

Impact of Procrastination on Interpersonal Communication and Marital Relationships

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Abstract: The current study was designed to investigate the impact of procrastination on interpersonal communication and marital relationships of Pakistan. To develop a thorough understanding of these concerned features, the research used quantitative methodologies. A well-structured questionnaire was used to collect data from 240 married people from Hasan Abdal, Wah Cantt and Haripur schools and universities. The findings supported the idea, indicating a significant negative relationship between both procrastination and interpersonal communication within marital relationships. This indicates that as procrastination tendencies increases, there is a slight decrease in interpersonal communication within marital relationships. These studies emphasize that individuals prone to procrastination might struggle with initiating or maintaining open and meaningful dialogues, which can negatively impact relational communication dynamics. The findings have significant suggestions and implications to tackle with procrastination tendencies and promoting healthy communication patterns that enhance marital relationship satisfaction and resilience.

Index Terms: Procrastination, interpersonal communication, marital relationship, married couples, quantitative methodologies, well-structured questionnaire.

I. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of procrastination is widely recognized for its detrimental impact on an individual's capacity to effectively engage in tasks and attain desired objectives. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that this tendency can extend beyond the realm of personal productivity, permeating into the domain of matrimony and interpersonal connections, thereby engendering significant adverse consequences. The present investigation aims to scrutinize the intricate ramifications of procrastination on the fundamental aspects of interpersonal communication, while also delving into the possible adverse consequences and proposing strategies for their mitigation (Andreou, 2007).

The endeavor of couples to proficiently articulate their concerns and attain resolution may encounter mounting

difficulties due to the accumulation of delays and unresolved matters. The afore mentioned inclination possesses the capacity to engender emotional detachment, dissatisfaction, and, in the direst circumstances, the dissolution of the interpersonal bond over a prolonged duration (Ferrari et al., 1995).

Nevertheless, it is worth noting that extant research has consistently yielded strange findings pertaining to the correlation between gender and the propensity for procrastination. Furthermore, it is worth noting that the assertion made in the preceding statement finds additional corroboration in the research conducted by Nilufer (2017) pertaining to the Turkish populace. Nevertheless, the strange outcomes documented in the extant literature serve to suggest that no discernible disparities exist between genders with regard to the phenomenon of procrastination (Wang, 2020). In a rather disconcerting turn of events, a subset of scholarly investigations has yielded empirical support for the contention that the propensity for procrastination is more prevalent among the female gender as opposed to their male counterparts (Song et al., 2020).

Thus far, the prevailing body of research has indicated that there exists no substantial disparity in procrastination rates between the genders, as evidenced by various studies such as the one conducted by Rothblum et al. in 1986. Nevertheless, it is imperative to acknowledge the cautionary stance adopted by Paludi and Frankell-Hauser (1986), who have aptly highlighted the presence of empirical support indicating a greater propensity for procrastination among women as compared to their male counterparts. Furthermore, these esteemed researchers have posited the notion that women may indeed encounter heightened levels of anxiety associated with procrastination when juxtaposed with men. At present, a dearth of empirical evidence exists regarding significant gender disparities in the factors associated with the phenomenon of procrastination.

Two notably comprehensive inquiries, namely a survey study conducted by Gröpel and Steel in 2008, have undertaken a direct examination of the relationship which describes that in the course of these inquiries, a discernible correlation was observed between the act of procrastination and the variable of gender, denoted by a coefficient of correlation (r) equal to 0.08. Henceforth, we possess a steadfast conviction that the mentioned correlation shall remain applicable within this context: it is necessary upon males to delay the execution of tasks to a greater extent. The established correlation between

the process of ageing and the inclination towards procrastination is a subject of considerable researches.

The profound influence of marriages of superior quality on individuals' life satisfaction, well-being, and efficacy, as well as their broader outcomes for society, have been expounded upon by Madathil and Benshoff (2008).

The scholarly literature posits that the role of family in fostering the cultivation of positive habits is beyond dispute (Rosario et al., 2006). One commonly observed phenomenon is the presence of a particular strain of perfectionism, which is influenced by societal norms and has a direct correlation with the tendency to procrastinate. This specific strain of perfectionism is often linked to the expectations imposed by parents and the prevalence of intense criticism within the familial environment (Ferrari et al., 2005). The contention put forth posits that the act of procrastination is subject to notable influence from familial relationships, although in an oblique manner.

According to the scholarly work of Heckman and La Fontaine (2010), it is evident that in contemporary times, there exists a noticeable trend where in the fairer gender, namely women, exhibit a higher propensity to successfully complete their collegiate studies and obtain a substantial proportion of academic qualifications bestowed by esteemed institutions of higher learning. In accordance with the findings presented in a 2009 report by the esteemed United States Census Bureau, it is revealed that the female population constitutes the larger proportion, specifically 55%, of individuals aged between 18 and 29 who have successfully attained a bachelor's degree or a higher level of educational attainment (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the impact of procrastination on interpersonal communication and marital relationships between various demographic characteristics (age, gender, love or arrange marriage, nuclear or joint family system, education) amongst married couples. This study is highly noteworthy since it addresses the serious problem of marital relationships of married couples in Pakistani culture, which is typically suppressed and denied. Also, there is a significant research gap because very few studies have been done to investigate this issue. Exploring the prevalence of procrastination and its correlation with various demographic factors among married couples is very important in order to provide new knowledge and statistical information that will be useful to policy makers.

II. Method

A sample consisted of 240 married couples, was collected through purposive sampling from different cities of Pakistan. The age range of the sample was 20-40 years. Married couple above 40 age and those who were separated divorced and illiterate were excluded from the study. Among the sample 62% were females and 38% were males.

Assessment Measures

Irrational Procrastination Quotient

The English version of IPQ-2010 was developed by (Steel, 2010) is used to measure participants' level of procrastination. Scale comprises of nine items e.g., "My life would be better if I did some activities or tasks earlier" (Item 3) and three items are reversely scored (Items 2, 6, and 9). The reliability of the nine likert items on the scale range from 0.58 to 0.74.

Marital Adjustment Test

The English version of MAT-1959 was developed by (Locke et al., 1959) is used to measure the participants' marital adjustment. Scale comprises of 15 items. The reliability of fifteen likert items on the scale ranges from 0.72-0.83.

Interpersonal Communication Inventory

The English version of ICI-1971 was developed by (Bienvenu, 1971) is used to measure the general trends in interpersonal communication, revealing a certain communication pattern. The questionnaire is structured along four components: clarity in expressing oneself, listening skills, giving and receiving feedback and capitalizing on emotional interaction. The reliability of the scale is 0.74.

Demographic Form

On a demographic sheet various characteristics of participants such as age, gender, family system (joint/nuclear), and marriage (love/arrange), education and location were documented. All the instruments were used with the permissions of their concerned authors.

Procedure

This study used cross sectional design to study the impact of procrastination on interpersonal communication and marital relationships, so three reliable scales were selected to access the parameters of the study for data collection. The informed consent was provided to participants who were willing. Before the administration of questionnaire, the aim of the study was briefed to the participants. It took 25 to 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire. After the data collection, finally the results were analyzed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Through result of analysis run by SPSS hypothesis were tested.

III. Results

To analyze the data descriptive, different analysis has been used to study the relationship between variables through Pearson product correlation. Moreover, linear regression included predictors and outcome variables.

Table 1

Correlation of Study Variables (N=22)

Variables	PROC	IC	MR
PROC	-	-.166**	-.076
IC	-	-	.36**
MR	-	-	-

Note: M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation and **p<.01, *p<.05, ***p< .001; PROC= Procrastination; IC= Interpersonal Communication; MR= Marital Relationship

Findings indicated a significant negative relationship between both procrastination and interpersonal communication within marital relationship.

Table 2

Simple Linear Regression showing Procrastination as Predictor of Interpersonal Communication(N=244)

Variable	B	SE	B
Constant	79.20***	3.65	
Procrastination	-.355**	.14	-.16
R^2	.03		

Note. SE=Standard Error of Estimate, B= Unstandardized Beta, B= Standardized Beta

The findings reveals impact of procrastination on interpersonal communication. The R^2 value of .03 revealed that the predictor variable explained 3% of variance in the outcome variable with $F(1,242) = 6.85, p < .01$. The findings revealed that procrastination negatively predicted interpersonal communication.

Table 3

Simple Linear Regression showing Procrastination as Predictor of Marital Relationship (N=244)

Variable	B	SE	B
Constant	123.16***	7.02	
Procrastination	-.311	.26	-.08
R^2	.006		

Note. SE=Standard Error of Estimate, B= Unstandardized Beta, B= Standardized Beta

The findings impact of procrastination on marital relationship. The R^2 value of .006 revealed that the predictor variable explained .6% of variance in the outcome variable with $F(1,242) = 1.42, p > .05$.

IV. Discussion

The present study investigates the complex interrelation among marital relationships, interpersonal communication, and procrastination. The way people engage in relationship communication is frequently influenced by procrastination, a common behavioral tendency. This article seeks to offer insights that can help foster healthier and more effective communication strategies within marital relationships through a thorough analysis of the topic.

The statistical analysis reveals a negative correlation between procrastination (PROC) and interpersonal communication (IC) that is statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level. This indicates as procrastination tendencies increases there is a slight decrease in interpersonal communication within marital relationships. Previous literature provides various perspectives supporting this relationship. For instance, research by Steel (2007) emphasizes the detrimental impact of procrastination on interpersonal dynamics. Procrastination tendencies often result in communication barriers, reducing the quality and frequency of exchanges within relationships. Additionally, studies by Milgram and Tenne (2000) and Hayes et al. (2018) highlight how procrastination can lead to conflict or avoidance in communication, hindering the development of healthy interpersonal interactions within intimate partnerships.

The hypothesis that "Procrastination will negatively impact marital relationships" appears to be contradicted by the findings of the study as outlined in Table 9. The statistical analysis, with an R^2 value of .006 and an insignificant F-value ($F(1,242) = 1.42, p > .05$), suggests that procrastination, as a predictor variable, only accounted for 0.6% of the variance in marital communication. The conclusion drawn from these results is that procrastination doesn't significantly predict marital communication in a negative manner. Kachgal, Hansen, and Nutter (2001) noted in their research that procrastination tends to lead to increased stress, potentially affecting communication patterns within relationships.

The hypothesis posited that procrastination would have a negative impact on interpersonal communication between partners. The empirical findings corroborated this assumption, indicating a negative predictive relationship between procrastination and interpersonal communication. The R^2 value of .03 suggested that procrastination accounted for 3% of the variance in interpersonal communication, a small but significant effect ($F(1,242) = 6.85, p < .01$). This aligns with prior research where procrastination has been linked to various negative outcomes in personal and relational domains. According to Steel (2007), procrastination tends to impede goal achievement and increase stress levels, which can spill over into interpersonal interactions. For instance, Tice and Baumeister (1997) highlighted how procrastination could lead to decreased self-regulation and increased conflict within relationships due to missed deadlines or unmet expectations.

Conclusion

This study investigated the effects of procrastination on interpersonal communication and marital relationships. The

findings demonstrated that males are more inclined towards the procrastination than the females. The current study findings suggested that procrastination significantly predicted the impact on communication between married couples. Gaining insight into the impact of procrastination on communication dynamics in relationships can facilitate the development of enhanced conflict resolution techniques and heightened intimacy. Emphasizing the harmful consequences of delay on timely talks and collaborative decision-making process highlights the necessity for proactive communication skills training among couples. Therapeutic interventions may include strategies to tackle procrastinating tendencies, promoting healthy communication patterns that enhance relationship satisfaction and resilience.

Implications

Practical recommendations derived from this research could involve designing customized workshops or counseling sessions centered on time-management techniques and communication improvement. Partners might derive advantages from acquiring specialized strategies to conquer procrastination, including establishing attainable objectives, employing efficient planning instruments, and promoting candid discussions regarding procrastination inclinations and its influence on relationship dynamics. Furthermore, practitioners in the field of couple's therapy can include these discoveries into premarital counseling programs, providing partners with the essential abilities to effectively handle communication difficulties and preempt any problems arising from procrastinating tendencies.

Limitations and Suggestions

The sample is only derived from few cities, and other regions need to be included in future research for a comprehensive understanding of the studied variables. The data is collected only from 20-40 age of married couples, further age groups can be incorporated to observe the impact of procrastination on interpersonal communication and marital relationships. Longitudinal studies and qualitative research will provide inclusive insight into procrastination within the marriage. By focusing on these areas, academics can advance a more comprehensive knowledge of how procrastination affects interpersonal communication and married couples' marital relationships. This will ultimately provide insightful knowledge for therapeutic approaches and relationship remedies.

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