



Psychological-Academic Challenges: The Relationship Between Psychological Vulnerability and Academic Procrastination Among University Students

Ahmed Ali¹

¹ Professor Assistant of Educational Psychology and Educational Statistics, Faculty of Education, tafahuna al'ashraf, Al-Azhar University (Egypt)

✉ Aghanem834@gmail.com

Received:01/09/2025

Accepted:16/09/2025

Published:01/12/2025

Abstract:

The study aimed to determine the level of both psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination among university students, to identify the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination, and to explore the possibility of predicting academic procrastination scores from psychological vulnerability scores among university students; The descriptive method was used, and the study sample consisted of 375 students. The study tools included the Psychological Vulnerability Scale and the Academic Procrastination Scale, both prepared by the researcher. Descriptive statistics were used, including means, standard deviations, and weighted relative means. Correlation coefficients and simple regression analysis were also used. The study found a moderate level of psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination among university students, and a statistically significant positive correlation between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination. The results also showed that psychological vulnerability significantly predicts academic procrastination. The scientific originality of this research lies in being one of the first studies—according to the researcher's knowledge—that addressed the relationship between psychological distress and academic procrastination among university students in the Arab environment, particularly in Egyptian universities, where this relationship has not been directly addressed in previous literature. This study, in addition to showing the correlation between the two variables, sought to test the predictive ability of psychological distress on academic procrastination, which enhances the practical dimension of the research in designing guidance programs for students. It also enriches the educational library in the field of educational psychology. The findings contribute to guiding the formulation of preventive and therapeutic guidance programs to reduce academic procrastination by developing psychological adjustment skills and enhancing psychological resilience among students.

Keywords: *Psychological Vulnerability; Academic Procrastination; University Students.*

التحديات النفسية الأكاديمية: العلاقة بين الضعف النفسي والتسويق الأكاديمي لدى طلاب الجامعات

أحمد غانم علي¹

¹ أستاذ علم النفس التعليمي والاحصاء التربوي المساعد، كلية التربية بتفهننا الأشرف، جامعة الأزهر (مصر)

Aghanem834@gmail.com ✉

تاريخ النشر: 2025/12/01

تاريخ القبول: 2025/09/16

تاريخ الاستلام: 2025/09/01

ملخص:

هدفت الدراسة إلى تحديد مستوى كل من الهشاشة النفسية والتسويق الأكاديمي لدى طلاب الجامعة، وتحديد العلاقة بين الهشاشة النفسية والتسويق الأكاديمي، والتعرف على إمكانية التنبؤ بدرجات التسويق الأكاديمي من درجات الهشاشة النفسية لدى طلاب الجامعة، وتم استخدام المنهج الوصفي، وبلغت عينة الدراسة (375) طالباً، وتمثلت أدوات الدراسة في: (مقياس الهشاشة النفسية، ومقياس التسويق الأكاديمي) من إعداد الباحث، وتم استخدام الإحصاءات الوصفية، المتمثلة في المتوسطات الحسابية، والانحرافات المعيارية، والمتوسط النسبي الموزون، كما استخدم معامل الارتباط، وتحليل الانحدار البسيط، وتوصلت الدراسة إلى وجود مستوى متوسط من الهشاشة النفسية والتسويق الأكاديمي لدى طلبة الجامعة، ووجود علاقة ارتباطية موجبة دالة إحصائياً بين الهشاشة النفسية والتسويق الأكاديمي، كما أظهرت النتائج أن الهشاشة النفسية تتنبأ بدرجة كبيرة بالتسويق الأكاديمي. تكمن الأصالة العلمية لهذه الدراسة في كونها من أوائل الدراسات - وفقاً لعلم الباحث - التي تناولت العلاقة بين الوهن النفسي والتسويق الأكاديمي لدى طلبة الجامعة في البيئة العربية، وبالأخص في الجامعات المصرية، حيث لم تُعالج هذه العلاقة بشكل مباشر في الأدبيات السابقة، كما تُظهر هذه الدراسة فضلاً عن الارتباط بين المتغيرين أنها سعت إلى اختبار القدرة التنبؤية للوهن النفسي في التسويق الأكاديمي، وهو ما يُعزّز البعد التطبيقي للدراسة في تصميم برامج إرشادية للطلاب، بالإضافة إلى إثراء المكتبة التربوية في مجال علم النفس التربوي، كما تسهم النتائج المستخلصة في توجيه نحو صياغة برامج إرشادية وقائية وعلاجية للحد من التسويق الأكاديمي، من خلال تنمية مهارات التوافق النفسي وتعزيز الصلابة النفسية لدى الطلاب.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الهشاشة النفسية؛ التسويق الأكاديمي؛ طلبة الجامعة.

1. Introduction

The concept of psychological vulnerability is a modern concept that has begun to attract the attention of researchers in the field of educational and psychological research, due to its direct impact on psychological adjustment and academic performance among students, especially university students. It reflects a weakness in the ability to cope with daily pressures and challenges, manifesting as excessive sensitivity to criticism or failure, fluctuations in self-esteem, and difficulty in controlling emotions. The term "Psychological vulnerability" has recently emerged in the field of positive psychology, which is known for guidance based on personal and psychological competence, and positive behaviors, taking into account the factors that cause their reduction in the individual, and the failure to achieve them leads to the emergence of some psychological disorders (Temel et al., 2020). Psychological vulnerability represents an obstacle to achieving psychological well-being, as resilience and self-control provide individuals with self-confidence and allow them to rely on themselves in facing life's challenges and pressures (Awaad et al., 2023).

Psychological vulnerability weakens an individual's coping potential, making them less resistant to risk factors or stressful events, more prone to psychological disorders, and more likely to engage in risky behaviors (Jamaati, 2021). Consequently, psychological vulnerability is negatively associated with social support, life satisfaction, positive affect, and self-efficacy, and it negatively predicts flourishing. It is positively associated with maladaptive perfectionism and procrastination (Uysal, 2015; Elemo & Dule, 2023). Additionally, it is positively correlated with various negative psychological variables, such as shyness and misunderstanding others (Qona'ah et al., 2020), and social isolation (Hong & Ha, 2020).

Psychological vulnerability weakens the coping abilities of university students, making them less resistant to risk factors, more prone to behavioral disorders and psychological problems, and unable to adapt to their reality, hindering their creativity and innovation. University students suffer from multiple psychological issues, including psychological vulnerability, which is a negative indicator affecting psychological resilience and self-wellbeing, as indicated by the studies of: (Jamaati, 2021; Dengal, 2022; Al-Jabjabi, 2023).

Psychological vulnerability weakens the coping abilities of university students, making them less resistant to risk factors, more prone to behavioral disorders and psychological problems, and unable to adapt to their reality, hindering their creativity and innovation. University students suffer from multiple psychological issues, including psychological vulnerability, which is a negative indicator affecting psychological resilience and self-wellbeing, as indicated by the studies of: (Jamaati, 2021; Dengal, 2022; Al-Jabjabi, 2023).

Many studies have found a statistically significant positive correlation between psychological vulnerability and some negative psychological variables. For instance, the study by Kiamarsi and Abolghasemi (2014) showed that procrastination and self-efficacy are linked to psychological vulnerability among students. Similarly, the study by Hong and Ha (2020) found a correlation between psychological vulnerability and social isolation. The study by Wareth and Tawfiq (2024) also demonstrated a positive correlation between psychological vulnerability and certain psychological issues, such as shyness and misunderstanding of oneself and others. The study by Rožman et al. (2025) the presence of a statistically significant positive correlation between psychological vulnerability and loss of happiness, as well as decreased academic achievement among adolescents. Academic procrastination is widespread among university students and is considered one of the most significant obstacles related to academic achievement. Academic procrastination manifests as the failure to perform a task within the desired timeframe or delaying it until the last

minute. The individual desires to complete the task, especially when it leads to a degree of emotional discomfort. It involves the individual's knowledge of completing the task, but they fail to push themselves to achieve the goal within the specified time. This process is usually accompanied by feelings of distress, anxiety, and self-blame (Al-Sarhan & Suwaileh, 2015).

Academic procrastination is associated with many negative aspects of students' personalities, such as lying and anxiety. Academic procrastination manifests in the academic field when a university student unjustifiably delays completing required academic tasks until the last possible moment, due to fear of failure and concern about others' judgment of them. They also fear that their efforts may not be sufficient, and thus they will not achieve the grades needed for success, leading to a state of fear and despair (Khalil, 2017).

Many studies indicate the prevalence of academic procrastination among university students due to various reasons. For instance, Jabbar's study (2017) indicated that university students postpone academic tasks by 63.24%. Similarly, Al-Ahmad and Yassin's study (2018) indicated that academic procrastination is prevalent among university students by 64.37%. Additionally, Eid's study (2019) indicated that university students postpone their assignments by 65.34%.

Despair and loss of hope are among the most common psychological problems that disrupt a student's mental balance, leading them to postpone their activities and tasks, and contributing to increased academic procrastination (Ali, 2021). Some studies conducted on academic procrastination indicate its prevalence among university students, such as the study by Al-Ahmadi (2018). The results of the study Dradkeh (2020) revealed the prevalence of academic procrastination and its negative relationship with academic self-efficacy. The study: Abisat's (2020) also found a negative correlation between academic procrastination and self-efficacy among university students.

Academic procrastination is a common problem among university students, affecting the academic process in general and the university student in particular. It leads to poor academic performance due to the postponement of exams on one hand and the accumulation of research burdens on the other. Procrastination in the academic field appears when students delay completing the required academic tasks until the last possible moment without justification. Academic procrastination is considered a maladaptive behavior due to its negative effects, as this behavior manifests in students postponing or delaying the execution of necessary tasks and assignments to achieve their academic goals (Al-Hajaj, 2014).

In addition to the above, a study by Klassen and Hannok (2013) confirmed that some students tend to procrastinate as a strategy to regulate their current mood at the expense of their future self. The study by Cavusoglu and Karatas (2015) also confirmed that procrastination is negatively correlated with self-esteem. Meanwhile, the results of the study by Goroshit and Hen (2019) showed that academic procrastination is prevalent among more than 70% of university students and indicated that procrastination would have a negative impact on students' academic achievements.

The study by Elias (2020) found that students, in general, have academic procrastination rates between (32%-77%). The study by Pyman (2020) indicated that (88%) of students procrastinate regularly, and procrastination varies from one student to another. Arab research has reached similar percentages, as in Sakran's study (2010), where the prevalence of academic procrastination behavior among students ranged between (20%-40%), and this percentage varies according to the level of achievement, gender, and educational stage. Academic procrastination among university students negatively reflects on their academic levels, as procrastination in performing tasks and duties is a common issue among university students. The repetition of this behavior is a thorny problem for these

students due to its negative consequences on themselves and society as a whole. Procrastination leads to the loss of much of their time or daily tasks. The spread of this phenomenon among university students causes negative effects on students from the academic, familial, and overall job and life satisfaction perspectives (Al-Atilat, 2020). In light of the limited previous studies that have addressed the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination, as well as other negative variables, there is a need for further scientific research to understand the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination, and to fill the gap in studies related to this topic. This study aims to provide a pioneering scientific contribution to the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination among university students, which has not been addressed in any previous studies—to the best of the researcher's knowledge—given the importance of these variables and their impact on the life of university students.

2. Theoretical Framework

This study is based on an integrated theoretical perspective that highlights the importance of study variables in the psychological heritage, where psychological vulnerability represents the lowest resistance to assaults and damages, varies among individuals, and signifies sensitivity and the inability to withstand environmental pressures (Taleb, 2014).

Psychological vulnerability consists of cognitive belief patterns that involve self-esteem being dependent on success or external approval. Similarly, psychological vulnerability encompasses cognitive structures that make individuals more sensitive to stress, social dependence, self-perfectionism, negative attitudes, and self-blame mechanisms (Satıcı & Uysal, 2017).

This study is based on an integrated theoretical perspective that highlights the importance of study variables in the psychological heritage, where psychological vulnerability represents the lowest resistance to assaults and damages, varies among individuals, and signifies sensitivity and the inability to withstand environmental pressures (Taleb, 2014).

Psychological vulnerability consists of cognitive belief patterns that involve self-esteem being dependent on success or external approval. Similarly, psychological vulnerability encompasses cognitive structures that make individuals more sensitive to stress, social dependence, self-perfectionism, negative attitudes, and self-blame mechanisms (Satıcı & Uysal, 2017).

The concept of psychological vulnerability refers to a cognitive structure that makes individuals more vulnerable under stressful conditions, assuming that some people are more affected by stressful events than others. It is a form of cognitive weakness associated with dependency, perfectionism, and the need for approval from external sources. It is a flaw that makes people less protected when facing a range of negative life experiences, more dependent, and more prone to anxiety, depression, and psychological breakdown (Nogueira et al., 2017). Psychological vulnerability is also a cognitive bias, a misconception, or a way of thinking that exposes the individual to psychological problems. After experiencing adolescence, cognitive fragility forms a maladaptive response, increasing the likelihood of the individual developing a psychological disorder (Nogueira et al., 2022). Psychological vulnerability is a pattern of cognitive beliefs indicating an individual's reliance on the achievements of others to affirm their self-worth. These cognitive beliefs increase a person's susceptibility to stress, the pursuit of self-perfection, negative attitudes, and self-blame mechanisms. They may pose a potential risk factor for academics in higher education institutions. In line with the principles of cognitive-behavioral therapy, the distorted thinking patterns and schemas that form the basis of psychological vulnerability may explain the increased vulnerability of academics to mental health issues. Individuals with psychological vulnerability are less capable of managing stress and appear to have less control over negative emotional experiences, especially if

they have more negative expectations for themselves and the future (Yamaguchi et al., 2022; Elemo & Dule, 2023). The concept of vulnerability refers to the susceptibility to an undesirable outcome. In this sense, vulnerability is reflected in biological, emotional, cognitive, or behavioral stress responses that do not lead to successful adaptation or self-regulation, ultimately contributing to the development of disorders and diseases. Individuals with psychological vulnerability suffer from depression, anxiety, alcohol and substance addiction, internet addiction, stress-related physical problems, aggression, feelings of loneliness, and fears (Silveira et al., 2022). Academic procrastination appears in the academic field when a university student unjustifiably delays completing required academic tasks until the last possible moment, due to fear of failure and sympathy for the judgment of others. They also fear that their efforts will not be sufficient, and thus they will not achieve the grades needed for success, leading to a state of fear and despair (Khalil, 2017, 160).

Academic procrastination is defined as the awareness that an individual must complete their tasks, yet they fail to push themselves to achieve the goal within the specified timeframe. This process is usually accompanied by feelings of distress, anxiety, and self-blame (Gün et al., 2020). Academic procrastination is a complex phenomenon of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral elements that involves the intentional postponement of tasks assigned to the student, despite their awareness of the potential negative consequences of this delay (Zhang et al., 2022). One of the strengths of this study lies in its solid theoretical foundation, which is based on integrated perspectives from established theories in educational psychology and cognitive sciences. However, the theoretical framework could be further enriched by incorporating a more comprehensive review of recent descriptive studies specifically examining psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination, as contemporary research has shed more light on psychological vulnerability and its relationship with certain negative variables, including academic procrastination.

Where the study by Yamaguchi et al. (2022) showed there are strong relationships between fragility and coping strategies, with fragility being closely associated with the search for emotional support in emotion-focused coping. There was no significant difference in cognitive reframing. Fragility had a stronger relationship with emotion-focused coping than with problem-focused coping. Athletes with high fragility (compared to low) had much higher scores in emotion-focused coping. These results indicate that fragile athletes need to receive appropriate emotional support to cope with stressful situations, as they heavily rely on emotion regulation-focused stress management strategies.

Moreover, Abdel Aal's (2023) study found a statistically significant positive correlation between nomophobia and psychological vulnerability among early childhood education students. As the symptoms of nomophobia increased, so did the psychological vulnerability of the early childhood education students. The research results revealed that the dimension of "pathological mobile phone use" was the most significant predictor of psychological vulnerability among early childhood education students, followed by "loss of comfort" in the second rank, "fear of not being able to access information" in the third rank, and finally "fear of not being able to communicate" in the fourth and last rank. The study by Mahboub (2023) showed that the level of psychological vulnerability among students at Umm Al-Qura University was at a moderate degree, and there was a strong positive predictive relationship with an impact of (43.6%) between cyberbullying thru social media platforms and psychological vulnerability among students at Umm Al-Qura University. The study by Wareth and Tawfiq (2024) revealed a correlational relationship between both self-defeat and psychological vulnerability, and between psychosomatic disorders. It also found statistically significant differences between the average scores of university students on the self-defeat and psychological vulnerability

scales, and psychosomatic disorders according to gender, favoring females. Additionally, it found statistically significant differences between the average scores of university students on the self-defeat, psychological vulnerability, and psychosomatic disorders scales according to nationality, favoring the Egyptian nationality. The study by Al-Khawas (2024) examined the extent to which psychological vulnerability can be predicted thru the dimensions of narcissistic personality among a sample of university youth. The results showed a significant positive correlation between the scores of the dimensions of narcissistic personality and the scores of the dimensions of psychological vulnerability and the overall score among the sample of university youth. It also became clear that the dimensions of narcissistic personality that can predict psychological vulnerability were (exhibitionism, self-sufficiency, vanity, entitlement, exploitation). By compiling these contemporary insights, the theoretical foundation can be further strengthened, reinforcing the robust evidence base that supports the exploration of the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination. This expanded theoretical review is expected to position the current research within the broader academic landscape, highlighting its contributions and detailing pathways for future research that enhances the educational process and helps overcome its challenges.

Regarding the reference base, there are many studies that have addressed psychological vulnerability among university students, such as: (Temel et al., 2020; Nogueira et al., 2022; Yamaguchi et al., 2022; Silveira et al., 2022; Elemo & Dule, 2023); as well as many studies that have addressed academic procrastination among university students, such as: (Abdollahi et al., 2020; Fadhli et al., 2021; Goroshit & Hen, 2021; Ma et al., 2022; Sastri, 2022; Zhang et al., 2022; Karataş & Akar, 2025); however, the researcher did not find a single study that addressed the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination among university students.

Thru the meticulous integration of a carefully selected set of these high-quality recent references, the scientific relevance of the study and its alignment with the current state of knowledge in this field will be significantly enhanced. This will not only strengthen the theoretical foundations but also place the research within the broader contemporary discourse, facilitating a more meaningful dialog and more effective knowledge transfer with fellow researchers and practitioners. Enriching the theoretical framework with an updated review of recent studies on psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination will enhance the conceptual foundation of the study. At the same time, adopting a more modern reference base, derived from the latest scientific sources, would enhance the importance, modernity, and integration of the research within the broader academic landscape. These improvements, collectively, would solidify the research's position as a timely, strong, and influential contribution in this field, paving the way for subsequent scientific research and practical applications that contribute to the advancement of the educational process and overcoming its challenges.

3. Method

3.1 Participants

The participants in this study consisted of university students enrolled in the first, second, third, and fourth years at the Faculty of Education in Tuhna Al-Ashraf, Al-Azhar University. (375) students from the Faculty of Education at Tuhna Al-Ashraf, Al-Azhar University were selected, with participants' ages ranging between 18.3 and 22.6 years, distributed across the departments (Arabic, Islamic Studies, Psychology, Special Education, English, and French), as well as from all four years of the college.

3.2 Research Design

The descriptive method was used for its suitability to the nature and objectives of the study, which aims to identify the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination

among university students. Psychological vulnerability was measured using a scale developed by the researcher, and academic procrastination was also measured using a scale developed by the researcher.

3.3 Measures:

The Psychological vulnerability Scale was developed and validated to assess the main components of psychological vulnerability (neurotic symptoms, low self-esteem, poor coping and resilience ability, and dependency and seeking external approval). The scale consists of 40 items written in Arabic and was presented to a panel of 10 judges. The internal consistency of the scale was verified, and the reliability coefficients were calculated using Cronbach's alpha, with values of (0.779 - 0.802 - 0.748 - 0.859) respectively, and for the total scale (0.850), indicating adequate construct reliability.

The Academic Procrastination Scale was developed and its validity was verified to assess the main components of academic procrastination (voluntary delay, avoidance behavior, fear of failure, negative emotions). The scale consisted of 28 items written in Arabic and was presented to a panel of 10 judges. The internal consistency of the scale was verified, and the reliability coefficients were calculated using Cronbach's alpha, with values of (0.912 - 0.913 - 0.921) respectively, and for the overall scale (0.963), indicating adequate construct reliability.

3.4 Procedure

Review of the theoretical frameworks and previous studies related to the study topic. Preparing the study tools (the psychological vulnerability Scale and the Academic Procrastination Scale) and presenting them to the esteemed reviewers. Applying the study tools to the exploratory sample and calculating validity and reliability. Applying the study tools to the main sample via Google Forms. Collecting, tabulating, and analyzing data using appropriate statistical methods. Reaching research results, discussing them, interpreting them, and writing recommendations and proposed research.

3.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were computed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 software. The arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated, and the study questions were answered using the weighted relative mean to determine the level of psychological vulnerability and the level of academic procrastination. The correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination. Simple regression analysis was used to determine the possibility of predicting academic procrastination thru psychological vulnerability among university students.

4. Results

The results of this study provide compelling evidence of the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination, and Table 1 presents the level of psychological vulnerability among university students.

Table 1: Level of Psychological vulnerability

Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level	Rank
neurotic symptoms	3.27	.856	Average	1
Low self-esteem	3.02	1.194	Average	3
Weak ability to confront and endure	2.99	1.268	Average	4
Dependence and seeking external approval	3.23	1.049	Average	2
Overall score	3.13	1.092	Average	-

It was observed that the level of psychological vulnerability in the overall score and its dimensions came at a moderate level, with an overall mean score of (3.13) and a standard deviation

of (1.09). The first dimension, "neurotic symptoms," ranked first with a mean score of (3.27) and a standard deviation of (0.856). The second dimension, "low self-esteem," ranked third with a mean score of (3.02) and a standard deviation of (1.19). The third dimension, "weak ability to cope and endure," ranked fourth with a mean score of (2.99) and a standard deviation of (1.26). Meanwhile, the fourth dimension, "dependence and seeking external approval," ranked second with a mean score of (3.23) and a standard deviation of (1.04).

The arithmetic means and standard deviations of the students' scores on the academic procrastination scale used in the study were extracted, and Table 2 illustrates this:

Table 2: Level of Academic Procrastination

Dimensions	Mean	Standard Deviation	Level	Rank
voluntary procrastination	3.33	1.01	Average	1
Avoidant behavior	3.17	1.03	Average	2
fear of failure	3.13	1.21	Average	3
negative emotions	3.01	1.11	Average	4
Overall score	3.16	1.09	Average	-

It is clear that the level of academic procrastination in the overall score and its dimensions came at a moderate level, where the overall mean score was (3.16) with a standard deviation of (1.09). The first dimension, "voluntary procrastination," ranked first with a mean score of (3.33) and a standard deviation of (1.01). The second dimension, "avoidant behavior," ranked second with a mean score of (3.17) and a standard deviation of (1.03). The third dimension, "fear of failure," ranked third with a mean score of (3.13) and a standard deviation of (1.21). The fourth dimension, "negative emotions," ranked fourth with a mean score of (3.01) and a standard deviation of (1.11). The correlation coefficient was also calculated to verify the relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation coefficients between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination

Variables	neurotic symptoms	Low self-esteem	Weak ability to confront and endure	Dependence and seeking external approval	Overall score
voluntary procrastination	0.432**	0.203**	0.202**	0.021	0.290**
Avoidant behavior	0.784**	0.810**	0.622**	0.039-	0.787**
fear of failure	0.385**	0.551**	0.458**	0.054-	0.499**
negative emotions	0.182**	0.229**	0.358**	0.794**	0.554**
Overall score	0.672**	0.693**	0.629**	0.270**	0.814**

It is evident that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination in the overall score and in the dimensions, except for the relationship between (dependence, and both optional delay, avoidance behavior, and fear of failure) as the relationship between them is not statistically significant. Therefore, it is clear that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the overall score of both psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination. Simple Linear Regression analysis was also used, and Table 4 shows the results.

Table 4: Results of the Simple Linear Regression Analysis

The dependent variable	The predictor variable (the explanatory variable)	R	R ²	R2 model	F	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	constant
Academic procrastination	Psychological vulnerability	0.814	0.663	0.662	732.41**	0.446	0.016	0.814	27.06**	32.75

It appears that the "F" value for predicting academic procrastination thru psychological vulnerability among university students reached (732.41), which is statistically significant at the 0.01

level; this indicates the possibility of predicting academic procrastination thru psychological vulnerability. The value of the partial correlation coefficient was (0.814), and the R^2 value for the coefficient of determination associated with the entry of variables into the regression equation was 0.663. This means that psychological vulnerability contributes 66.3% to predicting academic procrastination among university students. In light of this, the prediction equation can be written as follows: Academic procrastination = $32.75 + 0.446 \times \text{psychological vulnerability}$

5. Discussion

The study provided descriptive evidence on the level of psychological vulnerability among university students, which was found to be moderate. This may be attributed to the nature of the age and social stage that university students go thru, as early youth is considered a transitional period where individuals are exposed to academic, personal, social, and professional pressures, making them more susceptible to indicators of psychological vulnerability, without reaching a high level. University students often exhibit moderate levels of anxiety, sleep disturbances, and future-related stress, which explains the higher average in the neuroticism dimension specifically, followed by dependency and the search for external approval, then the low self-esteem dimension, and finally, the weakness in coping and resilience. Therefore, it can be said that the moderate level of psychological vulnerability among university students reflects a balance between the pressures and challenges they face on one hand, and the psychological and social resources available to them on the other hand. Additionally, the variation in the ranking of the four dimensions highlights the emotional and social aspects as the most prominent manifestations of fragility, compared to aspects related to self-esteem or resilience. This result is consistent with the findings of the study Mahboub (2023), which indicated that the level of psychological vulnerability among students at Umm Al-Qura University was moderate, and the study by Wareth and Tawfiq (2024), which showed that university students in Egypt and the UAE have a moderate level of psychological vulnerability.

It is worth noting that the level of academic procrastination was moderate, as university students have the ability to balance academic pressures and self-organization. Students often resort to procrastination due to feelings of anxiety and fear of failure, their desire to perform tasks perfectly, or due to multiple pressures that lead them to postpone some tasks to a later time. This indicates the presence of internal conflicts between the drive for achievement on one hand and their tendency to avoid stress or difficulty in starting tasks on the other. On the other hand, this intermediate level may also be explained by the presence of partial coping strategies among students that help them reduce the impact of procrastination. They might use methods such as last-minute planning or studying under time pressure, which allows them to complete tasks without procrastination becoming severely obstructive. However, the continuation of this pattern may have negative long-term effects, such as increased academic anxiety and decreased performance quality. This is consistent with the findings of studies by Al-Azamat and Bani Khalid (2023); Ngo et al. (2025); Karataş and Akar (2025) of the presence of a moderate level of academic procrastination among university students.

Regarding the statistically significant correlational relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination, it can be explained that psychological vulnerability among students is associated with their tendency to procrastinate in completing academic tasks. Psychological vulnerability, which includes a weakness in the ability to cope with stress and a higher susceptibility to feelings of anxiety or frustration, makes the student less prepared to effectively handle learning demands. This weakness in psychological resilience drives the individual to postpone tasks as a mechanism to avoid immediate stress, which in turn reinforces procrastination behavior.

From a psychological-educational perspective, this relationship can be explained thru the theory of self-regulation and the theory of failure avoidance. A student who suffers from psychological vulnerability is less capable of controlling their emotions and self-motivating, and is more inclined to avoid situations where they might feel helpless or criticized. Since procrastination provides temporary relief from these negative feelings, it becomes a recurring behavior, especially among those with fragile psychological structures. Therefore, psychological vulnerability is highly predictive of academic procrastination, as students who suffer from high levels of psychological vulnerability (anxiety, stress, low self-esteem, poor coping ability) are more likely to delay or avoid academic tasks to escape feelings of failure or the psychological pressure associated with performance. Neurotic symptoms, anxiety, and negative thinking are among the most prominent driving factors of procrastination behaviors, as they serve as mechanisms of escape and avoidance.

The relationship between psychological vulnerability and academic procrastination can also be understood thru the framework of emotional processing theory. Individuals with fragile psychological structures tend to amplify their negative emotional experiences and prioritize them in cognitive processing, which consumes their cognitive resources directed toward academic tasks. Thus, procrastination becomes a short-term functional escape, allowing them to delay confronting these unwanted emotions, but in the long run, it leads to the accumulation of stress and exacerbation of anxiety. Additionally, this relationship can be viewed from the perspective of dynamic models of self-regulation, which see academic procrastination not merely as an avoidance behavior but as a repeated failure to manage the balance between short-term motivations (avoiding immediate anxiety or seeking pleasure) and long-term motivations (achieving academic success). Consequently, the presence of high psychological vulnerability weakens the student's ability to employ self-regulation strategies, such as setting incremental goals or using self-reinforcement, which makes the mechanism of procrastination more entrenched.

This is supported by Jamaati (2021), who mentioned that psychological vulnerability weakens an individual's coping abilities, making them less resistant to risk factors or stressful events, more prone to psychological disorders, and more likely to engage in risky behaviors. Additionally, both Uysal (2015) and Elemo & Dule (2023) indicate that psychological vulnerability is negatively correlated with social support, life satisfaction, positive affect, and self-efficacy, and negatively predicts flourishing, while it is positively correlated with maladaptive perfectionism and procrastination. Although this research is highly promising, it contributes to laying an important foundation that calls for further investigation. Potential future directions include replicating these results and expanding their scope to include diverse student categories, studying academic procrastination and its relationship with various variables, such as perfectionism and feelings of psychological loneliness, emotion regulation and academic achievement, psychological resilience and future orientation, excessive use of social media, exam anxiety and academic self-efficacy. Programs can also be offered to reduce academic procrastination and improve psychological resilience, as well as to reduce psychological vulnerability among university students.

6. Conclusion

In summary, the results of this study indicate the importance of examining psychological vulnerability and its relationship with academic procrastination, due to the direct implications this topic has on the trajectory and academic achievement of university students. Understanding this relationship contributes to clarifying one of the hidden aspects influencing their academic behaviors, and enables researchers and educators to design guidance and educational programs that enhance psychological resilience and develop their self-regulation skills. On a practical level, benefiting from the results of

this research helps the students themselves become aware of the impact of psychological vulnerability on delaying the completion of their academic tasks, and encourages them to adopt more effective strategies for managing their time and overcoming pressures, thereby supporting their academic success and preparing them for a more stable professional and personal future.

References

- Abdel Aal, S. (2023). Nomophobia and its relationship with psychological vulnerability among students of the College of Early Childhood Education (In Arabic). *Journal of Childhood Research and Studies*, 5(10), 134 - 226.
- Abdollahi, A., Farab, M.N., Panahipour, S., & Allen, K. A. (2020). Academic Hardiness as a Moderator between Evaluative Concerns Perfectionism and Academic Procrastination in Students. *Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 181(5), 365–374.
- Al-Abisat, S. (2020). Academic procrastination and its relationship with self-efficacy among a sample of university students (In Arabic). *Journal of the College of Education, College of Education, Tanta University*, 78(2), 44 - 98.
- Al-Ahmad, A., & Yassin, F. (2018). Academic procrastination and its relationship with self-confidence among a sample of psychology students in the Faculty of Education at the University of Damascus (In Arabic). *Arab Union of Universities Journal for Education and Psychology*, 16(1), 13-56.
- Al-Ahmadi, S. (2018). Academic procrastination and its relationship with positive thinking and learning motivation among university students (In Arabic). *Journal of the Faculty of Education: Tanta University - Faculty of Education*, 72(4), 67-118.
- Al-Atilat, O. (2020). Emotional intelligence and its relationship with academic procrastination among university students in Jordan (In Arabic). *Journal of the College of Education*, 78(2), 655 - 684.
- Al-Azamat, O., & Bani, K. (2023). The predictive ability of self-disability on academic procrastination among Al al-Bayt University students. *Journal of Al-Quds Open University for Educational and Psychological Research and Studies*, 14(43), 221-237.
- Al-Hajaj, H. (2014). *Academic procrastination and its relationship with academic self-concept among university students* (In Arabic). Unpublished master's thesis, Jordan, Zarqa, Hashemite University.
- Ali, H. (2021). Despair and fear of failure as predictors of academic procrastination (In Arabic). *Journal of Psychological Services*, 14, 292 - 339.
- Al-Jabjabi, Karima. (2023). Psychological vulnerability and its relationship with creative thinking among students of the Faculty of Dentistry at Dhamar University (In Arabic). *Al-Bayda University Journal*, 5(4), 854 - 870.
- Al-Sarhan, M., & Suwaileh, M. (2015). Academic procrastination and its relationship with self-regulated learning among Al al-Bayt University students (In Arabic). *Journal of Al-Quds Open University for Educational and Psychological Research and Studies*, 5(17), 162-172.
- Awaad, F., El Alfy, A., & Abu Zaid, N. (2023). Parental competence and its relationship with the psychological vulnerability of students at Ain Shams University. *Journal of Education and Innovation Research, Ain Shams University*, 8(8), 161-191.
- Cavusoglu, C., & Karatas, H. (2015). Academic procrastination of undergraduates: Self-determination theory and academic motivation. *The Anthropologist*, 20(3), 735-743.
- Dengal, A. (2022). Psychological vulnerability among a sample of university students, Egypt, a clinical study (In Arabic). *Journal of the Faculty of Education in Qena, South Valley University*, (53), 333-402.
- Dradkeh, S. (2020). Academic self-efficacy and its relationship with academic procrastination and boredom among a sample of students from Northern Border University in light of some variables (In Arabic). *Educational Sciences: Cairo University - Faculty of Graduate Studies in Education*, 28(1), 351-396.

- Eid, I. (2019). Academic procrastination: its prevalence and causes from the perspective of university students (In Arabic). *The Jordanian Journal of Educational Sciences*, 8(2), 131-149.
- Elemo, A. S., & Dule, A. (2023). Investigating the link between procrastination, Big Three perfectionism and psychological vulnerability in academic staff. *Personality and Individual Differences*, (213), 112286.
- Elias, R. Z. (2020). Procrastination and Its Relationship with Business Students' Cheating Perceptions. *American Journal of Business Education*, 13(1), 1-8.
- El-Khawas, H. (2024). The narcissistic personality as a predictor of psychological vulnerability among a sample of university youth (In Arabic). *Journal of the College of Education in Psychological Sciences*, 48(3), 515 - 574.
- Fadhli, M., Sudirman, S. A., & Kılınçer, H. (2021). An Investigation into the Self-Handicapping Behaviors in Terms of Academic Procrastination. *International Journal of Islamic Educational Psychology*, 2(2), 191–202.
- Goroshit, M., & Hen, M. (2021). Academic procrastination and academic performance: Do learning disabilities matter?. *Current Psychology*, 40(5), 2490-2498.
- Gün, F., Turabik, T., & Atanur Baskan, G. (2020). The relationship between academic self-efficacy and academic procrastination tendency: A study on teacher candidates. *Hacettepe Egitim Dergisi*, 35(4), 815–826.
- Hong, S., & Ha, J. H. (2020). Classification and evaluation of defense mechanisms. *Psychoanalysis*, 31(1), 1-10.
- Jabbar, M. (2017). *Academic procrastination among students of the College of Education (In Arabic)*. Unpublished master's thesis, College of Education, Al-Qadisiyah University.
- Jamaati, N. (2021). Attachment styles and psychological vulnerability among academically non-adaptive adolescents and their relationship with their guidance needs (In Arabic). PhD thesis, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Batna University, Algeria. <https://2u.pw/ARrqw>
- Karataş, A., & Akar, H. (2025). Academic procrastination behavior, test anxiety and self-handicapping as predictors of academic achievement. *International Journal of Scholars in Education*, 8(1), 59-80.
- Khalil, M. (2017). Academic procrastination and its relationship with motivational orientations (intrinsic and extrinsic) and self-confidence among education college students. *Journal of the Faculty of Education, Assiut University*, 33(2), 157-195.
- Kiamarsi, A., & Abolghasemi, A. (2014). The relationship of procrastination and self-efficacy with psychological vulnerability in students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 114, 858-862.
- Klassen, R. M., Tze, V. M., & Hannok, W. (2013). Internalizing problems of adults with learning disabilities: A meta-analysis. *Journal of learning disabilities*, 46(4), 317-327.
- Ma, Y., Yang, X. M., Hong, L., & Tang, R. J. (2022). The Influence of Stress Perception on Academic Procrastination in Postgraduate Students: The Role of Self-Efficacy for Self-Regulated Learning and Self-Control. *International Journal of Digital Multimedia Broadcasting*, 2022(1), 6722805.
- Mahboub, H. (2023). Cyberbullying thru social media platforms as a predictive indicator of negative psychological rebellion and psychological vulnerability among Umm Al-Qura University students (In Arabic). *Islamic University Journal of Educational and Psychological Studies*, 31(5), 205 - 234.
- Ngo, C. G. A., Baptista, C. C. B., Caballero, H. C. L., & Lorejo, C. B. (2025). Procrastination And Self-Esteem as Predictors of Self-Handicapping Among Dean's Listers. *European Journal of Education Studies*, 12(6), 118-141.
- Nogueira, M. J., Barros, L., & Sequeira, C. (2017). Psychometric properties of the psychological vulnerability scale in higher education students. *Journal of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association*, 23(3), 215-222.

- Nogueira, M. J., Sequeira, C., & Sampaio, F. (2022). Gender differences in mental health, academic life satisfaction and psychological vulnerability in a sample of college freshmen: a cross-sectional study. *Journal of Gender Studies*, 31(8), 895- 904.
- Pyman, D. (2020). *Academic procrastination, self-regulation, anxiety, and personality (ASAP): 'Some' day is not a day of the week*. (Doctoral dissertation, Master's Thesis, Trent University]. Trent University Library & Archives.
- Qona'ah, A., Rachmawati, S., & Chan, C. (2020). Families' psychological fragility during an emergency. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation*, 24(7), 9064-9071.
- Rožman, M., Vrečko, I., & Tominc, P. (2025). Psychological Factors Impacting Academic Performance Among Business Studies' Students. *Education Sciences*, 15(2), 121.
- Sakran, E. (2010). The factorial structure of academic procrastination behavior, its prevalence, justifications, and its relationship with achievement levels among secondary and intermediate school students in the Asir region of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (In Arabic). *Journal of the College of Education in Ismailia*, 16, 1-70.
- Sastri, P. D. (2022). Academic Procrastination in students and how to overcome it. *Journal of Business and Management INABA (JBMI)*, 1(02), 89–96.
- Satici, S. A., & Uysal, R. (2017). Psychological vulnerability and subjective happiness: The mediating role of hopelessness. *Stress and Health*, 33(2), 111-118.
- Silveira, S., Hecht, M., Matthaeus, H., Adli, M., Voelkle, M. C., & Singer, T. (2022). Coping with the COVID-19 pandemic: perceived changes in psychological vulnerability, resilience and social cohesion before, during and after lockdown. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 19(6), 3290.
- Taleb, H. (2014). *Emotional intelligence and its relationship with both compassion fatigue and self-compassion among practicing clinical psychologists (In Arabic)*. PhD thesis, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Sétif 1 University, Algeria.
- Temel, V., Nas, K., & Dalkilic, M. (2020). Positive Perception and Psychological Vulnerability Levels of Academicians during COVID 19 Quarantine Period. *African Educational Research Journal*, 8(4), 876-883.
- Uysal, R. (2015). Social competence and psychological vulnerability: The mediating role of flourishing. *Psychological Reports*, 117(2), 554-565.
- Wareth, I. H. A., & Tawfiq, M. A. H. (2024). *Self-Defeat and Psychological vulnerability as Predictors of Psychosomatic Disorders: In Light of Climate Changes Among University Students in Egypt and the Emirates*. In *Global Perspectives on Climate Change, Social Resilience, and Social Inclusion* (pp. 131-152). IGI Global Scientific Publishing.
- Yamaguchi, S., Kawata, Y., Murofushi, Y., Shibata, N., & Ota, T. (2022). Psychological vulnerability associated with stress coping strategies in Japanese university athletes. *Journal of Clinical Sport Psychology*, 17(4), 449-463.
- Zhang, X. M., Chen, K., Wang, M. F., & Chen, C. M. (2022). The Relationship between Academic Procrastination and Internet Addiction in College Students: The Multiple Mediating Effects of Intrusive Thinking and Depression-Anxiety-Stress. *Psychology*, 13, 591-606.