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## **PROCRASTINATION AND SELF-ESTEEM: AN ANALYSIS OF PROCRASTINATION IN RELATION TO SELF -ESTEEM AND DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES AMONG PUBLIC SERVANTS OF TIRANA**

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### **Abstract**

Procrastination is a complex psychological behavior with emotional, cognitive, and behavioral components involving postponement of tasks or work for later despite negative consequences. This behavior has been widely studied by foreign researchers and has become the focus of psychological studies lately. This study aims to analyze procrastination in the Albanian context in relation to self-esteem and demographic factors such as age, gender, marital status, education, and the number of children among public servants in the city of Tirana. The study included 182 participants, of whom 140 were female and 42 were male, employed in public institutions in the city of Tirana. In order to measure the relationship between procrastination and self-esteem, two self-report instruments were used: Lay's General Procrastination Scale and Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale. The results show that 95.6% of participants have a normal level of procrastination, 2.7% of public servants have a high level of procrastination and 1.6% have a low level of procrastination. Pursuant to the study hypothesis that procrastination is expected to have a statistical correlation with the self-esteem it resulted that there is no statistically significant relationship between the two variables, nor between procrastination and demographic variables. Partial correlations revealed that procrastination statements had a statistical relationship with self-esteem and demographic variables. It was observed that 95% of the procrastination statements showed a statistically significant relationship with both the self-esteem statements and the demographic variables.

**Keywords:** *Procrastination; self-esteem; demographic factors; public servants*

### **Procrastination and Self-Esteem: An Analysis of Procrastination in Relation to Self -Esteem and Demographic Variables among Public Servants of Tirana**

*"You may delay, but time will not ." – Benjamin Franklin*

According to Knaus (2000), the phenomenon of procrastination can be traced back over 2.5 million years. Prominent figures such as Benjamin Franklin, Shakespeare, and even Sigmund Freud have discussed procrastination in their writings. However, its formal scientific study began more recently, during the 1970s. Historical traces of procrastination are also found in ancient civilizations such as Egypt and Rome, and even in the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi, where this "ancient nemesis" was addressed through

penalties and sanctions (Knaus, 2000).

But what exactly is procrastination? In psychology, it is defined as the postponement of decisions, responsibilities, or tasks—often for the sake of immediate gratification or due to underlying insecurities and internalized anxiety. This behavior typically results in missed deadlines and unfulfilled goals. The nature of the task itself also influences procrastinatory behavior. Ferrari, O’Callaghan, and Newbegin (2005) define procrastination as the “intentional delay of starting and finishing tasks.” It has three key components: cognitive, behavioral, and emotional. Additionally, procrastination is influenced by four main factors: task characteristics, individual personality differences, expected outcomes, and demographic factors. Prior research has shown that it is particularly associated with personality traits and task characteristics—especially perceived task difficulty (Steel, 2007).

This study aims to measure procrastination related to personality aspects, in particular its connection with self-esteem and demographic factors. I believe that the study of procrastination in the Albanian context is important to our society overall as it will offer valuable insights into its cultural and societal dimensions. And as the renowned procrastination researcher Piers Steel (2007) emphasizes its study should not be delayed or “forgotten” since this phenomenon continues to rise.

## II. Methodology

### Purpose of the study

To explore procrastination tendencies in relation to self-esteem and demographic variables among public servants working in public institutions in Tirana.

### Study objectives

- To examine the correlation between procrastination and self-esteem among participants
- To assess the correlation between procrastination and demographic variables
- To identify and describe participants’ levels of procrastination
- To describe the relationships among procrastination, self-esteem, and demographic variables

### Participants

The study involved 182 participants: 140 females and 42 males, aged 20 to 65. Participants were employed in various public institutions in Tirana, including the Ministry of Infrastructure and Energy (MIE), the Institute of Statistics (INSTAT), the Institute of Insurance (INSIG), the National Agency of Natural Resources (AKBN), and the Municipality of Tirana.

### Sample

Of the 182 participants: *Gender*: 23.1% were male (n=42), and 76.9% were female (n=140).

*Age Distribution*: 20–25 years: 20.9%; 26–35 years: 35.7%; 36–45 years: 16.5%; 46–55 years: 19.2% 56–65 years: 7.7%. *Marital Status*: 45.1% were single, and 54.9% were married.

*Education Level*: High school: 4.4%; Bachelor’s degree: 47.3%; Master’s degree: 46.2%; PhD: 2.2%. *Number of Children*: None: 44%; One: 17.6%; Two: 33.5%; Three: 4.9%.

Demographic variables		Number	Column%
Age	20-25	38	20.9%
	26-35	65	35.7%
	36-45	30	16.5%
	46-55	35	19.2%
	56-65	14	7.7%
Gender	Male	42	23.1%
	Female	140	76.9%
Civil status	Single	82	45.1%
	Married	100	54.9%
Education (secondary school, high school, bachelor, masters, PhD):	Basic education	0	0%
	High- school	8	4.4%
	University	86	47.3%
	Masters	84	46.2%
	Phd	4	2.2%
Number of children:	0	80	44.0%
	1	32	17.6%
	2	61	33.5%
	3	9	4.9%

### Instruments

In addition to the extensive use of theoretical literature, two validated self-report psychometric instruments were used: 1. The General Procrastination Scale (Lay, 1986), with a test-retest reliability of 0.80 and Cronbach's alpha of 0.82 and 2. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), with an internal consistency of approximately 0.70. Prior to full-scale administration, the instruments were piloted with 15 public servants to ensure clarity and cultural relevance. Necessary adjustments were made, and the instruments were then translated into Albanian and refined by two English language experts.

### Data analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive and correlational analyses were conducted for the categorical variables. Statistical significance was assessed using the p-value and Chi-square test to evaluate the relationships between procrastination, self-esteem, and demographic characteristics.

### Study design

This is a descriptive, correlational, and cross-sectional study, as data were collected from a specific population at a single point in time.

### Study limitations

- The sample is limited to public servants in Tirana and may not be representative of the entire country.

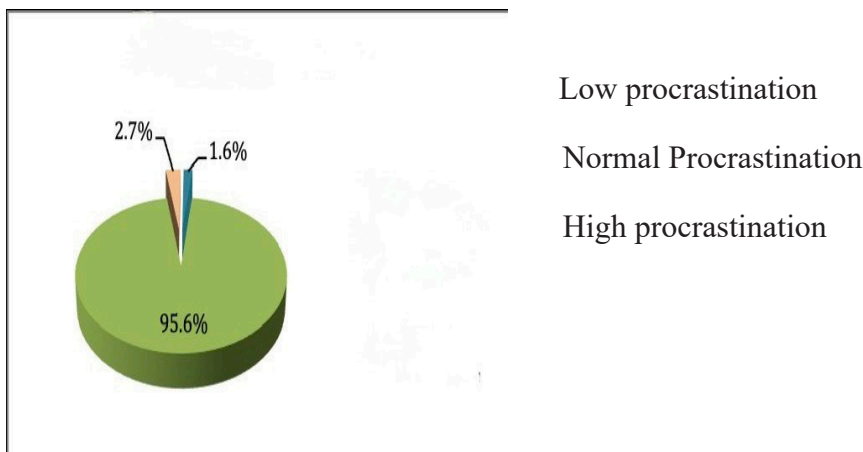
- The study examines only one personality trait (self-esteem); other relevant traits such as impulsivity, time management, or locus of control are not included.
- The sample is gender-imbalanced, with a larger proportion of female participants (76.9%), which reflects the actual composition of the public institutions involved.

### III. Results

#### Procrastination level

Using the General Procrastination Scale, results showed: Low procrastination: 1.6%; Normal procrastination: 95.6%; High procrastination: 2.7 % (Fig.1).

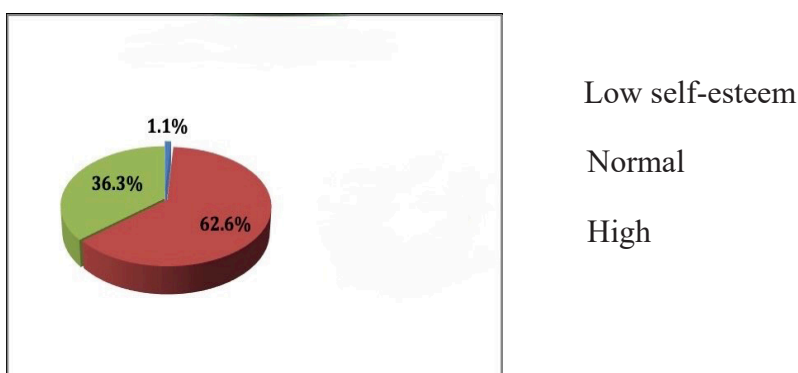
**Figure 1. Procrastination level of study participants**



#### Self - esteem level

From 182 individuals included in the study it results that 1.1% of the study participants have a low level of self-esteem; 6.2% have a normal level and 36.3% have high self-esteem (Fig. 2).

**Figure 2. Self-esteem level of study participants**



## Correlations between the procrastination and self-esteem variables

Approximately 96% of participants fall within the normal range on the procrastination scale. Regarding self-esteem, 1.1% of individuals exhibit low self-esteem, 62.6% fall within the normal range, and 35.2% report high self-esteem. Based on the analysis of both instruments and the application of statistical significance tests, the results indicate that there is no strong statistical relationship between levels of procrastination and self-esteem. This is supported by a p-value of 0.755 and a Chi-square test value of 1.895. The cross-tabulated data for these two variables are presented in the table below (Table 4).

**Table 4. Cross- tab and statistical significance test on procrastination and self-esteem**

TotAtot General Procrastination Scale* UtotG Self-esteem Crosstabulation % total							
		Self-esteem			Total	Chi-square	p-value
		Low self-esteem	Normal self-esteem	High self-esteem			
General Procrastination Scale	Low procrastination		1.6%		1.6%	1.895 <sup>a</sup>	.755
	Normal	1.1%	59.3%	35.2%	95.6%		
	High		1.6%	1.1%	2.7%		
Total		1.1%	62.6%	36.3%	100.0%		

Although the overall relationship between the procrastination variable and self-esteem is not statistically significant, a significant relationship was identified at the level of individual items within the self-esteem scale. Specifically, procrastination showed a statistically significant association with item no. 5 of the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale: “I feel I do not have much to be proud of” ( $p = 0.000$ ). Additionally, a marginally significant relationship was observed with item no. 10: “There are times when I feel that I am not good at anything” ( $p = 0.087$ ).

## IV. Discussion and Recommendations

This study aimed to measure procrastination in relation to self-esteem and selected demographic variables among public servants in Tirana. In doing so, it contributes to establishing an initial body of research on a complex behavior—procrastination—within the Albanian context. The findings serve as a foundation for generating future hypotheses and conducting more extensive studies.

*Procrastination tendencies:* Results indicate that the vast majority of participants (95.6%) exhibit a normal level of procrastination, with only 2.7% showing a high level and 1.6% a low level. These findings suggest that procrastination, while present, is not extreme in this population but still warrants further examination.

*Procrastination and self-esteem:* The study findings do not support the hypothesis that procrastination is

significantly correlated with self-esteem, with a p-value of 0.755. However, while the correlation between the overall procrastination score and the total self-esteem score is not statistically significant, further analysis revealed significant associations between specific items on the General Procrastination Scale and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale. This suggests that although the two constructs may not be broadly correlated, there are meaningful interactions at the item level that merit further exploration.

*Procrastination, personality and task characteristics:* Participant responses on the General Procrastination Scale indicate that procrastination behaviors may stem from both personality traits and perceptions of task difficulty. This aligns with previous research emphasizing the influence of task-related factors (e.g., perceived difficulty, clarity, or aversiveness) and individual differences (e.g., self-discipline, time management skills) on procrastination behaviors and task characteristics.

*Procrastination and demographic variables:* Analysis of demographic variables revealed noteworthy patterns. Participants aged 26–35 showed higher levels of procrastination, whereas those aged 56–65 reported the lowest levels. This finding supports prior research suggesting that older individuals tend to manage procrastination more effectively, possibly due to increased life experience, self-regulation skills, or refined time-management strategies.

An interesting trend emerged in relation to *the number of children*. Participants without children reported a 3% rate of high procrastination, while those with one child showed a 6% rate—double that of the former group. This may indicate that becoming a parent, particularly for the first time, introduces new stressors and responsibilities that could contribute to increased procrastination. This finding suggests the need for further research to investigate procrastination behaviors among new parents, possibly in relation to role overload or adjustment challenges.

*Self-esteem:* The majority of participants (62.6%) reported high self-esteem, 36.3% reported normal levels, and only 1.1% reported low self-esteem. This distribution could, in part, be attributed to cultural factors. It is commonly observed that in Albanian society, individuals may be reluctant to acknowledge weaknesses or respond honestly to questions about self-perception and personal shortcomings. This may be reflected in the response patterns, as a significant number of participants selected extreme answers such as “strongly agree” or “strongly disagree” on self-esteem items. As noted in the results section, there was no statistically significant correlation between overall procrastination and self-esteem scores. Nonetheless, meaningful relationships were found between procrastination and certain items of the self-esteem scale, as well as with some demographic factors. This highlights the complexity of the interplay between these variables and suggests avenues for more nuanced investigation.

## V. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study explored the relationship between procrastination, self-esteem, and demographic variables among public servants in the city of Tirana. The findings provide a valuable starting point for understanding how procrastination manifests in the Albanian context, especially within the public sector. Although no statistically significant correlation was found between overall procrastination and self-esteem scores, significant associations were observed at the item level between certain procrastination and self-esteem statements. This suggests that while procrastination and self-esteem may not be broadly interlinked, specific aspects of self-perception can influence procrastinatory behavior. Additionally, the study highlighted differences in procrastination levels across demographic groups, with younger participants and first-time parents showing higher levels of procrastination. These findings suggest that age and life responsibilities, such as parenthood, may play a role in shaping procrastination tendencies.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing body of literature on procrastination by offering preliminary insights into its presence and patterns among public servants in Albania. It underscores the need for

further research that includes a broader range of personality traits, job characteristics, and population samples. Moreover, future qualitative research may uncover deeper psychological and cultural factors that influence procrastination behavior in the Albanian context.

Based on the findings of this study, the following *recommendations* are proposed:

- To better understand procrastination at the city or national level, a larger and more diverse sample is recommended.
- Future studies should include individuals from the private sector to compare procrastination tendencies across different work environments.
- Beyond self-esteem, future research should incorporate other relevant traits such as impulsivity, locus of control, and time management.
- Studies involving students could provide insight into how procrastination affects academic performance and educational outcomes.
- A qualitative approach could offer deeper insight into the psychological and cultural aspects of procrastination, particularly how it relates to personality and life circumstances.

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