

The Silent Pause: A Review Study of Procrastination and Associated Variables on Youth

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Abstract

The prevalence of Academic procrastination among youth, aged 15 to 25 years old presents a significant challenge to their ability to self-regulate and thus achieve educational goals and successfully adjust to other aspects of their personal lives; specifically, how they handle their psychological health and/or future goals. This paper presents a complete systematic qualitative literature review of empirical studies from 2010–2025 on how various cognitive variables such as self-regulation, academic self-efficacy, emotional regulation, perfectionism, and fear of failure, as well as contextual variables (i.e., parenting styles, teacher support, digital distractions, task characteristics and academic climate) impact students' development. Adhering to the PRISMA Guidelines and following the guidelines of contemporary "Big Data" reviews, thematic analysis identified two different academic settings; in one type of academic setting, students have a strong level of self-regulatory skills supported by a positive environment that suppresses delays in completing their tasks; in the second setting, students suffer from maladaptive cognitive-behavioural disorders that result in procrastination behaviours being exacerbated by distraction caused by digital media. The proposed Integrated Theoretical Models demonstrate a bi-directional influence of cognitive and contextual pathways on students' level of academic engagement, academic performance and psychological health and well-being. Multi-level intervention strategies addressing both the student's capabilities and the student's support structures/environment should be developed for the benefit of educators, counsellors and policymakers.

Index Terms

Procrastination, Self-Regulation, Academic Self-efficacy, Emotion Regulation, Perfectionism, Fear of Failure