Exploring The Phenomena Of Procrastination And Its Impact Toward English Department Students' Academic Life

Abstract

This research aims to (1) investigate the procrastination type that occurs to the English department students; (2) explain the cause of English department students' procrastination within their academic activities; (3) describe how procrastination gives impact toward English department students' academic life. This research applied a qualitative case study approach. The data of this research were taken from two different subjects that considered displaying procrastination behavior, used interview and observation guide as the main instruments to collect the data. There were six steps in analyzing the data. First, used the instruments to gather the data. Second, transcribed the data. Third, reduced the data and analyzed it qualitatively. Fourth, organized the data into relevant data related to this research. Fifth, explained the findings based on the fourth method above. The result of this research shows that there are five types of procrastination in student's academic life and the two impacts that occurred by doing procrastination. In time-based, the students tend to procrastinate because of the deadline of the task still far ahead. In work-based, the students avoid doing the task by distracting themselves with another work that irrelevant to academic activities. In defensive, procrastination occurs to fill the need of students in order to protect their self-esteem. In active procrastination students intentionally procrastinate to work better under pressure. In passive procrastination, students cannot focus to maintain themselves to do the task. Procrastination eventually leads students to have negative emotional feeling and can be both good or bad academic performance.

Keywords: Procrastination, academic life, students' academic life.

1. Introduction

Procrastination is described by Steel (2007, p. 66) as "to voluntarily delay associate supposed course of action despite expecting to be worse off for the delay". As projected by Schraw, Olafson and Wadkins (2007) behaviour should be unneeded, delaying and harmful to be thought to be procrastination. The idea underlying procrastination is that 'later is better' and this is often conjointly a typical illusion behind 'tomorrow outlook'. However, once tomorrow comes, the pattern resurfaces, and procrastinators excuse themselves by promising that 'I will do it tomorrow'. Hence, procrastination is seen as 'tomorrow syndrome (Knaus, 2002).

Procrastination seems to be a major drawback, especially among university students. There are many possible reasons for the occurrence of procrastination in students (Rothblum et al., 1986). The need for this study arises from the very fact that procrastination could be a frequent prevalence amongst students. In their study in 1995, Senecal et all estimated about 95% of college students engage in this type of behavior during their schoolwork and studies. Procrastination and therefore the collegian appear to travel hand in hand. At the start of a replacement semester, nearly every student makes the goal of finishing work on time, doing his

or her best, and making good grades. In reality, most students put off the work until the last minute (Palmer, 1998). Despite this ever-popular trend of procrastinating work, most students regret procrastinating.

Recently, academic procrastination has been increasingly explored in order to comprehend how procrastination occurs and how students can be helped to avoid this problem. However, most of the studies have focused only on college students in science departments. There are very few studies investigating the procrastination of college students, especially in the English department. Lack of research in this area is seen as a possible explanation of why procrastination happened to those who suffer from it especially in the English department. Interest in this research surfaced because I know many friends and peers who have admitted that they are a procrastinator. It is a behavior that I as the writer even found myself partaking in it. Eventually, this research is going to figure out the type of procrastination, why students procrastinate and the associated consequences to their academic life.

2. Literature Review

An article written by the yank Psychological Association reveals, “Students worry regarding acting inadequately or concern their success could raise others' expectations of them” (Novotney, 2010). In his research, he asked other participants if they found that they procrastinated due to fear of success. Some students feel that they are never good enough and do not want to complete their work. When this happens, students will get low grades and that will discourage them further.

In an analysis study done at Ohio State University, it was found that “high procrastinators suffer more stress than other students do” (Grabmeier, 2002). College students are known for being stressed. In his study, he was trying to find out whether the students were stressed out because of their courses difficult or they wait till the last minute to do their work. The result is the students get self-hatred and anxiety when they were trying to wait to do the task until the last minute. This proposes that students' procrastination make them feel bad whenever they procrastinate their work. Some students feel that the work they're doing is simply busy work and cannot facilitate them achieve life. When students feel that means, they may procrastinate more. If those students challenge themselves or sent goals to finish the work, they are more likely to finish it.

The Journal of Education and scientific discipline has a lot of to mention on the topic: “Self-induced challenge seems to be particularly effective once a task is viewed as boring or unsuitable to their personal goals as a result of it allows them to reframe a task in order that its completion has relevancy to them for private reasons, even though the task had no perceived intrinsic merit” (Sansone, C., & Harackiewicz, J. M., 2003). Some students ought to feel that the work goes to learn them forthwith.

In another study done by Alexander Onwuegbuzie (2006) entitled 'Academic procrastination and the role of hope as a coping strategy' One of the many things that college students face is stress with their lecturers, particularly when trying to do tasks with a deadline. In his study, it was reported that academic procrastinators, specifically students who procrastinate in learning for the upcoming test tests, who were the greatest one to suffer from stress. And also, it found that students experience stress believed that on tests they would receive a lower grade. The

researchers deem that stress causes these college students to underestimate their abilities in academics. So, test anxiety was related to the test grades and also a negative impact from procrastination.

Procrastination has also affected adolescents. Adolescents delayed learning, schoolwork assignments, and papers even as faculty students do. Owens, A. & Newbegin, I. (2000) from The Journal of Social Behavior and Personality has more to say about this: “Academic procrastination of adolescents in English and mathematics: Gender and personality variations.” In their research, they found that students who engage in procrastination behaviors during adolescence are more likely to procrastinate in college. And also, no gender differences were found but the study concluded that girls read books or magazines when procrastinating and boys usually watched television, play games, or go online..

3. Method

This study used a qualitative research design from the phenomena that occurred in the students’ academic life. The approach that I used in this study was a case study approach.

I used this strategy in this research because this strategy is the most suitable strategy to achieve the focus of this study, and by doing an intensive investigation on a student who did an academic procrastination I achieved the data about what type of procrastination that the subject did, what were the reasons, and how did this procrastination behavior gave impact toward an English department student’s academic life.

I conducted observation and interview to gather the data which was used to complete the research. Observation and recording were done to get the data about subject behavior in procrastinating, while the interview was performed to support the data about English department student's procrastination in their academic life. After did the observation and documentation from the participant behaviour during procrastination act, I interviewed them (subject of this study), then I transcribed the result of the interview and write down the data from observation and documentation (recording, notes, etc.)

By observing the observation and transcription, then I reduced the data that I got by summarizing and choosing specific things referring to the research questions. In this step, the data was analyzed qualitatively concerning with the types, reason, and impact of procrastination in English department students’ academic life. I organized the data and seek for the answer from what kind of procrastination that the subjects do, why do they do it, and the impact that it gave to their academic life. Lastly, I verified my research by making conclusion of data findings, Moleong’s (2005).

4. Findings And Discussion

The findings in this research consist of the data collected from observations and interviews that had been done by me, the followings are the reduction of the data based on the research title about the procrastination that occurred in English Department students and its impact toward their academic life. The main point of this section is about describing the type of procrastination, the reason they did it, and the impact in their academic life based on the result of the interviews and observations through the subject.

a. Type of procrastination

Procrastination / No. / Type / Description / Indication

1. Time-based

Procrastination occurs because of the deadline that appears to be far ahead

- There is a deadline (seen or unseen)
- Think they still have enough time to do the task
- Weak time management on the deadline
- Keep promising to work on the task tomorrow.

2. Work-based

Procrastination occurs when the procrastinator tends to do something else rather than do the task right away

- Think they have too much work to do
- Prefer to do other activities rather than working on the task
- Put the task later to work better under the pressure

3. Defensive

Procrastination occurs because the procrastinator wanted to protect their self-esteem

- Self-handicapping themselves related working on the task
- Always have a reason to avoid to do the task

4. Active

Procrastination occurred because the procrastinator having a strong motivation to complete something under pressure

- Intentionally procrastinate the task
- Prefer to be under pressure

5. Passive

Procrastination occurred because the procrastinator not having a strong sense focus to the task so the task is delayed unintentionally due to this inability

- Unintentionally procrastinate the task
- Inability to work because of the fear of failure
- Get distracted easily

Table 1

1) Time-based procrastination

The reason why procrastinator always delays their task until the last second is because they think that they will still have enough time to do their task and it will be better to do it “tomorrow”. They tend to overestimate the time that given to them to complete their task and it becomes a planning fallacy. This happened regardless of their knowledge about how long it will take to finish the task. Weak time management also become one of the main indication procrastinators do their procrastination. When the deadline is there (seen or unseen) procrastinator tend to delay the task in order to create two positive emotions. The first reason is that they do not want to get a lot of stress by doing the task immediately and the second reason is that they think that they are a good organizer for their schedule in terms of doing the task (Pychyl, 2000). However, the positive emotions only last for that day only.

2) Work-based procrastination

Procrastinator tends to procrastinate on the task because they think that they have more work to do, so they don’t have the time to work on the task right away. The procrastinator in here tends to use “I have other activities to do” as their main reason to avoid in doing the task right away. The procrastinator usually put off doing their task at last minute because they know it requires hard work that demands a lot of mental energy, so as long is it does not threaten or have a direct impact to our survival, procrastinator often delays doing the task.

3) Defensive procrastination

This type of procrastination is procrastination where a procrastinator will always have a reason to avoid to do the task right away and they tend to do it in order to protect their self-esteem. In other words, it is self-defence mechanics. They decided to create a situation where they tend to handicap themselves in order to protect their ego, subject. Because they did not want themselves to be threatened by their fear when they cannot do the task properly. By the end of the day, they always have a reason for themselves why they got a bad score for their performance and will avoid their fear of not doing a good performance with the task. Without realizing it, the procrastinator is using procrastination to fill their need to protect their self-esteem.

4) Active procrastination

This type of procrastination is procrastination that occurs when the procrastinator think that they will do a better performance when they got in an under-pressure situation (Chu & Choi 2005). When the deadline reaching up, the procrastinator becomes more diligent and organized in doing their task. In the end, they cut all of the distraction and work and only focus on the task, their performance became better and they managed to finish it in time. Even though they did not really care about the task at first.

5) Passive procrastination

A procrastinator behavior can be categorized into passive procrastination when they delay doing their task because of their indecisive act. In other words, this type of procrastination occurred without the procrastinator have the intention to do it. procrastinator gets easily distracted by other things that have nothing to do with their task. They are ignorant about the task and just left it there without considering about it at all until the last minute. This behavior

eventually leads them to pass the deadline or did not manage to be in time with the goal to work on her task.

b. Reason of procrastination

1) Lacked motivation

Procrastinator knew about their capabilities on working about the task and the steps to it. It is just only that they have no reason to work on the task right away. They just lacked the motivation to do it. This occurred because the procrastinator cannot find a good reason why they should work on the task right away at the time. There are two types of motivation that they lost in here. The first one is intrinsic motivation, where they should have the motivation to do their task comes from the inside of themselves, and the second one is extrinsic motivation. It means that others should support them to do their task in order to finish it (Brownlow & Reasinger 2000). In this case, others had something to do with their intrinsic motivation. Instead of getting the motivation from others, they felt that others were judging them, and eventually lead them to lost intrinsic motivation to do their task.

2) Poor time-management

In this case, the procrastinator ignored the task that they have. They tend to do another activity that did not relate with their task such as seeing their friends, checking social media about other things that irrelevant with the task, or do nothing at all. Those activities eventually spend their times on nothing but unproductive activities, and by the end of the day, they will just leave the task there without even thinking about it. It showed that the procrastinator has a weak time management skill or not planning things efficiently to accomplish their task. This weak time management skill eventually leads to procrastination (Pychil, Morin, Salmon, 2000). The procrastinator overestimating themselves by thinking that they still have much time to complete the task.

3) Self-handicapping

The procrastinator intentionally handicapping herself in doing the task by doing other activities that had nothing to do with her thesis, at the later time they will start to blame it on the activities that they did before. The procrastinator self-handicapping themselves by creating an obstacle so that it was nearly impossible for them to complete all the task that they already committed to. Therefore, the procrastination is a way for them to blame their failure instead of acknowledging her own personal lack of ability (Ferrari & Tice 2000). in managing to finish part of their task. On the other hand, they may still succeed despite the procrastination.

4) Lack of self-esteem

The procrastinator usually has a will to do their task, they will always feel that it should be perfect. Because of this type of thinking they become lacked in self-esteem to do it. For instance, when they already find a good resource for their task and think that the resource is not enough, they will just leave the work there and do something else. When they do the other activities, they will never think of the task until the guilty feeling come to them, and when that occurs, they will just start to write their task again with anxiety and panic situation.

c. Impact on academic life

According to Burka and Yuen (2008), the impact of procrastination can be identified into two types. The first one is internal consequences and the second one is the external consequences Internal consequences can be described as feelings of irritation to utter despair, and external consequences can be described from small penalties to major one from campus, home, workplace, etc.

1) Impact on emotional feeling (Internal consequences)

'Because by then I think I had put my entire, sort of, self-worth into this thesis, and it felt like, if I never complete it, I'm just going to be useless, for the, sort of for the rest of my life, it's going to sit with me, it will be something that I will just never get over, so I have to just get it done."

At the moment when procrastinator decided to procrastinate their task, they create distractions in order to avoid the task that they got, they want to make it disappear from their mind at that moment. Even though it is successful for them to make the thought disappear for a moment they will still remember about it frequently. Despite the fact that they still remember about it, they still let themselves to drown in this situation leaving them unable to do the task and always feel anxious as the time is clocking. The consequences of this behavior would lead to creating a mindset to avoid the task when they got one. When this cycle keeps on repeating eventually it will take their time to waste and lead to anxiety (Wegner, 1994).

2) Impact on academic performance (External consequences)

The impact on procrastination in academic performance can be both good and bad. For the procrastinator who tend to be under pressure to work on the task they will use the last minute ethic work to get a good inspiration, idea, and optimal performance when he did the task at the last minute, where he preferred to do the task under pressure circumstances despite their procrastination behavior Furthermore, even though they procrastinated the task until the last minute it will still help them to protect their feelings of self-worth because they do not get a failure from the score (Covington 1993). While the procrastinator who cannot manage themselves with under pressure situation, they tend to have a bad impact on their academic performance, for instance never finish the thesis in time, get a bad outcome from the thesis revision, etc. eventually this impact will create internal consequences as well, such as despair, anxiety, dreadful feeling.

5. Conclusion And Suggestion

This section consists of two parts. The first is the conclusion and findings presented in the previous chapter. The second part is a suggestion. Those are will be discussed.

a. Conclusion

From this research, it can be concluded that:

1. Students who procrastinate an academic task can be categorized into five different types of procrastination based on their situation and condition that they dealt with within

their academic life. Namely: (a) Work-based procrastination, (b) Time-based procrastination. (c) Defensive procrastination (d) Active procrastination. (d) Passive procrastination

2. There are four types of reasons why students procrastinate their academic task. (a) They have poor time management, (b) lack of motivation to do the task, (c) lack of self-esteem to work on the task, (d) tend to self-handicapping themselves.
3. There are two impacts that happened to English department students after they committed procrastination. (a) Impact on their academic performance (external consequences), (b) Impact on their emotional feeling (internal consequences).

b. Suggestion

In future research, it is necessary to examine procrastination differentiating those who plan to procrastinate and those who do not. From the data, it can be seen that students perceived themselves as procrastinators regardless of whether they had planned or not, but they seemed to represent different motives or reasons in procrastination. However, most of the past research did not make such a distinction. Therefore, future work should not only determine whether a planned delay is considered as procrastination but also independently examine different delays.

Further exploration regarding the positive impact of procrastination is also necessary. Although procrastinators in the current study reported working better under pressure, they did not seem to procrastinate for such benefits or to achieve satisfactory results. In the finding, it can be seen that the participant did not enjoy the feeling that the got to finish the work under pressure, even though it increases their performance it did not seem that it was the way that they want to work their academic task. For future research, thus, should be able to explain whether procrastination could be truly giving a good impact on students in facing their academic life.

In addition, future research will need to investigate potential varying reasons for procrastination. In the current study, it is suggested that people engage in procrastination for different potential reasons. Thus, future research should uncover the multiple reasons for academic procrastination and provide which reasons are best attributable to procrastination in different circumstances. This work will help to further develop a process model or theory of academic procrastination.

In conclusion, this study contributed to existing procrastination research in several ways. First, it examined the type of students who procrastinate their academic task. Second, the finding further revealed the reason behind procrastination behaviour. Third the impact of procrastination behaviour that occurs in academic life.