

## **Detailed abstract**

### **Ph.D. Thesis in Educational Psychology**

#### **Causal Relationship between Perfectionism and Academic Procrastination with Mediation of Motivational, Cognitive, and Metacognitive Self-Regulation**

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Academic procrastination can be defined as unintentional delay in accomplishing an academic task in the assigned or expected time, despite expecting to be worse off for the delay. Many factors might cause procrastination. The literature review of personality characteristics of those who procrastinate shows that an important factor is perfectionism. Over the past 30 years, a great deal of evidence has been accumulated confirming that two basic forms of perfectionism can be distinguished: positive perfectionism and negative perfectionism. Previous studies show that the facets of negative perfectionism have been positively correlated with procrastination, while the facets of positive perfectionism have no specific relationship with procrastination or if any, negative relationship. Although these studies show differences in the relationship between positive perfectionism and negative perfectionism and procrastination, there is no answer to the following questions: 1- Why are such relationships observed? 2- Why do positive perfectionism and negative perfectionism have reverse relationships to academic procrastination? And 3- Are there any other factors mediating between perfectionism and procrastination?

Considering both the theoretical views and empirical research, this study aimed at having a better understanding of the relationship between positive perfectionism and negative perfectionism and academic procrastination by examining the role of self-regulation facets (in a sequential order as motivational, cognitive and metacognitive self-regulated learning variables) as a mediator. It was expected that positive perfectionism through increasing use of motivational, cognitive and metacognitive self-regulated strategies results in decreasing academic procrastination while negative perfectionism through decreasing use of these strategies results in increasing academic procrastination.

Survey data were collected from 758 undergraduates. To test the hypothesized model, the following four instruments were administered to the participants: Motivated Strategy for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ), Multidimensional Perfectionism Scales (two versions), and Academic Procrastination Scale. To examine the reliability and validity of measures, Cronbach alpha, test-retest coefficient, and factor analysis methods were used. In order to examine the research hypothesis, the procedure suggested by Frazier, Tix, Barron (2004) and Hoyle & Smith (1994) were followed. Structural equation models (SEM) in LISREL were applied to determine the adaptation of the hypothesized model for the observed data and also to examine the fitness of the proposed model.

As hypothesized, the results revealed that positive perfectionism showed a statistically significant negative relationship with academic procrastination ( $\beta = -0.49$ ), while negative perfectionism showed a statistically significant positive relationship ( $\beta = 0.53$ ). The sub-model includes endogenous and exogenous variables fitted the data well ( $\chi^2/df=2.53$ , NNFI= 0.96, SRMR= 0.03, RMSEA=0.05, CFI=0.98.). In the next step, findings showed that motivational self-regulation was fully mediator between both kinds of perfectionism and cognitive-metacognitive self-regulation (NNFI= 0.93, SRMR= 0.04, RMSEA=0.06, CFI=0.96). In the last step, the fitness of the overall model, including all direct and indirect effects was examined. The outcome indicated that the hypothesized model did fit the observed data (NNFI=0.92, SRMR=0.06, RMSEA=0.07, CFI=0.94). Then all path coefficients were calculated. The results confirmed that motivational and cognitive-metacognitive self-regulation mediate partially the relationship between positive perfectionism and academic procrastination, while such pattern did not observe for negative perfectionism.

Taken together, our findings provided partial support for the proposed model. The findings indicate that positive perfectionism facilitates positive form of self-regulation, which in turn, leads to less procrastination, whereas negative perfectionism directly (without mediating role of self-regulation) leads to more procrastination. On the whole, these findings suggest that although perfectionism has been described as dysfunctional in nature, some forms of perfectionism may be more functional and associated with highly constructive self-regulation and less dilatory behaviour. Moreover, the findings confirm that procrastination depends on a complex interaction among the individual's internal factors. The results have important implications for educational and clinical settings.