

**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE
MASTER PROGRAM**

MASTER THESIS

**ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION AMONG MASTERS
STUDENT: STARTING AND COMPLETING THE
DISSERTATION WITHIN THREE MONTHS**

**BY
OMOTOYOSI BUSOLA ODUWAYE**

NICOSIA – 2019

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NICOSIA - 2019

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Master of Arts

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Yagmur Cerkez

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scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Guidance and
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Declaration

I, Omotoyosi Oduwaye, declare that this dissertation submitted in part completion of the award M.A. in Guidance and counseling Psychology is entirely my work and all sources have been credited in the text and references.

Signed: _____

Date: January, 10, 2019.

DEDICATION

To God and my parents

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First and foremost, my appreciation goes to almighty God for granting me the grace to accomplish this dissertation.

I would also like to recognize the efforts of my supervisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Gozde Latifoglu for her supervision, advice, guidance and contribution all through the period of this research, without her, this work would not be possible. Thank you for your ideas and encouragement I am indeed grateful to you.

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ABSTRACT

Procrastination has always been a social issue and is now gaining depth as an academic issue. At the graduate level in the academic field, lots of student struggle with procrastination and being unable to fight this act leads to a lot of negative consequences especially when at the delicate point of writing a dissertation.

The present study used qualitative measures to find out reasons why students procrastinate as well as the effects and coping strategies. 40 masters' students in two private universities participated in the study and data was collected using semi structured interview with open ended questions. The data was analyzed using thematic content analysis.

The major finding of the study was that anxiety and low motivation are main reasons why masters students procrastinate starting their dissertation. This study also found that low academic achievement, self-doubt, guilt and regrets are some of the effects of procrastination on students. Some of the participants in the study have used time management, self-control and task division as measures of tackling with procrastination.

Key words: Procrastination, academic procrastination, dissertation, masters' students

ÖZ

Erteleme her zaman sosyal bir konudur ve şimdi akademik bir konu olarak derinleşmektedir. Akademik alanda yüksek lisans düzeyinde, pek çok öğrenci erteleme ile mücadele etmek ve bu eylemle mücadele edememek, özellikle hassas bir tez yazarken çok olumsuz sonuçlara yol açmaktadır.

Bu çalışma, öğrencilerin neden etkiledikleri ve başa çıkma stratejilerinin yanı sıra neden destek verdiğini ortaya çıkarmak için nitel önlemler kullanmıştır. Çalışmaya iki özel üniversitede 40 yüksek lisans öğrencisi katılmış ve açık uçlu sorularla yarı yapılandırılmış görüşme kullanılarak veri toplanmıştır. Veriler tematik içerik analizi kullanılarak analiz edildi.

Çalışmanın ana bulgusu, kaygı ve düşük motivasyonun, yüksek lisans öğrencilerinin tezlerine başlamalarını ertelemelerinin ana nedenleri olduğuydu. Bu çalışma aynı zamanda düşük akademik başarının, kendinden şüphe duyma, suçluluk ve pişmanlıkların erteleme sürecinin öğrenciler üzerindeki etkilerinden bazıları olduğunu göstermiştir. Araştırmaya katılanların bazıları zaman yönetimi, öz kontrol ve görev bölümlerini erteleme ile mücadele etmenin önlemleri olarak kullanmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Erteleme, Akademik erteleme, tez, yüksek lisans öğrencisi

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the study/Problem Status

It is going to be extremely difficult to find someone who has never procrastinated, in fact, if a person was to answer “NO” to the question “have you ever procrastinated?” such person would either be seen as a liar or being over righteous. This is because every now and then, we procrastinate, we’ve had one or two tasks that we put off until we can’t avoid it anymore and therefore left with no choice than to do the said task. This act of delay or postponement is known as procrastination.

Procrastination is one of several problem that our society is faced with. We do not only put off tasks, we also put off concerns until they compound with time (Gallagher, 2008; Sirios, 2007) so much that we can’t even make up for our procrastination. We actually plan to do something and when the time to do it comes, we put it off and discover that our preference at that moment has changed and we pursue other tasks that are more enjoyable. In this case, we are putting off tasks with long term rewards and pursuing short term temptations. Procrastination is gaining recognition more and more and is becoming an important issue that is being addressed almost in all behavioral science fields.

Generally, at the university level, students are expected to carry out lots of project as part of the requirements for the degree they sought, these projects could be in form of assignments, term papers, articles, tests, research work among others. These projects

could vary in the eyes of each student from easy to tedious depending on the capacity of the student and the nature of the project, hence the reason some students would want to delay the projects and get distracted by enjoyable temptations until the deadline is near and they can't avoid the task anymore or wait until they believe they can do it effectively. Once procrastination occurs within the academic environment, it is called academic procrastination.

Most masters' students are expected to write a dissertation or thesis and it is a major requirement of their degree. Because of the importance accorded to the dissertation, most masters' students get pressured when it is time to start writing as they all want to carry out a standard research which will complete their masters' degree and perhaps get them ready for a doctorate degree. Choosing a good and relevant topic, writing a proposal, carrying out the research, choosing a method for data analysis, deciding what type of research to carry out etc. are all parts of the research that gets the students worked up, make them hesitate and eventually start procrastinating or even worse, they might start looking for "agents" who can write their dissertations for them.

Some masters' student who decide to eventually write their dissertations themselves starts late and finishes all of it within a month or two whereas normally, carrying out a thorough research takes more than a month. Students eventually rush the thesis, aiming to get a good grade, fulfil the requirement and graduate rather than carrying out a research that would benefit everyone.

1.2. Research Objectives

It is not exaggerated when procrastination is called “a thief of time”. It has lots of negative effects on students’ academics and increases stress levels. Although procrastination can be positive or negative but the consequences of the latter is much more than the benefits of the former. When students procrastinate writing their dissertation, it affects not only their academics and cause them stress, it also affects the reliability of their research. The researcher hopes to develop these objectives.

- To find out the impact/ consequences of procrastination on the academic life of masters student.
- To examine the factors that may be responsible for increase or decrease in procrastination
- To examine the reasons why masters student procrastinate.
- To provide a better understanding on the importance of dissertation
- To explore individuals attitude towards procrastination.

By exploring these objectives, it is hoped that series of research will emerge concentrating on the graduate students’ population and that these students will understand that they are not alone in the struggle with procrastination.

Research Questions

This research seeks to answer the following questions.

1. Why do students procrastinate?
2. What are the factors that causes increase or decrease in procrastination?

3. How do masters student try to fight procrastination?
4. Is the dissertation over rated in its importance?
5. What are the consequences of academic procrastination?

To answer these questions, the research objective will be strictly adhered to. The interview questions for this research will be drafted based on these research questions.

1.3. Significance and Importance of the study

This study is important because it is an attempt to add to the existing literatures on academic procrastination which scholars are still trying to find a way to curb. It is also significant to lecturers, assistant teachers, instructors, undergraduates and graduate students in tertiary institutions, it will assist them in knowing what the challenges of procrastination are when writing a masters dissertation and what they may do to avoid it. This study will serve as an eye opener to knowing the reasons why masters' students start their dissertations late. Also, another significance of this study lies in the fact that it will contribute to the knowledge in the most academic departments as it is hoped that from it, more studies will emerge. Students will no longer find it difficult to start their dissertation when necessary and finish it within the deadline and also write these dissertations themselves without them paying someone to do so, the university will be able to put their feelings into consideration and their lecturers will criticize them constructively. In this regard, it will also be useful for other researchers who might want to carry out research in related topics.

1.4. Research limitations

In the course of carrying out this research, some limitations were encountered. The method of interviewing was very time consuming although it proved to be efficient in extracting information in an open way from the respondents. The use of a singular case study (masters' student) is another limitation as this effectively reduces the generalizability of its results and restricts the capacity of a comparative outlook.

The third limitation is that although the research was carried out in three major and well populated universities filled with lots of diaspora students, some respondents had to be turned down to eliminate bias because they were not fluent in English language which is the language of instruction in the research.

Another limitation in researcher bias which is a risk in any research study especially ones with less structured data collection. The researcher tried to be aware and be vigilant of researcher bias though it could be impossible to completely exclude researcher bias, the researcher is convinced to have accomplished credible findings which can be applied to a larger population. Furthermore, it could be noted that the type of data collected from this research allows a better interpretation compared to numeric data

1.5. Research Structure

This thesis is divided into five distinct chapters. This chapter, the first, provided a brief introduction about academic procrastination and the masters' dissertation. This chapter entails an overview of the thesis starting from the introduction to the study, the

research problem and question, the purpose of the study, hypotheses, objectives, significance, research methods, data collection, research design and the limitations of the research.

The second chapter embodies a review and examination of existing literature on procrastination and academic procrastination in general. As well as explaining factors that aid procrastination such as stress, anxiety, perfectionism.

The third chapter contains the methods used to carry out the research. The fourth chapter contains a thorough explanation of the findings of the research. The fifth chapter contains conclusion, significance and ideas on further research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to examine and review the literature on procrastination, academic procrastination and the importance of a dissertation in general. As the current research is focused on the academic procrastination among masters students when writing their dissertations, this chapter will therefore review the importance of dissertation, review existing literature on procrastination by providing an overview of the definitions of procrastination and academic procrastination followed by a review of some psychological approaches to procrastination, factors aiding procrastination as well as the work of scholars on what academic procrastination is and its consequences.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Having identified my research problem and research question, it is appropriate to elucidate a theoretical framework to serve as a guide and source of direction for the research, as well as providing justification and a foundation that supports the research. A theory is explained to be “a set of interrelated constructs, definitions and proposition that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables with the purposes of explaining the predicting phenomena” (Kerlinger, 1973 cited in Nnabugwe, 2010). The theoretical framework tends to be an important characteristic of various studies. It underpins the studies’ analyses, description, and interpretation. In recognition of this, this thesis will employ the social cognitive theory of self-regulation by Albert Bandura.

In 1991, Bandura suggested that in the social cognitive theory, self-influence regulates and motivates human behavior. Self-regulative mechanism works through three sub functions. These functions include self-monitoring of one's behavior (its determinants and effects), affective self-reaction and judgment of one's behavior in regards to personal standards and environmental circumstances. Self-regulation also includes the mechanism of self-efficacy. This mechanism has a vital role in the exercise of personal agency through its strong influence on thoughts, actions and motivation. Self-regulation is also involved in moral conduct. Although when it is compared to the achievement domain, the moral domain has standards of evaluation and as a result is more stable. The judgmental domain is more complex and varies while the affective self-reaction is more intense. In the perception of an interactionist, the operation of self-regulative system is affected by social factors.

2.2 THE POSTGRADUATE DISSERTATION AND ITS IMPORTANCE

When most students hear the word “dissertation”, fear kicks in, adrenaline rushes in and a feeling of dread takes over. This is because the dissertation is an essential component in the completion of a postgraduate degree program.

2.2.1 Masters' Dissertation

The masters' dissertation is a study (often lengthy) written on a topic chosen by the graduate student which has been approved by his or her advisors. It is undertaken with the supervision or guidance of a faculty supervisor and involves an extended period of writing and research. The content and length of a dissertation depends on the researcher's field of study. In theoretical fields, dissertations are usually longer than in practical fields. (University of Leicester, 2013)

2.2.1.1 M.A Dissertation

MA dissertations are academic research studies in the fields of Humanities, Art and selected social sciences. They typically contain a comprehensive investigation of a particular topic, based on applying theoretical knowledge to already available data e.g. Texts, documents, data sets, artworks etc. the primary focus in MA dissertations is on the application of philosophical and theoretical frameworks and therefore it is usually rare for this type of dissertation to contain data collected extensively by the author. The length of this type of dissertation could be from 25,000 to 50,000 words, although they may be shorter in some programs where a practical element is also included.

2.2.1.2 M.Sc. Dissertation

M.Sc. dissertation are often shorter compared to MA dissertations. This is because they depend heavily on more concrete and detailed data that can be explained with fewer words. Nonetheless, the content is just as accurate in a scholarly sense. This type of dissertation usually requires the students to carry out practical field work or gather data via lab activities. For M.Sc. students, the dissertation forms part of a bigger process of data collection and research reports.

2.2.1.3 MBA Dissertation

MBA dissertations can take different forms. Basically, they stick to a more science-based framework and have a lot in common with M.Sc. dissertations than MA dissertations. However, MBA students are increasingly being offered more opportunities by universities to pursue various forms of research that comprises more qualitative and profound approaches that address wider sets of learning outcomes. Due to this, the length of the MBA dissertation varies significantly depending on the

institution and the line of research. Nevertheless, several MBA programs require no dissertations.

2.2.2 Differences between Masters', Undergraduate and PhD Dissertations.

A masters' dissertation requires a student to deal with their subject area in a broader manner than they did at their undergraduate. Although a lot of masters' students probably completed a bachelor's dissertation, what is expected of them for the masters' dissertation is much more different. At the masters' level, they are expected to develop critical analysis that goes beyond the incorporated reviews usually offered in undergraduate studies. Masters' students are particularly expected to develop a clear philosophical and professional structure for their writing. This is to enable them develop a deeply incisive and targeted analysis. (University of Manchester, 2013)

Masters dissertation is also significantly different from MPhil and PhD dissertations. This is more or less due to the fact that at the masters' level, a less original research may be required. The PhD level requires a longer thesis which is normally about 80,000 – 100,000 words. The PhD and the MPhil both require a more sophisticated research scheme which is based on independent field or text-based research. However, at the masters' level, research doesn't always have to be completely ground breaking and special as it is expected for a PhD, nevertheless, masters' students are still required to carry out original research and critical analysis.

2.2.3 What does a Masters' Dissertation Usually Contain?

The masters' dissertation will normally contain the following structure even though the length and the nature of these structures depends on the academic field.

- ❖ Abstract: this is a brief summary that comprises the research, lists the methods and summarizes the findings.
- ❖ Introduction: this is usually the first chapter, where the problem statement and what is intended to be researched on is discussed.
- ❖ Literature review: this is a chapter that discusses the most essential theories and important philosophies that are relevant to the research as well as previous or similar research.
- ❖ Methodology: this could also be a chapter and it is a detail on the methodologies used to conduct the research.
- ❖ Investigative chapters: these are the main body of the research and they provide the critical analysis of the subject.
- ❖ Conclusion: usually the final chapter, it summarizes the research findings and provides recommendations.
- ❖ Bibliography: this is expected to adhere to the guidelines provided for each discipline and it could also be lengthy.

2.2.4 Requirements and Assessment of Masters' Dissertations

Word count –10,000 – 50,000 words are usually the word count expected of most masters dissertations. This can differ depending on the researcher's discipline. The word count usually doesn't include the foot notes, appendices or bibliography.

Duration of study – Usually, master programs are one year (Mostly in the UK). In some other European countries, it is eighteen months and in North American countries like the USA and Canada, it is usually two years. However, the dissertation is submitted at the end of the graduating year and in some cases, provided the reasons are dare, students are allowed one or two extra semester for completion.

The time given to carry out the dissertation also varies depending on the department and the school rules. Some universities allows a semester while some allows two semesters (1 year). The doctoral dissertation usually takes more time say 2-3 years. (University of Birmingham, 2013)

Submission deadline – This depends largely on the university's calendar. A specific submission date is usually given. Masters' dissertation are assessed by examiners and result certified by the exam board. So students are expected to submit way before their graduation.

Starting, writing and completing a good dissertation requires honest dedication, motivation and commitment from student over a long period of time. These factors are necessary if students want to avoid procrastination. (University of Worcester, 2010).

2.3 Understanding Procrastination

The term “procrastination” is mostly used when referring to an unhealthy postponement of tasks. It is the act of delaying less pleasurable or more urgent tasks and carrying out more enjoyable or less urgent tasks and thus putting off imminent tasks to a later time, sometimes to the last minute before a deadline. A person may procrastinate personal issues – putting off raising a stressful issue with their partner, health issues – delaying visiting a doctor or dentist, home care issues – patching a leak in the roof or even academic/work obligations – reading a novel to completing a report.

Depending on the area that is being investigated, Procrastination can be defined in a numerous ways (Klingsieck, 2013). In relation to distress, Solomon & Rothblum (1984) defined procrastination as a delay in conjunction with subjective discomfort. In relation to postponement, Beswick & Mann (1994) says it is when we delay beginning or completing an intended course of action. In relation to irrationality, Sabini & Silver (1982) defined it as the illogical delay of behavior. They believed that putting a task off is not procrastination in as much as there is a rational reason(s) behind it. Several definitions of procrastination are available in research, these definitions can be regarded as complimentary or contradictory (van Eerde, 2000). A detailed definition which puts into consideration various aspects of the same behavior will be more useful in distinguishing procrastination from other related activities for example lack of self - assertiveness.

Although researchers have defined procrastination in a lot of different ways, there are still similarities among those studying procrastination regarding how to define

the term perfectly. One factor often cited and widely agreed upon as a criteria for the defining procrastination is the tendency to postpone tasks or activities otherwise known as delay factor (Ozer, Demir & Ferrari 2009). Some researchers have agreed that the delay factor is a common characteristic, some other researchers believe that the inclination to delay the completion of a task is an important factor in the definition of procrastination and that the delay of a task can only be called procrastination if the person has a sincere intention to complete the task (Schraw, Watkins & Olafson 2007). Another viewpoint was presented by Schouwenburg (2004) in the explanation of procrastination. Schouwenburg (2004) perceived procrastination as a behavior where one lacks essential time management skills and proficient study habits. With procrastination pictured this way, as a behavior, the definition refers to a task specific avoidance behavior. With this insight, procrastination can be defined as a regular delay of responsibilities and important choices which is part of a behavioral characteristic. This behavioral phenomenon definition of procrastination applies to academic procrastination as well because in academic procrastination, students engage in the behavior by failing to finish assigned tasks or by delaying accomplishment of academic tasks (Deniz, Tras, Aydogan 2009).

Still, other researchers view procrastination as a maladaptive act where a person delays completion of tasks unnecessarily and creates feelings of discomfort as a result (Bui, 2007).

Schraw, Wadkins & Olafson (2007) proposed three criteria must be met before a behavior can be named procrastination: such behavior must be counter-productive, needless and delaying. Steel (2007) explained procrastination as “**a voluntary delay of**

an intended course of action despite understanding the outcomes of such delay”.

This definition highlights the three main components of procrastination in one uniform definition.

In addition to the numerous definitions available on procrastination, researchers have also identified alternative procrastination types. An exploratory research carried out by Choi in 2009 found that procrastination can be active or passive. Active procrastinators are procrastinators who take advantage of the strong motivation to complete tasks that often occur during high pressure situations. The study defined the opposite of active procrastination as passive procrastination. Passive procrastinators are procrastinators who delay completion of certain tasks until the deadline. Choi (2009) described this passivity behavior to be caused by a failure of an individual to decide the importance of acting in a time sensitive way when trying to accomplish a task. 185 undergraduate business students from a Canadian university were respondents in this study. The percentage of the female students was 67 while the male was 37. Racial illustration within the sample consisted of 74.1% white, 20% Asian, and 2.7% Hispanic and 1.6% African American. A questionnaire titled the “survey of university students’ use of time” was filled by the participants. This questionnaire was designed to measure active procrastination, time related perceptions and behaviors, personality variables and personal outcomes.

2.3.1. Why do People Procrastinate?

Procrastination has been studied in all social settings but mainly in the academic sense (Lay, 1986) and the most primary reasons for engaging in procrastinating behavior is the presence of fear failure and wanting to avoid aversive tasks (de Bruin &

Rudnick, 2007). Steel (2007) found that students start showing procrastination tendencies from high school and the behavior seems to be persistent through University with 50% of the procrastinating population reporting a continuous delay which results in problems for them. Lack of proper planning and effective time management could result in procrastination (McGhie, 2002). Two of the students in McGhie's study linked procrastination to time management.

A lot of factors can influence procrastination behavior, but psychologically, there are three things.

1. ***Personality traits***: the higher the impulsivity of an individual, the more their vulnerability to procrastination. This is to explain that there are individuals whose vulnerability to procrastinate are much higher than other individuals. And this is due to their personality traits.
2. ***Self-regulation deficits***: self-regulation plays a very important role in the individual decisions. Deficits of self-regulation includes time management, perseverance, self-motivation etc. but these deficits gaps between the individual's actions and intentions (Gerholz & Klingsieck, 2013). When an individual procrastinates and does other things instead of the said task, he might experience happiness, reduction of tension, forgetting the said task or even the success of completing another task but at the end, adverse feelings, negative outcome and stress gains an upper hand (Hocker, 2013). Individuals may use consciously or unconsciously use procrastination to preserve their self-respect or just to avoid conflict.
3. ***Situational factors***: Gerholz & Klingsieck (2013) named situational factors such as attractiveness of the task, expected feedback, complexity of the task,

plausibility and structuralizing and experience autonomy as factors that could lead to procrastination.

2.3.2. Psychological Approaches to Procrastination

This study reviewed four psychological approaches to procrastination. These approaches are behavioristic, cognitive, temporal motivational theory and psychoanalytic and psychodynamic theory.

Behavioristic approach: most learning theories have argued that behavior naturally occurs through the provision/lack of reinforcement and punishment (Ainslie, 1975). Reinforcement theorists formulated that an individual's repeated success of dilatory behavior can increase the possibility of procrastination. Another behavioristic theorist aimed at behaviors to avoid unpleasant stimulus (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). Honig, cited in (Ferrari, Johnson & McCrown, 1995) that escape conditioning occurs when an individual starts a task and then stops the task before completion. This conditioning nurtures the attitude to quit a task before completion. Avoidance conditioning on the other hand occurs when individuals make exceptional efforts to avoid doing a task. Such individual will delay every resolution about starting such task. Specious reward theory states that "receiving reinforcement with varying consequences would make individuals conditioned to avoiding tasks" (Ainslie, 1975). Ainslie also argued that humans always prefer short term reinforcements and rewards to long term goals because short term reinforcements gives immediate pleasure. In this regard, procrastinators are addicted to short term rewards. This habit would hinder them from achieving long term goals because they are wrapped up in the quest for immediate

pleasure and this increases anxiety towards the task. In the end, this habit facilitates avoidance of task and eventually leads to negative outcomes which becomes repeated to other future tasks (Ferrari, Johnson & McCrown, 1995).

Temporal motivational theory approach: The temporal motivational theory (TMT) tries to explain the process of an individual's behavior or decision making. This theory suggests that individuals tend to procrastinate when they perceive that the utility of carrying the task is low. TMT embodies Pico economical components such as value, sensitivity to delay, utility, expectancy and time delay (Steel, 2007; Steel & Konig, 2006). In TMT, expectancy indicates an individual's perceived success probability, value refers to an individual's preferences towards an activity. Sensitivity to delay represents an inclination to short term reward and time delay indicates the duration before getting results. Steel and Konig (2006) in their findings about TMT presented that TMT was in lieu with procrastination grounded theory which was contrived by Schraw et al in 2007. Steel & Konig found that unclear directions, lack of incentives and deadlines are three conditions that affects procrastination. When these conditions are connected with TMT, lack of incentives is equivalent with values, unclear direction identical to expectancy and deadlines identical to sensitivity to delay. They also found that incentives and rewards from a task may become a type of satisfaction which can increase the will to perform a task. They also believed that task postponement may be because of unattractive incentive and deadlines are important to help individuals exert self-management and reduce postponement. Lack of self-confidence to complete a task may be have turned up from methods, purposes and expected result of such task. The above evaluation could change, a task that has been ruled as useless could change to

useful as time goes and one main reason for this is because human could be inclined to reduce future reward and increase current enjoyment.

Cognitive approach: The cognitive approach is relatively new but is more popular in explanation of behavior and some psychological concepts. Three things were proposed by Ferrari, Johnson & McCrown (1995) as causes of procrastination, these are decision making inability, vulnerable self-esteem and irrational beliefs. These three causative factors are separate but related to each other.

Procrastination was called an emotional disorder which is rooted in irrational thinking. (Ellis & Knaus, 1977). One irrational thought believed by procrastinators is “I have to do something good that will be appreciated”. This thought is irrational because such high standard is seldom met. Any individual with this belief would feel bad when they do not perform excellently in any area of their lives. This thought may also encourage them to start a task early due to the fear of failure.

Procrastination may be an important strategy in protecting a vulnerable self-esteem (Burka & Yuen, 1983). Their theory was based on the notion that delaying tasks serve as a defense for vulnerable procrastinators. This is because when a task is delayed, the individual’s ability assessment is also delayed.

The third proposed cause is inability to take decisions. Janis and Mann in 1977 (cited in Ferrari, Johnson & McCrown, 1995) suggested a theory of conflict when it comes to decision making. Beswick, Rothblum and Mann (1988) also associated conflict with the inability to make decisions. Janis & Mann saw procrastination as a coping strategy when making difficult decisions. Examples of conflicts experienced by

academic procrastinators are conflicts in choosing courses and in picking a dissertation topic.

Psychoanalytic and Psychodynamic approach: Sigmund Freud made an attempt to explain the prevalence of procrastination based on task avoidance concept in 1953 (cited in Ferrari, Johnson & McCrown, 1995). Based on this concept, uncompleted tasks pose a threat to one's ego and are therefore avoided. Freud hypothesized when individuals face tasks that cannot be realized, anxiety comes in as a warning sign of threat to the individual's ego. Once the ego perceives the existence of threat, a defense mechanism is raised such as avoidance of such task. In classical psychoanalytic theory, it is believed that the procrastinator is generally inclined towards the present and that has great difficulty in future anticipation.

Psychodynamic theorists believe that the personality of an individual is closely bound to their childhood experiences. In this regard, the procrastination act is seen as a portrayal of infancy traumas or representation of parenting problems. The term chronic procrastination syndrome was used by Missildine, 1963 (cited in Ferrari, Johnson & McCrown, 1995) to explain the pause of an ongoing task with daydreaming and slowness. Slowness in individuals are supposedly rooted in unrealistic goal setting from parents as well as conditional love and attention. Authoritative or permissive parenting will increase the tendency of children to procrastinate. Permissive parenting produces underachiever children who always feel anxious and have difficulties in meeting up with predetermined schedules. Other children who experienced authoritative parenting get upset easily and they may try to oppose rules in order to gain their freedom.

2.4 What is Academic Procrastination?

When procrastination takes place in any academic environment, it is referred to as academic procrastination. This is being aware that one needs to perform an academic obligation or carry out an academic activity, e.g. writing a project, a term paper, studying, writing a thesis or dissertation, but due to one reason or another, not being able to motivate oneself to carry out such task within the said period. (Ackerman & Gross, 2005). On the other hand, Ellis & Knaus (1977), Ferrari, Johnson & McCrown, (1995) defined academic procrastination as an “act of postponing academic tasks to a point where it is highly unlikely to attain optimal performance which results in a state of psychological distress”.

Academic procrastination is not new in any collegiate educational system, it has been going on for decades. While Ellis & Knaus (1977) reported that about 95% of students experiences academic procrastination. Ferrari et al supported this finding by reporting that academic procrastination was as high as 95%. Solomon & Rothblum (1984) found out in their research that 46% of the students surveyed which is about one-quarter Caucasian-American university students’ experiences problems relating to procrastination on their academic tasks specifically when writing a term paper than when completing an assignment (30%), preparing for examination (28%). Gallagher, Golin, and Keheller (1992) reported that about 52% of the university students who participated in their research requires a moderate or high help regarding procrastination. Clark and Hill (1994) in their study found that about 30% to 45% African American undergraduate students reported procrastination in similar academic tasks

In recent studies, Day, Mensik & O'Sullivan (2000) reported that nearly 50% of university students procrastinate consistently without being able to control it. Ozer, Demir & Ferrari in 2009 discovered that 52% of the undergraduates surveyed in their research were procrastinators. More recently, Klassen et al (2010) noted that out of the two groups of undergraduates' researched, 57% of one group and 59% of the other group reportedly spend three hours or more everyday procrastinating.

2.4.1 Academic Procrastination and Cognitive Factors

Musynski & Akamatsu (1991) concluded in their study on doctoral clinical psychology students that cognitive factors related to procrastination might result in a delay or even failure in completing their dissertations within the time frame.

Academic procrastination was defined as a form of procrastination carried out specifically in relation to academic tasks (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984). They asked 342 voluntary, undergraduate students who were among two sections of a large introductory psychology course to participate in a class experiment in their correlational, exploratory study of the relationship between the frequency of academic procrastination and behavioral, cognitive and affective factors. 222 of the sample were female students, 101 were male students and there were 19 students who didn't disclose their identity, among this population were 264 freshmen, 43 sophomores, 13 juniors and 19 students did not identify academic year. Ninety percent of the students were between 18-21 years of age. In one section, introductory psychology students were simultaneously given self-paced quiz while completing each chapter of their psychology textbook. The students were asked to choose and attend one of the experimental sessions which were held numerous times in the first semester and were

told that they could earn extra credits in the course for their participation in the study. The students took the self-report measure, procrastination assessment scale-students (PASS), which was made up of two different sessions held at different times throughout the first semester. The first section was the assessment of procrastination frequency of procrastination in six specific areas of academic related tasks. Students identified on a 5-point Likert scale how much they procrastinate and to what extent procrastinate is a personal problem for them with 1 being “never procrastinate” and 5 being “always procrastinate. In the second section of the PASS, the researchers developed questions involving various undergraduate academic procrastination scenes and listed different cognitive reasons for the procrastination described in the scenario. Anxiety, perfectionism and difficulty in making decisions were some of the listed reasons. The participants rated afterwards how these possible reasons accurately described the reasons for academic procrastination.

2.4.2 Academic Procrastination and Anxiety

Haycock, McCarthy, and Skay (1998) found that between anxiety and procrastination, there was a statistically significant, positive relationship. That is to explain that people with high level of anxiety are prone to procrastinating. Anxiety, depression and worry are highly correlated with procrastination as a behavior (Spada, Hiou, and Nikcevic 2006). They also showed that individuals who engage in chronic procrastination may develop negative emotions which is due to them being unable to finish their tasks on time, meet deadlines, or make decisions about life events.

Lots of researchers have devoted their time to find out the relationship between academic procrastination and trait anxiety. Some long term researches found academic procrastination to be positively related to anxiety (state) as deadlines draw nearer (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984; Tice & Baumeister, 1997). On the other hand, Onwuegbuzie discovered in 2004 that academic procrastination correlated with multi-dimensional statistics anxiety like test anxiety, class attendance anxiety, interpretation of statistics data anxiety in graduate students enlisted in statistics courses. Some other studies found that there is no relationship between anxiety (trait) and dimensions of procrastination generally (Haycock, McCarthy & Skay 1998; Lay & Silverman, 1996). Whereas, the authors in the previous study discovered a positive and reliable relationship academic procrastination and trait anxiety. Trait anxiety negotiated the correlation between maladaptive perfectionism and academic procrastination (Chang & Lewin). They found that trait anxiety is the route that relates maladaptive perfectionism to academic procrastination. In maladaptive perfectionism, the main trend was that “as trait anxiety increases, academic procrastination also increases”. Chang and Lewin also found that trait anxiety balances the relationship between adaptive perfectionism and academic procrastination. Typically, under conditions of low trait anxiety, highly adaptive perfectionism has no effect since people with low trait anxiety seldom procrastinate. Nonetheless, the most breathtaking result was that of the interaction effect between trait anxiety and adaptive perfectionism. Under high trait anxiety conditions, individuals who have shown a great deal of adaptive perfectionism tended to procrastinate less i.e., irrespective of the strong and positive relationship between trait anxiety and academic procrastination, increased adaptive perfectionism seemed to reduce the effects of high trait anxiety which eventually results in less procrastination.

Another main purpose of this research is to examine possible ways to reduce procrastination.

2.4.3 Academic Procrastination and Perfectionism

Perfectionism is usually portrayed by a striving for impeccability, spotlessness and setting extremely high standards for performance usually escorted by the propensity for overly severe evaluations of one's behavior. (Hewitt & Flett, 2002). However, this term was explained by Frost, Marten, Lahart & Rosenblate (1990) as citing goals that are completely out of range and difficult which could make the person have negative feelings as a consequence when this goal aren't met.

There are lots of existing studies that established that adaptive perfectionism is associated with higher grades (Bieling, Israeli, Smith, & Antony, 2003; Chang, 2006; Rice & Slaney, 2002) in exams, tests and even the cumulative GPA. Nevertheless, the indices of academic performance wasn't consistently associated with maladaptive perfectionism. Despite the fact that grades are direct measures of academic performance, it is a principle that has various determinants. An extensive review of literature, a largely reliable and direct relationship between academic procrastination and perfectionism was observed. As a matter of fact, socially prescribed perfectionism and academic procrastination are positively correlated (Onwuegbuzie, 2000; Saddler & Sacks, 1993; Saddler & Buley 1999), it was also established that self-oriented perfectionism has no correlation (Flett, Blankstein, & Koledin, 1992; Onwuegbuzie, 2000; Saddler & Sacks, 1993) or a negative correlation (Frost et al., 1990; Saddler &

Buley, 1999) with procrastination. In regards to general procrastination (non-domain specific), Frost et al. (1990) reported that the prevalence of procrastination is correlated positively with Parental Expectations and Parental Concerns although the cruelty of procrastination was positively correlated with Doubting of Actions, Parental Concerns, and Concern over Mistakes. Conversely, Personal Standards and Organization were negatively correlated to the frequency of procrastination but neither subscale was significantly related to severity of procrastination. Given the empirically supported relationship between perfectionism and academic procrastination, it is believed that academic procrastination is a promising criterion variable with which to measure the alleged benefits of adaptive versus maladaptive perfectionism on academic performance.

The relationship between procrastination and perfectionism in graduate student population was explored by Onwuegbuzie in 2000. 135 graduate students from a graduate level research class at a university in united stated participated in the study. 92.6% of the research population were female between the ages of 21-51 with a mean age of 26. The students were asked to fill the Procrastination Assessment Scale-Students (PASS) and the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (MPS) surveys. The PASS consisted of six lists of academic tasks, which included writing a term paper, meeting attendance, exam preparation, administrative tasks, scholastic tasks follow up, and reading assignments progress. The instruction for the student was to complete three rating scales for each task. They were to identify the rate at which they procrastinated on each task. The first rating scale was from 1 (never procrastinate) to 5 (always procrastinate). The second scale was for the opinion of the participants about seeing procrastination as a problem where 1 refer to “never a problem” and 5 “always a

problem”. The third scale was about the participant’s desire to decrease procrastination where 1 referred to “do not want to decrease and 5 referred to “definitely want to decrease”. After adding up frequencies, the comprehensive measure of academic procrastination had a total score that ranged from 12 – 60 where high scores indicates self-reported academic tasks procrastination. The second part of the PASS requested the participants to reflect on the last time they procrastinated writing a dissertation, or a term paper and to state how much, it ever, each of the 26 reasons provided corresponded with the reason for their procrastinating behaviors and 1 referred to “not at all reflects why I procrastinated” and 5 referred to “definitely reflects why I procrastinated”. Majority of the participants acknowledged that reluctance to begin a task fear of failure of such task were part of the reasons for procrastination. On the other hand, the MPS was made up of 45 questions on a 7 point Likert scale which analyzed three aspects of perfectionism which included self-oriented, socially prescribed and other oriented. A high score on any of the three aspects reveal perfectionist tendencies. Onwuegbuzie (2000) established that 41% of the students who took part in the study acknowledged that they “nearly always” or “always” procrastinated when writing an academic paper, 39.3 procrastinated on preparation for exams while 60% on weekly reading assignments. This study also shows that graduate students more likely procrastinated 3.5 times on weekly reading compared to undergraduates.

A number of researches agreed that procrastination positively relates to perfectionism (Burka & Yuen, 2008; Ferrari, 1992; Martin, Flett, Hewitt, Krames and Szanto, 1996; Schraw et al., 2007; Senécal et al., 1995) some researchers however offered that there is little or no support for connecting procrastination with perfectionism (Johnson & Slaney, 1992; Muszynski & Akamatsu, 1991;

Schouwenberg, 1992). Furthermore, a negative correlation was reported between these two constructs by Busko in 1998. Busko (1998) did, however, only focus on self-oriented perfectionism, the two other dimensions of perfectionism suggested by Hewitt and Flett (1991) were neglected by Busko. The other two dimensions are socially prescribed perfectionism and other-oriented perfectionism. A research that focuses only on one dimension of perfectionism may generate inconsistent and inconclusive findings in the correlation of procrastination and perfectionism.

2.4.4 Academic Procrastination and Pressure

Chu and Choi (2005) noted that some students deliberately procrastinate so that they can perform excellently because they believe they perform better under pressure. They reported that procrastination can either be passive or active. While passive procrastination is postponing tasks due to lack of fear of failure, active procrastination is deliberately procrastinating so as to get better results. On the other hand, the lack of ability to use indicators of self-regulating behavior such as regulating thoughts and learning process may cause reluctance in finishing tasks and therefore leading to procrastination (Klassen et al, 2010). Ferrari, Sabrina, Raymond and Brett, (1998) found in their research that procrastinators compared to non-procrastinators at the non-selective colleges were reported to often use fraudulent and legitimate excuses when academic tasks are involved. The participants in the study said the excuses were generated mostly to gain more time for their tasks and also that most of their professors do not require proof for the excuses as the excuses were accepted.

2.4.5 Academic Procrastination and Reading Ability

Another predictor of procrastination is reading ability (Collins, Onwuegbuzie & Jiao, 2008). According to their research on 120 African American students, they discovered through two series of correlation tests that reading ability of these students leads to them indulging in procrastination. The first correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship between reading ability and procrastination due to fear of failure, the second analysis also revealed a significant relationship between reading ability and procrastination associated with writing projects, term papers, and all academic tasks in general.

2.4.6 Academic Procrastination and Motivation

Cavusoglu and Karatas (2015) found out that academic motivation is a predictor of procrastination in students. As a student's intrinsic motivation increases, the tendency of such student to delay his/her work decreases (Lee, 2005; Bornlow & Reasinger 2000). It was also reported that students who have lower levels of intrinsic motivation tend to put less time to their academic tasks and therefore procrastinate more.

Lietchty et al (2009) carried out a study about dissertation among doctoral students with a focus on doctoral students in social work department and created a concrete understanding of some aspects in the issue of procrastination. Just like other doctoral programs, it was reported by social work faculties that 50% of their doctoral students who have started their doctoral dissertation dropped out before completing it.

The study also went further to analyze the four stages of attrition and the periods when the risk of dropping out is higher for doctoral students. The first stage is the first

two years into the doctoral research with an attrition rate of 59%; the second stage is between the second and third year with an attrition rate of 41% the third stage referred to the time between the third and the fifth year with an attrition rate of 32%: and the final stage refers to the time after 4 or more years when the attrition rate was 17%. The ABD (All But Dissertation) stage when the students have finished course work but not the actual dissertation was recognized as the most sensitive stage. The researchers suggested, from a sociocultural theoretical standpoint, that higher learning was achieved through meaningful relationships, which, when contextualized in the framework of dissertation completion, could refer to tasks that were done with the help of colleagues, professors and other directors

According to Lietchty et al, (2009) three types of learning conditions affects success and maturation and the area of dissertation completion. The foremost is that for the students, the advisors and the department generally should make authentic assessment of their students' zone of current development. The second is the student must accept criticism and guidance, the supervisor must be able to meet the students' specific needs and the department providing appropriate curriculum for ensured mastery.

2.5 Consequences of Academic Procrastination

One consequence of procrastination is low academic achievement (Wesley, 1994) and another is increased stress and anxiety levels (Ferrari et al. 2005). It can be reasonably assumed that this behavior doesn't just show up in college, but it definitely

develops alongside other learning behaviors within the student and the educational environment interaction.

The result of Hen & Goroshit (2018) in their research on 373 social science undergraduates' students in Israel challenged the primary perception of people about procrastination being mainly associated with discomfort. The results found that although decisional procrastinators may experience these discomfort by non-academic procrastinators as they are working towards changing the habit. The finding also suggested a deviation between the two procrastination types i.e. decisional and academic. This may however proffer more to the controversy that procrastination for some students, is a relief emotionally but then negative outcomes follow it and the academic achievement of students is affected which in return makes the students feel a dire need to change the habit. Academic procrastination has been associated with varieties of negative consequences like delaying studying for examinations and tests, missing submission deadlines and getting low grades (Beswick, Rothblum, & Mann, 1988; Semb, Glick, & Spencer, 1979). Academic procrastination has also being linked to negative physiological and psychological outcomes like stress, anxiety, depression, low self-esteem ad guilt (Pychyl, Lee, Thibodeau & Blunt, 2000; Tice & Baumeister, 1997). Van Eerde (2000) identified three different types of behavior caused by procrastination with task performance – not meeting deadlines or low quality work due to time constraint. The second is extra role behavior – work or academic goals may be delayed and avoided and personal goals or pleasure used as distraction. The third behavior is, social interaction – one's procrastination habit may have an effect on people around, like having to wait for the procrastinator or constantly reminding the procrastinator about deadlines.

There are lots of negative consequence to procrastination but it is important to be aware that procrastination is not always considered a negative behavior. For example, Chu and Choi (2005) differentiated “passive procrastinators” and “active procrastinators”. They explained active procrastinators as individuals who deliberately delay a task for strategic management and passive procrastinator as the traditional procrastinator’s i.e. delaying a task until the deadline is near. This suggests that procrastination can be an intentional act with expected positive results rather than a negative behavior (Demeter & Davis, 2013). Choi and Moran (2009) found that active procrastinators have effective time management skills and are pleased with the outcomes of their behavior.

2.6 Coping Strategies for Students writing Dissertations

Although some students have mentioned that their professors, supervisors and program administrators were really helpful through the attempt to finish their dissertation, this doesn’t mean that they still do not need additional help. Meyers (2006) analyzed primary phase of starting a research and the ability of the students to appraise various preparation levels necessary to complete a thorough research. Hadjioannou et al. (2007) examined the definition and relevance of friendship and team work among the support groups in the population of graduate students. They suggested that the relations between the students and their professors were seen to be correlate highly with the graduate students’ perceived overall quality. Some students have cited being disappointed with the relationship and tagged it as the “unsatisfactory aspect of the experience”. They mentioned experiencing various forms of negative feelings all

through the duration of the program, they especially cited living in isolation and anxiety. Students got support from mentoring groups as their social and academic needs were being met. The findings suggested that the programs which includes practices such as networking new students with advanced ones, social gathering organization and accepting doctoral students to share offices have lower attrition rates.

Procrastination can also be reduced by concretely designing assignments (McCrea, Liberman, Trope & Sherman, 2008) and also by setting certain goals (Steel, 2007). It is also crucial to note that “if-then plans” known as implementation intentions help simplify the ability to pursue goals (Gollwitzer, 1999). These plans helps students to feel the control of the situation and also find opportunities to act earlier and faster. Lewis and Oyserman (2015) found that substituting smaller units of time can make individuals perceive deadlines as immediate i.e. saying 48 hours instead of two days, 120 days instead of 5 months. When units of time are manipulated this way, people might start taking their tasks more seriously as they believe the deadline is nearer. 162 participants in two studies were asked to imagine themselves preparing for tasks whose deadlines were either days, months, or years away. Those who thought in the smallest unit of time (days) believe that they would start working on the task earlier than those who thought in months and years. Some participants said they would start saving four times earlier when they were told their retirement was just 14,600 days away instead of 40 years. According to Oyserman, this time manipulation will be useful for individuals struggling with long term goals such as saving up for retirement or college, carrying out a research or even writing a dissertation.

Ackerman & Gross argued that another way to reduce academic procrastination is to provide students with very clear instructions. This means handing out to them step by step instruction, presenting examples, providing the chance of early feedback and task clarification. They also said that if instructors sense or notice that some students are still procrastinating, it would be helpful to remind the students about deadlines as this will help the students to be aware of their instructors clear standards and expectations, this will help them to act more quickly.

The results from this study indicated that students should be counseled on ways to manage their time efficiently in order to complete and also possess practical expectations regarding the dissertation process. Graduate students should be allowed to have some self-reflective time before embarking on their research so that they can adequately locate the deficiencies and avoid difficulties like procrastination which can emerge when they begin the research.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter entails the methodological approach used to carry out this research. It will present the aim of this research as well as the designs, methods and processes adopted in conducting the research. It will also present the sample, the data collection as well as the method of data analysis. In conclusion, it will discuss ethical issues and limitations associated with the study.

3.1. Research Design and Justification

Research design is the framework or plan of a study which is used as guide for collecting data, processing them and generally conducting a research work (Adepoju, 2014). This research is qualitative and the case study design is used. Case study research has been one of the used research methods. It is mostly used along with qualitative research as well as comparative methods. This research design has been used by a majority of researchers in proving most of their theoretical claims. Lamont (2015) argued that “case study research design is a historical study of an event”. Also, Gerring (2004) added that case study design “is an intensive study of single unit for the purpose of understanding a large class of similar unit”. It also allows for detailed examination. Therefore, case study design will be used in this thesis by focusing solely on the master student population. The masters’ students were chosen because they are in the middle of the study chain. Above the undergraduates and below the doctorates student. This makes them flexible as they have an experience of their undergraduate dissertation and most of them are looking forward to the doctorate degree.

3.2. Research Method

The method used to carry out this research is the qualitative research method. Qualitative research method is defined as “process of research involves empirical work being carried out with the collection of data which can concur, refute or contest theories which in turn allows for understanding and clarification for different observations” (May, 1997). The qualitative research method uses the induction process where data related to a specific study is collected and the researcher generates series of concepts and theories from the data. This method was considered appropriate for this research as it allows deeper understanding of procrastination from individuals’ personal experience, beliefs and feelings as opposed to the quantitative counterpart which more numerically based and structured.

3.3. Data collection method

The data for this research were collected using semi structured interviews. This was chosen because of its elaborative nature which provides more range and flexibility and on the long run gives a capacity to be able to obtain more information from respondents. The questions were open ended which permitted the respondents to explain their answers and also allows the interviewer to probe thereby gaining more information from the respondent. Semi structured interviews actually allows the respondents in the study to answer the questions on their terms compared to the standardized interview and it still provides the avenue to compare answers than focused interview (May, 1997). The interview is the most suitable and reliable method when conducting complex but sensitive researches because it gives the interviewer the

opportunity to prepare the respondent before asking sensitive questions and also to explain complex questions (Kumar, 2005).

3.4. Sampling and sample method

Many researchers have different reasons for using a particular sampling technique when conducting their researches. For this research, the non-probability purposive sampling method was used. This method is particularly excellent and establishes a great correspondence between the research question and sampling (Bryman, 2004). To be selected to participate in the research, the participant must speak and understand English, be a masters' student in any of the two universities where the research was carried out and give their consent for participation. There are no age and gender restriction in the selection of the participants.

Permission to carry out the research was asked from both school due to ethical considerations and both schools gave the researcher the permission to carry out the research in the premises of the school with the students as respondents. Participants were sought by visiting each institute of graduate studies in each school, meeting potential respondents and telling them about the research and if they agree to participate, depending on their choice of venue and time, the interview is done. All interviews were carried out in the school's premises.

Some of the respondents introduced the researcher to their friends and course mates who were also interested in being a part of the research.

The sample is made up of 40 masters' students. 18 from Girne American University and 22 from Near East University. Each interview lasted about 25 to 35 minutes.

The demographic data of the sample is presented below.

3.5. Demographic data of the sample

The participants in the research were adult masters level student writing a dissertation or about to start writing. Forty masters' students participated in the research. Seventeen students (42.5%) were boys, the girls were twenty three (57.5%)

Table 1

Frequency Distribution by Sex

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Male	17
Female	23
Total	40

The age of the participants in this research ranged from 22 to 32 with a mean age of 25.

The data relating to age are presented in table 2 below.

Table 2

Frequency Distribution by Age

Age	Frequency
22	7
23	5
24	5
25	11
26	2
27	0
28	3
29	3
30	1
31	2
32	1
Total	40

The research study is ethnically rich as the universities where the research was conducted admits students from all over the world. 28 respondents are international students (Immigrants) and only 9 were local. 3 students decided to remain ethnically anonymous. Although majority of the participants in this research were African because of their accustomed use of the English language, most middle east that were qualified for the study were turned down as they spoke little or no English. 2 people identified as white, 15 as Africans, 8 as Arabians, 9 Middle Eastern (Turkish), 3 Asian and 3 people didn't specify ethnicity. The data are represented in table 3.

Table 3

Frequency Distribution by Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Frequency
Cypriot	2
African	15
Arab	8
Middle East (Turkish)	9
Asian	3
Not specified	3
Total	40

Both universities where the research was carried out are privately owned schools. Twenty four students (60%) were from Near East University and sixteen students (40%) were from Girne American University. The data is represented in the table below.

Table 4

Frequency Distribution by University

University	Frequency
NEU	22
GAU	18
TOTAL	40

In the schools where the participants were picked from, the duration for masters with thesis is from 18 to 24 months, which is three to four semesters. Normally, the first two semesters are for coursework and starting from the third, the seminar for the dissertation and the dissertation proper starts. Most of the students who participated in this research were in their third (45%) and second semesters (30%), with a few in their first (10%) and fourth (15%). The data for this frequency is represented in the table below.

Table 5*Frequency Distribution by Level*

Current level	Frequency
First semester	4
Second semester	12
Third semester	18
Fourth semester	6
Total	40

Since the duration and length of a dissertation sometimes depends on the department the researcher is from, knowing the department of each participant was important so as to understand some of the reasons for their answers to the interview questions. The participants in this study were from various departments in their universities ranging from arts and humanities to social sciences and pure sciences. Although majority were from psychology and counseling psychology departments, but other departments were all accepted. There was no bias in the choosing of participants from a particular department. The departments included law (7.5%), computer engineering (2.5%), international relations (5%), guidance and counseling psychology (17.5%), marine management (5%), psychology (35%), occupational therapy (2.5%), accounting and business management (10%), mechanical engineering (5%),

architecture (2.5%), hotel management and tourism (7.5%). The frequency for this is shown in the table below.

Table 6

Frequency Distribution by Department

Department	Frequency
Guidance & Counseling psychology	7
Psychology	12
Law	3
International relations	2
Accounting and business management	4
Computer engineering	1
Marine management	2
Occupational therapy	1
Architecture	1
Tourism and hospitality management	5
Mechanical engineering	2
Total	40

3.6. Data Collection

The data collection for this research took place in December, 2018. A Dictaphone was used to record the interview and the interview was transcribed verbatim. The study was conducted with semi structured interview method. To serve as a guide, a list of questions were constructed based on the research question (See appendix) and revised by some experts in the field of research from the researcher's university. These questions are open ended, asked in different way to different respondents and allowed discussion instead of the straightforward question and answer format in structured interviews.

The structure of the interview went thus:

1. Reading and signing the consent form
2. Filling the participant demographic information form
3. Exploring participants challenges as a masters' student
4. Exploration of the importance of the dissertation
5. Exploring reasons and the level of procrastination of respondents
6. Understanding the factors that aid increase or decrease in procrastination
7. Exploring respondents feelings, attitudes and believes towards procrastination.
8. Coping strategies for procrastination.

3.7 Data Analysis

After all the data were transcribed, they were coded, analyzed, interpreted and verified. The transcription process helps a researcher to understand a particular subject more due to the repeated listening and reading of the transcribed interview. After the

transcription process, coding began. Each code is a keyword which were used to categorize answers. After this, the data was analyzed and categorized under themes and sub themes that emerged from the coding. Emerging themes were coded accordingly. Interpreting the data by identifying the reoccurring themes is the next stage in the data analysis. At this stage, similarities and differences in the data are to be highlighted.

The final stage is the data verification. This is a process that involves scrutinizing the validity of understanding of the collected data by reviewing the codes and transcripts all over. This allows the researcher to verify previous hypothesis. (Sarantakos, 1998).

3.8 Ethical Considerations in the Research

Ethics are moral principles that guides a person's behavior or govern the conduct of an activity. In the conduct of any research, the researcher must always consider the impact of their research on the participants and the society at large. Before the commencement of this research, a research proposal was submitted to the supervisor. The researcher defended this proposal and it was approved by the supervision committee. Prior to data collection, the researcher got approval from the ethical board of both universities where the respondents were from before collecting any information from these respondents.

As it unethical to collect information without the willingness and informed consent of participants, the researcher clearly explained the voluntary basis of participation to the participants, they were informed of the confidentiality and anonymity of the research as well as their right to withdraw from the research at any time. The reason for carrying out this research was explained, how they can participate

was also stated. They were told that the interview would be recorded and were also encouraged to ask questions if they do not understand any question or any of the things the researcher explained to them.

All the participants in this research read and signed the informed consent thereby giving their willingness to participate in the research and the interview was done thereafter.

This research strictly followed the ethical codes of the American Counseling Association on research and publications stated in section G of the 2005 ACA code of ethics.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

This chapter explains findings from the interview and the subsequent data analysis as well as draws out the main themes from the data collected. The key factors promoting procrastination that emerged are stress, anxiety, motivation and perfection. All the factors are connected and can affect how more or how less an individual procrastinates. All emerging themes are analyzed and presented in this chapter.

4.1 Interview Analysis

In the analysis of the interview, the researcher coded the questions according to the interview structure and the answers were recorded under each section. These codes are discussed here as well as the emerging themes.

4.1.1. Challenges Faced by Master's Students

All 40 respondents in this research agreed that to some extent, it is challenging to be a masters' student. As the masters curriculum is an upgrade to what they were used to at their undergraduate level, comprehension of their new role as masters students was challenging at the beginning. For some students, coping with the reading, assignments, projects and researches was a big deal as they already had a phase where they didn't do any academic related task for a while.

Participant 3 said *"It was hard to cope with all the academic work as I wasn't in the school system for about three years before I started my masters' program. It was as if*

my brain was closed to anything that involved academics". This view was common to most of the participants who had a break between their undergraduate and the beginning of their masters' program.

Another challenge that was mostly common to respondents who are international student is the fear of the unknown. Most of them were leaving their home land for the first time and they didn't know what to expect from a strange land where they were not really sure of fitting in. Participant 7 said *"I was not really sure of what to expect from the teachers. I was scared of their grading system and It was the first time of being in a class with so many students from other countries that it seemed I was in the wrong place"* this participant can be said to be anxious about a new life in a new country. Participant 2 said *"Yeah, it was hard at first, settling down and adjusting to the new environment but luckily for me, my teachers didn't bring all the pressure at a time, they started slowly and by the second semester, I was getting lots of projects than the first but by then, I was already used to the system"*. Participant 7 also said *"but after the first two lectures, I saw that everyone was almost like me and they were as nervous as I was, the lecturers were actually nice and they understood that some of just changed environment"*.

It can be seen from this interpretation that the challenges some of the participants agreed to facing was settling down in a new school, adjusting to a new country and adjusting to going back to school.

4.1.2 Importance of the Dissertation

This is another thing that the respondents agreed to. They all agreed that the dissertation is the peak of their program and it is like a preparation for another phase in their academic endeavors. Participant 24 described how important the dissertation is. She said *“the dissertation is the main thing. It is what every thesis writing masters student looks forward to. Without a dissertation, I do not think it is right for someone to call themselves a master’s degree holder. The research is as important as the degree itself”*. Participant 7 said *“I think it is important because you cannot even be given a PhD admission if there are no previous research in your name and the dissertation is a way to show that you have research experience”*.

It could be agreed that the dissertation is extremely important in any academic stage.

The respondents were also asked about the likely duration for the completion of a dissertation. The answers to this questions were affected by the department of each respondent. It was clear that some respondents believe that some researches take longer in some departments. Participant 37 who is in the architecture department said *“in my department, it is not about the number of chapters you write or your literature review, it is about your architectural skills, the details of your work and the thoughts of your supervisor. You could still be drawing sketches when your mates in the other departments are already defending their projects”*. Participant 3 from the department of accounting and business management said *“I really can’t say a particular duration is acceptable, I think it depends on your topic. You do not expect a student writing about the use of shorthand to finish the same time as a student studying the economic impact of immigration in a country. They are both related to business, but one is more important than the other”*. Participant 12 from the psychology department said *“when*

it comes to duration, it is in the hands of the student and the supervisor, I mean it depends on how serious they both are. It also depends on the type of research. Qualitative researches takes time compared to quantitative researches. On the other hand, there are even students who use both methods for their research. You cannot expect them to start and finish at the same time”.

All these reasons are good enough to justify why there might not be an ideal duration for the starting and completing of the dissertation. However, if procrastination is also part of this reason, it could take a student a long time to complete the dissertation. A respondent admitted that he has been working on his dissertation for 4 semesters now which is about two years and it is as a result of starting late due to financial difficulties, changing supervisors and lot of procrastination.

4.1.3 Reasons for Procrastination

When respondents were asked the question “*in relation to studying and your academics generally, do you procrastinate? How often?*” it was not surprising for the researcher to find that all the respondents responded positively to this question, and when they were asked how often, only 5 respondents said “once in a while”. 29 respondents agreed they procrastinate a lot of times and 6 respondents said they really can’t say. Although 24 respondents agreed they only procrastinate when it comes to projects, assignments and researches, 16 said they procrastinate in every academic related tasks. Out of the 40 respondents in this research, 24 are writing their dissertations, 12 are about to start (they already submitted their proposals) and only 4 are still at the coursework stage. All 24 respondents who are writing their dissertation

agreed that the dissertation stage was the stage where they procrastinated more throughout their masters' program. Even the students who have submitted proposals admit that they had quite a few challenges in the drafting of the proposal intended for the dissertation.

When asked the reasons for procrastination, no respondent could point out just one reason. There were reasons ranging from lack of interest in a particular course or assignment to picking a dissertation topic.

Interestingly, Participant 1 said *"when it comes to procrastination, I always have an excuse. But I think the truth is that I just always think I have enough time to complete the assignment and I just do other things and when the time to submit the assignment is near, I start to rush it and I get so involved in it that I ask myself why I didn't start earlier"*. This participant acknowledged that there is really no substantial reason for procrastination. Participant 18 said *"one of the reasons I am delaying my dissertation is because my supervisor is almost always not available. He seems to have too much workload and when I need his advice, he is not always there"*. 17 participants cited gathering research journals, searching and meeting with research respondents and funds as reasons for delaying their dissertation. On the other hand, Participant 33 said *"I actually like to delay starting any project because I want to make sure I am at my best when I do start working on the project. This way, I achieve a better result than when I just do it anytime"*. Participant 19 said *"the reason I delay all my academic tasks is to get a perfect score. I delay them while I do other things that can distract me from the important task. This way when I am doing this task, I have no distraction, I can concentrate 100% and at the end get my perfect score"*. These two participants

seem like active procrastinators as they always seem to get the best results after procrastination.

Seven participants actually named distractors such as social media, internet, movies, and television as reasons for their procrastination. Participant 21 said *“sometimes I honestly start working on a project and I get a facebook notification from my phone, I pause what I am doing to check the notification and before I know it, I am engrossed in the social media and by the time I realize what I was doing, I would have wasted a lot of precious time”*.

Other reasons for procrastination given by respondents include stress, anxiety, excess workload, and motivation.

4.1.4 Factors That Affect Procrastination Prevalence

Prevalence in procrastination refers to how much procrastination reoccur. In this study, a lot of factors were found to make students procrastinate their academic tasks. Most recurring factors were Motivation, Criticism, Laziness and Anxiety. Other factors include stress, dedication and perfectionism. This factors can affect how high or how low the tendency of procrastination can be for an individual.

Motivation

Motivation is an important factor in our everyday lives. Either we agree to it or not, we all want to be praised when we do something right. When people’s actions are stimulated to in order to help them accomplish their goals and objectives, this is called

motivation. In this study, about 72% of the respondents named motivation as a factor that affects their procrastination prevalence. Participant 4 said *“I did a course in my first semester and each time my lecturer gives a task, I perform poorly no matter how hard I try, sometimes I think it is because the lecturer probably doesn’t understand my points. We were about 10 who were facing this difficulty. Eventually, I lost interest in the course and towards the end of the semester when he gave us a project, I didn’t look forward to doing it, I actually did the project the night before submission just so that I can say I did it and you know I still failed it. I had to redo the course but luckily for me, it was a different lecturer that took it.”*. This participant can be said to have lost interest in this particular course because of the low motivation gotten from the lecturer. Participant 4 also said *“sometimes getting good scores is a form of motivation for me”*.

Motivation can come from within the individual (intrinsic; where the students are motivated inwardly) or from others (extrinsic: where the students allows external forces to motivate them) be used in two forms (intrinsic or extrinsic). Most procrastinators are highly incapable of intrinsic motivation and therefore need others to motivate them in order to complete a give task. Extrinsic motivation can be inform of words of encouragement from teachers, parents and even fellow students. Participant 9 who is already finishing up her thesis related an experience with motivation. She said *“all through the two semesters I spent on my thesis, my supervisor was very helpful. Even when I taught I couldn’t get more original ideas for my thesis, he kept telling me I had it in me. At a point, it seemed like he believed in me more than I believed in myself. Because of this, I rarely procrastinated writing my thesis because I know for every completed chapter, my supervisor has a box of encouraging words to say to me”*. It

could also be in the form of rewards. Motivation is a proven psychological drug that can be used to fuel an individual's motive. In conclusion, the more the students are motivated, the lesser their procrastination tendencies.

Criticism

This is when the merits and demerits of something is being judged. Criticism is a social issue as well as procrastination. Although the general purpose of criticism in the academic settings is to improve the learner's ability but if this criticism is not constructive, it could be more harmful than helpful. Constructive criticism is when one is criticized in a positive way while projective criticism is negative criticism. Participant 31 stated that *"I am particularly scared of being criticized negatively when it comes to my academic work because I try to put my best in my academic and when I am criticized about it, I feel really down afterwards and lose interest in whatever it is I was doing at the time"*. Positive criticism helps a student to realize their faults in an encouraging way and want them to do better. In the course of writing a dissertation, students are likely to come across a lot of critics. Their chosen topic, method, research design, analysis, finding and much more will be criticized, this is to make sure that the student carries out an original research that will benefit all. When it comes to academic in the collegiate system, lecturers are often the critics and their way of criticism (constructive or projective) affects their students positively or negatively. Negative criticism could cause students to have low self-esteem and reduce their motivation and in return promotes procrastination.

Anxiety

The fear of the unknown is a common phobia we all go through. An overwhelming feeling of uncertainty otherwise known as anxiety is a huge factor in procrastination. When one is unsure of the outcome of something, anxiety kicks in and when the thing can be delayed, we tend to delay it. Not only can one have this feeling before procrastinating, it is also present during and after procrastination. In this study, anxiety was described as a result of overpowering fears, negative beliefs and even self-doubt which in turn leads to procrastination by some of the respondents. Participant 15 *“I get worried about everything not only my academics, I am worried about the result of a medical test and I find that I keep procrastinating taking the medical test, when I am worried about my project grades, I start to delay the project”*. Participant 1 said *“when I doubt my abilities, then I procrastinate more”*. A student can be worried about how to carry out a research, which tools and method to use and therefore decide to push the task to another time, but on the long run, continual procrastination leads to higher levels of anxiety and stress. A student who is less worried about the outcomes of his or her academic task would definitely procrastinate less than a student who is constantly worried.

When it comes to dissertation writing, anxiety is a major procrastinator determinant. Participant 34 *“I was so worried about how to go about my thesis that I didn't realize I was already wasting time. It wasn't until my supervisor started sending me reminder mails that I buckled up and started doing something. The dissertation is a very tiring experience”*.

Laziness

As much as this doesn't sound like a genuine reason, it is a factor that determines procrastination prevalence. A generally lazy student would find excuse every time in order to avoid carrying out tasks that are perceived as difficult. Easier tasks would get more attention with this kind of students. Some of the participants in this research named laziness as a factor that dictates their level of procrastination in all areas of their life. Participant 38 said *"sometimes, it is just laziness. When I feel lazy, I find that I delay everything I need to do at that time no matter how important it is. I could just lay on the bed all day and when a good deal of time has passed, I would realize I had wasted too much time and there is nothing I can do. But when I am not feeling lazy, I could even invent task for myself just to keep me busy"*.

4.1.5. Feelings, Beliefs and Perceived Effects of Procrastination

Procrastination comes with a lot of emotions. A procrastinator would feel series of emotion while procrastinating. The participants in this research shared some of their feelings and beliefs during and after procrastination. Participant 17 told the researcher *"the kind of feeling I get when procrastinating and after procrastinating are similar. When procrastinating, my mind goes back to the work I am supposed to do but I shrug it off even though I am worried and check to see if I still have time, and when I find out that I don't have time, I panic and start to rush the work. Sometimes I am just worried about what my grade would be because I have delayed doing my work for so long and the result might not be as good"*. Participant 8 said *"I believe procrastination is a bad thing, I just can't help myself. It just seems easier to do things that I enjoy doing than things that I don't. When I am procrastinating I have this feeling of dread and constant*

worry and sometimes I won't be able to sleep". Most of the participants named regret and self-hate as feelings that comes with procrastination. Participant 7 said "*whenever I procrastinate, I regret it. I always regret not controlling myself more and managing my time properly*".

On the effects of procrastination, the participants all seem to understand that a lot of negative outcomes are associated with procrastination especially when it is related to their academics. Participant 26 said "*I know that procrastinating is bad. It keeps me constantly worried about how much time I am wasting doing unproductive things*". Another said "*for every time I procrastinate carrying out a task, I have lesser time to do that task. When I first started my dissertation, I had a whole semester to prepare for my seminar but I didn't start writing the proposal until about three weeks to defense, I thought I still had time. I hated myself for that and rushing the proposal didn't help as it was rejected. I had to do it all over again which meant paying another fees for an extra semester*". Participant 2 said "*stress is one effect procrastination has on me. When I am procrastinating, I get stressed out a lot. As my workload increases, my stress level also increases*". Distressingly, 6 participants mentioned that when procrastinating, they get constantly worried, develop headaches and lack of sleep, these effects can cause individuals to perform very low in their academic and can also affect their mental and physical health. The participants were also asked if they have ever had a positive outcome from procrastination, only 4 participants declared positive answers and when asked to explain, one of them, participant 6 said "*I have been lucky about two or three times because I procrastinated. On one of the occasion, I had a term paper to write, I started it and at a point I didn't know what to write, so I put it off. About three days*

later, which was just a day from the deadline I started having brilliant ideas on what to write and before I knew it, I completed the paper and had an A. it was a very good experience for me because I think if I had just pushed myself when I first started it, I might not have done really well". Participant 33 said *"procrastination actually helps me to be open to other ideas and plan well for when I start the actual work, for me sometimes, it can be a good thing"*. These participants could be seen as active procrastinators. They are not procrastinating to enjoy more pleasurable tasks, they are procrastinating to improve their effort on the important task that they have.

Participants were also asked if they believe that procrastinating academic related tasks can prevent them from achieving their academic goals, 36 respondents confirmed that at the long run, procrastination may lead to failure and when it is not controlled, one's academic achievement is at a risk. Participant 10 explained further *"I believe too much procrastination in the academia leads to failure, once I cannot even do my school work, how am I supposed to pass and when I do not pass, how will I graduate and move to the next level. I think that procrastination causes too much damage in the long run"*. 4 respondents disagreed with this believe because they procrastination helps you to be opened to new ideas in your academic, gives you time to gather information and at the long run improves your academic performance.

4.1.6 Coping Strategies for Procrastination.

The intent of this question was to understand how students try to avoid procrastinating. In the process of answering this question, most of the respondents were reluctant. They admitted to not really trying to fight procrastination. However, 3 respondents said they try to focus on the benefit of completing the said task and this has helped them reduce the rate at which they procrastinate. Participant 20 said *“what I try to do is break down the task into smaller portions and complete them one at a time. When I started my dissertation, I noticed I was procrastinating a lot, so I started writing it chapters by chapters. And this has really helped me because I know that when I complete a chapter, I can take a break and start another chapter afterwards”*.

12 respondents said self-control and time management is the way they deal with procrastination although 3 out of these people admitted that it is hard to keep up with the self-control when there are lots of enjoyable things to do. Participant 29 admitted to using reward to reduce procrastination. This participant said *“in all areas of my life that I procrastinate, I reward myself when I get the work done. Sometimes, I even tell my spouse to reward me when I carry out a difficult task. When I have a particular task that I have been putting off, I tell myself “finish this task and go watch a movie at the cinema” then I find that I am actually looking forward to seeing that movie, so I hurry taking up the task”*. Participant 21 said *“I know distraction is the reason why I procrastinate, so when I really want to get serious, I try to get rid of them or find a peaceful place without distractions like the library”*. Eight participants actually stated that in the process of writing their dissertation, their supervisors have been most helpful,

reminding them of deadlines, helping with difficult terms, explaining citations and referencing, and providing them with moral support.

4.2 Tabular Representation of the Findings

Reasons for academic procrastination	Task difficulty, late tuition fees payment, availability of supervisors, excess workload, anxiety and stress, distraction such as social media
Factors that affect Procrastination Prevalence	Motivation, Anxiety, Laziness, Criticism, Perfectionism and dedication.
Feelings, beliefs and effects of procrastination	Self-doubt, low self-esteem, regret, self-hate, lower academic achievement, lower grades, missing deadlines, stress and constant worry which leads to health related issues like headache and insomnia.
Coping Strategies for Procrastination	Task breakdown, Self-control, time management, getting rid of distractors e.g. mobile phone.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main objective of this research is to find the reasons for procrastination as well as the impact or consequences of procrastination on the academic life of masters' student using the dissertation as a tool. This chapter will provide an interpretation of the findings of this research. It will explain how the findings are relevant to the research and relate the findings to some previous research. The finding of this research are based on the interpretation and analysis of the data gotten from the forty students that participated in the semi structured interview.

Onwuegbuzie et al. (2000) argued that post graduate students are 3.5 times more prone to procrastinating compared to undergraduates. If the rate of procrastination in graduate students is this high, then it is surprising to find out that very few researchers have worked on procrastination with graduate student as the population. Most of the researches available on academic procrastination were on high school and undergraduate student. However, the results of this study are consistent with existing literature on academic procrastination. Although the reasons for procrastination in this study may differ from other studies, the consequences of procrastination on students are similar.

5.1 Understanding the Findings of the Research in Relation to Previous Researches

As expected, graduate students are also fighting a war with procrastination not only in their life but in their academics as well. According to the findings of this research, there are several reasons why masters' student procrastinate. These reasons

include lack of interest, stress, anxiety, excess workload on students, laziness, fear of failure, distraction (social media), lack of motivation, availability and meeting with supervisors. When it comes to the dissertation, the main reason for procrastinating is because the students know that the project will require time, effort and hard work. This alone makes the students perceive the task as very difficult and delay it. They get distracted into doing other pleasurable things and therefore waste valuable time that ought to have been put into working on the dissertation. The social media is a constant distraction to students as it is much more enjoyable than realistic tasks. This is why even when students are working on a project and get a Facebook notification, they are likely to pause what they were working on, check the notification and get lost in the surfing of the internet, only to realize that they have wasted some time just by that distraction.

The dissertation is an essential component of the graduate degree. All 40 participants in this study agreed to the importance of the dissertation. Some participants even agreed that the dissertation is as important as the degree itself. Ability to carry out research is one of the basic requirements of a graduate student either at the master's or doctoral level. Being able to prove this could increase the academic achievement of a student and the dissertation is a way most schools use to find out hence the importance of the dissertation.

The level of procrastination varies from student to student and these levels are determined by a series of factors. Although some of these factors could be a reason for procrastination, when they increase or decrease, they tend to affect an individual's level of procrastination. Some of the factors obtained from this study include criticism, motivation, laziness, anxiety, dedication, perfectionism and stress. Although all students ought to learn how to handle criticism, the study shows that most students are

in fact scared of it. They do not want to be criticized negatively as it affects their self-worth and could lead to them putting off the task. On the other hand, if criticism is constructive, students have a better chance at avoiding procrastination.

It is clear from the findings that procrastination has a lot of negative consequences as seen in the literature review. Some of the consequences of procrastination found in the study includes, stress, anxiety, low academic achievement, discomfort, decrease in self-worth, increase in self-doubt and even insomnia. These consequences correlate with the consequences found by other researchers in their study. Wesley (1994), Onwuegbuzie (2004) also found low academic achievement as a consequence of academic procrastination. Hen & Goroshit (2018) in a more recent research also found discomfort as a consequence of decisional and academic procrastination. Ferrari et al (2005) also discovered increase in stress and anxiety levels as consequences of procrastination in their study. This means that even though the reasons might differ, the consequences of procrastination is almost the same for every procrastinator. Recent studies show that chronic procrastination may increase the vulnerability of people to serious health conditions like hypertension, headaches, insomnia and some cardiovascular diseases Sirios (2015), this is consistent with this research as some of the respondents reported headaches and Insomnia as effects of procrastination.

In this study, the participants narrated various ways that they have tried to tackle the procrastination problem they are facing. Some listed self-control and time management while others listed breaking down tasks, using intrinsic motivation, being aware of deadline and help from their supervisors as ways they have been able to tackle procrastination.

5.2 Recommendations

How procrastination is dealt with by individuals and the society at large will go a long way in the reduction of procrastination behavior. Universities need to recognize this problem and its damaging consequences, school management should put in place counseling services for students who are faced with this problem. This would help the students in a lot of ways in controlling if not totally stopping the act of procrastination.

A lot of students are getting lower grades not because they aren't intelligent but because they have a procrastination problem. Professors, lecturers and all other authorities can help students in tackling this problem. Lecturers should watch out for procrastination tendencies in their students and this may help them to know when their students are struggling with procrastination and help them, and if there are no positive results, they could be referred to the counseling department of the school. They should also note the way they criticize their students and help motivate them positively.

A deeper understanding of why students procrastinate starting their dissertation would benefit supervisors, professors, university counselors and give more understanding about the feelings of their students especially when writing a dissertation. Through this, the students' relationship with their professors' and supervisors can be improved and they could learn to express their needs which would be helpful for a successful dissertation completion. Students with less capacity can ask for additional support and not be turned down. If university counselors can be able to assess the reasons for academic procrastination, this could help them form treatment plans based around understanding and working with procrastinating students towards gaining confidence in capability and as a result lower procrastination.

This research is qualitative in nature. Quantitative method or a mixed method may be used in a further research to increase the reliability and validity of the study. Future researchers would benefit from this as it will give a deeper understanding of reasons why students procrastinate their dissertation despite its importance.

5.3 Conclusion

The aim of this research was to find out reasons, effects and factors influencing academic procrastination especially when related to writing the dissertation. The chapters examined these aims as well as coping mechanism that students have tried to use in tackling procrastination. The research questions were examined with a qualitative approach using semi structured interviews. The use of the semi structured interview provided in depth insight into the personal experiences of the student with procrastination and therefore allowed the topic to be discussed candidly which made the interpretation and analysis more meaningful. A review of related literature on procrastination and academic procrastination was presented. Finally, an interpretation of the findings of this study was presented along with a discussion on how the findings are related to the research with a comparison on some previous research.

The findings of this research are relevant to wider psychological studies on procrastination and academic procrastination as they highlighted the personal impact procrastination has on individuals. The importance of the university management as well as the teaching staffs to understand the effects and reasons for procrastination is crucial in order to understand the feelings of students who are constantly battling with procrastination. This study highlighted that all students procrastinate especially when related to academics and how this behavior damages their personal and academic life.

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Appendix one

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How challenging is it to be a masters' student?
2. How important do you think the dissertation is?
3. How possible is it to start and finish a dissertation in three months?
4. What duration do you think should be given to complete the dissertation?
5. In relation to studying and your academics generally, do you procrastinate?
How often?
6. What are your reasons for procrastination?
7. At what level of your current study have you procrastinated more?
8. When it comes to academic matters, do you have low motivation?
9. Are you afraid of criticism when it is related to your academic work? Why?
10. How exactly do you feel during and after procrastination?
11. Do you believe that procrastinating academic related tasks can prevent you
from achieving your educational goals?
12. What needs to happen for you to realize the effects of procrastination on your
academics?

Appendix two

Informed consent and participant voluntary participation form

ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION AMONG MASTERS STUDENTS: STARTING AND COMPETING THE DISSERTATION WITHIN THREE MONTHS.

Dear potential participant,

Please take a few minutes to carefully read the following information on this research before you give your consent and participate in the research. **However, if at any point, you have any question about the study, kindly ask the researcher who will provide more information.**

Currently, there are little or no research on procrastination in relation to postgraduate students compared to undergraduates and lower classes. But postgraduate students are not left out in the battle against procrastination. The purpose of the research is to find out the reasons why masters' students engage in academic procrastination with a focus on the dissertation. The research hopes to find out ways student deal with procrastination as well as the damaging consequences of procrastination on students' academic life. This research is being carried out by Oduwaye Omotoyosi, a masters' student in Near East University under the supervision of Assist. Prof. Dr. Gozde Latifoglu.

To participate in this study, you are being asked to be interviewed. Apart from the background and demographic information such as age, gender, institution and level which are on the demographic information form which will be given after you give your consent, there are twelve questions to be asked during the interview. The interview duration is estimated to take up to 30 minutes. ***Please note that the interview questions are open ended and other questions might arise from your answer.***

All data collected during this study are **anonymous** and **confidential**. The interview session will be recorded with a Dictaphone and will be transferred to an encrypted folder on the researcher's computer after the interview. You can withdraw from the study at **any point** without giving any reason to the researcher. All information collected are confidential and they will be stored in a password protected safe which will be destroyed three years after the completion of the study.

To signify your voluntary participation, please fill the consent form on the next page.

CONSENT FORM

Research title: Procrastination among Masters' Level Students: Starting and Completing the Dissertation in three months.

Name and address of researcher: Oduwaye Omotoyosi B. oduwayeomotoyosi@gmail.com
Department of guidance and counseling psychology, Ataturk faculty of education, Near east university, Lefkosa. TRNC via Mersin 10, Turkey.

Telephone number: +905338538671

Name and address of supervisor: Gozde Latifoglu. gozdelatifoglu@gmail.com
Department of guidance and counseling psychology, Ataturk faculty of education, Near East University, Lefkosa, TRNC via Mersin 10, Turkey.

Please tick the boxes to confirm that you agree to each statement.

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for this study and have the opportunity to ask questions.
2. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time before the interview is over without giving reasons.
3. I agree to take part in this study.

Signature and date

Appendix three

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Dear participant,

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study. Kindly fill out this demographic information page and we can begin the interview.

AGE:

GENDER:

ETHNICITY:

INSTITUTION:

DEPARTMENT:

CURRENT SEMESTER OF STUDY:

Appendix four



10.12.2018

Dear Omotoyosi Busola Oduwaye

Your application titled “**Academic Procrastination Among Master Level Students: Starting and Completing The Dissertation Within Three Months**” with the application number YDÜ/EB/2018/193 has been evaluated by the Scientific Research Ethics Committee and granted approval. You can start your research on the condition that you will abide by the information provided in your application form.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Kanol

Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee



Note: If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics

YAKIN DOĞU ÜNİVERSİTESİ
REKTÖRLÜK



NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY
PRESIDENT'S OFFICE

17 Aralık 2018

Sayın Omotoyosi Busola Oduwaye,

“Academic Procrastination Among Master Level Students: Starting and Completing the Dissertation within Three Months” adlı anketinizin uygulanması uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgi ve gereğini rica ederim.



Doç. Dr. İrfan Suat GÜNSEL
Mütevelli Heyeti Başkanı

Ek-1 Anket Formu



GIRNE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Business

Date: 11.03.2019

Ref No. :2018-19- SPRING-009

Dear OMOTOYOSIBUSOLA ODUWAYE,

This to certify that Girne American University, Business Faculty Research Ethics Committee has reviewed and approved the study titled ACADEMIC PROCRASTINATION AMONG MASTER STUDENTS: STARTING AND COMPLETING THE DISSERTATION WITHIN THREE MONTH, under the supervision of Asst.Prof.Dr. Gozde Latifoglu, on 11.03.2019

Committee Members

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Panteha Farmanesh
Head of International Business Department

Signature



Appendix 7

Omotoyosi Busola Oduwaye, B.Sc. (Ed.) from Tai Solarin University of Education, Guidance and psychological counseling department. Worked at Excellent High school and Asero High School as School Counselor. Worked at New Life Clinic as a Counselor. Research interests include literatures on ethics, behavioral psychology and academic related issues.

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