Spada, Hiou, and Nikcevic 2006) claim that anxiety and procrastination are correlated. They found that people who experience anxiety are more likely to procrastinate.

Procrastination has many effects not only at the level of academic achievements but also at the psyche of the procrastinators. Different studies show that procrastination creates embarrassment and inferior complexity problem to procrastinations (Hussain & Sultan, 2010). It was also found that not competing tasks, which is a direct result of procrastination, lessens students' self-confidence (Steel, 2007). There are also some aspects that can be factors of procrastination to some students, but also results of procrastination to other. For instance, self-esteem is a result of this issue to Steel (2007), however, it is considered a factor leading to procrastination to Ferrari (2000).

II. METHODOLOGY:

The purpose of this study is to determine the frequency of procrastination among Moroccan university students, the factors behind procrastination, and the eras of procrastination. As the study is dealing with numerical data and percentages, the method to be implemented in this survey is quantitative. The population of this study is Moroccan university students. To assign a sample, a convenience sampling method was



applied. This sample (70 students) consisted of female and male Moroccan university students whose age ranged between 18 and 24 years old. A questionnaire, this study's main instrument, was electronically distributed to the participants.

III. FINDINGS:

The findings of this survey were not surprising. Indeed, they confirm previous studies (Solomon and Rothblum 1984; Kelleher, 1992; Steel, 2007; Sultan & Hussain, 2010). It was found in this study that 71,4% of Moroccan university students procrastinate and wait until the deadline. The gender was not taken into consideration in this study. Therefore, there is no descriptive distribution of procrastination in terms of gender.

Concerning the distribution of subjects that students tend to procrastinate, the results show that 85,7% of the participants procrastinate in writing tasks. The surprising finding is that only 57,2% of the participants who try to overcome the procrastination. Which means that informants do not pay attention to writing activities. In addition, the percentage of informants who admit procrastinating in reading tasks is 42,9%. Surprisingly, the same percentage of informants who procrastinate is the same percentage of them who try to overcome this behavior. This symmetry in results may be the result of the attitude of students towards the importance of reading. It was also reported that 28,6% who procrastinate during the period of preparing for exams. The percentage of informants who try to decrease procrastinating in preparing for exams is 71,4%. The finding related to the eras of procrastination shows that students give more attention to exams even if there is a decent number of students who procrastinate in this task. Based on this given data, it can be concluded that the majority of students study for exams only. The results of this survey shed light on different factors behind procrastination among Moroccan university students. It was reported that 57,2% of procrastinators feel it takes too long to complete their tasks. This number may lead us to conclude, subliminally, that 57,2% of Moroccan university students are passive procrastinators. Also, 42,9% of the informants of this study reported that their procrastination is due to waiting for information from classmates. This number shows that half of the procrastinators rely on others to complete their tasks. There is another aspect that leads students to procrastination is relying on professors to complete tasks. It is very surprising that 85,7% of procrastinators do not take any step to do their work until they are provided with information from

their professors. Based on this number, it should be noted that efforts should be given to making our students more autonomous. Autonomy is the main characteristic of today's learners and they became the center of the teaching/learning process (Cotterall, 1999).

IV. CONCLUSION:

The phenomenon of procrastination has been taking too much attention since the 1980s. This attention was not randomly given to this issue as it is one of the main factors that hinders higher achievements not only in academia but also in different life concerns. The data we have from many studies that have been administration to explore this issue alerts us. The data shows that procrastination among students is increasing year after year especially during this era whereas students are hooked by technology. Studies have given enough attention to the reasons behind procrastination and its effects. Now, it is highly needed to focus and shed light on the measures that should be taken so as to overcome this phenomenon.

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