

INVESTIGATION OF ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION: A CASE STUDY IN ISLAM-AFFILIATED UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Until recently, studies on academic procrastination involving students with diverse secondary school backgrounds have received limited attention, although an extensive body of research has been conducted on academic procrastination among university students. This study explored the current phenomenon of students' academic procrastination experience when completing academic writing tasks. Following qualitative analysis techniques, this case study involved nine students at a Public Islamic University in Lampung. The participants were selected through a purposive sampling technique. Research data were obtained from documentation, surveys, and in-depth interviews with the participants. The findings of the study show that the majority of academic procrastinators, categorized as passive procrastinators (56%), come from high school and vocational school backgrounds. Meanwhile, the majority of active procrastinators (44%) are from Islamic boarding schools. This difference is influenced by personality traits, with passive procrastinators exhibiting a stronger tendency toward extraversion, while active procrastinators are more dominant in the agreeableness trait. Furthermore, the Avoidance-Oriented Coping Mechanisms emerges as the most often used by students to overcome academic procrastination. The findings of this study provide valuable insights to enhance the affective aspects of the learning process.

Keywords: Academic procrastination, coping mechanisms strategies, personality traits, secondary school students, task characteristic

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INTRODUCTION

Many studies indicate that the transition from secondary school to university involves significant challenges, particularly in writing academic texts (Hadi et al., 2024; Shaat, 2022; Yung & Cai, 2020). Students will face challenges in addressing grammatical errors (Bagacina, 2024), vocabulary acquisition (Alrajafi, 2021) organizing their ideas (Aldabbus & Almansouri, 2022), and forming coherent paragraphs (Irwansyah, 2022). The challenges emerged because students encounter advanced academic writing tasks, although they are merely for daily tasks (West, 2024). In addition, the fulfilment of each task the lecturer

assignments must be submitted by the specified deadlines (Chilukuri, 2024). This demanding environment often makes students to lose interest, even when the tasks appear to be easy or simple (Yunos et al., 2023). Therefore, a lack of basic writing knowledge often results in academic procrastination when completing tasks.

Students engage in procrastination either due to specific reasons or for no apparent reasons (Wolters, 2003). While procrastination does not indicate whether someone is good or bad, it is often associated with negative connotations (Rozenal et al., 2022). Moreover, interviews conducted with students from a Public Islamic University in Lampung revealed that, despite procrastinating, students consistently complete their tasks within the required deadline. The occurrence of procrastination was caused by various factors, including a preference for working under pressure and the necessity of prioritizing tasks. Procrastination was also influenced by habits formed during secondary school and academic environments associated with diverse educational backgrounds. These findings further suggest that procrastination is not limited to a single type.

Procrastinators usually prioritize less important activities over responsibilities that require completion (Tibbett & Ferrari, 2019). In addition, some procrastinators experience a lack of self-esteem as a result of their inability to complete tasks orderly (Khaiwal & Gupta, 2024). In line with that, Chu & Choi (2005) distinguish between two types of procrastinators, namely active procrastinators and passive procrastinators. Active procrastinators intentionally delay tasks without directly experiencing negative emotions, such as stress and anxiety (Choi & Moran, 2009) and can manage these emotions to achieve optimal outcomes (Seo, 2013). In contrast, passive procrastinators often face difficulties in initiating tasks, which results in decreased productivity during procrastination (Wessel et al., 2019). These decisions are influenced by various factors, both internal and external. Internal factors are rooted in personality traits, while external factors include task characteristics and demographic variables (Steel, 2007). However, each type of procrastination can lead to positive outcomes in certain situations when managed effectively.

In such cases, coping strategies are often used to overcome academic procrastination, as they help individuals manage stress, improve time management and increase motivation (Chu & Choi, 2005). This strategy was introduced by Folkman and Lazarus (1980). In a further study conducted by Endler (1997), three primary coping strategies were identified: task-oriented coping, emotion-oriented coping, and avoidance-oriented coping. These coping strategies were highlighted in the context of academic procrastination, where delaying tasks is often used as a means to avoid stress. As a result, the outcomes of procrastination vary significantly among students, depending on their approach and the underlying factors influencing their behavior.

Numerous studies have examined the issue of procrastination within academic settings. For instance, a study conducted with students across several universities in the Amhara region of Ethiopia highlighted that procrastination occurs regardless of gender and university type (Fentaw et al., 2022). Over 80% of students reported engaging in academic procrastination. Another study indicated that women, individuals aged 16 and 20, and those from higher socioeconomic levels exhibited higher levels of academic procrastination (Estrada-Araoz et al., 2023). Students frequently procrastinate on coursework they find uninteresting or feel obligated to complete. Furthermore, Khaiwal and Gupta (2024) found that procrastination negatively affects students' academic achievement. This behaviour is influenced by several internal factors, such as poor time management, low self-esteem, and fear of failure. Based on extensive studies on academic procrastination, it appears that similar research remains limited within the context of Islamic-affiliated universities. This context is particularly significant in the landscape of English Language Teaching (ELT) as it connects English language learning to a more specific environment.

Thus, there is an urgent need for study to fill the gap mentioned above by investigating the academic procrastination experiences of students from different secondary school backgrounds while completing academic writing tasks. In addition, this study aims: (1) to investigate the types of procrastinators among undergraduate students at public Islamic university in Lampung, (2) to reveal the

factors that cause students to procrastinate when completing academic writing tasks, and (3) to depict the strategies to overcome academic procrastination when completing academic writing tasks.

The findings of this study provide valuable insights to enhance the affective aspects of the learning process. Furthermore, the study offers meaningful perspectives on addressing academic procrastination within specific contexts, such as Islamic Universities.

METHOD

This study applied a qualitative case study approach to gain a deeper understanding by examining a particular phenomenon (Creswell, 2007), i.e., how Islam-affiliated university students face academic procrastination. In addition, a case study approach was utilized because it allowed researchers to capture comprehensive aspects of real-life events. Through this approach, the researchers aimed to provide comprehensive information about academic procrastination among students. Hence, readers will better understand the types of procrastinators, the factors contributing to academic procrastination, and strategies to overcome it.

The participants in this study were selected through purposive sampling based on their secondary school background, including high school, vocational school, and Islamic boarding school. A total of nine students from the English Education Department enrolled in an Academic Writing class and known to engage in academic procrastination were included. Ahead of participation, students were informed that the study aimed to explore types, factors, and strategies related to overcoming academic procrastination. With approval from their lecture, we reached out to potential participants and provided them with a consent form. To maintain confidentiality, participants are referred to as Participants 1-9. Specifically, Participants 1-3 were from Islamic boarding schools, participants 4-6 were from high schools, and Participants 7-9 were from vocational schools. Participants were fully informed of their rights, including access to their information, the option to request additional information, and the

right to withdraw from the study at any time. Table 1. displays demographics information about the participants.

Table 1. The Demographics of the Participants

Item		Percentage
Gender	Male	33% (out of 9)
	Female	67%
Secondary School Background	High School	33%
	Vocational School	33%
	Islamic Boarding School	33%

Data was acquired through documentation, surveys and in-depth interviews. The documentation allowed researchers to gather public or private records that provide contextual data for comprehending the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2012). Then, the survey acquired data directly from participants related to their personal experiences, attitudes, opinions, beliefs, or behaviors (Rea & Parker, 2014). Meanwhile, the in-depth interview provided an understanding of participants' lived experiences and how they interpret those experiences (Seidman, 2006). The documents utilized in this study consist of students' Academic Writing scores to examine the outcome of procrastination on their academic achievements. The survey was collected via Google Form and consisted of two sections. The first section portrayed the personal information of participants including name, student number, class, secondary school background, and mobile phone number. The second section consisted of nine questions exploring the students' type of procrastinators. All the questions in the second section of the survey were open-ended. In-depth interviews were conducted with each participant individually, either over the phone call or in person. Participants were allowed to use their preferred language to provide long and detailed responses (Patricia, 2017) about their procrastination habits, personality traits, and strategies often used to overcome procrastination. The interview questions were carefully designed to gather detailed and insightful responses related to the research objectives. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes and was audio-recorded with the participants' consent.

Data analysis was conducted following the steps proposed by (Creswell, 2007), which include: (1) creating and organizing data files obtained from surveys, interviews, and documentation, (2) reading through the text by making margin notes and generating initial codes, (3) describing the case and its contextual background, (4) classifying the data by using categorical aggregation to identify themes or patterns, (5) interpreting the data through direct interpretation and developing naturalistic generalizations, and (7) representing data by providing an in-depth picture of the case using narratives, tables, and figures. In addition, the data results were validated through triangulation from multiple sources.

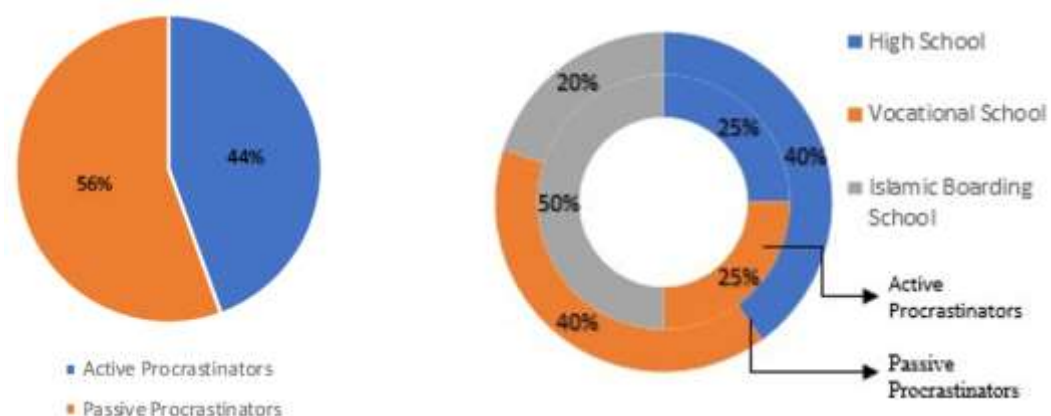
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This section presents the results of documentation, surveys and in-depth interviews that focused on exploring the academic procrastination that students experience when completing academic writing tasks. The analysis shows that passive procrastinators are the most prevalent type experienced by students in academic writing classes. Moreover, different factors underlying each type of procrastination were identified. This study further highlights the main strategies that students often apply to reduce academic procrastination. Findings will be further explained based on these types of procrastinators.

Type of Academic Procrastinators

To the research participants, nine survey questions were asked based on indicators of active procrastinators and passive procrastinators. After the survey results were analysed, it was found that most participants in the academic writing class were classified as passive procrastinators. Figures 1. and 2. show a recapitulation of the participants' responses.



As can be seen from figure 1, the majority of five students in the academic writing class (more than 50% of all study participants) were passive procrastinators. In comparison, four students (less than 50%) were active procrastinators. Different secondary school backgrounds caused this procrastination. Most passive procrastinators came from Islamic boarding school. The responses below elaborate on the students' experience in Islamic boarding school that influenced their current procrastination habits.

“At the Islamic boarding school, I also get more tasks than in college, such as memorization and homework.” (Participants 1)

“It's more difficult in college. In the Islamic boarding school, I have been taught basic Arabic from childhood, [...] but when I meet English [because it is not taught] in the Islamic boarding school, the two languages feel unrelated.” (Participant 2)

These two responses show that the different weight of tasks and scheduled activities affect students' ability to manage their time. In Islamic boarding school, students are accustomed to a regular schedule of activities, so they have to postpone tasks until they have free time to complete them. On the other hand, the difference in the material learned at Islamic boarding school and at university requires participants to allocate additional time to comprehend the tasks in lectures.

For students who graduated from vocational schools, the tendency to procrastinate tasks was influenced by the major they pursued during their studies. One participant from the Accounting major states:

“Usually, when I was in vocational school, I was taught Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. So, when I enter college and get assignments of papers and others, I am not too surprised.” (Participant 9)

The provision of materials during vocational school supports students in performing tasks that require basic writing knowledge. However, for students enrolled in non-linear majors, such as Computer Network Engineering and Marketing, the difference in academic disciplines leads to confusion and lack of motivation to complete tasks. One participant expressed that experience.

“If, for example, majors at vocational school and college are the same, maybe there are encouragements to be enthusiastic, help us to complete tasks.” (Participant 8)

Therefore, many vocational school students show a tendency toward passive procrastinators.

Similar to high school students, the tasks they receive at school are often perceived as less challenging than those assigned by lecturers. When asked whether they were more motivated to complete tasks in high school, one participant responded:

“Yes, because in high school it was not too difficult.” (Participant 5)

The habit of facing lighter tasks in high school leads participants to procrastinate when confronted with more heavier tasks in lectures.

Factors Influencing Academic Procrastination

In this section, interview results reveal that different types of procrastinators exhibit distinct personality traits. Figure 3 and 4 show a recapitulation of the participants' response.

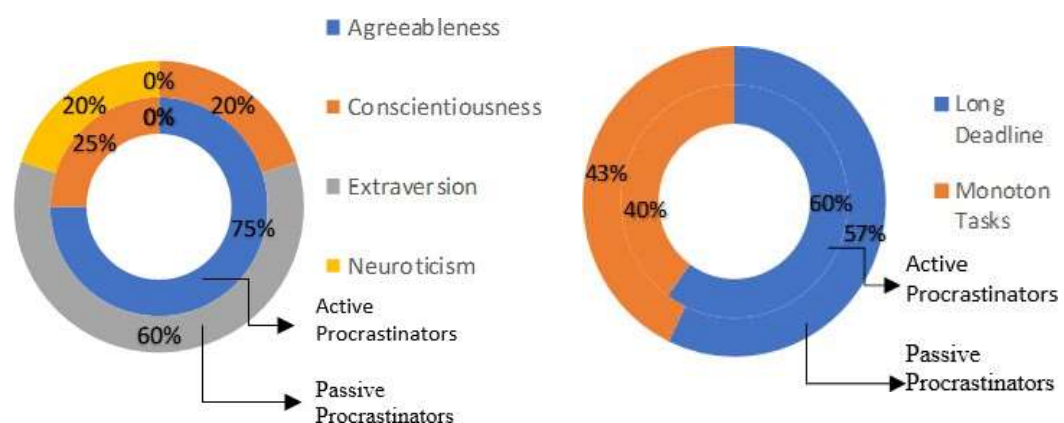


Figure 2. Individual Characteristics and Task Characteristic of Academic Procrastinators

As illustrated in Figure 3, the majority of active procrastinators (approximately 80%) show personality traits associated with the agreeableness

type. In contrast, more than 50% of passive procrastinators show extraversion personality characteristics. Meanwhile, Figure 4 demonstrates that, in terms of external factors, both active and passive procrastinators (60% each) tend to procrastinate tasks with long deadlines.

Participant 1 reports that he often works on tasks near the deadline, adjusting his time management based on the difficulty of the task.

“Well, I usually do the tasks close to the deadline. Depending on the weight or value of the tasks.” (Participant 1)

In addition, when the task is perceived as challenging, other participants tend to procrastinate in order to gain a deeper understanding of the task. The following excerpts illustrate the participants' reasons for procrastinating the task.

“So, if I try to complete the task quickly, it only makes me confused. [...] When the deadline comes, it feels as though inspiration suddenly appears.” (Participant 2)

“When I feel the task is difficult, I will wait for information from others first. To avoid having to redo the task, I prioritize completing other tasks first.” (Participant 9)

The excerpts indicate that by adjusting the difficulty level or weight of assigned tasks, students could enhance their effectiveness and efficiency in completing their work. The response also shows that delaying tasks sometimes provides an advantage in terms of increased inspiration. This delay may arise from students' lack of information or understanding when tasks are completed in a hurry, leading to underdeveloped creative ideas or solutions. Therefore, adjusting the complexity and scheduling of tasks play a significant role in improving students' productivity.

Extraversion, on the other hand, is more frequently seen in passive procrastinators. The following excerpt shows the extraversion personalities of passive procrastinators.

"I usually play with friends, buy food, think that we need a reward for ourselves because we have put a lot of effort on the task." (Participant 5)

"I have to wait for intention to really gather, [...] What's more, if I've relaxed and watched TikTok, it feels very lazy." (Participant 6)

"For me, I do it by watching television, watching movies, or gathering with my family. So that I can refresh or relax my brain." (Participant 7)

The responses indicate that the extraversion personality encourages students to distract from primary tasks and get immediate gratification through social or entertainment activities. Participants with this personality often perceive themselves as having completed numerous tasks, which leads to a sense of deserving a reward, despite this action being driven by impulsivity. The findings also suggest that students with high extraversion tend to exhibit low levels of internal motivation. Thus, they require external encouragement or motivation to maintain focus and complete the assigned tasks.

In addition, Conscientiousness was found in both active and passive procrastinators. Participant 6 shared an experience regarding the distraction she felt.

"If the deadline is still long, I often get distracted by my handphone. However, if it is close to the deadline, I can get rid of the handphone."

The response indicates that the extraversion personality tends to be easily distracted, which hinders their ability to complete tasks on time. Participants with this personality trait are often distracted by their phones, making them unaware of how much time has passed while procrastinating. The findings also suggest that when they work on tasks close to the deadline, these distractions tend to fade as they become more focused on completing the tasks.

Neuroticism is also found in passive procrastinators. They fear that tasks must be completed perfectly or experience pressure from looming deadlines. The following excerpt shows participant 3's experience with procrastination:

“I often feel scared, anxious, stressed, because I am afraid when the tasks are done wrong or not right, If the anxiety was because of the deadline. Because there are many other tasks too.” (Participant 6)

The excerpt above indicates that the high level of difficulty of tasks and long deadlines can increase anxiety and stress among students. This situation causes students to hesitate their ability to complete the task and such self-doubt becomes a primary factor driving procrastination. Feeling burdened by tasks that appear complex and time-consuming leads students to postpone their work, which can worsen their stress and anxiety.

In addition, the documentation indicates that despite procrastinating their tasks, students are able to meet the deadline. However, a variance in achievements was evident between the two types of procrastinators. Active procrastinators demonstrate higher achievements compared to passive procrastinators. The highest and lowest scores were shown among students with conscientious personalities. Despite sharing the same personality traits, these students belong to different types of procrastinators, with active procrastinators exhibiting higher scores.

Strategies to Overcome Academic Procrastination

The questions in this interview focus on the strategies employed by respondents to overcome procrastination, specifically through the application of coping mechanisms. The results reveal that both active and passive procrastinators tend to use avoidance-oriented coping mechanism, though with differing outcomes. Figure 5 shows a recapitulation of the participants' responses.

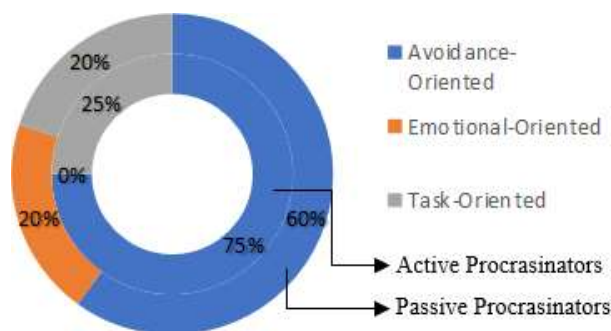


Figure 3. Coping Mechanisms Strategies Used by Academic Procrastinators

As illustrated in Figure 5, around 80% of active procrastinators implement avoidance-oriented coping to manage academic procrastination. Besides, over 50% of passive procrastinators also utilize avoidance-oriented coping when confronted with existing challenges.

“The laptop is a bit slow because it has been a long time, so it is slow [...] it must be heated first. After that, it can be used.” (Participant 1)

The response above indicates that active procrastinators tend to postpone work when facing facility constraints, such as less-than-optimal devices. This delay is not merely indicative of laziness but is instead a strategic approach to overcome existing challenges and ensure optimal conditions before continuing the tasks.

Furthermore, avoidance-oriented coping strategies employed by passive procrastinators' serve different purposes. The following excerpt explains how participants implement this strategy.

“If the signal is difficult, I will postpone the task first. [.] Usually while waiting, I play offline games or lie down.” (Participant 6)

“I have to detach myself from the problem. It can be hanging out with family or doing hobbies such as reading, listening to music, or sleeping.” (Participant 7)

These responses show that Participants tend to temporarily postpone tasks when facing challenges. During this delay, students engage in other activities or seek entertainment as means of restoring their motivation. This strategy enables them to manage the pressure and refocus on completing the task.

In addition to avoidance coping, both active and passive procrastinators employ task-oriented coping mechanisms to address their workload. The excerpts below clarify the findings.

“It's already D-3 of the collection but I haven't found the right source. [.] The way to overcome it is of course through discussions with friends.” (Participants 4)

“[...] It's better to do it with friends. Exchange ideas with others.”
(Participants 5)

These responses indicated that when facing confusion and anxiety regarding the tasks, participants actively take concrete steps to manage the problem, such as seeking assistance from peers.

Emotional-oriented coping strategies also employed by passive procrastinators reduce perceived stress. Participant 8 revealed:

“Sometimes if I do not strengthen myself [...] I think I will not continue studying.”

This response indicates that the use of positive affirmations during experiences of negative emotions helps restore motivation and enthusiasm.

Discussion

An active procrastinator is an individual who delays a task to focus on other tasks deemed higher priority (Shang et al., 2023). This habit often begins with planning learning activities during the transition from high school to university when selecting a field of study (Gutiérrez-García et al., 2020). Bazubagira (2024) findings suggest that secondary school significantly influences one's success at university. Tobing et al. (2024) also stated that materials relevant to students' experiences increase their interest and understanding. These theories align the study's findings, which show that students with an educational background aligned with their field of study, or those who already have a basic knowledge of related subjects, tend to exhibit greater motivation to complete tasks. Therefore, students from Islamic boarding schools with an English-speaking environment and vocational students majoring in Accounting who have learned the primary use of Microsoft Office are better prepared and motivated to complete academic writing tasks.

Schools with a large workload, such as Islamic boarding school, train students to manage their time effectively. This result is in line with studies showed that the ability to initiate tasks, plan, and organise are essential predictors of academic procrastination (Rabin et al., 2011; Sari & Fatoni, 2022). In other

words, students who struggle with these skills are more likely to delay academic writing tasks. In Islamic boarding school, in addition to studying general subjects, students engage in various scheduled religious activities. This requirement necessitates careful time management to ensure the completion of both academic and religious tasks one time. This finding aligns with the message conveyed in Surah Al-Asr, verses 1-3 of the Qur'an, which highlight the significance of time (الْعَصْر) and warns that most human will face loss if they fail to utilize time effectively (Al-Hilali & Khan, 1984). As a result, students from Islamic boarding school tend to be better trained in organizing their tasks. This provides an explanation for why the majority of active procrastinators were found among Islamic boarding school participants.

On the other hand, passive procrastinators tend to delay tasks due to indecision or hesitation to act (Kooren et al., 2024). Syahril et al. (2022) suggest that this hesitation is often caused by difficulties understanding or completing the assigned tasks. The theory is in line with the study's results, which indicate that high school and vocational school students accustomed to relatively simple school tasks often experience reduced motivation when faced with more complex college tasks. These negative emotions encourage them to delay tasks until the deadline comes. In contrast, participants from Islamic boarding school, accustomed to managing numerous tasks during their education, are more likely to procrastinate because of prioritization rather than indecision. Therefore, most passive procrastinators in this study were high school and vocational school students.

Academic procrastination is a phenomenon influenced by various factors, including personality traits, which affect individuals' likelihood to delay tasks (Steel, 2007). Swaraswati et al. (2017) reveal that the higher level of extraversion is associated with an increased tendency to procrastinate. Extraversion reflects a person's tendency toward active social engagement, such as interacting with others, seeking enjoyable experiences, or participating in social activities (Feist et al., 2013). This theory aligns with the study results, which indicate that most passive procrastinators possess extraversion personalities. These individuals often delay tasks to socialize with friends and family or find entertainment through

social media. Participants with this personality type require external stimuli to motivate them to complete tasks.

In line with the above results, Hossain and Hossain (2022) reveal that agreeableness is not correlated with passive procrastination and positively correlates with the ability to meet deadlines. Agreeableness is a personality trait reflecting an individual's ability to act with self-control, focus on goals, and have a positive approach to completing tasks (Costa & McCrae, 2011). These theories align with the study's results, which found that most active procrastinators have agreeable personalities. Participants with this personality type tend to view procrastination as a problem-solving strategy, utilizing available time to deepen understanding or gather additional information before completing a task.

Academic procrastination is closely related to stress (Custer, 2018). In this context, coping refers to managing responses to stressful or pressured situations (Compas et al., 2017). Ilchenko (2017), links academic procrastination to seeking momentary pleasure and avoiding stress, while Roth and Cohen (1986) explain it as a coping mechanism involving avoidance and distraction. This finding aligns with study's result, which show that both active and passive procrastinators use avoidance-oriented coping strategies to manage problems and stress while working on tasks.

Endler (1997) describes avoidance-oriented coping as a strategy for dealing with stress by seeking social diversion. This theory corresponds to the experiences of research participants, who procrastinate to increase motivation by playing games, using social media, interacting with friends, or making delaying tasks to address facility constraints.

CONCLUSION

Academic procrastination in academic writing tasks should be understood as a way to understand students' experiences. This understanding can provide valuable input for lecturers to design tasks more suited to students' needs. The study reveals that most students in academic writing classes are passive procrastinators, predominantly from high school and vocational school

backgrounds. In contrast, active procrastinators generally come from students who had attended Islamic boarding schools. In addition, academic procrastination is influenced by internal and external factors. Internally, personality traits such as agreeableness tend to encourage individuals to become active procrastinators, while extraversion personalities are more likely to become passive procrastinators. In addressing academic procrastination, active and passive procrastinators often use avoidance-oriented coping mechanisms, such as postponing tasks and engaging in other activities to restore motivation. Although procrastination is often perceived negatively, it is essential to understand that it can serve as coping when students face competing priorities or specific obstacles. With appropriate strategies, students can still complete tasks on time despite procrastination.

This study explored academic procrastination in academic writing among participants from diverse secondary school backgrounds. It found that while most active procrastinators come from Islamic boarding schools, their procrastination habits vary by school type. Therefore, this study has limitations in examine the relationship between different types of Islamic boarding school and students' procrastination behaviours. Additionally, similar research can be expanded by exploring participants demographics more deeply to enrich the understanding of the phenomenon of academic procrastination in terms of causal factors and strategies students use.

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