

The survey of the group-training time management effectiveness on the students' procrastination

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Abstract

The present study aims at the investigation of the group-training time management effectiveness on the city of Iarastan's high school boy students' procrastination from. The present study is an underlying research in terms of the objectives it is in pursue of and it is a descriptive research of the correlation type in terms of data collection methods it uses. The study methodology used here is a pretest-posttest with a one-month follow-up and a control group. The study participants were 455 first grade high school boy students from the city of Lar all of whom were selected based on a randomized clustering method. Data collection tool was the procrastination questionnaire. 30 individuals with the highest procrastination score were selected as the study sample volume based on a simple randomized method. The statistical data were analyzed by means of the descriptive statistics, covariance analysis and reassessment. The results indicated that 65% of the students' procrastination score differences pertained to the group-training time management procedures. Also, the pretest-posttest and pretest-follow-up scores differed significantly among the experimental and control groups regarding the procrastination rate. The results of the study indicated that training for time management significantly affects the students' procrastination.

Key Words: time management, procrastination

Introduction

In many of the various academic levels we are bearing witness to procrastination or laziness among the students and such an issue is an important concern challenging the parents and the educational authorities. Some of the students do not take their lessons serious or are lazy and slothful in finishing their assignments and this is a cause contributing to the academic underachievement in them. The term procrastination has been derived from a prefix "pro" meaning after, later and in support of and a root "crastinus", meaning tomorrow and literally it means until tomorrow [1]. In fact, procrastination is a way of scaping from something to live to the maximum extent possible in the present time [2]. Time is the most valuable source at the hand of the human beings, since all of the other sources take their value if there is time and it is due to the same

worth and importance that paying attention to the time has been repeated in many of the cultures and languages [3]. Time management can be considered as an instrument by means of which one can get access to a better life characterized by valuable accomplishments and deep feelings, satisfaction and perfection [4]. The importance and the priority of the time has long been focused on by the scientists and the thinkers to the extent that some have attempted foretelling in order to gain a greater recognition and to gain a sort of control over the time, some have also broken the time limits and boundaries and some of the others have also predicted many years later from now [5-7]. Exercising time management makes the individual more aware of the available time and perform duties in a more organized and effective manner to obtain the maximum productivity possible in this way [8]. Ziegler [9] in his study comes to the conclusion that for barring the factors resulting in wastage of time and improving the productivity the activities should be prioritized and the results of every project at hand should be considered and the least possible time should be spent on less important activities. In addition, the evidences indicate that the individuals' environment and place of living are effective on their procrastination. For instance, the individuals who live in buildings with no greeneries show a greater deal of procrastination in coping with fundamental issues. The study has demonstrated that the green areas increase the individuals' efficiency through reducing their mental tiredness and finally result in the decrease in procrastination [10]. Karami [11] in a study called the "procrastination prevalence rate in the university students and the relation it has with the anxiety and depression among 400 Islamic Azad university students, Rudehen Branch," came to the conclusion that more than half of the testees (61%) had a high level (24%) and very high level of procrastination (37%) and it was also found out that though procrastination is significantly associated with anxiety and depression but it solely accounts for 3.5% and 3% of the anxiety and depression variations, respectively.

The discussion and the evaluation of procrastination and the theories of relevance to the present study suggest that the procrastination exposes the individuals to mental, social and economical losses

in both the individual and social levels. Based on the theories provided regarding procrastination which can be classified in areas such as attention, behavioral, self-deceit, anxiety, disobedience, expectations mitigation, and procrastination talent, procrastination is of various types and its harmful outcomes depend on the situation in such a way that based on the patterns focused on in the current research project procrastination stems from various factors, specially impulsiveness. According to the fact that procrastination process is seen abundantly among the students and it is a factor that results in behavioral and academic underachievement and delayed achievement in the long run and also because teaching the life skills has lost its intensity in the high schools, it seems that learning and teaching the time management concept in a direct way can be effective on the reduction in procrastination and because such a phenomenon is seen in the students due to reasons such as lack of motivation and other reasons of the like the current research becomes necessary because of the scientific, social and academic reasons and it is necessary to take various kinds of trainings and teachings effectiveness on the procrastination reduction into consideration. Therefore, it can be said that reducing procrastination in the students is in a direct relationship with the time management skills training and according to the problems and the challenges that procrastination brings for the human beings, particularly the students, thus the present study is seeking to figure out whether being trained for the time management skills can be effective on the students' procrastination?

Method:

Study plan: the plan used in the current research paper follows an experimental, pretest-posttest and posttest-follow-up test method with control group by means of which the study population are assigned to different groups the objective of which is to elaborate on the effect that group-training for time management skills can exert on the procrastination of Larestan's high school students.

The participants: the study population includes 455 first grade high school boy students from the city of Larestan who were schooling during the curriculum years from 2012 to 2013. The study sample volume has been selected based on a randomized clustering method which was carried out as follows: from the 6 high schools in the city of Lar three schools were selected and from every school one first grade was appointed and the entire students in the class were administered with the procrastination questionnaires and 30 students with the highest scores were randomly selected and they were assigned to two 15-individual groups. After the study sample volume was determined and after it was coordinated with the schools headmasters in the city of Lar, the selected students received the procrastination questionnaire

and the necessary explanations regarding the way that the questionnaires had to be completed were provided to them. After the questionnaires were completed, 30 students were selected from those with the highest scores of the procrastination questionnaire who were finally assigned to two 15-individual groups. The experimental group was given 8 sessions of time management training. The sessions lasted 90 minutes and were held once a week and the control group received no intervention. The overall content provided in every session included a review of the topics introduced in the last session and inspecting the homework from the last session, teaching and training for new time management skills, giving the new homework related to the newly taught topics, concluding remarks.

Theoretical and practical definitions of the variables:

Procrastination: There are numerous definitions provided for the term procrastination [12-14]. Procrastination means postponing an assigned duty which is required to be finished within a specified period of time but it has not been carried out for a reason or another [15]. By procrastination here we mean the score that the participants had obtained from the procrastination questionnaire [16] and it can range from 0 to 80 and the individuals with higher scores are called procrastinators.

Time management: it is a tool for the evaluation, control and determination of the objectives in life and getting aware of the way that the time should be spent which includes the prioritization of the objectives and devising assignments to reach to that goal [17]. By time management in the present study we mean the group training which takes place in the form of eight 90-minute sessions, once a week, and also the instructional material which has been compiled based on the life skills books authored by Naseri and Na'eeni [18] and it incorporates lessons on time management, as well.

Instrument:

Procrastination questionnaire: the questionnaire was constructed in 1986 by Lee [16] and it is a general scale for assessing and measuring procrastination. Procrastination questionnaire contains 20 items by which the activities and actions are investigated which are best indicators of the delay in the time that they had to be carried out. The questionnaire is rated based on a 5-point scale. Therefore, every participant chooses one of the following options as the answer to the items presented in the questionnaire: "I do not have such a feature at all" (0), "I do not have such a feature to a relative extent" (1), "neutral" (2), "I relatively have this feature" (3) and "I completely have this feature" (4). The individual's obtainable possible score ranges from 0 to 80, that is to say the individual who

obtains a score of 80 possesses a high level of procrastination characteristics. The inverse questions were 3, 4, 6, 8, 11, 13, 14, 15, 18 and 20. The questionnaire's validity and reliability were evaluated in a study in 2011 by Akbari and Samani by means of Cronbach's internal consistency alpha coefficient method and a value of 0.85 was obtained which is indicative of an optimum reliability of the test.

Study implementation method: after the study sample volume was determined and the necessary coordination was made with the headmasters of the high schools from the city of Lar, the selected students were given the procrastination questionnaire and they were briefed on the way that the questionnaires had to be completed. After the questionnaires were completed, 30 students with the highest scores were selected randomly and they were stochastically assigned to two 15-individual groups, an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group received eight 90-minute sessions, once a week, to be trained for time management skills (setting of the goals, identification of the needs and the wants, planning, time control, creating a list of the various solutions, making decision on the most appropriate solutions, solution execution and review) but the control group received no intervention. The general content of each session included the following topics: reviewing the last session's material and the inspection of the last session's homework, teaching and training for new skills of time management, giving new home assignments regarding the taught skills, conclusion and providing a summary of the topics presented.

Findings:

The data obtained from the questionnaires were analyzed by taking advantage of SPSS ver.21. The analysis took place in two stages concerning the descriptive statistics and the inferential statistics. AS for the descriptive statistics, the mean and the standard deviation of the individuals' scores in experimental and control and follow-up groups were investigated and in respect to the inferential statistics the variance analysis with repetitive measurements was used based on the study hypotheses, the results of which have been presented in the following tables.

The mean and the standard deviation of the procrastination scores obtained from the pretest, posttest and follow-up have been given in table (1). The results of the aforesaid table indicate that procrastination mean scores in posttest and follow-up test of the experimental group is more reduced in contrast to the control group.

Table 1: mean and standard deviation of the procrastination scores from pretest, posttest and follow-up tests

Groups position	Pretest		Posttest		Follow-up	
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation	Mean	Std. Deviation
Experimental group	35.6	3.7	22.3	4.5	20.4	5.2
Control group	33.2	3.6	31.4	3.4	31.6	3.4

The results pertaining to the differences in the procrastination posttest scores have been given in table (2). As it is observed in the second row, the F-value is obtained as equal to 88.6 which is significant in 0.01 level. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the procrastination scores obtained from the posttest after eliminating the pretest effects. There is a significant difference between the procrastination scores of the students who have been investigated based on group training time-management method in contrast to the control group. And, according to the Eta coefficient (0.65), it can be concluded that 65% of the students' procrastination scores differences pertains to the group-training time management method.

Table 2: the investigation of the differences in the procrastination posttest scores

Variations source	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean squares	F-value	Significance level	Eta coefficient
Pretest effect	88.6	1	88.6	6.5	0.01	0.19
Independent variable effect	704.1	1	704.1	52.1	0.0001	0.65
Error	364.3	27	13.4	---	----	----

Adjusted total	227 24.0 0	30	----	---	----	----
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The summary of the inter- and intra-testees variance analysis results with a repetitive measurement of the procrastination posttest scores and pretest-follow-up tests scores differentials has been presented in table (3). As it is observed from table (3), there is a significant difference between the pretest-posttest and pretest-follow-up tests scores regarding the procrastination rate in the experimental and control groups ($P=0.0001<0.01$ and $F=76.04$). Also, it is observed in the table that there is a significant difference ($F=7.8$ and $P=0.009<0.05$) between the factors' scores (pretest-posttest and pretest-follow-up).

Table 3: the summary of the inter- and intra-testees' variance analysis results with iterative measurement of the procrastination posttest and pretest-follow-up tests scores differences

Source of variations	Statistical indices	Sum of squares	Degree of freedom	Mean squares	Fisher value (F)	Significance level (P)
Inter-testees	Groups	2548.017	1	2548.017	76.04	0.0001
	Error	938.13	28	33.5		
Intra-testees	Factor	27.3	1	27.3	7.8	0.009
	Groups factor	18.1	1	18.1	5.2	0.03
	Error	97.3	28	3.4		

Discussion:

Based on the results obtained from the data analysis it was made evident that the group training for time management has a significant influence on the students' procrastination. In the investigation of the studies, no study evaluating the group training for time management suggesting results indicative of its effectiveness was found corresponding to the results obtained by the present study. Thus, to elaborate more on the issue we prefer to point to the studies which are deemed to be closer to the theme of the

present study [11, 19-23] in which it has been found out that academic self-regulation and religious beliefs are associated with the attenuation of self-disabling and that the academic self-efficacy is associated with the reduction in anxiety and depression. In elaborating on the results just mentioned it can be said that many of the human beings become entangled by procrastination and job postponement in various time cross-sections of their lives and this has been the cause of a great many of harms and losses in itself and it is clearly visible among the students in various academic levels that procrastination and laziness in studying and doing homework, as well, has brought a situation for their academic underachievement. It has been frequently seen that the students waste their time and get busy with useless things or they seem not to have a proper plan for studying their lessons and they most often choose to study their lessons the night before the exam. It can be stated that time management is a skill everyone requires in his or her life. Time management skill makes the individual carry out his or her jobs or activities in an organized manner and brings about the grounding for timely accomplishment of the assignments and reduces the procrastination and laziness in performance, so teaching and training such skills is necessary for the human beings. Also, it is recommended that the students should be trained for such skills since they teach the students that the time is worthy and the students can learn how to make use of time in their academic achievement and try to avoid wasting their time via accurate and careful planning during their course of schooling to finally bear witness to their progress and take advantage of their talents in various stages of life; moreover, time management enhances the individual's organization, order and success and the individual will feel more satisfaction with his or her life.

There are limitations in every research upon which the later studies preparations are laid. The present study also faced constraints and limitations, including that the study was performed on the high school students and generalizing the results to the lower levels of education should be done with due care and that the study was undertaken on the boy students, so its generalization to the girls should be performed with due care. Also, the students were only available during certain hours and they could not be controlled out of school time. According to the challenges and the limitations of the study it is therefore suggested that later studies should also incorporate the investigation of the other skills and other interventions including the study methods, decision-making skills and so forth.

Also, according to the results obtained in the present study some applied suggestions can be made to the parents, teachers, instructors, headmasters, officials and education ministry planners and the other

interested groups and individuals. Based on the importance of procrastination and the effect it has on the students' academic performance one can hold training and teaching workshops in which the students can learn life skills in order for their potencies to be enhanced and also to take measures in decreasing the academic procrastination.

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