

# Periodic Research

## Study of Variation in Procrastination Levels Among Students of Different Traits and Characteristics



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### Abstract

The presented study aims to analyse the difference in procrastination level with respect to personality, sex, order of birth and class timings. This study adopted online survey method and samples for the study were collected from various places across India. A total of 116 people were surveyed out of which 80 were male and 36 female. The data was collected using a questionnaire of 25 questions, 15 to decide the procrastination level and the rest 10 to decide the type of personality.

**Keywords:** Procrastination, Personality, Survey.

### Introduction

Procrastination is the practice of carrying out less urgent tasks in preference to more urgent ones, or doing more pleasurable things in place of less pleasurable ones, and thus putting off impending tasks to a later time, sometimes to the "last minute" before a deadline. The pleasure principle may be responsible for procrastination; one may prefer to avoid negative emotions, and to delay stressful tasks. The belief that one works best under pressure provides an additional incentive to the postponement of tasks. Some psychologists cite such behaviour as a mechanism for coping with the anxiety associated with starting or completing any task or decision.

Extraversion or being an extrovert is "the act, state, or habit of being predominantly concerned with obtaining gratification from what is outside the self". Extraverts tend to enjoy human interactions and to be enthusiastic, talkative, assertive, and gregarious. Extraverts are energized and thrive off of being around other people. They take pleasure in activities that involve large social gatherings, such as parties, community activities, public demonstrations, and business or political groups. They tend to be energized when around other people, and they are more prone to boredom when they are by themselves.

Introversion or being an introvert is "the state of or tendency toward being wholly or predominantly concerned with and interested in one's own mental life". Introverts are typically more reserved or reflective. Some popular psychologists have characterized introverts as people whose energy tends to expand through reflection and dwindle during interaction. This is similar to Jung's view, although he focused on mental energy rather than physical energy. Few modern conceptions make this distinction. Introverts often take pleasure in solitary activities such as reading, writing, using computers, hiking and fishing.

### Aim of the Study

Procrastination is considered to be a great setback in the performance of students. Students with higher procrastination tend to be less productive than others and that shows in their results. We, in this paper are trying to analyse different reasons for higher levels of procrastination among students and whether these reasons are generic and based on some characteristics or individual based.

The presented study aims to analyse the difference in procrastination levels of the surveyed people with respect to their personality type, sex, order of birth and class timings as some of the reasons. This study adopted online survey method and samples for the study were collected from various places across India. These results can be used while psychoanalysis of people of different personality types, sex, etc. The outcomes of the study can be further used to analyse the

reasons for high levels of procrastination among people of different backgrounds such as sex, order of birth, etc.

## Review of Literature

In 'The Nature of Procrastination: A Meta-Analytic and Theoretical Review of Quintessential Self-Regulatory Failure', Piers Steel, University of Calgary attempts to specify the relationship between procrastination and individual differences. To help organize the suspected correlates, researchers have organized traits into the traditional five-factor model. Still, several researchers have focused their work on a single facet of a trait, such as extroversion. Because the field of personality lacks definitive terminology at the facet level, this situation generates an unwieldy number of relationships and creates some confusion about what facets should be associated with any specific trait. To reduce redundancy and illuminate potential patterns, he has grouped together for discussion facets that share a similar theoretical association with procrastination.

Consequently, results are clustered into the following groups. Neuroticism is considered along with four of its facets: irrational beliefs, self-efficacy and self-esteem, self-handicapping, and depression. Similarly, the trait extraversion is reviewed along with three of its facets: positive affect, impulsiveness, and sensation seeking. Agreeableness is considered only at the trait level, as is openness to experience. Intelligence/aptitude is also discussed alongside openness to experience but is analysed separately. Finally, conscientiousness is considered along with several constructs related to self-regulation: distractibility, organization, achievement motivation, and the intention–action gap.

Extraversion is one of the more interesting possible causes of procrastination, but also one of the more complicated. Extraverts are usually described as sociable, optimistic, outgoing, energetic, expressive, exciting, and impulsive. Note that the exact definition of impulsiveness and its structure wanders somewhat, as well as which personality trait it best represents. Typically, impulsiveness indicates spontaneity and a tendency to act upon whims and inclinations. Although pessimism and low energy level are aspects of depression, they are also a central part of extraversion, especially as measured by positive emotionality or affect. These preliminary findings demonstrate some of the complexities of extraversion, as procrastination's hypothesized relationships with these facets conflict. Both lethargy and impulsiveness are expected to predict procrastination, but lethargy indicates a lack of extraversion, whereas impulsiveness suggests an abundance of the trait. In keeping with this inconsistency, no significant results are expected for extraversion.

The Myers–Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is an introspective self-report questionnaire designed to indicate psychological preferences in how people perceive the world and make decisions. The MBTI was constructed by Katharine Cook Briggs and her daughter Isabel Briggs Myers. It is based on

the typological theory proposed by Carl Jung who had speculated that there are four principal psychological functions by which humans experience the world – sensation, intuition, feeling, and thinking – and that one of these four functions is dominant for a person most of the time. The MBTI was constructed for normal populations and emphasizes the value of naturally occurring differences. The underlying assumption of the MBTI is that we all have specific preferences in the way we construe our experiences, and these preferences underlie our interests, needs, values, and motivation.

In "Academic Procrastination: Frequency and Cognitive-Behavioral Correlates", Laura J. et al (1984), she states that procrastination is the act of needlessly delaying the tasks to the point of experiencing subjective discomfort, in an all-to-familiar problem. She estimates that 95% of college students engage in procrastination. Also that the tendency for students to procrastinate increases the longer they are in college: freshmen procrastinate the least; seniors, the most.

## Methodology

### Variables

The independent variable involved is Personality type (extrovert/introvert) and dependent variable is Procrastination level. The descriptive variables considered in their study are gender, order of birth and class timings.

### Hypotheses

1. Procrastination levels will be equal among introverts and extroverts.
2. Students with evening classes will procrastinate more than those having morning classes.
3. Males and females will procrastinate equally.
4. First born child will procrastinate less than his/her younger siblings.

### Research Method

The study adopted survey method, which is objective and closed-ended in nature. The study assesses the significance of sex, order of birth and class timings on the personality type and procrastination level.

### Tools Used

To assess the given hypotheses, the following tools were used:

1. Procrastination Scale (Lay, 1986). Journal of Research in Personality, 20, 474-495: Score was in the range of 15 to 75 according to 15 questions with scoring on each question from 1 to 5. Higher score implies more procrastination traits among the individual.
2. Questionnaire for personality type in "Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking" (Crown, 2012) by Susan Cain: Score was within a range of 1 to 10. For simplification, an individual with a score of less than 5 was considered as an introvert and more than 5, extrovert.

### Sample

The samples for the study were collected online from people of various age groups and professions. A total of 116 people were selected out

which 86 are male and 30 are female. Convenience or accidental sampling design was used.

**Sex**

1 – male, 2 – female

**Order of Birth**

1 – First Born, 2 – Second Born, 3 – Only Child, 4 – Other

**Class Timings**

1 – Morning, 2 – Evening, 3 – Mixed

Personality: 1 – Introvert, 2 – Extrovert

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Sex	116	1.0	2.0	1.259	.441
Order of Birth	116	1.0	4.0	1.759	.844
Class Timings	116	1.0	3.0	1.776	.838
Personality	116	1.0	2.0	1.698	.466

The data collected was analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. Descriptive analysis (mean, standard deviation) was used to find the level of procrastination and the type of personality among adults. T test and ANOVA test were used to assess the significance difference in the level of procrastination and the type of personality based on their gender, order of birth and class timings.

**Results and Discussions**

**Statistics**

	Sex	Personality	Class Timings	Order of Birth
N Valid	116	116	116	116
Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean	1.259	1.6897	1.776	1.759
Median	1.000	2.0000	2.000	2.000
Std.Deviatio	.4417	.46668	.8386	.8442

**Hypotheses 1**

“Procrastination levels are equal among introverts and extroverts.”

**Table 1**  
**Procrastination Level and Personality Group Statistics**

Personality	N	Mean Procrastination Score	Std. Deviation	t - value	
pro_sum	Introvert	36	46.00	5.70861	.323
	Extrovert	80	45.3250	7.96591	

Procrastination score is within a range of 15 to 75, with 15 being the least procrastinating and 75, the most. Table 1 indicates the t-value for the difference in procrastination level among extroverts and introverts. No significant difference is found between the procrastination levels of people with different personality types. Hence the hypothesis is accepted.

**Hypotheses 2**

“Students with evening classes procrastinate more than those having morning classes.”

**Table 2**  
**Procrastination and Class Timings**

pro_sum	N	Mean Procrastination score	Std. Deviation	F value
Morning	28	46.1429	7.81127	563
Evening	15	46.1333	6.06944	
Mixed	15	43.8000	7.60827	
Total	58	45.5345	7.29628	

Procrastination score is within a range of 15 to 75, with 15 being the least procrastinating and 75, the most. Table 2 indicates the f value for difference in procrastination level among students with morning, evening and mixed class timings. Since there are three groups to be evaluated, ANOVA test is used and f value is calculated. No significant difference is found between the three groups in the level of procrastination. Hence the hypothesis is not accepted.

**Hypotheses 3**

“Males and females procrastinate equally.”

**Table 3**  
**Procrastination and Gender**

pro_sum	Sex	N	Mean Procrastination score	Std. Deviation	t-value
	Male	43	45.9767	7.14306	.779
	Female	15	44.2667	7.83278	

Procrastination score is within a range of 15 to 75, with 15 being the least procrastinating and 75, the most. Table 3 indicates the t-value for the difference in procrastination level between males and females. No significant difference is found in the procrastination levels between males and females. Hence the hypothesis is accepted.

**Hypotheses 4**

“First born child procrastinates less than his/her younger siblings.”

**Table 4**  
**Procrastination and Order of Birth**

pro_sum	N	Mean Procrastination Score	Std. Deviation	f-value
First Child	25	44.1600	7.09859	.935
Second Child	26	45.9231	8.02458	
OnlyChild	3	47.3333	1.52753	
Others	4	50.2500	4.50000	
Total	58	45.5345	7.29628	

Procrastination score is within a range of 15 to 75, with 15 being the least procrastinating and 75, the most. Table 4 indicates the f value for difference in procrastination level among first child, second child, only child and others. Since there are four groups to be evaluated, ANOVA test is used and f value is calculated. No significant difference is found between the four groups in the level of procrastination. Hence the hypothesis is not accepted.

**Conclusions**

1. Procrastination levels do not differ significantly among introverts and extroverts.
2. Procrastination levels do not differ significantly among students with evening and morning classes.
3. Males and females procrastinate equally.
4. Order of birth does not significantly determine the level of procrastination.

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