FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION AMONG UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN CHINA*

Ni Zhimei[1] and Pasana Chularut[2]

[1-2]**Faculty of Education, Srinakharinwirot University, Thailand**

Corresponding author E-mail: pasana@g.swu.ac.th

Received 23 June 2026; Revised 3 July 2026; Accepted 5 July 2026

Abstract

The objectives of this study were 1) to investigate the relationship between conscientiousness, time management disposition, Intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, self-control, and academic procrastination, and 2) to investigate the influence of conscientiousness, time management disposition, Intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, and self-control on the academic procrastination of students at Zunyi Normal University. The sample consisted of undergraduate students from Zunyi Normal University in China. The research instrument was a structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson's correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis.

The findings revealed that 1) all variables were significantly related to academic procrastination; and 2) several variables significantly influenced academic procrastination. The findings indicate that both psychological and behavioral factors play important roles in influencing academic procrastination among undergraduate students.

* Ni Zhimei and Pasana Chularut. (2026). Factors Affecting Academic Procrastination Among Undergraduate Students In China. Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Development, 4(5), 379-391.;

DOI: https://doi.org/10.

Website: https://so12.tci-thaijo.org/index.php/JISDIADP/

Keywords: Academic Procrastination, Conscientiousness, Time Management, Internet Addiction, Self-Control

Introduction

Academic procrastination has become a common issue among university students and has attracted increasing attention in educational psychology. It refers to the intentional delay of academic tasks despite awareness of possible negative consequences (Lay, 1986; Steel, 2007). Academic procrastination negatively affects students' academic performance, emotional well-being, and learning efficiency. As higher education becomes more competitive, undergraduate students face increasing academic pressure, complex learning tasks, and various external distractions, all of which may contribute to procrastination behavior. Therefore, understanding the factors influencing academic procrastination has become increasingly important.

Previous studies have shown that academic procrastination is influenced by multiple psychological and behavioral factors. Conscientiousness is negatively associated with procrastination, as students with higher conscientiousness tend to be more disciplined and responsible (Van Eerde, 2003; Steel, 2007). Time management disposition also plays an important role, as poor time management often leads to delayed task completion (Trueman & Hartley, 1996). Learning motivation is another important factor. Ryan and Deci (2000) suggested that intrinsic learning motivation promotes active engagement in learning, while extrinsic learning motivation may lead to passive learning behaviors. In addition, internet addiction has been identified as a major contributor to procrastination due to excessive online engagement (Young, 1998). Self-control is also strongly related to procrastination, as students with stronger self-control are better able to regulate their behavior and resist distractions (Tangney et al., 2004).

Although previous studies have examined academic procrastination from different perspectives, limited research has comprehensively investigated the combined influence of conscientiousness, time management disposition, intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, and self-control on academic procrastination among undergraduate students in China. In particular, empirical evidence from Zunyi Normal University remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to investigate the relationships among these variables and identify the key factors influencing academic procrastination. The findings may provide useful implications for improving students' academic behavior and learning performance.

Objectives

1. To investigate the relationship between conscientiousness, time management disposition, Intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, self-control, and academic procrastination.

2. To investigate the influence of conscientiousness, time management disposition, Intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, and self-control on the academic procrastination of students at Zunyi Normal University.

Conceptual Framework

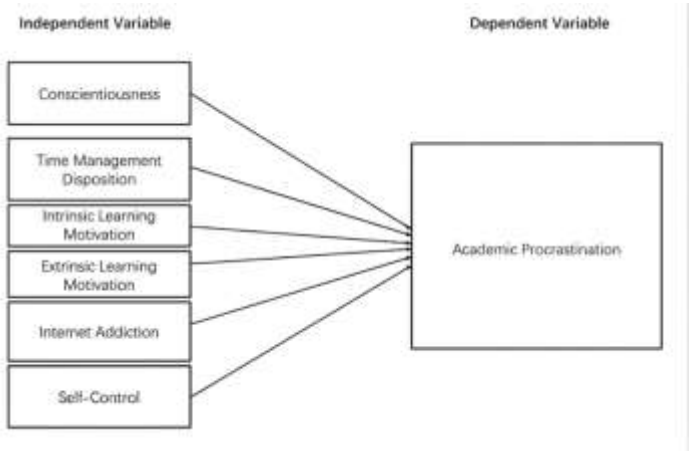


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Literature Review

1. Academic Procrastination

Academic procrastination refers to the intentional delay of academic tasks despite knowing that such delay may lead to negative consequences. Lay (1986) defined procrastination as a self-regulation failure commonly observed in academic settings. Steel (2007) further emphasized that academic procrastination negatively affects learning efficiency, academic achievement, and psychological well-being. Among college students, procrastination has become a common behavioral issue due to academic pressure, distractions, and poor self-management.

2. Conscientiousness and Academic Procrastination

Conscientiousness is a personality trait associated with responsibility, discipline, and goal-oriented behavior. Students with high conscientiousness are generally more organized and capable of completing tasks on time. Van Eerde (2003) found that conscientiousness is negatively associated with procrastination.

Similarly, Steel (2007) reported that conscientiousness is one of the strongest predictors of procrastination behavior. Students with higher conscientiousness usually demonstrate lower levels of academic procrastination.

3. Time Management Disposition and Academic Procrastination

Time management disposition refers to an individual's ability to effectively organize, plan, and allocate time. Good time management helps students complete academic tasks efficiently and reduce delays. Trueman and Hartley (1996) found that poor time management is closely related to weak academic performance and procrastination. Students with stronger time management skills are more likely to avoid procrastination and improve academic performance.

4. Intrinsic Learning Motivation and Academic Procrastination

Intrinsic learning motivation refers to engaging in learning activities for personal interest, enjoyment, or internal satisfaction. Ryan and Deci (2000) suggested that intrinsic motivation promotes active engagement and sustained learning behavior. Students with stronger intrinsic learning motivation are more likely to complete tasks voluntarily and efficiently. Therefore, intrinsic learning motivation is generally negatively associated with academic procrastination.

5. Extrinsic Learning Motivation and Academic Procrastination

Extrinsic learning motivation refers to engaging in learning activities due to external rewards, pressure, or expectations. Ryan and Deci (2000) explained that extrinsic motivation depends heavily on external reinforcement. Excessive dependence on external rewards may reduce learning autonomy and increase passive learning behavior. As a result, extrinsic learning motivation may positively influence academic procrastination.

6. Internet Addiction and Academic Procrastination

Internet addiction refers to excessive and uncontrolled internet use that interferes with daily functioning. Young (1998) identified internet addiction as a

behavioral problem associated with poor academic performance and self-regulation difficulties. Excessive internet use often reduces study time and increases task delay. Therefore, internet addiction is considered an important factor contributing to academic procrastination among university students.

7. Self-Control and Academic Procrastination

Self-control refers to the ability to regulate thoughts, emotions, and behaviors to achieve long-term goals. Tangney et al. (2004) found that individuals with high self-control perform better academically and demonstrate stronger self-regulation. Strong self-control helps students resist distractions and maintain task focus. Therefore, self-control is negatively related to academic procrastination.

8. Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature review and conceptual framework, the following hypotheses were proposed:

H1: Conscientiousness, time management disposition, intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction and self-control are related to academic procrastination of Chinese college students.

H2: Conscientiousness, time management disposition, intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction and self-control have an impact on academic procrastination of Chinese college students.

Methodology

1. Research Design

This study employed a quantitative research method to investigate the factors affecting academic procrastination among undergraduate students at Zunyi Normal University. The study examined the relationships between conscientiousness, time management disposition, intrinsic learning motivation,

extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, self-control, and academic procrastination.

2. Population and Sample

The population consisted of 923 undergraduate students in the Faculty of Education at Zunyi Normal University. Based on Krejcie and Morgan (1970), 274 students were selected as the sample using simple random sampling.

3. Research Instrument

The research instrument was the Academic Procrastination and Factors Affecting Procrastination Questionnaire (APFAQ), a structured questionnaire using a 5-point Likert scale. The questionnaire consisted of 49 items covering seven variables: academic procrastination, conscientiousness, time management disposition, intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, and self-control. The IOC value was 1.00, and the overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was 0.769, indicating acceptable validity and reliability.

4. Data Collection

The questionnaire was distributed online through class teachers. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. A total of 274 valid responses were collected for analysis.

5. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using SPSS statistical software. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate mean and standard deviation. Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the relationships among variables, while multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify the factors affecting academic procrastination.

Results

1. Results for Objective 1 and Hypothesis 1

Objective 1 aimed to investigate the relationship between conscientiousness, time management disposition, intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, self-control, and academic procrastination among undergraduate students at Zunyi Normal University.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Variables	Mean	SD	Level
Academic Procrastination (Y)	3.29	0.67	Medium
Conscientiousness (X1)	3.10	0.65	Medium
Time Management Disposition (X2)	3.13	0.64	Medium
Intrinsic Learning Motivation (X3)	3.18	0.67	Medium
Extrinsic Learning Motivation (X4)	3.15	0.66	Medium
Internet Addiction (X5)	3.07	0.63	Medium
Self-Control (X6)	3.07	0.66	Medium

The descriptive results indicated that all variables were at a medium level. Academic procrastination had the highest mean score (M = 3.29), while internet addiction and self-control had the lowest mean scores (M = 3.07).

Overall, the results suggest moderate levels across all variables among undergraduate students.

Table 2 Correlation Analysis between Variables and Academic Procrastination

Variables	**r**	**Sig.**
Conscientiousness (X1)	-0.508**	.000
Time Management Disposition (X2)	-0.440**	.000
Intrinsic Learning Motivation (X3)	-0.466**	.000
Extrinsic Learning Motivation (X4)	0.446**	.000
Internet Addiction (X5)	0.449**	.000
Self-Control (X6)	-0.451**	.000

Note: **p < .01

The correlation analysis showed that all six independent variables were significantly related to academic procrastination. Conscientiousness, time management disposition, intrinsic learning motivation, and self-control were negatively related to academic procrastination, while extrinsic learning motivation and internet addiction were positively related to academic procrastination. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

2. Results for Objective 2 and Hypothesis 2

Objective 2 aimed to investigate the influence of conscientiousness, time management disposition, intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, and self-control on academic procrastination among undergraduate students at Zunyi Normal University.

Table 3 Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.791	0.626	0.618	0.417116

Table 3 shows that the regression model had strong explanatory power. The six independent variables explained 62.6% of the variance in academic procrastination.

Table 4 Regression Coefficients

Variables	Beta	p-value
Conscientiousness (X1)	-0.293	< .001
Time Management Disposition (X2)	-0.189	< .001
Intrinsic Learning Motivation (X3)	-0.249	< .001
Extrinsic Learning Motivation (X4)	0.205	< .001
Internet Addiction (X5)	0.196	< .001
Self-Control (X6)	-0.219	< .001

The regression analysis showed that all six variables significantly influenced academic procrastination. Conscientiousness had the strongest effect, followed by intrinsic learning motivation and self-control. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

The regression equation in unstandardized form is:

$$Y = 5.045 - 0.305X_{1} - 0.251X_{3} - 0.224X_{6} + 0.209X_{4} + 0.208X_{5} - 0.199X_{2}$$

The regression equation in standardized form is:

$Z = -0.293X_{1} - 0.249X_{3} - 0.219X_{6} + 0.205X_{4} + 0.196X_{5} - 0.189X_{2}$

Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was supported.

Table 5 Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Result
H1	Supported
H2	Supported

Discussion

The findings related to Objective 1 showed that conscientiousness, time management disposition, intrinsic learning motivation, extrinsic learning motivation, internet addiction, and self-control were significantly related to academic procrastination among undergraduate students at Zunyi Normal University. Conscientiousness showed the strongest relationship with academic procrastination. These findings suggest that psychological and behavioral factors are closely related to academic procrastination. The results are consistent with previous studies. Aitken (1982) found that procrastination is related to personality traits, while Steel (2007) and Tangney et al. (2004) emphasized the roles of conscientiousness and self-control in reducing procrastination.

Regarding Objective 2, the results showed that all six variables significantly influenced academic procrastination. Conscientiousness was the strongest predictor, followed by intrinsic learning motivation and self-control. These findings indicate that personality, motivation, and self-regulation are important predictors of academic procrastination. This is consistent with McCloskey (2011).

Recommendation

Universities should develop effective strategies to reduce academic procrastination among students. Teachers and academic advisors should help students strengthen conscientiousness, improve time management skills, and develop better self-control to improve academic performance.

Universities should also provide programs to enhance intrinsic learning motivation and reduce internet addiction. Workshops, counseling services, and academic support activities may help students improve self-regulation and reduce procrastination behavior. Zhang et al. (2018) suggested that strengthening self-regulation can effectively reduce academic procrastination. Future studies may include larger samples and additional variables.

References

Aitken, M. E. (1982). A personality profile of the college student procrastinator. In Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh.

Lay, C. H. (1986). At last, my research article on procrastination. Journal of Research in Personality, 20(4), 474–495.

McCloskey, J. D. (2011). Finally, my thesis on academic procrastination: The development and validation of the Academic Procrastination Scale (Master's thesis, University of Texas at Arlington).

Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. American Psychologist, 55(1), 68–78.

Steel, P. (2007). The nature of procrastination: A meta-analytic and theoretical review of quintessential self-regulatory failure. Psychological Bulletin, 133(1), 65–94.

Tangney, J. P., Baumeister, R. F., & Boone, A. L. (2004). High self-control predicts good adjustment, less pathology, better grades, and interpersonal success. Journal of Personality, 72(2), 271–324.

Trueman, M., & Hartley, J. (1996). A comparison between the time-management skills and academic performance of mature and traditional-entry university students. Higher Education, 32(2), 199–215.

Van Eerde, W. (2003). A meta-analytically derived nomological network of procrastination. Personality and Individual Differences, 35(6), 1401–1418.

Young, K. S. (1998). Internet addiction: The emergence of a new clinical disorder. CyberPsychology & Behavior, 1(3), 237–244.

Zhang, Y., Dong, S., Fang, W., Chai, X., Mei, J., & Fan, X. (2018). Self-efficacy for self-regulation and fear of failure as mediators between self-esteem and academic procrastination among undergraduates in health professions. Advances in Health Sciences Education, 23(4), 817–830.