

Understanding happiness and academic procrastination among undergraduate students in Kashmir: A quantitative as well as qualitative study

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ARTICLE HISTORY

Received: 29.04.2023

Received in revised form: 17.05.2023

Accepted: 18.05.2023

KEYWORDS

Happiness

Academic procrastination

Undergraduate students

Demographics

CORRESPONDENCE

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports two studies that examine the difference between happiness and academic procrastination among undergraduate students. The first study investigates gender and geographic location differences in happiness and academic procrastination levels, finding that males and urban students report higher levels of both. The second study, conducted in Kashmir, explores undergraduate students' subjective experiences and perspectives on happiness and academic procrastination. The second study's objective was to gain an understanding of how undergraduate students in Kashmir subjectively experience happiness and academic procrastination. Employing a qualitative research design and using thematic analysis, the study revealed that happiness is a personal experience that can be achieved in various ways, including through social relationships, activities, and gratitude. The study offers insights into the perceptions of undergraduate students in Kashmir regarding happiness and academic procrastination, which can aid in the creation of strategies to enhance student well-being and academic performance. Overall, the two studies underscore the importance of considering individual differences in levels of happiness and academic procrastination, as well as subjective experiences, when formulating interventions to endorse student well-being and academic success. By comprehending how students define and pursue happiness and recognizing the factors that contribute to academic procrastination, educators and policymakers can develop effective strategies to promote student well-being and academic achievement.

Introduction

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the assumption that happiness and academic procrastination are related constructs that may be influenced by demographic variables such as gender and location. According to previous research (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016; Diener et al., 2018), there is an inverse connection between happiness and academic procrastination, indicating that happy people tend to procrastinate less in their academic activities. However, this relationship may not be uniform across different groups of individuals, as it may be moderated

by factors such as gender and location. For instance, some studies have brought into being that females tend to report higher levels of happiness and academic procrastination than males, and that urban dwellers may experience lower levels of happiness and higher levels of academic stress than rural dwellers (Ferrari et al., 1995; Kesebir & Kesebir, 2017; Diener et al., 2018; Kim & Seo, 2015). Therefore, the conceptual framework aims to examine how these demographic variables may affect the happiness and academic procrastination among students.

The theoretical framework of this study is based on several psychological theories that explain the underlying mechanisms of happiness and academic procrastination, such as self-determination theory (SDT), temporal motivation theory (TMT), and self-regulation theory (SRT). These theories provide a comprehensive understanding of how motivation, time management, and self-control may influence students' happiness and academic procrastination levels. According to SDT, a person's happiness is closely related to their level of autonomy and competence. TMT proposes that motivation is influenced by two factors, which are the value of the task and the perceived delay to its completion, while SRT suggests that self-control is a limited resource that can be exhausted over time, leading to a phenomenon known as ego depletion. This research paper consists of two studies that investigate the difference between happiness and academic procrastination among undergraduate students. The first study examines the differences in happiness and academic procrastination levels on the basis of gender and locale. The study found that males reported higher levels of happiness and academic procrastination. Urban students also reported higher levels of happiness and academic procrastination than rural students. These findings suggest that interventions to improve student well-being and academic engagement should consider gender and geographic location.

The second study aimed to understand undergraduate students' subjective experiences and perspectives on happiness and academic procrastination in Kashmir. Using a qualitative research design and thematic analysis, the study found that happiness is a subjective experience that is found in different ways, such as social relationships, activities, and gratitude. The study provides insights into how undergraduate students in Kashmir perceive happiness and academic procrastination, which could update the development of strategies to endorse student well-being and academic success.

Overall, the two studies emphasize the significance of individual differences in happiness and academic procrastination levels and subjective experiences when designing interventions to improve student well-being and academic engagement. By understanding how students define and pursue happiness and identifying the factors that contribute to academic procrastination, educators and policymakers can develop effective strategies to promote student well-being and academic success.

SDT, or Self-Determination Theory, states that humans require three basic psychological needs to be fulfilled - autonomy, competence, and relatedness - to achieve contentment and motivation in their lives. Autonomy refers to the feeling of control over one's life, competence involves the need to be effective in one's actions, and relatedness is the desire for social connectedness. If these needs are satisfied, individuals are more likely to be intrinsically motivated, which means they are motivated by internal factors rather than external pressures or rewards. Intrinsic motivation is accompanying to higher levels of happiness and lower levels of academic procrastination (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Steel & Klingsieck, 2016).

According to TMT, a person's academic procrastination is closely related to their time management skills (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016). TMT proposes that individuals tend to procrastinate when they perceive the expected value of a task to be low or the delay until the deadline to be long. The expected value of a task is determined by its utility (the degree to which

it contributes to one's goals) and its valence (the degree to which it is pleasant or unappealing). The delay until the deadline affects the discounting rate of the task's value, meaning that the longer the delay, the less valuable the task becomes. Therefore, individuals are more likely to procrastinate on tasks that have low utility or valence or have distant deadlines. Procrastination can reduce one's happiness by causing stress, guilt, anxiety, and poor academic performance (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016).

According to SRT, a person's academic procrastination is closely related to their self-control abilities (Sirois & Pychyl, 2013). SRT suggests that individuals have limited cognitive resources for self-regulation, which is the capacity to control one's impulses and emotions in order to achieve one's goals. When these resources are depleted by factors such as fatigue, stress, or distraction, individuals are more likely to succumb to temptations and distractions that interfere with their academic tasks. Procrastination can also deplete one's self-regulatory resources by creating negative emotions such as regret, shame, or frustration. Therefore, individuals who have low self-control or experience high self-regulatory depletion are more to be expected to procrastinate on their academic tasks. Procrastination can also affect one's happiness by undermining one's self-esteem, self-efficacy, and satisfaction with life (Sirois & Pychyl, 2013). In summary, the conceptual and theoretical frameworks of this study provide a rationale for exploring the relationship between happiness and academic procrastination among students, and for investigating how gender and location may moderate this relationship. The study will use a quantitative research design that involves collecting data from a sample of students using online surveys. The data will be analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-tests in study 1 and thematic analysis in study 2.

Happiness and academic procrastination are two important variables that can greatly impact the well-being and academic success of college students. Understanding the factors that contribute to happiness and academic procrastination is critical for designing effective interventions that promote student success. In this study, we examine the difference between two demographic factors, gender and geographic location, and these two variables. Having a positive outlook on life is associated to a number of positive outcomes, comprising greater physical and mental health, increased life satisfaction, and enhanced academic achievement. Happiness is a crucial component of total well-being. Although previous research has examined the factors that contribute to happiness, less is known about the potential differences in happiness levels between male and female students, as well as between rural and urban students. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the difference between gender, geographic location, and happiness levels among college students. Academic procrastination is another variable that can have a significant impact on student success. Procrastination is defined as the deferral or postponement of tasks, which can lead to increased stress, decreased motivation, and lower academic performance. While previous research has explored the factors that contribute to academic procrastination, less is known about how gender and geographic location might influence this behavior. Therefore, this study aims to examine the difference between gender, geographic location, and academic procrastination levels among college students. By investigating these two variables and their difference with gender and geographic location, this study aims to contribute to our understanding of factors that impact student well-being and academic success. These findings may have important implications for designing interventions that promote student success and improve their overall well-being. The study also intends to contribute to the existing literature on happiness and academic procrastination, and to offer practical implications for enhancing students' well-being and academic performance.

Method

Research design

This study aims to investigate the levels of happiness and academic procrastination among undergraduate students using a quantitative research approach. Data was collected using a descriptive survey method. A questionnaire was separated into two parts. The first part consisted of the Academic Procrastination Scale, while the second part included the Happiness Scale. Instructions on how to complete the survey and provide demographic information were included in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to undergraduate students, and the responses were collected and analyzed.

The survey was sent to 300 non-professional undergraduate students registered in various colleges across the Kashmir region, but only 200 completed it. The data was collected using the convenience sampling technique.

The study also adopted a qualitative research approach with thematic analysis as the method for data analysis. The research included six undergraduate students who came from diverse educational backgrounds as participants. The data was collected through semi-structured interviews, which were then analyzed thematically. Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting themes or patterns within data, and it is often utilized in qualitative research to explore and describe complex phenomena. In this study, the use of thematic analysis helped to identify recurring patterns and themes in the data that provided insights into the experiences and perceptions of the participants regarding academic procrastination and happiness levels.

The table 3 shows the demographic details of the six participants in the study.

Table 3 Demography of subjects

Interviewee	Age	Educational level	Gender	Fathers' education	Mothers' education
Subject 1	21	UG 1 st year	Female	Graduate (B.Com)	10 th
Subject 2	22	UG 2 nd year	Male	Graduate (B.A)	Graduate (B.A)
Subject 3	21	UG 1 st year	Male	5 th	5 th
Subject 4	23	UG 3 rd year	Male	12 th	10 th
Subject 5	22	UG 2 nd year	Female	PhD	Masters
Subject 6	23	UG 3 rd year	Female	Masters	12 th

Analysis of data

Using the SPSS statistical analysis program, descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to assess the acquired data. Male and female students, as well as students from rural and urban areas, were compared on their mean scores for academic procrastination and happiness using the independent t-test. Hedges' g was used to determine the effect size. The significance level has been set to $p < .05$.

Results

Quantitative findings

The collected data was analyzed under the following sections. The questionnaire was distributed among undergraduate students.

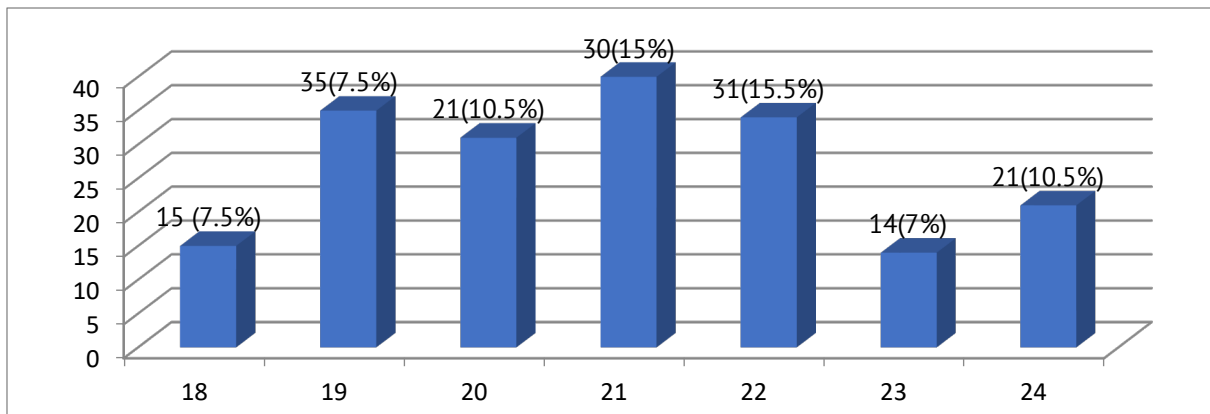


Figure 1 gives age wise distribution of students in percentage

The mean age was 21 (range: 18-24 years).

Table1 Demographic characteristics of participants

Demographic characteristics	Frequency and percentage of students (%)
<i>Gender and social category</i>	
Female	118(59%)
Male	82(41%)
Rural	104(52%)
Urban	96(46.5%)
<i>Age (years)</i>	
All	Mean ± SD (range) 21 ±2.46
Female	21.46±2.11
Male	21.06±2.41

Table 1 show that out of 200 respondents, 118 (59%) were females and 82 (41%) were males. The mean age of all the students was 21.71(range: 18-24 years). Mean age for female students was 21.46±2.11 whereas for male students it was 21.06 ± 2.41.

Table 2 Mean, standard deviation in Happiness and Academic Procrastination on gender and locale and frequency distribution on its levels

	Frequency and Percentage of students			Male (82)		Female (118)		t(198)	Hedges'g
	High	Average	Low	M	SD	M	SD		
HS	6 (3%)	160(80%)	34 (17%)	99.90	14.25	89.79	13.74	5.04	.72
APS	61(31%)	124(62%)	15(7.5)	63.71	12.11	57.61	15.74	2.95	.42
	Frequency and Percentage of students			Rural (104)		Urban (96)		t(198)	Hedges'g
	High	Average	Low	M	SD	M	SD		
HS	6 (3%)	160(80%)	34 (17%)	93.83	9.7	104.51	10.1	7.62	1.07
APS	61(31%)	124(62%)	15(7.5)	59.8	12.7	64.8	13.1	2.73	.37

HS: Happiness; APS: Academic Procrastination

Regarding happiness (HS), 6 (3%) of the students reported high levels of happiness, 160 (80%) reported average levels of happiness, and 34 (17%) reported low levels of happiness. A t-test was conducted to compare the happiness levels between males and females, which resulted in a statistically significant difference ($t(198) = 5.04, p < .001, \text{Hedges' } g = .72$), indicating that there was a significant gender difference in happiness. The Hedges' g value of .72 suggests a large effect size, indicating that the difference in happiness levels between males and females is not likely due to chance. Another t-test was conducted to compare the levels of happiness between rural and urban, which also resulted in a statistically significant difference ($t(198) = 7.62, p <$

.001, Hedges' $g = 1.0$), indicating that there was a significant locale difference in happiness. The Hedges' g value of 1.0 suggests a large effect size, indicating that the difference in happiness levels between rural and urban is not likely due to chance.

Regarding academic procrastination (APS), 61 (31%) of the students reported high levels of academic procrastination, 124 (62%) reported average levels of academic procrastination, and 15 (7.5%) reported low levels of academic procrastination. A t-test was conducted to compare the levels of academic procrastination between male and female students, which resulted in a statistically significant difference ($t(198) = 2.95, p < .001, \text{Hedges' } g = .41$), indicating that there was a significant difference in academic procrastination between male and female students. The Hedges' g value of .41 suggests a moderate effect size, indicating that the difference in academic procrastination levels between male and female students is not likely due to chance. Another t-test was conducted to compare the levels of academic procrastination between rural and urban, which also resulted in a statistically significant difference ($t(198) = 2.73, p < .001, \text{Hedges' } g = .38$), indicating that there was a significant locale difference in academic procrastination. The Hedges' g value of .38 suggests a moderate effect size, indicating that the difference in academic procrastination levels between rural and urban is not likely due to chance.

Qualitative findings

Thematic analysis

After analyzing the text, the following themes related to happiness and academic procrastination was extracted:

Themes related to happiness

Internal source of happiness

Subject 1,2,3 and 5 believe that happiness comes from within, and accepting oneself is an important factor for happiness. Subject 6 emphasizes that being satisfied with one's achievements and promoting love and smile are key factors for happiness. The theme of internal source of happiness is a complex and multifaceted concept, as evidenced by the perspectives of the six subjects. While each individual has their unique take on what brings them joy and satisfaction, there are some commonalities that can be observed. Firstly, all the subjects believe that happiness originates from within oneself, rather than from external factors such as money, possessions, or status. This implies that a person's mind-set and outlook play a significant role in their level of contentment. Secondly, social connections and relationships are a vital source of happiness for most of the subjects. Spending time with loved ones, supporting friends, and seeing others happy bring them immense joy and satisfaction. Thirdly, engagement in activities that are exciting, enjoyable, and challenging is a common factor in promoting happiness. This includes playing sports, trying new things, enjoying good food, and celebrating life's successes. Fourthly, having a positive attitude, being optimistic, and having a sense of purpose are important for cultivating happiness. Being satisfied with one's achievements and pursuing goals through time management also bring a sense of fulfillment and contentment. However, it is also essential to recognize that health issues, environmental factors, and other external circumstances can impact an individual's level of happiness. For instance, subject 5 highlights that health problems can disturb their happiness. In conclusion, the theme of internal source of happiness is an intricate and multifaceted concept that depends on a person's mind-set, social connections, engagement in enjoyable activities, and overall outlook on life. It is critical to understand that everyone has their unique perspective on what brings them happiness and that external circumstances can also influence it.

Social relationships

The subjects (1, 3, 5, and 6) mention that According to the participants in this study, spending time with close friends and family members was identified as the most significant factor contributing to their happiness levels. This finding is consistent with previous research that has highlighted the importance of social connections and relationships in endorsing well-being and happiness. It is plausible that spending time with loved ones can provide individuals with a sense of belonging, support, and fulfillment, which can contribute to their total happiness. The participants' emphasis on the significance of social relationships underscores the importance of nurturing and maintaining positive connections with others for promoting well-being and happiness. A good close relationship with people makes them feel good. Social relationships are an important factor in the happiness of all six subjects. Spending time with family and friends is a common theme among all of them, and they find joy in creating positive relationships with others. Some subjects also find happiness in using social media to stay connected with friends, while others prefer more active and exciting activities. All of the subjects appreciate supportive and positive relationships with others, and find happiness in seeing their friends and loved ones happy as well.

Physical activity

Subject 2, 5, and 6 believe that physical activity contributes to happiness and a healthy state of mind. The common thoughts regarding physical activity among these six subjects are that it plays an imperative role in promoting happiness and overall well-being. According to the participants in the study, engaging in physical activity on a regular basis was identified as a crucial factor in reducing stress levels, improving mood, and increasing energy levels. This finding is consistent with previous research, which has consistently demonstrated that physical exercise can have significant benefits for mental and physical health. Regular physical activity is known to boost the release of endorphins, which can help reduce stress and improve mood. Moreover, it can enhance cardiovascular health, increase muscle strength and flexibility, and improve overall physical fitness. The participants highlighted the importance of finding enjoyable physical activities, as this can help to increase motivation and adherence to an exercise regimen. This underscores the importance of engaging in physical activity regularly to promote well-being and happiness. Additionally, they acknowledge that physical activity requires time management and dedication, but they feel that the benefits outweigh the effort. Overall, these subjects view physical activity as an important aspect of a happy and healthy lifestyle.

Themes related to academic procrastination

College environment

All six subjects believe that the college environment has a significant impact on academic procrastination. Subject 1 feels that a supportive college environment with a positive atmosphere and helpful peers can reduce academic procrastination. Subject 2 thinks that a stimulating college environment that encourages learning and exploration can reduce procrastination. Subject 3 believes that an organized college environment that fosters discipline and structure can help reduce procrastination. Subject 4 thinks that a motivating college environment with inspiring professors and engaging courses can reduce procrastination. Subject 5 believes that a manageable workload, clear expectations, and a supportive college environment can help reduce procrastination. Subject 6 thinks that a positive and stimulating college environment that provides resources and support can reduce procrastination. The participants in the study agreed that the college environment plays a crucial role in academic procrastination, and a supportive, stimulating, organized, and motivating environment can help reduce procrastination. This finding

has shown that environmental factors can have a significant impact on academic performance and motivation. The participants identified various factors that contribute to a positive college environment, including supportive faculty and staff, access to resources and services, clear expectations and deadlines, and a sense of community and belonging. They also emphasized the importance of a stimulating and challenging academic environment that fosters intellectual curiosity and engagement. These findings highlight the need for colleges and universities to create an environment that supports student success and promotes motivation and engagement.

Time management

Subjects 1, 5, and 6 agree that time management is important for happiness and helps in goal accomplishment. The participants in the study agreed that time management is an indispensable component of living a happy and productive life. This finding has shown that effective time management skills are critical for academic and personal success. The participants identified various strategies for managing their time effectively, including setting priorities, creating schedules, breaking down tasks into manageable steps, and using tools such as calendars and to-do lists. They also emphasized the importance of being flexible and adaptable in their approach to time management, as unexpected events and challenges can arise that may require them to adjust their schedules and priorities. These findings highlight the importance of time management skills in promoting well-being and productivity and underscore the need for individuals to develop effective time management strategies. They all agree that managing time well can reduce stress and increase efficiency. They also believe that time management requires setting priorities, being organized, and developing good habits. Additionally, they feel that procrastination can hinder effective time management and lead to negative consequences such as missed deadlines and poor performance. Finally, they all believe that time management requires discipline, perseverance, and a willingness to adjust and adapt as necessary.

Health issues

Based on the responses of the six participants, there are several common thoughts regarding the relationship between health and academic procrastination. Firstly, all six participants acknowledge that health plays a critical role in academic success. Poor health can lead to decreased motivation and energy levels, which can in turn contribute to procrastination and a lack of focus on academic tasks. The participants in the study recognized that procrastination can have negative effects on one's physical and mental health. This finding has shown that procrastination can lead to increased stress levels, decreased sleep quality, and a lack of exercise, all of which can contribute to a decline in overall health. The participants shared their personal experiences with the negative effects of procrastination, including feeling overwhelmed, stressed, and anxious, and struggling to maintain healthy habits such as exercise and sleep. They emphasized the need for individuals to recognize the negative impact of procrastination on their health and to develop strategies for overcoming it. These findings highlight the significance of addressing procrastination as a health issue and promoting strategies for managing it effectively. Additionally, several participants noted that taking care of one's physical and mental health can help combat academic procrastination. This includes getting enough sleep, engaging in regular exercise, and practicing stress-reducing activities like meditation or yoga. Finally, some participants pointed out that seeking support from others, such as friends or mental health professionals, can also be helpful in managing both health and academic procrastination. Talking about one's struggles with others can provide a sense of accountability and help identify strategies for improvement. Overall, the participants recognize the interplay between health and academic procrastination and emphasize the importance of taking care of both in order to achieve academic success.

Based on the thematic analysis, it can be concluded that happiness is a subjective experience and individuals find it in different ways. Some find happiness through social relationships and spending time with loved ones, while others find happiness in activities such as sports, trying new things, or celebrating good moments. Being grateful and appreciative towards others is also seen as a factor that promotes happiness. It is worth noting that time management can also bring happiness by making things work out properly. On the other hand, academic procrastination is not explicitly mentioned in the findings. However, it can be inferred that some of the subjects might struggle with it, as time management is highlighted as a factor that can lead to happiness. It is possible that some of the subjects experience stress and anxiety related to their academic pursuits, and that this affects their overall happiness. Therefore, it is important to recognize the impact that procrastination can have on one's academic performance and overall well-being, and to take steps to address it.

In summary, while there are some overlaps in the themes between happiness and academic procrastination, the focus on social relationships, physical activity, and internal source of happiness is more prominent in the former, while college environment, time management, and health issues are more specific to the latter. Based on these findings, happiness can be defined as a state of mind where an individual finds joy and satisfaction in internal sources such as self-acceptance, physical activity, and promoting love and smiles, as well as external sources such as close relationships with family and friends. Academic procrastination, on the other hand, can be defined as the act of delaying academic tasks due to factors such as the college environment, time management, and health issues, which can impact an individual's level of stress, satisfaction, and happiness.

Discussions and conclusions

Quantitative findings

The current study investigated the levels of happiness and academic procrastination among students, while also examining the difference in gender and locale on these variables. The findings reveal that the bulk of the students reported average levels of happiness and academic procrastination. However, there are significant differences in happiness levels and academic procrastination levels among the sample of students. Specifically, the study found that males reported higher levels of happiness than females, and males also reported higher levels of academic procrastination than females. Additionally, there was a significant difference in academic procrastination levels between rural and urban students, with urban students reporting higher levels of happiness and academic procrastination than rural students. The data in this study showed that in HS and APS males reported more HS as well as APS. One possible explanation for the ongoing negative trend in previous studies between happiness and academic procrastination could be related to the impact of academic procrastination on academic performance and the resulting stress and anxiety that may decrease happiness levels. Research has shown that academic procrastination can lead to lower academic performance, increased stress, and negative emotions, which can contribute to lower levels of happiness (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016). Thus, it is possible that the students who reported higher levels of academic procrastination may also be experiencing negative emotions that impact their happiness levels. However, it is important to note that this is only one possible explanation and further research would be needed to explore the relationship between happiness and academic procrastination. Additionally, it is important to consider other potential factors that may impact happiness levels,

such as social support, personal values, and life events. Furthermore, the relationship between academic procrastination and happiness may also be influenced by the age and undergraduate courses of the students. Ferrari et al. (1995) studied how academic procrastination varied by course and affected students' well-being. They found that most students procrastinated often and felt worse about themselves. They also found that some courses had more or less procrastination than others, depending on students' interest, motivation, and self-regulation. Additionally, research has also shown that the level of academic procrastination may differ depending on the undergraduate course. Hailikari et al. (2021) conducted a study to explore the correlation between students' procrastination, psychological flexibility, academic self-efficacy, and time and effort management skills. They also found some differences in procrastination across study fields, such as education, psychology, and business. They reported that students studying education had the highest levels of procrastination, followed by students studying psychology and business. They suggested that these differences may reflect different levels of interest, motivation, and self-regulation among students in different fields. A study by Svartdal et al. (2020), they also reviewed some research on how these factors affect different groups of students, such as gender, age, culture, and study field. They mentioned that some studies have found differences in procrastination across study fields, such as humanities, social sciences, natural sciences, and engineering. They cited a study by Ferrari et al. (1995) that found that students studying education reported higher levels of procrastination than students studying business or science. They suggested that these differences may reflect different levels of task difficulty, task value, task interest, and task feedback among different fields. Therefore, it is possible that the trend between happiness and academic procrastination in the current study could be influenced by the age and undergraduate courses of the students. Further research could discover whether the association between happiness and academic procrastination varies across different age groups or undergraduate courses, and whether certain courses or age groups are more susceptible to experiencing positive emotions due to academic procrastination, which could affect their happiness levels.

The study found that male students reported higher levels of happiness than female students, which is in line with previous research that has also observed gender differences in happiness levels. For instance, Diener and Chan's (2011) study reported that men generally report higher levels of life satisfaction than women, which may contribute to the higher levels of happiness reported by male students in this study. There are several potential explanations for why male students may report higher levels of happiness than female students. One possible explanation is that males may have more positive attitudes towards life events and may be more resilient in the face of adversity. There is research to support the idea for example, a study by Gallagher et al., (2019) found that male college students reported higher levels of resilience and more positive attitudes towards life events compared to female college students. Additionally, a meta-analysis by Tamres et al., (2002) found that males tend to report higher levels of self-esteem, which could contribute to more positive attitudes towards life events and greater resilience. However, it is important to note that gender differences are complex and can be influenced by various factors, including cultural and societal norms. Additionally, research has shown that males tend to engage in more active coping strategies, which may help them better manage stress and maintain positive emotions (Matud, 2004). Furthermore, social and cultural factors may also play a role in shaping gender differences in happiness levels. For example, traditional gender roles may dictate that males should be more assertive and independent, which may lead to a greater sense of control and autonomy, thereby contributing to higher levels of happiness. On the other hand, females may be socialized to prioritize relationships and caregiving, which may lead to greater empathy and compassion but may also result in higher levels of emotional distress and lower levels of

happiness. Some sources suggest that women are socialized to value relationships and caregiving more than men, and that this affects their morality, identity, and well-being Gilligan (1982) has proposed that women tend to prioritize an "ethics of care" as their sense of morality evolves along with their sense of self, while men tend to prioritize an "ethics of justice" (Verywell Mind, 2023). Similarly, Deutsch (2016) suggested that women's socialization might make them more risk averse, more prone to self-doubt, and more likely to face trade-offs between work and family (The Atlantic, 2016). In conclusion, the finding that male students reported higher levels of happiness than female students are consistent with previous research and may be explained by a combination of individual, social, and cultural factors. However, this is not a conclusive or universal claim, as there may be other factors and variations that influence how women and men develop and express themselves. Therefore, further research is needed to better understand the mechanisms underlying gender differences in happiness and to identify effective strategies for promoting happiness and well-being among all students.

The finding that male students reported higher levels of academic procrastination is consistent with some previous research, such as Chu and Choi's (2005) study which found that male students were more likely to procrastinate than female students. However, other studies have not observed significant gender differences in academic procrastination (Ferrari et al., 1995; Haycock et al., 1998; Hess et al., 2000; Johnson & Bloom, 1995; Rothblum et al., 1986; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984; Watson, 2001). However, some studies have suggested that men may procrastinate more than women in everyday life (Steel, 2007), or that gender orientation (i.e., masculinity and femininity) may influence academic procrastination (Balkis & Duru, 2017). Some factors that may affect academic procrastination regardless of gender are personality traits (Zhou, 2018), self-regulation skills (Ferrari, 2001), emotion regulation strategies (Aldao & Nolen-Hoeksema, 2013), locus of control (Rothblum et al., 1986), and socio-demographic variables (Khan et al., 2014). Gender differences in academic procrastination have been consistently found in research. A meta-analysis of 219 studies and over 46,000 participants showed that males procrastinate slightly more than females on average, and this difference was consistent across various age groups and cultures (Steel, 2007). A possible reason for this variation between genders could be linked to individual characteristics or qualities of their personalities. Research has suggested that males may be more likely to exhibit personality traits such as impulsiveness, sensation seeking, and lack of conscientiousness, which may contribute to higher levels of procrastination (Chu & Choi, 2005; Steel, 2007). However, another possible explanation is related to optimism. Research has shown that males may have more positive attitudes towards life events and may be more resilient in the face of adversity, which could lead to a tendency to procrastinate more when faced with academic tasks (Klein & Boals, 2001). This is partially supported by a study by Bjuggren and Elert (2019), which examined gender differences in optimism about the economy, but not specifically about academic tasks. Therefore, while personality traits may be one potential explanation for the gender difference in academic procrastination, the role of optimism cannot be overlooked as another potential contributing factor. To better understand the intricate relationship between personality traits, optimism, and academic procrastination in both genders, further research is necessary. Additionally, socialization and cultural norms may contribute to the gender discrepancies observed in academic procrastination. In summary, the results of previous studies support the existence of gender differences in academic procrastination, with males reporting more recurrent instances of procrastination than females. Further research could investigate the underlying factors contributing to this difference and develop targeted interventions to reduce academic procrastination in both male and female students.

The finding that urban students reported higher levels of happiness than rural students is consistent with previous research. For instance, Kim et al. (2017) found that urban residents

reported higher levels of life satisfaction and subjective well-being compared to rural residents. They suggested that this may be due to urban residents having better access to social support, higher levels of social interaction, and more opportunities for personal growth and development. Similarly, a study by Luhmann et al. (2012) demonstrated that people residing in urban settings reported greater levels of positive emotions and overall satisfaction with their lives in comparison to those living in rural areas. They proposed that this may be due to the fact that urban areas offer more diverse and stimulating environments, with greater opportunities for social engagement and access to cultural amenities. Additionally, a study by Wang et al. (2019) found that individuals living in rural areas reported higher levels of negative affect compared to those living in urban areas. They suggested that this may be due to factors such as social isolation, limited access to resources and services, and a lack of opportunities for personal growth and development. In the context of the current study, the finding that urban students reported higher levels of happiness than rural students may be due to the fact that urban environments offer more opportunities for social interaction, cultural engagement, and personal growth and development. Moreover, it is possible that urban students have easier access to various resources and services that support their mental health and overall well-being, such as mental health care and recreational facilities, which could contribute to their higher levels of happiness compared to their rural counterparts. This outcome aligns with previous studies and underscores the significance of considering environmental factors in influencing individual well-being.

Similarly, there are several possible explanations for the significant difference in academic procrastination levels between rural and urban students, with urban students reporting higher levels of academic procrastination. One potential explanation is that urban students may have more distractions or time commitments than rural students, such as part-time jobs, extracurricular activities, or social events, which can lead to a higher likelihood of procrastination. Earlier studies have revealed a positive relationship between time pressure and procrastination, providing support for this idea (Klassen, Krawchuk, & Rajani, 2008). Another possible explanation is that urban students may have more access to technology and digital distractions, which can contribute to procrastination. For example, social media and online entertainment platforms can be highly engaging and addictive, leading to a greater likelihood of procrastination among urban students who have easy access to these resources (Rosen, Carrier, & Cheever, 2013). Furthermore, urban students may be more accustomed to a fast-paced lifestyle and instant gratification, which can lead to a lower tolerance for delayed rewards and a greater tendency towards procrastination. The variation in cultural values and attitudes towards time in rural and urban areas could offer a possible explanation for this pattern. It is plausible that differences in cultural norms and values between these regions may impact how individuals approach time management, which could, in turn, affect their propensity for procrastination. Additionally, individuals in rural areas may have more limited access to distractions, such as social events and entertainment, which could also contribute to lower levels of procrastination. Nevertheless, additional research is required to investigate the link between procrastination and residing in rural areas. The results from previous studies indicate that environmental and lifestyle factors such as living in urban versus rural areas may influence students' procrastination tendencies. Although the precise explanations for the observed variations in academic procrastination levels between rural and urban students may differ, these findings highlight the significance of contextual factors in shaping procrastination behavior among students.

Overall, these findings have important implications for educators and mental health professionals who work with students. For example, educators could design interventions to reduce academic procrastination among male students, who may be at higher risk for this behavior. Mental health professionals could also consider gender differences in happiness levels when working with

students and may want to focus on strategies to improve happiness levels in female students. Additionally, the finding that urban students report higher levels of academic procrastination suggests that interventions targeting this behavior may be particularly important for students in urban areas. In summary, the results of this study enhance our knowledge of the gender differences in academic procrastination and happiness levels among students. While more research is needed to endorse these findings and explore potential explanations for these differences, this study provides important insights for educators and mental health professionals working with students. In general, these findings suggest that gender and geographic location are important factors to consider in understanding student well-being and academic performance. Although this study provides insights into the gender differences in academic procrastination and happiness levels among students, additional research is necessary to uncover the precise mechanisms that underlie these disparities. Moreover, identifying potential interventions to assist students in managing their procrastination tendencies and promoting their well-being is crucial. Future studies could explore various interventions, such as time management strategies, mindfulness-based practices, and mental health resources, to determine their efficacy in mitigating procrastination and enhancing happiness levels among students. By gaining a more in-depth understanding of these mechanisms, researchers may be able to develop effective interventions to support students in overcoming these challenges and succeeding academically and personally.

Qualitative findings

Themes related to happiness

Internal source of happiness: The findings suggest that subjects believe that happiness comes from within and accepting oneself is an important factor for happiness. This is consistent with previous research, which has found that self-acceptance and self-compassion are linked with greater well-being and life satisfaction (Neff, 2011; Breines & Chen, 2012). However, it is imperative to note that research has suggested that an excessive focus on internal factors, such as happiness as a personal choice or attitude, may lead to feelings of guilt or blame for those who struggle with happiness (Joshi & Weijers, 2016). Research has supported the idea that internal factors play a crucial role in happiness. A study found that people who focus on internal sources of happiness, such as personal growth and positive relationships, are more likely to experience long-term happiness compared to those who focus on external sources like money or status (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2006).

Social relationships

All subjects mentioned that spending time with close friends and family members is the biggest factor in their happiness. This is in line with extensive research showing that social support and positive relationships are strongly associated with happiness and well-being (Lyubomirsky, 2008; Diener & Seligman, 2002). Social connections and relationships have also been found to be important for happiness. A review of over 200 studies published in the journal *Social Indicators Research* found that social support and social interaction were consistently linked to greater happiness and life satisfaction (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005). Research has consistently made known that social relationships are a significant predictor of happiness and well-being. A meta-analysis conducted by Holt-Lunstad et al. (2010) found that having a strong social network was associated with a 50% increase in the likelihood of survival, which is similar to the effect of quitting smoking. Another study by Diener and Seligman (2002) found that the frequency of social contact was one of the strongest predictors of happiness, even when controlling for other factors such as income and marital status. Moreover, social relationships have been shown to have a positive impact on

mental health. A work by Cacioppo and Patrick (2008) found that social isolation and loneliness were connected with an increased risk of developing depression and anxiety. On the other hand, social support has been shown to buffer against the negative effects of stress and promote resilience (Cohen & Wills, 1985).

Physical activity

The findings suggest that subjects believe that physical activity contributes to happiness and a healthy state of mind. This is supported by a large body of research signifying that physical exercise has positive effects on mood and well-being, including reducing indicators of depression and anxiety (Babyak et al., 2000; Salmon, 2001). Research has consistently shown that engaging in physical activity has numerous reimbursements for both physical and mental health. Systematic physical activities have been found to condense the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, as well as develop overall fitness levels and increase energy levels. In terms of mental health, physical activity has been found to reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety, as well as improve mood and cognitive functioning. A meta-analysis of 23 studies conducted by Teychenne et al. (2010) found a positive association between physical activity and mental health outcomes such as decreasing anxiety, depression, and stress. The authors concluded that regular physical activity could help improve psychological well-being, and that even low levels of physical activity can have a positive impact. Furthermore, research has found that physical activity can promote happiness and overall well-being. A study conducted by Steptoe et al. (2005) found that individuals who engaged in regular physical activity reported higher levels of well-being and lower levels of stress compared to individuals who were less physically active. The authors suggested that physical activity may have a positive impact on mood, self-esteem, and social connectedness, all of which contribute to overall well-being.

Themes related to academic procrastination

College environment

The findings suggest that subjects believe that the college environment has an impact on their level of stress, satisfaction, and happiness. This is consistent with study showing that the college environment can have a significant impression on students' well-being and academic performance, particularly in terms of stress levels and social support (Stallman, 2010; Weare & Nind, 2011). Research has revealed that college students often experience high levels of stress due to academic pressure, financial concerns, and other personal factors (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010). This can lead to negative consequences such as burnout, anxiety, and depression. However, the college environment can also provide opportunities for social support and personal growth, which can contribute to students' overall well-being and happiness (Weare & Nind, 2011). Subjects acknowledge the impact of the college environment on their well-being and highlight the prominence of a positive and supportive environment. They mention that factors such as the worth of relationships with professors and peers, the availability of resources and support services, and the overall campus atmosphere can affect their level of satisfaction and happiness. One of the subjects reported that a supportive and collaborative learning environment is essential for their academic success and happiness, while other subject emphasizes the importance of a positive and inclusive campus culture for their well-being. These findings are consistent with research showing that a positive college environment, characterized by supportive relationships, access to resources, and a sense of community, can have a constructive impact on students' mental health and well-being (Weare & Nind, 2011; Stallman, 2010). On the other hand, a negative or unsupportive college environment can increase stress levels and negatively impact students' academic performance and mental health (Stallman, 2010). Overall, the findings suggest that the college environment can have a significant influence on students' well-being

and happiness, and that a constructive and supportive environment can contribute to academic success and personal growth.

Time management

The findings suggest that subjects agree that time management is important for happiness and helps in goal accomplishment. This is supported by research indicating that poor time management skills can contribute to academic procrastination and negatively impact students' well-being and academic performance (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016; Senecal et al., 1995). The common thoughts of subjects suggest that time management are a crucial factor in achieving happiness and success. These individuals believe that effective time management skills help them in accomplishing their goals and managing their tasks efficiently. This finding is supported by existing research that has linked poor time management skills to negative outcomes such as academic procrastination and lower academic performance (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016; Senecal et al., 1995). Research has shown that individuals who are effective at managing their time are more likely to experience positive outcomes such as reduced stress, increased productivity, and higher levels of life satisfaction (Seo, Barrett, & Bartunek, 2004). In the context of academic life, effective time management skills have been found to play a substantial role in students' academic success (Macan et al., 1990; Britton & Tesser, 1991). Students who commendably manage their time are more likely to attain their academic goals, feel less stressed, and have a higher sense of well-being (Britton & Tesser, 1991; Steel & Klingsieck, 2016). On the other hand, poor time management skills have been found to be a major contributor to academic procrastination, which can lead to a variety of negative outcomes such as lower grades, increased stress, and lower levels of life satisfaction (Steel & Klingsieck, 2016). The findings suggest that effective time management is a critical factor in achieving academic success, happiness, and overall well-being. Students who struggle with time management are more likely to procrastinate and experience negative outcomes such as lower grades, increased stress, and lower levels of life satisfaction. On the other hand, individuals who prioritize time management are more likely to accomplish their goals efficiently, reduce stress, and experience positive outcomes such as increased productivity and higher levels of life satisfaction. The research consistently shows that managing one's time effectively can help individuals experience these positive outcomes. Furthermore, students who effectively manage their time are more likely to achieve their academic goals, feel less stressed, and have a higher sense of well-being. In contrast, students who struggle with time management are more likely to procrastinate and experience negative academic outcomes. Therefore, developing effective time management skills is essential for individuals to promote their happiness and success. It is important for students to learn time management skills to recover their academic performance and overall well-being. In conclusion, the findings suggest that effective time management skills are crucial for academic success, happiness, and overall well-being. Individuals who prioritize time management are more likely to experience positive outcomes, while poor time management skills can contribute to academic procrastination and negative outcomes.

Health issues

The findings suggest that subjects mention that health issues can have an impact on their level of happiness and their relationships with others. This is supported by research showing that health problems and chronic illnesses are associated with lower levels of well-being and higher levels of stress (Diener & Chan, 2011). In addition to the impact on happiness, health issues can also have a significant impression on academic performance and contribute to academic procrastination. For example, college students with prolonged health conditions were more likely to experience academic difficulties, including lower grades, more missed classes, and increased

likelihood of academic probation. Furthermore, health issues can also lead to increased stress and anxiety, which are known to be significant factors in academic procrastination (Steel, 2007). Therefore, it is important for students to prioritize their health and seek appropriate medical care when needed. This can include practicing self-care behaviors such as upholding a healthy diet, getting sufficient sleep, and engaging in physical activity, all of which can positively impact both physical and mental health. By prioritizing their health and well-being, students can reduce the negative impact of health issues on their academic performance and overall happiness, and reduce the likelihood of academic procrastination.

Overall, the findings highlight the complex and multifaceted nature of happiness and academic procrastination, and the importance of considering various internal and external factors that can impact these constructs. While social relationships, physical activity, and internal sources of happiness appear to be key factors in promoting happiness, college environment, time management, and health issues may play a noteworthy role in academic procrastination. Further research is required to better understand the mechanisms underlying these relationships and to identify effective strategies for promoting well-being and academic success. This study has shed light on various factors that can influence happiness and academic procrastination among college students. The findings indicate that internal factors, such as self-acceptance and self-compassion, are important for happiness, while social relationships and physical activity are also crucial for promoting well-being. Moreover, the study highlights the impact of external factors, such as college environment, time management, and health issues, on academic procrastination and well-being. These findings have important implications for educators, mental health professionals, and policymakers who are concerned with promoting student well-being and academic success. The study suggests that interventions aimed at promoting positive self-talk, mindfulness, and physical exercise may be effective in improving students' happiness and well-being. Additionally, interventions aimed at improving time management skills and addressing health issues may also be beneficial in reducing academic procrastination and promoting academic success. In conclusion, this study emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to understanding and addressing happiness and academic procrastination among college students. Future research should continue to explore these factors and their underlying mechanisms to identify effective strategies for promoting well-being and academic success among college students.

Limitations

Despite the fact that the findings provide important information on what effects happiness and academic procrastination, there are a number of limitations that should be taken into account. First and foremost, the sample size is really small—it only has 200 participants in the quantitative component and six in the qualitative section—which restricts the applicability of the results to other populations. The sample's lack of diversity in terms of age, gender, or cultural background further restricts how broadly the results may be applied. Second, the study's qualitative portion relied heavily on self-report measures, which can be biased and may not correctly represent participants' real behaviours or experiences. For instance, participants might have given socially acceptable comments or might struggle to remember details of their past experiences. Thirdly, the study focused on a limited set of factors that may impact happiness and academic procrastination. Other important factors, such as financial stress, workload, and family responsibilities, were not explicitly investigated, which may limit the comprehensiveness of the findings. Finally, the study did not investigate the long-term effects of the identified factors on happiness and academic procrastination. Future research could explore the durability of these effects over time and whether they are influenced by additional factors that were not examined in this study.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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