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The Role of Social Networks in Delay of University Students Academics in Pakistan

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Abstract
The purpose of the study is to investigate the role of social network in academic delay of University students of Pakistan. The study design was the quantitative and applied descriptive. The population of the study was students of under graduate program of universities. Multistage cluster sampling techniques was used to select the respondents of the study. The size of sample was 375 participants of study. Primary data collection through questionnaire which was adopted in this study, from previous studies of Solomon and Rothblum Academic Procrastination Questionnaire (1984) and Social Networks Questionnaire developed by the authors. Data analyses for required data was performed in SPSS through tests were Mann Whitney and chi-square. The result of the study indicates that there is no difference between male and female respondents for delay behavioral change and unpleasant feeling caused by academic delay. The Online Social network components of the study have greatest correlation and impact on academic procrastination of the students in Universities.
Keywords: social network, delay, students, university.

Introduction
Millions of users around the world have paid attention to virtual networks since the advent of these networks for simultaneous and non-simultaneous and quick communication as well as access and distribution of large volumes of data. Virtual networks can be explored and evaluated from different aspects. Academic failure and reduced educational performance may arise from spending too much time on the Internet since many students in lower levels of education have access to and use cell phones and the Internet for various functions. In addition, academic achievement of children and adolescents is an important issue in psychology and sociology.
Although social media is a very useful tool in the hands of students, many studies have shown the negative impact of these networks on academic performance (Karpinski *et al.*, 2013; Paul *et al.*, 2012). In this regard, Paul *et al.* (2012) showed a significant and negative correlation between the time spent on online social networks and academic performance of the students. Permanent use of social networks can lead to distraction, loss of time and procrastination (Karpinski *et al.*, 2013; Ozer *et al.*, 2013, p. 875).
Academic procrastination or negligence is a common problem at different levels of education (Jokar and Delavar Pour, 2007). Ellis and Neil (2003) defined procrastination as delaying a task decided to be undertaken as soon as possible to the near future for no reason at all although finishing the task may lead to promising results and postponing that task may be disadvantageous and lead to self-blame. Procrastination have different representations due to complexity and interference of cognitive, emotional and behavioral components. These diverse representations are academic procrastination, procrastination in decision-making, neurotic procrastination and obsessive procrastination. The most common academic procrastination is represented in the field of education, which is addressed as a comprehensive

phenomenon among the students. Academic procrastination is defined as an irrational and unreasonable desire to delay commencing or completing an academic task (Balkis and Duru, 2009, p. 42). In other words, academic procrastination is associated with academic tasks and can be described as delaying academic tasks for different reasons (Yao, 2009, 29). This term is most recently defined as a defective self-regulation in the sense of individual inability to control thoughts, emotions, feelings and performance according to predetermine criteria (Farran, 2004).

Various studies have mentioned numerous consequences and reasons for procrastination. Some adverse consequences may be getting low scores in the classroom, withdrawal of education, low self-esteem (Steel, 2007), stress and anxiety (Williams *et al.*, 2008), etc. In addition, various studies have suggested that procrastination can be caused by absence of self-regulation characteristics, which leads to relying on external factors for motivation. This issue may result in maladaptive behaviors such as pathological use of the Internet (Odaci, 2011).

Various studies have shown that procrastination is not only a time management problem, but also a complex process encompassing cognitive, emotional and behavioral factors (FI and Tangen, 2000, p. 33). Hence, various theories have been proposed for procrastination. Behavioral theories of procrastination are based on the concept of reinforcement and punishment, which claim that postponing a task may be more strengthening than completing that task (Beriodi, 1980; quoted by Balkis and Duru; 2007, p. 65). According to psychoanalytical approach, procrastination is defined as a problematic behavior that reflects underlying mental excitement and mostly covers individual feelings for the family. Cognitive - behavioral theories discuss procrastination with regard to cognitive beliefs and processes and emphasize identification of underlying irrational thinking styles. According to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, procrastination arises from anxiety, which is a warning sign for repressed unconscious desires. Defense mechanisms are activated as soon as anxiety is detected. Based on dynamic defense mechanisms and task avoidance, those unfinished tasks would be primarily postponed since they are self-threatening. Cognitive approaches also emphasize the role of irrational beliefs and unrealistic expectations in procrastination but cannot define how such beliefs affect procrastination-oriented cognitive processes.

In general, procrastination is regarded from different perspectives varying from optimistic to pessimistic. Optimistic views claim that such characteristics as behavior, cognition and motivation are the main cause of procrastination while pessimistic views refer to procrastination as a habit or personality disorder. Hence, procrastination views can be divided into different categories as follows.

Procrastination as a behavioral problem: in this view, the goal of treatment lies in reducing the rate or percentage of procrastination and increasing the rate or percentage of studying or activity. Such methods as modeling, conditioning, time management and planning techniques are used to reduce procrastination.

Procrastination as a cognitive problem: in this view, procrastination arises from false beliefs and thoughts about conditions and results of various activities (Beck, 1976, p. 13). Such beliefs are commonly unreasonable and should be treated using rational-emotional behavioral therapy. According to this view, the main cause of permanent procrastination lies in the issue that rigid and stiff people stick to those beliefs or attitudes that force them to postpone what is currently advantageous for them to tomorrow. Albert Ellis believes that these rigid and stiff beliefs (often as must, probably, it is necessary, it is compulsory) are the core of procrastination.

Procrastination as a motivational problem: In this view, procrastination does not arise from laziness or absence of motivation. On the other hand, prognosticators are interested in doing other activities. Individual motivation to perform the task should be increased in order to reduce this type of procrastination (Sqoenberg, 2004, p. 67).

Procrastination as a habit: in this view, procrastination is regarded as a habit and eventually declines self-efficacy expectations. Such interventions as task management are used to treat this type of procrastination since those therapies emphasize restructuring environment, teaching adaptive behaviors, increasing personal responsibility and using social influence.

Procrastination as a personality disorder: In this view, procrastination is recognized as weak conscience with such features as lack of perseverance, laziness, lack of attention and weakness in authoritarian.

Psychotherapy is used to reduce this type of procrastination (based on severity of the disorder and individual response) (Sqoenberg *et al.*, 2004; quoted by Shahni Yeylagh et al., 2006, p. 29).

Hypothesis
- Social networks affect delay in preparation for the exam among students of the universities.
- Social networks affects procrastination in preparing homework among students of the universities
- Social networks affects procrastination in preparation of papers (project) at the end of the semester among students of the universities
- Changing academic delay habits between participating boys and girls was different.

Materials and Methods
The study design was the quantitative and applied descriptive. The population of the study was University students. Multistage cluster sampling techniques was used to select the respondents of the study. The size of sample was 375 (male and female) participants of study. Primary data collection through questionnaire which was adopted in this study, from previous studies of Solomon and Rothblum Academic Procrastination Questionnaire (1984) and Social Networks Questionnaire developed by the author's two questionnaires were used to collect the required data. The questionnaires encompassed three parts (introduction, research demographic variables and research questions). The questionnaire items were scored based on a 5-point Likert Scale.
A) Academic Procrastination Assessment Questionnaire: the questionnaire was developed by Solomon and Rothblum (1984). The questionnaire contains 27 closed questions in four domains of preparing for exams, preparation of homework and preparation of final papers and the desire to change students' academic procrastination habit and creating an unpleasant feeling caused by academic procrastination. The reliability of the questionnaire was estimated as 0.78 using Cronbach's alpha. B) Social Network Inventory: The inventory covered 9 items. This scale was developed by the author. Cronbach's alpha was calculated as 0.76. Data analysis was performed in SPSS statistical software tests were performed Mann Whitney and chi-square.

Data Analysis and Discussion

As a result, nonparametric statistics like Mann Whitney and chi-square were used to test the research hypotheses.

Table 1 - descriptive statistics of the participants by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent%
Male	185	49
Female	190	50.7
Total	375	100

The result shows in the table 1, that 185 cases (49.3%) were males and 190 cases (50.7%) were females.

Table 2 - Descriptive statistics relevant to research variables by gender

Variable	Mean	
	Males	**Females**
Procrastination in preparation for the exam	3.51	2.83
Procrastination in preparation of homework	3.03	2.68
Preparation of papers (projects) at the end of the semester	3.49	3.18
Tendency to change procrastination behavior	4.36	4.21
Creating an unpleasant felling caused by academic procrastination	4.04	4.01
Procrastination	3.69	3.38

Table 2 shows that the means of all procrastination component by respondents category likewise males and females.

Table 3 – Examining normal distribution of variables

Variables	Most Extreme Differences			K.S Statistics	Significance Level	Result
Procrastination in preparation for the exam	0.077	0.053	-0.077	1.491	0.023	Not Normal
Procrastination in preparation of homework	0.094	0.054	-0.094	1.813	0.003	Not Normal
Preparation of papers (projects) at the end of the semester	0.128	0.092	-0.128	2.474	0.000	Not Normal
Tendency to change procrastination behavior	0.215	0.185	-0.215	2.975	0.000	Not Normal
Creating an unpleasant feeling caused by academic procrastination	0.154	0.098	-0.154	2.975	0.000	Not Normal
Procrastination	0.098	0.052	-0.098	1.901	0.001	Not Normal

According to Table (3), the null hypothesis is rejected since the level of significance of testing for normal distribution is less than 0.05 (sig<0.05 and α = 0.05). It can be concluded that data distribution is not normal with 95% confidence.

Hypothesis 1:

According to Table 4, significant levels of the three variables of daily use of social networks, membership in social networks, school group activities were less than 0.05 (sig<0.05 and α = 0.05). Therefore, daily use of social networks, membership in social networks and school group activities were associated with academic procrastination.
According to gamma coefficients for daily use of social networks (0.394), school group activities (0.34), it can be stated that severities of correlation of daily use of social networks and school group activities with students' academic procrastination were moderate. In addition, severity of correlation of membership in social networks (0.237) was relatively low.
Significance levels of frequency of logging into social networks (0.513), duration of membership in social networks (0.051), method of connection to the Internet (0.179), the reason for using social networks (0.053), academic achievement (0.446) and resolving problems and concerns (0.527) were greater than 0.05 (sig>0.05 and α=0.05). Therefore, frequency of logging into social networks, duration of membership in social networks, method of connection to the Internet, the reason for using social

networks, academic achievement and resolving problems and concerns were independent of academic achievement.

Table 4 - Chi-square test results relevant to the effect of online social networks on procrastination in preparation for the exam

Variables	Chi-square test			Correlation degree	
	Chi-square statistics	Degree of freedom	Significance level	Gama coefficient and phi coefficient	Significance level
Daily use of social network	45.178	6	0	0.394	0
Frequency of logging into social networks	5.247	6	0.513	-0.196	0.068
Duration of membership in social networks	12.6	6	0.051	0.044	0.607
Membership in social networks*	20.868	6	0.002	0.237	0.002
Method of connection to the Internet*	8.911	6	0.179	0.154	0.179
The reason for using social networks*	20.811	12	0.053	0.236	0.053
School group activities	19.305	8	0.013	0.34	0.033
Academic achievement	7.875	8	0.446	-0.046	0.546
Resolving problems and concerns	7.087	8	0.527	0.027	0.713

Hypothesis 2:

According to Table 5, significant levels of four variables of daily use of social networks, frequency of logging into social networks, duration of membership in social networks, the reason for using social networks were less than 0.05 sig<0.05 and $\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, daily use of social networks, frequency of logging into social networks, duration of membership in social networks, the reason for using social networks were associated with procrastination in preparation of homework among the students.

According to gamma coefficient, severity of correlation of daily use of social networks (0.317) with procrastination in preparation of homework was moderate. Severities of correlation of frequency of logging into social networks, duration of membership in social networks and the reason for using social networks were relatively low.
Significance levels of membership in social networks (0.097), method of connection to the Internet (0.468), method of connection to the Internet (0.179), school group activities (0.394), academic achievement (0.187) and resolving problems and concerns (0.157) were greater than 0.05 (sig>0.05 and $\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, membership in social networks, method of connection to the Internet, school group activities, academic achievement and resolving problems and concerns were independent of procrastination in preparing homework among the students.

Table 5 – independence chi-square test to examine the effect of using online social networks on procrastination in preparing homework

Variables	Chi-square test			Severity of correlation	
	Chi-square statistics	Degree of freedom	Significance level	Gama coefficient and phi coefficient	Significance level
Daily use of social networks	19.581	6	0.003	0.317	0.004
Frequency of logging into social networks	16.424	6	0.012	0.296	0.037
Duration of membership in social networks	12.878	6	0.045	0.217	0.045
Membership in social networks*	13.475	8	0.097	0.191	0.097
Method of connection to the Internet*	5.615	6	0.468	0.123	0.468
The reason for using social networks*	26.865	12	0.008	0.268	0.008
School group activities	8.418	8	0.394	0.102	0.394
Academic achievement	11.261	8	0.187	-0.021	0.83
Resolving problems and concerns	11.868	8	0.157	-0.015	0.882

Table 6 - Chi-square test of independence relevant to the impact of online social networks on procrastination in preparation of papers

Variables	Chi-square test			Severity of correlation	
	Chi-square statistics	Degree of freedom	Significance level	Gama coefficient and phi coefficient	Significance level
Daily use of social networks	39.401	6	0	0.192	0.015
Frequency of logging into social networks	21.819	6	0.001	0.311	0.002
Duration of membership in social networks	36.195	6	0	0.37	0
Membership in social networks*	19.276	8	0.013	0.228	0.013
Method of connection to the Internet*	18.497	6	0.005	0.222	0.005
The reason for using social networks*	13.508	12	0.333	0.19	0.333
School group activities	26.827	8	0.001	0.143	0.034
Academic achievement	13.41	8	0.099	0.112	0.107
Resolving problems and concerns	28.43	8	0	0.158	0.024

Hypothesis 3:
According to Table 6, significant levels of variables of daily use of social networks, frequency of logging into social networks, duration of membership in social networks, membership in social networks, method

of connection to the Internet, school groups activities, resolving problems and concerns were less than 0.05 (sig<0.05 and α = 0.05). Therefore, daily use of social networks, frequency of logging into social networks, duration of membership in social networks, membership in social networks, method of connection to the Internet, school groups activities and resolving problems and concerns were associated with procrastination in preparing papers (project) at the end of the semester among the students.

According to gamma coefficient, severities of correlation of daily use of social networks (0.192), membership in social networks (0.228), method of connection to the internet (0.222) and resolving problems and concerns (0.158) with procrastination in preparing papers (project) at the end of the semester were too low. Severities of correlation of frequency of logging into social networking and membership in social networks were moderate.

Significant levels of the reason for using social network (0.333) and academic achievement (0.099) were greater than 0.05 (sig>0.05 and α = 0.05). Therefore, the reason for using social network and academic achievement were independent of procrastination in preparation of articles (project) at the end of the semester among the students.

Hypothesis 4:

According to Table 7, Mann-Whitney statistics and z statistics were respectively as 16800.5 and -0.754 and the significance level was equal to 0.451. Given that the significance level was greater than 0.05 (sig>0.05 and α = 0.05), the null hypothesis is not rejected. It can be stated that changing academic procrastination habits between participating boys and girls was not different. The alternative hypothesis was not confirmed.

Table 7. Mann-Whitney test, the fifth hypotheses

	Rank			Mann-Whitney test		
	Number	Mean	Total	Mann-Whitney	z statistics	Significance level
Males	185	192.19	35554.5	16800.5	-0.754	0.451
Females	190	183.92	34945.5			

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to investigate the role of online social network (Internet) in academic delay in universities of Pakistan. Therefore, several objectives and hypotheses were proposed according to previous studies and with regard to existing frameworks and theories in this field. A suitable methodology was designed to test the hypotheses. Mann-Whitney and chi-square tests were used to examine the impact of online social networks (independent variables) on students' academic procrastination (the dependent variable).

The results showed no significant difference between changing procrastination habit and an unpleasant feeling caused by academic procrastination among boys and girls. The components of daily use of networks, membership in networks, duration of membership in networks and frequency of logging into networks had the greatest impact and correlation with academic procrastination among junior high school students in the fourth district in Tehran. The results of this study were consistent with the results of those studies conducted by Tamadoni *et al.* (2011), Khodashenas (1994), Young (1998) and Savari (2012).

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