

Mediating role of Academic Procrastination and Authoritarian Parenting Style and Academic Stress among StudentsAbdullah Hassan^{a*}, Danish Arooj^b, Aneela Mushtaq^c, Muhammad Abbas^c^a Lecturer Psychology, Bahria University, H-8 Campus, Islamabad, Pakistan^b Clinical Psychologist, Mental Health Practitioner at MHEC, Islamabad^c Department of Clinical Psychology, Shifa Tameer-e-Millat University, Islamabad, Pakistan**Abstract**

This study aimed to explore the mediating role of academic procrastination in the relationship between parenting styles and academic stress among students. Previous research has shown that parenting styles significantly affect students' academic outcomes (Pinquart, 2020). Specifically, authoritarian parenting—characterized by rigid rules and high demands has been linked to increased academic stress (González, 2022). Moreover, students raised in authoritarian environments often struggle with self-regulation and time management, leading to higher levels of procrastination (Sanchez, 2024), which can further intensify academic stress as deadlines approach (Law, 2023). The hypothesis proposed that academic procrastination mediates the relationship between authoritarian parenting and academic stress. A total of 210 students (53 males, 157 females) from various institutions in Rawalpindi and Islamabad participated in the study through convenience sampling. Data were collected using the Parental Authority Questionnaire (Alkharusi, 2011), the Academic Procrastination Questionnaire (Abu-Ghazal, 2012), and the Questionnaire of Academic Stress (QASSE; García-Ros, 2018). Descriptive statistics were calculated, and mediation analysis was conducted using structural equation modeling (SEM) in SPSS-21. The results supported the hypothesis, indicating that academic procrastination significantly mediates the relationship between authoritarian parenting and academic stress. These findings are consistent with existing literature on the negative academic consequences of authoritarian parenting. Future research should consider intervention strategies that promote healthier parenting practices to help reduce academic procrastination and stress among students.

Keywords: Academic Procrastination, Authoritarian Parenting, Academic Stress, Student Mental Health

Correspondence: Abdullah Hassan

Lecturer Psychology, Bahria University, H-8 Campus, Islamabad, Pakistan

Email: abdullahhassanpasha@gmail.com

Pages 24-28 /Received, February 20, 2025, Revision Received April 26, 2025, Accepted May 10, 2025,

1. Introduction

Education is a prime need of today's era hence, researches revealed that 60% of university students report moderate to severe stress levels during their academic years, which has been associated with poor mental health and academic outcomes (Yikealo, 2018). It is often linked to multiple factors such as parenting styles, and fear of failure and many external factors. Present study will examine the mediating role of academic procrastination examining how it connects authoritarian parenting, to academic stress and impacts both factors.

Student's academic performance is significantly influenced by parenting styles, with supportive and balanced parenting commonly producing higher results (: Altaf et al, 2021; Pinquart, 2020). Although authoritarian parenting, also recognized as controlling parenting, is marked by strong demands and poor responsiveness, it might have a detrimental impact on academic behaviors. For example, it can increase procrastination because of a lack of autonomy (Harrington, 2021). Moreover, because authoritarian parents frequently place a strong emphasis on control and obedience, children raised in such environments may grow to fear failure and criticism. This psychological impact helps to explain how crucial authoritarian parenting is in contributing to academic procrastination (Dinkha, 2023). Because of this fear, a youngster may avoid certain actions, such as procrastinating, by delaying beginning or finishing chores in order to avoid possible criticism or punishment (Cooper-Kahn, 2024).

By highlighting external rewards or punishments rather than fostering internal impulses like curiosity and personal development, authoritarian parenting can demoralize a child's intrinsic motivation (Wang, 2021). Students who lack intrinsic motivation may put off doing their assignments because they don't feel compelled to do so until they are under external pressure (Garcia, 2019). This behavior has the potential to develop onto a habit over time, which can result in chronic procrastination and its detrimental effects, including youngsters experiencing more academic stress (Pinquart, 2017). Students often engage in academic procrastination, which is marked as the deliberate and habitual delay of beginning or finishing academic tasks, even though they are aware that doing so may have detrimental effects on their wellbeing, stress levels, and academic performance (Wolters, 2021).

According to a previous study, academic procrastination is linked to emotional and cognitive variables like anxiety, perfectionism, and motivation in addition to being a time management problem (Sirois, 2017). As a result, the practice may set off a vicious cycle of avoidance and stress in which procrastination raises worry, which then fuels more procrastination and stress related to schoolwork. (2016, Steel).

Academic stress is the term used to describe the psychological anguish that students go through as a result of academic obligations, including workload, exams, time management, and the need to do well. It's a prevalent problem that can have a detrimental effect on academic achievement and mental health (Pascoe, 2020). However, too much academic stress can affect how well students think and how motivated they are to study, which can lead to a decline in academic performance and even burnout (Deb, 2015). Furthermore, academic stress refers to the psychological strain that arises from the expectation to excel in academic environments. It is frequently linked to unfavorable consequences, such as anxiety, depression, and poor academic performance, which ultimately results in poor mental health among college students (Beiter, 2015).

Literature Review

Parenting styles play a critical role in shaping students' academic performance by influencing their motivation, self-discipline, and approach to learning (Spera, 2005). There are three main parenting styles:

Authoritative parenting, which balances high expectations with responsiveness and support, is often associated with the best academic outcomes, nurturing independence and strong work habits (Baumrind, 2013). Authoritarian parenting is harsh, with high demands but little emotional warmth, leading to lower academic performance due to increased stress and decreased intrinsic motivation (Harrington, 2021). Permissive parenting, marked by low demands and high responsiveness, can result in poor academic discipline, as children may face challenges with self-regulation and goal-setting (Spera, 2005).

Literature has constantly shown a significant relationship between authoritarian parenting and academic procrastination. When parents impose rigid controls and are strict with their discipline, high expectations, and lack of responsiveness, it can cause children to lose their sense of autonomy and lead to procrastination. Children may also develop a fear of failing and engage in avoidant behaviors, like procrastinating, in an attempt to avoid possible criticism (Wang, 2021).

Steel and König's (2006) Temporal Motivation hypothesis (TMT) a well-known hypothesis that explains academic procrastination. To explain why individuals, procrastinate, TMT integrates a number of motivational mechanisms, with a particular emphasis on the relationship between impulsivity, time, anticipation, and value.

According to TMT, procrastination happens when the perceived value of completing a task is low relative to the immediate rewards of engaging in more enjoyable activities, particularly when deadlines are distant (Janson, 2024). Similarly, In the context of authoritarian parenting, where students may feel less intrinsic motivation and more pressure to perform, the tendency to procrastinate increases as they may undervalue their tasks or feel overwhelmed by the expectations placed upon them (Steel, 2022). Thus, TMT provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the motivational dynamics influenced by parenting styles can lead to procrastination, which in turn heightens academic stress (Bajcar, 2024).

Students who experience authoritarian parenting are also more likely to experience academic stress because students are under constant pressure to live up to the high standards and strict expectations established by their authoritarian parents, sometimes at the expense of their mental health (Pinquart, 2017). Furthermore, individuals who experience authoritarian parenting are more likely to experience academic stress because they feel under pressure to live up to tight and controlling standards (González, 2022). In a similar vein, Kausar (2024) investigated the relationship between procrastination and academic stress in students, finding that procrastinating increases stress levels and impairs academic performance.

However, previous studies revealed the significant positive correlation between academic procrastination and academic stress. This relationship is attributed to the pressure and anxiety that collect as students delay their academic tasks, leading to a heightened sense of stress (Kuru 2022).

It was hypothesized that academic procrastination is expected to mediate the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and academic stress among college and universities students

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

Cross-Sectional research Design was used.

2.2 Sample

In the present study, sample of 210 college and university students was recruited from various institutions in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Data were collected using purposive sampling, which included 57 male and 153 female participants. Participants included who were enrolled in a college or university at the time of data collection. Only individuals who were clinically stable and willing to provide accurate responses were involved in the study.

Participants with a history of substance abuse or addiction were not included and those with physical or mental health conditions that could interfere with their ability to complete the study were excluded

2.3 Instruments

2.3.1 Demographic Form: A demographic form was used to accumulate important information from the participants, including their age, gender, educational level, family structure, birth order, number of siblings, and socioeconomic status.

2.3.2 Parental Authority Questionnaire: Alkharusi et al. (2011) used a shortened version of Buri's (1991) Parental Authority Questionnaire. The 20 items in this Likert scale, are broken down into three subscales: permissive (items 15-20), authoritarian (items 8-14), and authoritative (items 1-7). Individuals assessed their answers using a five-point Likert scale, which extended from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree." The internal consistency of the scale used in this study was $\alpha=0.80$, whereas the reliability of the original scale was $\alpha=0.78$.

2.3.2 Academic Procrastination Questionnaire: The Academic Procrastination Questionnaire, developed by Abu-Ghazal (2012), was utilized to assess procrastination behaviors among students. This one-dimensional scale includes 21 items rated on a Likert scale from "totally disagree" to "agree." Higher scores indicate greater procrastination, whereas lower scores reflect less procrastination. The scale's reliability was $\alpha=0.90$.

2.3.3 The Questionnaire of Academic Stress (QASSE), The García-Ros, Pérez-González, and Tomás (2018) amended the academic stress questionnaire, which now has 24 items spread over four domains (academic overload, future perspectives, classroom interactions, and family pressure), in a Likert scale, with a Cronbach's alpha score of $\alpha=0.92$.

2.4 Data analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the demographic characteristics and key study variables. Data were analyzed using SPSS, where mean, standard deviation, and frequency distribution were computed. To examine the relationship among variables, a mediation analysis was conducted using the SEM in SPSS. This analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship between the variables, namely parental authority, academic procrastination, and academic stress.

3. Results

Moderating correlation of Mothers Education Level (MEL) between Resilience (R) and Stress (S) among School Children

Table 1

Demographic characteristics of the study general population (N=210)

Variables	Category	f	%
Gender	Male	57	27.1
	Female	153	72.9
Age in years	16	4	1.9
	17	8	3.8
	18	12	5.7
	19	36	17.1
	20	60	28.6
	21	39	18.6
	22	35	16.7
Education	24	16	7.6
	Undergraduate	121	57.6
	Graduate	89	42.4
Birth Order	First born	53	25.2
	Second born	85	40.5
	Last born	48	22.9
	Only child	24	11.4
Socio Economic status	Upper class	32	15.2
	Middle class	161	76.7
	Other	17	8.1
Family system	Nuclear	126	60.0
	Joint	84	40.0

Predicting the Mediator (Academic Stress): The constant (intercept) is -2.97, indicating the baseline level of Academic Stress when Parenting Style is at zero. The effect of Parenting Style on Academic Stress is 1.08 ($\beta = 0.66$), suggesting a moderate to strong positive relationship between Parenting Style and Academic Stress. The model explains 43% of the variance in Academic Stress ($R^2 = 0.43$). Predicting the Outcome (Academic Performance), The constant is -24.60, indicating the baseline level of Academic Performance when both Parenting Style and Academic Stress are at zero. The effect of Parenting Style on Academic Performance is 0.93 ($\beta = 0.56$), and the effect of Academic Stress on Academic Performance is 0.32 ($\beta = 0.39$), both showing significant positive relationships. The model explains 58% of the variance in Academic Performance ($R^2 = 0.58$), with a change of 0.15 in R^2 when adding the mediator. The Direct Effect of Parenting Style on Academic Performance, after accounting for Academic Stress, is 0.93 ($\beta = 0.56$). The Indirect Effect through Academic Stress is $1.08 * 0.32 = 0.346$. The Total Effect of Parenting Style on Academic Performance is the sum of both direct and indirect effects (1.276).

Figure 01: Hypothesized and Tested Model of This Study

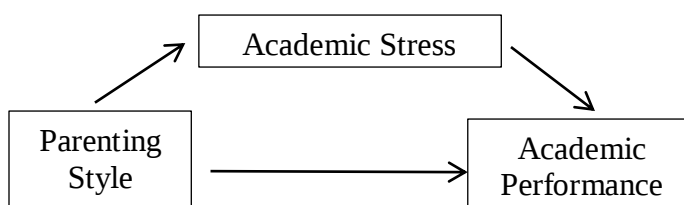


Table 2

Mediation Analysis between Parenting Style and Academic Performance with Academic Stress as Mediator (N=210)

Variables	B	95% CI	SEB	β	R ²	ΔR^2
Predicting the Mediator (Academic Stress)						
Constant	-2.97	[-9.11, -0.91]	6.13		0.43	0.43***
Parenting Style	1.08***	[0.91, 1.25]	0.09	0.66		
Predicting the Outcome (Academic Performance)						
Constant	-24.60***	[-36.19, -13.00]	5.88		0.58	0.15***
Parenting Style	0.93***	[0.78, 1.08]	0.08	0.56		
Academic Stress	0.32***	[0.25, 0.39]	0.04	0.39		

4. Discussion

The results of current study demonstrated that authoritarian parenting mediated significant relationship between academic procrastination and academic stress among college and university students. These findings align with previous research indicating that parenting styles exert a strong influence on both academic behaviors and psychological outcomes in students (Wang & Sheikh-Khalil, 2014).

Academic procrastination has been found to be fostered by authoritarian parenting, according to several research. For example, Sanchez, (2024) investigated that children of authoritarian parents frequently experience difficulties with self-control and time management, which increases their likelihood of putting things off. This is due to the fact that authoritarian parenting creates a strict, controlling environment that limits autonomy, which is essential for encouraging motivation and efficient time management (Grunschel, 2018). Students who experience control from other sources, like strict regulations from their parents, could put off completing their schoolwork as a kind of passive resistance or out of fear of failing. Higher levels of academic stress are frequently the result of this parental expectations-related pressure (Rizwan, 2020).

Previous evidences showed, procrastination makes students feel more stressed out when deadlines draw near, especially for those who were raised in tremendously demanding circumstances (Law, 2023). Similarly, avoidant habits may be wired by the negative reinforcement patterns typical of authoritarian parenting, which would increase procrastination. Students struggle to achieve academic demands as a result of this delay, which further adds to their stress (Frontini, 2016)

Furthermore, authoritarian parenting not only causes procrastination but also directly raises academic stress. Students raised in authoritarian households are more prone to view academic problems as threats than as chances for personal development. According to Spera (2005) authoritarian parents deprive their children of the emotional tools they need to handle the pressures of school by showing them little love or compassion. In another study, it has been noted that students raised in an authoritarian environment frequently internalize their parents' expectations, which increases their stress and anxiety when they fall short of them (Ishak, 2012).

However, the results of this study also highlight the detrimental effects that come with students procrastinating in their academic work. Another research reported, persistent procrastination raises stress levels, lowers academic achievement, and lowers wellbeing in general. When students delay tasks, they often go through from guilt and anxiety, which compounds stress, particularly in those raised under strict parental supervision (Topić, 2024).

Implications

The findings of this study have several important implications.

First, the findings emphasize how important parenting approaches are especially authoritarian parenting that is enforcing academic procrastination and stress levels in adults. The results of this study can help educational specialists, psychologists, and counselors, to create treatments strategies and interventions that lessen academic stress and procrastination by enhancing family dynamics and parental support networks.

Second, knowing how academic procrastination mediates stress, it is possible to incorporate time management and motivation techniques into Policy makers of education systems.

Last, Educational institutions and communities can also use these insights to develop parental education programs that assist parents in adopting more balanced and supportive parenting practices in order to provide a healthier learning environment for their kids.

Limitations and Recommendations

There are several limitations to the study that should be considered.

Firstly, the purposive sampling method used in this study may have limited how broadly the results may be applied to other populations. The general applicability of the findings to other ethnic groups. Future studies should use random sampling techniques to increase the representativeness and generalizability of the results. Secondly, the study used a self-reporting method, which increases the likelihood of response bias and may not capture participants' actual behaviors or experience. Future research could address this issue by combining observational and self-reported data to reduce bias and provide a better understanding of this phenomenon. An unequal sample size (57 men and 153 women) may restrict the generalizability of the findings. Forthcoming research should seek a more well-adjusted and balanced sample and examine additional moderating characteristics, such as personality traits and coping strategies, to communicate a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics of academic stress. The fact that this study was conducted in a specific area Islamabad/Rawalpindi might limit the applicability of the results to various cultures. Present study needs to be expanded to include different cultural and/or geographical outlines across the country to determine the generalizability of the outcomes. Lastly, other factors like motivation, learning styles, and individual differences that can have an effect on the interaction between parenting style, academic procrastination, and academic stress were not taken into deliberation by the study. To provide a more comprehensive statistics of the factors influencing academic outcomes, future studies should examine these variables.

References

- Alkharusi, H., Aldhafri, S., Kazem, A., Alzubaidi, A., & Al-Bahrani, M. (2011). Development and validation of a short version of the parental authority questionnaire. *Social Behavior and Personality: an international journal*, 39(9), 1193-1208.
- Altaf, S., Hassan, B., Khattak, A. Z., & Iqbal, N. (2021). Relationship of parenting styles with decision-making and self-concept among adolescents. *Foundation University Journal of Psychology*, 5(2), 74-85.
- Bajcar, B. (2024). *Understanding Procrastination at Work: Individual and Workplace Perspectives*. Taylor & Francis.
- Baumrind, D. (2013). Authoritative parenting revisited: History and current status.
- Beiter, R., Nash, R., McCrady, M., Rhoades, D., Linscomb, M., Clarahan, M., & Sammut, S. (2015). The prevalence and correlates of depression, anxiety, and stress in a sample of college students. *Journal of affective disorders*, 173, 90-96.
- Cooper-Kahn, J., & Dietzel, L. (2024). *Late, lost, and unprepared: A parents' guide to helping children with executive functioning*. Taylor & Francis.
- Deb, S., Kumar, A., & Gireesan, A. (2015). Stress and Resilience Capacity of Students: A Burning Public Health Issue. *Positive Psychology*, 163.
- Dinkha, J., Sharma, N. S., & Al Enezi, N. (2023). Parents, children, teens, and psychological viewpoints on parenting practices in Kuwait and Greece. *Rowman & Littlefield*.
- Frontini, R., Moreira, H., & Canavarro, M. C. (2016). Parenting stress and quality of life in pediatric obesity: The mediating role of parenting styles. *Journal of Child and Family Studies*, 25, 1011-1023.
- Garcia, O. F., & Serra, E. (2019). Raising children with poor school performance: Parenting styles and short-and long-term consequences for adolescent and adult development. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 16(7), 1089.
- García-Ros, R., Pérez-González, F., & Tomás, J. M. (2018). Analyzing academic stress in adolescence and their relationship with students' psychological and physical well-being: Development and validation of the Questionnaire of Academic Stress in Secondary Education.
- Ghazal, M. A. (2012). Academic procrastination: prevalence and causes from the point of view of undergraduate students. *Jordan Journal of Educational Sciences*, 8(2), 131-149.
- González-Olmo, M. J., Ruiz-Guillén, A., Moya-López, M., Romero-Maroto, M., & Carrillo-Díaz, M. (2022). The Influence of Parenting Styles on Eating Behavior and Caries in Their Children: A Cross-Sectional Study. *Children*, 9(6), 911.
- Grunschel, C., Patrzek, J., Klingsieck, K. B., & Fries, S. (2018). "I'll stop procrastinating now!" Fostering specific processes of self-regulated learning to reduce academic procrastination. *Journal of Prevention & Intervention in the Community*, 46(2), 143-157.
- Harrington, C. (2021). A Course-Embedded Study Task Planning Intervention Activity for College Students. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies*, 26.
- Harrington, C. (2021). What is "toxic masculinity" and why does it matter?. *Men and masculinities*, 24(2), 345-352.
- Ishak, Z., Low, S. F., & Lau, P. L. (2012). Parenting style as a moderator for students' academic achievement. *Journal of Science Education and Technology*, 21, 487-493.
- Janson, M. P., Wenker, T., & Baulke, L. (2024). Only a matter of time? Using logfile data to evaluate temporal motivation theory in university students' examination preparation. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 94(4), 1192-1207.
- Kausar, R., & Afaq, U. (2024). The Effects of Parenting Styles on Child Development. *Jahan-e-Tahqueeq*, 7(2), 856-866.
- Kuru, E. (2022). Views of Parents on The Distance Education Period. *International Online Journal of Educational Sciences*, 14(4).
- Law, I. L. J., Leong, S. J., & Tan, H. Y. (2023). Self-control, chronotype, and future time perspectives as predictors of bedtime procrastination among Malaysian young adults (Doctoral dissertation, UTAR).
- Pascoe, M. C., Hetrick, S. E., & Parker, A. G. (2020). The impact of stress on students in secondary school and higher education. *International journal of adolescence and youth*, 25(1), 104-112.
- Pinquart, M. (2017). Associations of parenting dimensions and styles with externalizing problems of children and adolescents: An updated meta-analysis. *Developmental psychology*, 53(5), 873.
- Pinquart, M. (2017). Associations of parenting dimensions and styles with internalizing symptoms in children and adolescents: A meta-analysis. *Marriage & Family Review*, 53(7), 613-640.
- Pinquart, M., & Ebeling, M. (2020). Parental educational expectations and academic achievement in children and adolescents—a meta-analysis. *Educational Psychology Review*, 32(2), 463-480.
- Rizwan, M., Talha, M. A., & Qi, X. (2020). Cultural impact of perceived parental expectations on students' academic stress. *Annals of Social Sciences and Perspective*, 1(2), 53-65.
- Sanchez, J. H. (2024). *Lived experiences of young adults exposed to negligent and permissive parenting styles* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University).
- Sirois, F. M., Molnar, D. S., & Hirsch, J. K. (2017). A meta-analytic and conceptual update on the associations between procrastination and multidimensional perfectionism. *European Journal of Personality*, 31(2), 137-159.
- Spera, C. (2005). A review of the relationship among parenting practices, parenting styles, and adolescent school achievement. *Educational psychology review*, 17, 125-146.
- Spera, C. (2005). A review of the relationship among parenting practices, parenting styles, and adolescent school achievement. *Educational psychology review*, 17, 125-146.
- Steel, P., & Klingsieck, K. B. (2016). Academic procrastination: Psychological antecedents revisited. *Australian Psychologist*, 51(1), 36-46.
- Steel, P., & König, C. J. (2006). Integrating theories of motivation. *Academy of management review*, 31(4), 889-913.
- Steel, P., Taras, D., Ponak, A., & Kammeyer-Mueller, J. (2022). Self-regulation of slippery deadlines: the role of procrastination in work performance. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, 783789.
- Topić, P. (2024). *The Relationship Between Self-Concept Dimensions And Procrastination Tendencies In Students* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Split. Faculty of Humanities And Social Sciences).
- Wang, M. T., & Sheikh-Khalil, S. (2014). Does parental involvement matter for student achievement and mental health in high school?. *Child development*, 85(2), 610-625.
- Wang, Y., Gao, H., Liu, J., & Fan, X. L. (2021). Academic procrastination in college students: The role of self-leadership. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 178, 110866.
- Wolters, C. A., & Brady, A. C. (2021). College students' time management: A self-regulated learning perspective. *Educational Psychology Review*, 33(4), 1319-1351.
- Yikealo, D., Tareke, W., & Karvinen, I. (2018). The level of stress among college students: A case in the college of education, Eritrea Institute of Technology. *Open Science Journal*, 3(4).