WHAT IS PROCRASTINATION AND HOW TO DEAL WITH

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Procrastination is a complex issue involving a range of factors such as personality traits, cognitive processes, and environmental influences and others. The aim of this work is to provide a comprehensive overview of procrastination by exploring its types, prevalence, and causes and to present evidence-based strategies for overcoming procrastination and making it effective.

Key words: Procrastination; comprehensive overview; consequences; task prioritization; strategies; complex implications; negative repercussions; passive preparation; natural inclination; Arousal procrastination.

Procrastination is a common behavior that affects individuals across various domains and can lead to negative consequences such as stress, reduced productivity, and missed opportunities. Despite its prevalence, procrastination remains a complex issue involving a range of factors such as personality traits, cognitive processes, and environmental influences. We aim to provide a comprehensive overview of procrastination by exploring its types, prevalence, and causes. We will also present evidence-based strategies for overcoming procrastination and making it effective.

Procrastination is a behavior where an individual delays or postpones tasks, actions, or decisions. It involves choosing to engage in alternative activities instead of the task at hand, often resulting in missed deadlines or poor performance. Procrastination is a complex phenomenon that can have various causes, including personality, environmental and cognitive factors.

There are several types of procrastination, each with their own unique characteristics and underlying causes.

1. Arousal procrastination, where an individual delays starting a task until the last minute because they believe they work better under pressure. This type is often associated with a desire for excitement and stimulation, and individuals who exhibit this behavior may thrive on the rush of adrenaline they feel when working against the clock.

2. Avoidance procrastination, where an individual puts off tasks that they perceive as unpleasant, uncomfortable, or boring. This type is often associated with a fear of failure or negative evaluation, and individuals who struggle with avoidance procrastination may be anxious about being judged harshly or criticized for their work.

3. Decisional procrastination, where an individual delays making decisions or choices. This type is often associated with difficulty making choices or a fear of making the wrong decision. Individuals who exhibit this behavior may feel overwhelmed by the number of options available to them or be hesitant to commit to a course of action.

4. Perfectionism, which occurs when individuals put off tasks until they feel they can do them perfectly. Individuals who struggle with perfectionism often set impossibly high standards for themselves and may be unwilling to settle for anything less than perfect. This can result in procrastination as they may feel that they are not ready to start a task until they have all the necessary information, skills, or resources to complete it perfectly.

5. The fear of failure is the type of procrastination that can be particularly problematic for individuals who struggle with anxiety or low self-esteem. Individuals who exhibit this behavior may avoid tasks to avoid the possibility of failure, believing that if they fail, it will reflect poorly on their abilities or character.

6. Task prioritization is a type of procrastination that occurs when individuals prioritize less important tasks over more pressing ones. This type of procrastination is often rooted in a lack of motivation or difficulty prioritizing tasks effectively. For example, an individual may spend hours checking emails or scrolling through social media instead of working on an urgent project.

7. Creative avoidance occurs when individuals use creative excuses to avoid tasks. For example, an individual may convince themselves that they cannot work on a task until they have rearranged their workspace, or that they cannot start a project until they have completed a certain unrelated task first. This type of procrastination can be particularly difficult to overcome as it often involves deeply ingrained habits or beliefs that may be difficult to change.

Overall, understanding the different types of procrastination and their underlying causes can be a helpful step in overcoming this common challenge. By identifying, which type of procrastination they are experiencing, individuals can begin to develop strategies to overcome their procrastination and improve their productivity and well-being.

The impact of procrastination is not limited to individuals. Delayed decision-making in the business arena can result in inefficiencies, deterioration in the quality of work and in customer relations. Additionally, procrastination can lead to missed opportunities and wasted resources.

Research has shown that procrastination can have negative consequences for individuals and society as a whole. Individuals who procrastinate may experience increased stress levels, decreased productivity, and decreased academic or work performance. Chronic procrastination has also been linked to anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues.

Given these complex implications for the individual and society as a whole, there is a need to conduct research to identify which populations are more likely to procrastinate and what may be the reasons for this. The survey was conducted using Google Forms. Its purpose was to assess the level of procrastination of the following social groups: schoolchildren, students without a permanent job, students with a permanent job, and people with a permanent job. To conduct the survey, we compiled a list of 18 statements with response options "Strongly disagree", " Disagree", "Differently", "Agree", " Strongly agree ".
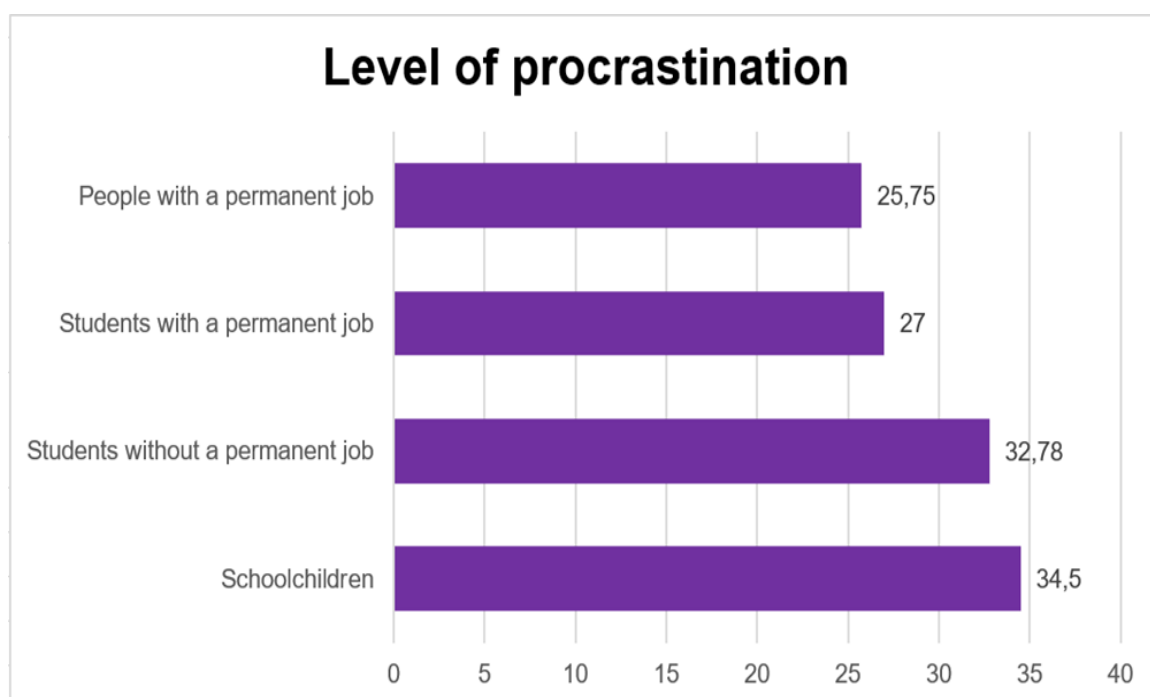
Results of the research

The results (fig. 1) showed that the groups most prone to procrastination were schoolchildren and students without a permanent job, while students and non-students with a job showed a lower level of procrastination.

Procrastination can be caused by a variety of factors: ear of failure, lack of motivation, distractions, perfectionism and lack self-regulation skills

Paying attention to the studies that have been done, it is indeed possible to detect a pattern between the results and causes of procrastination. Schoolchildren face the fear of failure and the inability to manage their time, tasks and priorities most of all. In addition, schoolchildren are more likely to be distracted due to age and the characteristics of new generations. These patterns are also quite relevant for students, especially first-year students. Also, schoolchildren and early-year students (they are less likely to have a permanent job) are highly prone to a lack of motivation and a lack of interest in completing specific tasks. Such a factor as

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perfectionism characterizes older people, that is, those who most likely already have a job.

Ultimately, procrastination can have negative consequences for individuals and society as a whole, and it is important to understand the underlying causes to develop strategies to address and overcome it. There are several effective strategies that can help us overcome procrastination or turn it to our advantage.

First of all, consider tips that help overcome procrastination. It's worth starting with organizing time and setting priorities. Here are the skills to learn for better time management: setting specific and measurable goals for staying motivated and focused on the objectives, prioritizing tasks to focus on the most important and urgent tasks first, creating a schedule using calendars, to-do lists, and productivity apps, breaking larger tasks into smaller, more manageable steps, which can help to reduce feelings of overwhelm and stress, allowing us to focus on one small step at a time and build momentum towards our goals.

Another effective strategy is to focus on the benefits of completing a task. By remembering the positive outcomes of a task, people can stay focused and energized, which can help to overcome procrastination.

The ability to rest properly. During procrastination, even when a person does nothing, they still do not rest, but only spend an internal resource on guilt and other self-destructive feelings. A good rest can be a way to avoid procrastination in the future, because sometimes the body does not have enough strength for productive work and it looks for all kinds of ways to avoid it.

Even though procrastination is directly related to wasting time, some people just tend to finish work just before the deadline and succeed at it. Research has shown that people who procrastinate can be highly effective. It's important to distinguish between ineffective procrastination, which causes missed deadlines and doesn't result in work getting done, versus effective procrastination in which the work happens close to the deadline without sacrificing quality. In this case, instead of changing the natural inclination, procrastinators can learn to do it effectively. Here are some tips for it.

The first tip for effective procrastination is to use "structured procrastination" to your advantage. Also called "active procrastination," this concept means that if you're avoiding one thing on your to-do list, you should use that time to accomplish something less imminent on the list instead.

The second one is to find ways to create external deadlines or consequences. Involving other people can be a good way to keep yourself accountable. Create a deadline by letting another person know that you'll give them something by a specific date.

The following tip is to accept that this strategy works for you. Don't feel guilty for procrastinating – there is nothing inherently bad about it. Beating yourself up for having a different work style is not going to help you be more efficient

or successful. Accept that you are an effective procrastinator and treat yourself with kindness and self-compassion. Remember, that If you're finding yourself missing deadlines then it is no longer effective procrastination.

Know when it's time to let go. Some items on the to-do list simply may not be that important to accomplish. If you have been putting off dealing with a particular item on your list for weeks or even months and no negative repercussions have occurred, it may be time to take it off the list entirely. It's also possible that this item still needs to happen but you're not the person who should do it, in which case you can find someone to delegate to so that it will get done.

The fifths tip is to use passive preparation. There are a lot of ways to work on a task or project, and not all of them seem obvious to others. You can passively prepare a paper or a project in several ways: read articles about it, think about it creatively, talk with people about it, write down thoughts about it, or create a timeline. This approach means that you can allow yourself to explore ideas without the pressure of needing to get the actual product done just yet.

Reward yourself when you've accomplished a task. Treat yourself when you've accomplished tasks by their deadline. Give yourself permission to celebrate, eat your favorite dessert, watch a movie, or buy yourself something you've been wanting. This will positively reinforce your behaviors in the long run.

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