

**Self-compassion as an indicator of predicting both  
academic procrastination and test anxiety among  
students at Sultan Qaboos University**

**Prepared by**



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## **Abstract**

The study aimed to explore the relationship between Self-compassion, academic procrastination and test anxiety among a sample of students of Sultan Qaboos University (Sultanate of Oman), as well as the differences between these variables by year (first and last year), gender (male and female) (Scientific, human). The sample consisted of (287) male and female students, 123 students from scientific colleges and 164 male and female students from humanitarian colleges. For this purpose, the researcher used the following tools: Self-compassion scale, academic procrastination scale, and the test anxiety scale.

The results of the study showed a negative relationship between self-compassion, academic procrastination and test anxiety, and a positive relation between procrastination and test anxiety. The results also showed differences in the basic variables of study, and each of the demographic variables (gender, specialization, year of study).

The regression analysis showed that Self-compassion is a predictor of gender, specialization, academic year and test anxiety, but it is not a predictor of academic procrastination.

**Keywords:** Self-compassion, academic procrastination, test anxiety, University students.

## **Introduction:**

Many college students have a list of goals to achieve academic success which are an integral part of their university life. However, some may fail to complete academic duties in a timely manner, and this may negatively impact their lives. Academic anxiety, the tension and a sense of hopelessness, Because of the difficulty of performing these duties on time.

I have found, Beswick et al (Beswick et al., 1988) a negative relationship between academic procrastination and academic achievement. Students who postpone their studies for the time of the test, and therefore concerned before the date of the test, Several studies have indicated. Most college students suffer from academic procrastination, Steele said (Steel, 2007: 65-94), that 75% of university students, They acknowledge that they delay in the performance of academic duties, Research results have shown (Al-Ahmad, 2010) that (40% -30%) Of students considered

procrastination a critical problem hinder their personal balance and perform their academic work thus increasing the level of tension and feeling anxious.

As demonstrated by the results of studies (Steel, 2007), (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984), (Özer et al., 2009), Procrastination has to do with personality traits Such as fear and anxiety, and weak self-efficacy, and the control center, Obsessions and neurotic.

Some students may resort because of fear of tests to escape from the situation or absence from the test, all defensive means used by the student to protect him from that position.

People who are sorry for themselves when they have painful experiences or cases of failure they may look themselves into an understanding look and harmony and kindness rather than exaggerated monetary judgment or self-flagellation of what happens to them (Neff, 2003b: 85-102).

With regard to the connection between self-pity and anxiety, Compassion itself can be seen as a valuable emotional organizational strategy, Self-pity can be a protective source against test anxiety And the academic delay of many students especially in their different educational stages (Neff, 2003a:223-250).

### **The problem of the study and its justifications:**

There is a problem many students face in their academic life Related to the weakness of motivation towards the study, which is Procrastination; Students use this concept for short-term benefits, but in fact has detrimental effects on their health, personal well-being and academic performance. (Zuckerman & Tsai, 2005:411-442)

Procrastination is a widespread phenomenon in all societies, and has a direct impact on individuals and university students; University students who have higher procrastination they are characterized by a low level of achievement with high level of anxiety and tension.( Tice & Baumeister, 1997) This anxiety and procrastination is sometimes due To the inability of the student to deal with the requirements of his life Cognitive, emotional and academic flexibility and self-pity In the face of life's difficulties (Neff et al., 2005) (Williams et al., 2008)

### **The researcher formulated the problem of his study in the following question:**

Is it possible to predict the dimensions of self-pity (Positive and negative) In relation to both academic procrastination and test anxiety to a sample of students of Sultan Qaboos University?

### **The importance of the study:**

The importance of the study is as follows:

1. A new variable of psychology has been shown, which is, a self-pity which is a protective factor to meet students' requirements to achieve their academic goals, and to shed light on this concept and its relation to some personal and psychological variables (Academic procrastination, test anxiety) it may help to understand and know some of the factors that affect it.
2. Targeted sample in research, Students of Sultan Qaboos University Scientific and humanitarian faculties.
3. The study presents three important measures in the academic field, Self-pity, Academic and procrastination, and test anxiety among university students.
4. Few studies have been addressed to self-pity and its relationship to academic procrastination and the concern of the test at the Sultan Qaboos University Students.
5. The results of this research can be used in building outreach programs relating to the development of self-pity to university students who are characterized as academic procrastination by overcoming its disadvantages.

### **Objectives of the study:**

1. Shed light on the concept of self-pity and its relationship with some psychological and personal variables.
2. Exploring the relationship between self-pity and academic procrastination the anxiety test of the study sample.
3. Knowledge of the differences in both self-pity and academic procrastination and test anxiety among sample members Depending on the academic year and academic specialization, and gender (males and females).
4. Know the differences between high and low self-pity in the sample each of academic procrastination and test anxiety.

5. Knowledge of the interaction effect of variables test anxiety and academic procrastination Gender and specialization and the academic year and their mutual interaction with compassion itself.

### **Terminology of study and procedural definitions:**

#### **Self –Compassion**

Self-pity foretells many aspects Positive self-esteem and psychological performance, such as increased happiness and optimism (Neff et al., 2007), decreased symptoms of depression and anxiety, Improve motivation (Breines & Chen, 2012), and increased satisfaction with the relationship (Baker & McNulty, 2011). So compassion itself is the strongest predictor of good academic performance and adapt to academic work requirements (Leary et al., 2007)

Definition of Self-compassion: "Openness to personal suffering, and test the sense of care and kindness towards the self, Take an attitude of nonjudgmental understanding towards shortcomings and failures, and that one's experience is part of the common human experience(Neff, 2003a :224)

**The researcher knows self-pity procedurally:** The degree obtained by the examinee on this scale and consisting of (26) paragraphs with its six dimensions.

#### **Academic Procrastination:**

Describe Ferrari (Ferrari et al., 1995) that academic procrastination of the student may be the result of three behavioral manifestations

1. Poor performance, intent or behavior
2. discrepancy between intention and behavior
3. Student preference for non-competitive activities

Some studies have shown (Steel, 2007) procrastination is related to a person's weak motivation and the difficulty of self-regulation, it is also associated with lying.

#### **The researcher knows academic procrastination procedurally**

"It is postponement or avoidance of achievement and the implementation of academic duties on time, which can be measured by non-submission of duties on time, and attend to written and oral tests.

#### **Test-anxiety**

That test anxiety may not be present alone but with other forms of psychological distress such as depression. (Esther et al., 2013)

Test anxiety: It "a set of physiological factors and behavioral responses that come with anxiety on possible negative consequences (Zeidner, 1998: 411-442)

**Definition of test anxiety procedurally:** The case felt by the student before and during the test, and includes a number of symptoms including moodiness of tension and speed of arousal, and cognitive symptoms such as difficulty concentrating and exaggeration in interpretation and low self-efficacy, and motivational symptoms, such as avoiding situations and increasing reliability the desire to escape from the test positions, increase in physiological symptoms, such as: heart palpitations difficulty breathing and dry mouth.

### **Previous studies:**

There are many studies, the study (Murat, 2011) differences between males and females have been shown in compassion and academic delay, and troubled attitudes, a study (Sirois, 2014) aimed to the verification of self-pity as a mediator of the relationship between procrastination and psychological pressures, and search (Golpour et al., 2015) Disclosure of the role of self-pity in the prediction of procrastination among students.

### **Study Hypotheses:**

1. There is a statistically significant relationship between self-pity both academic procrastination and test anxiety of the total sample.
2. There are statistically significant differences between the average scores of each of the pity itself Academic procrastination and test anxiety depending on the specialization (scientific, humanitarian) the school year (first, last), and gender (males, females).
3. There are statistically significant differences between the mean scores high and low self-pity depending on the variables of academic procrastination and test anxiety.
4. There is a statistically significant interaction of test anxiety variables, and academic delay, Specialization and academic year type and interaction between them on the particular compassion of the study sample.

### **Methodology and procedures of the study**

Follow the researcher in his study descriptive approach, in order to identify the relationship between compassion itself every academic procrastination and test anxiety in a sample of students from Sultan Qaboos University, as well as to identify differences between males and females, Specialty (scientific, humanitarian) , and the school year, and the predictive ability of study variables to self-pity.

### **Study Society:**

The study population consists of all students (males, females) Students at Sultan Qaboos University In all scientific and humanitarian colleges, for the first semester of the academic year 2018/2019.

### **The study sample:**

The study sample was randomly selected of Sultan Qaboos University students (287) students, Their ages range from (18-24) years, Number of males (151) students, and 136 students, and the number of students in the first year (90) students, and 197 students from the last year, and the number of students in scientific colleges (123) students, while swallowing the number of students in humanitarian colleges (164) students.

### **Study Tools:**

#### **1. Scale Self –compassion**

It consists of (26) is, divided into three positive elements and three negative elements are:

- A. Self -Kindness , In exchange for Self-Judgment
- B. Common Humanity, in exchange for Isolation
- C. Mindfulness, In exchange for Over-Identification.

### **Study proposals:**

1. Conduct studies on students (male, female) in their different educational stages especially at the undergraduate level to know the level of self-pity and test anxiety and academic delays in some Omani universities.
2. Conduct studies on academic procrastination in public life and its relationship to some variables, Such as self-regulation and wisdom and the rationale for procrastination.

3. Conducting comparative studies among university students of various disciplines in academic procrastination and some other variables, such as gender, age, and geographical environment
4. Develop guidance programs based on self-pity to reduce the phenomenon of academic procrastination and test anxiety among university students.

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