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Review

Procrastination Across Cultures: Comparative Insights from India and Global Studies

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Abstract

Procrastination, the act of delaying tasks despite knowing potential negative consequences, varies across cultures due to psychological, social, and environmental factors (What is procrastination?, 2022; Steel, 2007).

This comparative study analyzes secondary data from peer-reviewed journals, surveys, and reports to examine patterns in India versus global contexts, particularly the USA and Europe. Indian studies report 70-80% prevalence among students driven by academic pressure and time management issues (Rahul & Ganava, 2023; Bhati, 2024), while global research shows 20-25% chronic rates linked to perfectionism, with cross-cultural variations (Rozenal et al., 2018; Zhang et al., 2022). Key differences include external duties in collectivist India versus internal traits in individualistic societies, per Hofstede's dimensions.

Similarities involve digital distractions. Findings advocate culturally tailored interventions like mindfulness.

Keywords: procrastination patterns, cross-cultural psychology, academic delay, workplace habits, behavioral interventions

Introduction

Procrastination involves voluntarily delaying intended tasks despite anticipating negative consequences, often linked to emotion regulation failures (What is procrastination?, 2022). A comparative study reveals cultural influences, with India showing higher academic rates (78%) due to exam stress compared to global averages (Solving Procrastination, 2025; Rahul & Ganava, 2023). This matters for targeted strategies amid India's urbanization.

Literature Review:

Global Findings

Worldwide, procrastination affects 20-25% chronically, rooted in anxiety and perfectionism (The psychology of procrastination, n.d.; Steel, 2007). Cross-cultural studies note higher rates in individualistic cultures like the USA (80-95% students) and sex differences, with

males often procrastinating more (Zhang et al., 2022; Klassen et al., 2008). Interventions yield modest success across Europe and Asia (Rozenal et al., 2018).

India-Specific Findings

In India, 70-80% of students procrastinate due to time management (95%), competitive exams like JEE/NEET, and collectivism (Rahul & Ganava, 2023; Bhati, 2024; Daryani et al., 2021). Workplace IT overload and urban factors amplify it, with northeast students citing laziness (75%) and decision difficulty (42%) (Academic Procrastination And Its Prevalence..., 2024). Gender differences show males higher (Chaudhary et al., 2023).

Comparative Analysis

India exhibits higher academic procrastination (78%) from external pressures versus global internal traits (20-25%), moderated by ethnicity and identity (Rahul & Ganava, 2023; Zhang et al., 2022). Coping differs: social support in India, cognitive therapy elsewhere (The psychology behind procrastination, 2022). Digital triggers align globally. India shows higher academic procrastination from external pressures versus global emphasis on internal traits like impulsivity (The development and validation of a one-off scale to..., 2025). Similarities include digital triggers worldwide, but differences emerge in coping: Indians lean on social support, while Westerners favor cognitive therapy (Procrastination, 2022).

Aspect	India Characteristics	Global (USA/Europe) Characteristics
Prevalence	70-80% students (Psychology of procrastination: Understanding and overcoming it, 2023)	20-25% chronic (The psychology of procrastination, n.d.)
Main Triggers	Exam stress, family duty (Psychology of procrastination: Understanding and overcoming it, 2023)	Perfectionism, anxiety (The psychology of procrastination, n.d.)
Cultural Influence	Collectivism delays action (Towards a dimensional, multifactorial, and integrative approach, 2022)	Individualism boosts autonomy (Towards a dimensional, multifactorial, and integrative approach, 2022)
Type	India Example	Global Example
Academic	JEE/NEET prep delays (Psychology of procrastination: Understanding and overcoming it, 2023)	Essay deadlines (Academic procrastination in children and adolescents: A systematic review, 2023)
Workplace	IT project overload (Top research papers on procrastination, 2021)	General deadlines (Solving Procrastination, 2025)

Conclusion

Comparative insights suggest tailored interventions: mindfulness for India's cultural context and goal-setting globally (The psychology behind procrastination, 2022). Future research should analyze post-2025 digital trends, as urbanization may align Indian patterns closer to worldwide norms (Solving Procrastination, 2025). This framework supports concise secondary analysis for policy implications. Tailored interventions like time management for India and goal-setting globally are recommended (Rahul & Ganava, 2023; Rozenal et al., 2018). Post-2025 trends may converge patterns (Solving Procrastination, 2025).

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Declaration of Competing Interest

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