Procrastination and psychological safety

Procrastination is understood as conscious delay, failure to complete, or postponement of planned activities, accompanied by a sense of internal discomfort and a negative emotional state, connected with an expectation of negative consequences.

1. Introduction

In the current environment of rapid transformation in a digital society and the multitude of demands on the individual, interest in the study of procrastination as a phenomenon is rising. In Russian psychology, the terms otkladyvanie ("postponement") or promedlenie ("delay") are used as synonyms for "procrastination." Procrastination may appear in any sphere of human activity: Academic, work, social (postponement of meetings or phone calls), professional, or home. According to V. S. Kovylina, 46 to 95 percent of students regard themselves as procrastinators [1]. Procrastinators often delay realizations of their plans until "later" and start to work on them only at a time when there is no point in attempting to make up for lost time. This is precisely the way in which the negative consequences of such postponement manifest themselves. In addition to external unpleasant results, procrastination is characterized by significant emotional discomfort: A sense of guilt, worry, and uncertainty as to whether the situation will be resolved positively, all of which rise as a deadline approaches [2]. Worry increases, not only because of the temporary and high expectations of others, but because of the increased self-imposed demands for results by the procrastinator. Emotional discomfort, negative subjective feelings, and a general dissatisfaction with one's own activity are fundamental psychological signs of procrastination.

One of the problems of this phenomenon is the vagueness of the boundary between "procrastination" and "laziness". E.P. Ilin distinguishes two types of procrastinators: "tense" ones are more "nervous", "upset", "subject to a sense of guilt", "relaxed procrastinators" categorizable in nontechnical language as "lazy", are concerned only with completing those tasks that will bring pleasure at the present moment, "here and now". In this case, laziness is a form of procrastination [3]. Yet in spite of similar behavior, associated with the failure to complete tasks, a procrastinator is distinguished from a lazy person by a negative emotional experience. Rather than being indifferent, procrastinators are actively interested in achieving an expected result. The fundamental differences between the two types lies in the subjective emotional suffering of the individual with reference to the delay of planned tasks.

V.S. Kovylin distinguishes the two types of procrastination as expressions of the emotional reactions regarding planned or necessary activities. In the case of "relaxed procrastination," the subject spends time on other, more pleasant activities and recreations. "Tense" procrastination is connected with a loss of a sense of time, a dissatisfaction with oneself, vague life goals, indecision and feelings of insecurity [1]. The basic types of procrastination have been characterized by N. Milgram, J. Batory, and D. Mourer: Daily, or Household: Daily or everyday (postponement of tasks which should be done every day), procrastination in decision making, including minor decisions; neurotic procrastination (postponement of important decisions); compulsive, which includes both everyday procrastination and postponement of decisions; and academic, postponement of assignments and preparation for examinations [1]. A habit of postponing things until later may lead to lower academic standing, heightened nervousness, the formation of an inferiority complex, and problems in interactions with others. The majority of students do not deny that they postpone the completion of academic assignments.

Researchers have noted that procrastination is most widespread among students. Procrastination among students has been studied in connection with anxiety [4][5][6], self-esteem [7][8], defense mechanisms and coping strategies [9][10][11], perfectionism [12][13][14] etc.

2. procrastination as a risk of the psychological safety of the educational environment

R. Klassen et al. have shown that academic procrastination, as a tendency on the part of students to postpone until later, is linked to a low effectiveness of self-motivation. K. Sinekal, with a group of researchers, have concluded that intrinsic motivation associated with the content of activities and identified motivation (motivation to perform personally significant tasks) are typical for students with a lower level of procrastination, while extrinsic motivation and demotivation are typical for students with a higher level of procrastination [1].

T.V. Zaripova and N.A. Danilova have examined the interconnections between students' academic procrastination and academic motivation. Their results have demonstrated that students whose academic motivational structures are dominated by internal motivators (intellectual curiosity, professional drive) and positive motivators (desire for success) are less prone to academic procrastination. Academic procrastination is not connected with the level of social motivators for the academic activity of the students [15]. Students with an expressed manifestation of procrastination are characterized by a predominance of negative motivation for academic activity (avoidance of failure) over positive (achievement of success). T. M. Tron asserts that "active procrastinators" are distinguished by weak academic motivation and low academic success [16].

Researchers have suggested that the process of studying is characterized by conditions under which procrastination often arises. O.O. Shemyakina points to the following conditions of the academic process that provoke procrastination: The external origin of assignments; delayed consequences; long periods given for completion; boring, routine, unpleasant assignments; pressure from other obligations; delayed gratification and rewards; any written assignments [17]. Procrastination may allow students to avoid direct evaluations of their performance, but the resulting obligation to complete them in a short time may prevent them from realizing their potential. Such situations lead to negative consequences, but it may support self-esteem at the necessary level [18].

Procrastination that arises in the context of learning may lead to damage to the psychological security of the educational environment. By the psychological security of the educational environment, we mean conditions that allow the high level of satisfaction, sense of security, comfort, and socio-psychological competence that are necessary for the realization of individual potential in a variety of areas [19]. I.A. Baeva suggests that the interpersonal relations of inhabitants of the learning environment "give birth to" the psychological security of that environment [20]. A satisfactory level of personally trusting social interaction is one of the criteria for psychological security of the educational environment of contemporary educational institutions [20][21]. Constant delaying and postponing of required assignments by students may lower the level of satisfaction with interpersonal relationships with inhabitants of the educational environment.

Analysis of the quality of interpersonal relations in the educational environment of the institution showed that the majority of students surveyed take a positive view of the relationships that they have, and sense a goodwill in interpersonal relationships in the educational environment, acceptance, and a potential for personal growth. it is possible to assert the existence of a psychologically secure educational environment on the level of the database. Nevertheless, it became apparent that students sense the existence of negative aspects of interpersonal relationships in the educational environment, which may pose risks of breaches to its security. Students with different levels of procrastination feel that interpersonal relationships in the educational environment are characterized by aggressivity and manipulation.

Differences were found in the indicators of academic motivation and motivation of academic and cognitive activity among students with various levels of procrastination. Students with moderate procrastination are significantly distinguished as motivated by professional, academic, and cognitive activity, which causes them to strive to acquire professional knowledge, skills, and abilities appropriate to their profession. External introjected motivation, which manifests itself in feelings of obligation and shame in relation to oneself and significant others, as well as amotivation in the form of lack of interest and sense of meaning in academic activity, prevail in students with a high level of procrastination.

3. conclusion

The more students with high procrastination value goodwill in interpersonal relations in the educational environment, the less they express cognitive motivation, which drives students to learn new things, to understand the subjects that they are studying, and to find pleasure in the process of learning. The more they value the acceptance of interpersonal relationships, the lower their internal motivation to achieve the best results in their studies, and the higher their external motivation for self-esteem, and their desire to study for the sake of their own significance. Such negative characteristics of

interpersonal relationships as hostility and manipulation are positively connected with introjected and external motivation, and amotivation.

Students with a high level of procrastination often show their negative qualities in interpersonal relationships, provoking violation of the psychological safety of the educational environment. Besides that, the more the procrastinators valued their interpersonal relations, the lower their cognitive and internal motivation was.

References

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