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«KLAD” journal admits for publication various types of articles: original research, review articles, short reports or essays, reflections, case studies, methodologies and cases in english; containing the results of fundamental and applied research in the field of philosophy and identity, history of kazakhstan, pedagogy, linguistics and methods of teaching languages, translation, and tourism.

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ACADEMICALLY SUCCESSFUL SOPHOMORES WHO STRUGGLE WITH PROCRASTINATION AT KAZGUU UNIVERSITY

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Abstract: This small scale research focuses on understanding of the experiences of academically successful KAZGUU sophomores who face procrastination. The main research question is: What are the experiences of academically successful sophomores of KAZGUU who struggle with procrastination? Basic qualitative research strategy was used to answer the research questions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 5 second-year well-performing students who had encountered procrastination issues. The research revealed 3 main themes that emerged after data analysis: confidence, conscious procrastination, and strategies used to do the academic tasks at last minute. Moreover, there were two subsidiary questions: 1) What are the motives for sophomore students to procrastinate? 2) How would successful sophomores, prone to procrastination, describe their feelings?

Key words: procrastination, academic delaying, confidence, conscious habit

INTRODUCTION

Procrastination takes place in all aspects of our life, including the academic part. Literally, procrastination is the postponement of important matters indefinitely, which can be described by other words such as «delaying,» «putting off,» or «postponing» (Aydoğan & Akbarov, 2018). Actually, it's a problem with self-regulation and time management, that is, not completing tasks at the set time and going beyond the deadline. Of the varieties, the most common is academic procrastination. In the study by Steel (2007) it was revealed that 95% of the surveyed students struggle with procrastination. It also reported that procrastination is revealed by students spending one-third of their time doing daily habits instead of cramming for their assignments. In the study of 11 US universities, 70% of undergraduate students reported that they

often delayed their academic assignments (Schraw et al., 2007). Moreover, the same study shown that procrastination was more prevalent among students with good grades than those with low ones.

Kiamarsi and Abolghasemi (2014) stated that students who are prone to procrastination had high signs of psychological and personality vulnerability. Consequently, a positive statistically significant relationship was found between these two variables. Low levels of self-control and self-efficacy can be one of the reasons for the negative consequences of procrastination. Either way, postponing can lead to increased depression and anxiety. Sirois et al. (2003) showed that procrastination can cause stress and result in poor mental health.

Following the above articles, we concluded that there is a problem of academic

procrastination worth to be researched further, especially among high-performing university students. Partially, because there is wrong belief that procrastination is a phenomenon that does not occur among high-performing students, but only among poor-performing students. This small-scale study was conducted using a basic qualitative strategy to identify KAZGUU sophomores' motives for procrastination within their own experience and to determine what they do to maintain high levels of academic achievement. The value of this study is to contribute to a body of literature on the topic with a focus on academically successful students prone to procrastination.

MAIN AND SUBSIDIARY QUESTIONS

The main question of our research is:

What are the experiences of academically successful sophomores of KAZGUU who struggle with procrastination?

The subsidiary questions are:

What are the motives for sophomore students to procrastinate?

How would successful sophomores, prone to procrastination, describe their feelings?

METHODOLOGY

The basic qualitative research focuses on interpreting how people construct their reality, how they give meaning and interpretation to their experiences in this life (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 24). Since we aimed to study the experiences of students with procrastination and the meaning that they attribute to their experiences we decided that basic qualitative research strategy meets the aims of our small-scale study. To investigate this topic we used semi-structured interviews. Sample was planned to be non-probability and participants were not randomly selected (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 96). The recruitment followed purposive sampling with specific criteria. The target population of our small-scale study

was second-year students of KAZGUU University. Five full-aged academically successful sophomore students who are prone to academic procrastination were our participants, of which 3 males and 2 females. There were only representatives of the second year students who are majoring in BA in International Relations, Tourism, Applied Linguistics and Accounting.

Our interview questions consisted of three parts: warm-up, demographic, and broad pre-determined questions. The first and second parts were used to introduce the participants and to learn more about them. As the semi-structured interviews were conducted, the pattern of questions could change depending on the direction of the conversation with the participants. These sections included warm-up questions such as «How is your day going? What did you arrive at the university on? How old are you?» and similar questions. Broad questions were aimed at finding out the general nature of procrastination in their lives and the second block was to find out a certain experience in the academic part. Probing questions were asked to elaborate on the answers given.

Before confirming their participation, all students were acquainted with informed consent form that stipulated anonymity and confidentiality procedures. First, participants' names were replaced by pseudonyms (Shy, Attractive, Brave, Talkative, and Competent). Second, everyone had the full right to refuse to participate. Third, participants were informed about the conditions and purpose of the study. All obtained data during the research was stored in a separate secure flash drive, which ensured safe storage of data. It was also said that each participant could withdraw from the study if he/she wanted to. Two copies of the document were signed by the students themselves, so that one copy would remain with the participants and the other with us - researchers. The semi-structured interviews lasted for 20-30 minutes approximately. The participants were informed that the entire interview was

audio-recorded.

Data analysis. Data analysis was conducted in stages. First, the interviews were transcribed and then entered into the coding sheet. Following that, the qualitative thematic analysis was applied to distinguish open codes, axial codes, and then thematic codes. We took all the text forms of the research participants' interviews and conducted the analysis several times, so that we could identify the themes in a natural way. More precisely, as researchers, we found common binders from the open codes, thereby combining them into a group of sub-themes. The sub-themes given helped to identify the main themes of the research paper and to understand the real experiences of sophomores in good academic standing who often suffer from procrastination. In order to build a clear boundary between the sub-themes, each sub-topic was highlighted with a different color (See Table 1). As a result, 205 axial codes were identified from which the 3 main themes were then highlighted. Of all the codes, 30 were not allocated to any of the theme categories.

The study used strategies that provided valid and reliable information: member-checking,

clarification of researchers' biases, peer-debriefing, presenting undistributed codes, and transcription double-checking. Initially, we identified the research problem because all of the researchers also had experience with it in their biographies. Second, member-checking was used by us after the preparation of the transcripts for participant verification to reduce the possibility of misinterpretation of the results. Third, peer debriefing was used as a strategy, that is, an outside person was invited to ask questions that we as novice researchers should take into account. It was also mandatory for all researchers to be present during the interviews and further processing of all obtained interviews. This was followed by the stage of re-checking all the codes and transcripts. And at final, the presentation of codes that were not included in any of the key themes.

FINDINGS

Confidence. As mentioned earlier three main themes and 205 codes were identified. The very first theme – Confidence included 63 axial codes and two subthemes. This theme revealed not so obvious sides of procrastination among well-performing students, namely that students with good

| | | | | |
|----------|-------------|--|---|--|
| 00:07:36 | Talkative | Устраняет, на самом деле меня все устраивает, но мне нужно поменять, потому что у меня возникает ситуация, когда уже недостаточно слушать просто урок, нужно именно готовиться заранее к предмету. Опять же 2 случая. На данный момент академическое письмо и бухгалтерский учет. | Strategy during the procrastination that helps to accomplish the task and Being ok with the current state, even knowing what would be best for him. & Self-confidence in knowledge | Strategies, Conscious Procrastination and Confidence |
| 00:07:57 | Interviewer | Как тебе удается поддерживать хорошую академическую успеваемость при таких обстоятельствах? | | |
| 00:08:03 | Talkative | Я начинаю чем-то жертвовать, либо сном, либо питанием. Получается, каким образом это происходит у меня? То есть, если вы неделю нормально спите, то есть вы спите в неделю 6 дней нормально и в день, когда нужно сдавать дедлайн, вы спите 3 часа, то я считаю это нормально. Ну то есть вы неделю спали по 6 часов и решили в один день типа поспать 3 часа. Это намного лучше того, если вы в итоге спали всего 3 часа и в последний день вы спите 3 часа, типа, в сравнении 3 часа на протяжении 7 дней и спите 3 часа в один день. Думаю, ответ очевиден то, что намного лучше. Ну а вот из того, чем я, как сказать, жертвую, часто бывает то, что я не кушаю в день, когда нужно сдавать дедлайн, то есть ты садшься и делаешь его полностью. Опять же тот пример с 13 страничным дедлайном по бизнес-коммуникациям, когда я его делал, я целый день не кушал, я просто сидел и расписывал свой кейс. Мхм, не вставал... Нет, бывали там перерывы в минут 10 там, просто встать размяться чуть и дальше продолжать работу. И тогда думаешь, да, надо было пораньше. Но я всегда выкручиваюсь. | sacrificing in order to maintain great performance and Strategy during the procrastination that helps to accomplish the task & Being ok with the current state, even knowing what would be best for him | Strategies & Conscious Procrastination |
| 00:09:19 | Interviewer | Как ты планируешь процесс выполнения заданий? | | |
| 00:09:25 | Talkative | Вообще не планирую что, делаю все в последний момент за один присест. | Strategy during the procrastination that helps to accomplish the task & Self-confidence in knowledge & Being ok with the current state, even knowing what would be best for him | Strategies & Confidence & Conscious Procrastination |

TABLE 1
SNAPSHOT OF DATA ANALYSIS

grades are usually confident in their knowledge and do not worry much in situations of procrastination. Participant Brave says this in his interview: «Ну есть люди, которые говорят то, что я лучше сейчас сделаю, потом по кайфу, у меня наоборот, то есть... У меня больше такое. И по сути я всегда знаю что успею и выполню вовремя». This is also proved by the words of Participant Competent: «... но все равно я много чего знаю и всегда надеюсь на полученные за весь период знания». This shows that well-performing students in many cases are more than confident in their abilities and hope for the gained knowledge.

Yet there were also cases where it was mentioned that their overconfidence came out sideways and the Participant Talkative says:

Получается, из-за того, что 20% и это как раз таки из-за того, что я типа слишком был уверен в своих силах и получается, я на данный момент по одному из предметов потерял 6% от общей оценки уже, а по второму 5 процентов тоже потерял, и получается я теряю проценты не из-за того, что не готовился, а из-за того, что был уверен в том, что я правильно сдам для того, что знания, которые я получил на уроке мне хватят.

The same situation was confessed to us by Participant Attractive:

То есть мне нужен, мне нужен был был написать эссе на 20% это не так для меня большим количеством, но оно все равно очень хорошо весит очень много и это эссе на важную тему...На котором я хотела себя проявить и так далее. да откладывала до последнего не успела, но потом успела. Как видите, сегодня late submission.

Conscious procrastination. The next key theme that came out naturally is conscious procrastination. This theme included 67 axial codes and uncovers how participants turned procrastination into a certain habit

and at the same time understand that it would be better not to put off tasks for later. As a result, they all perceive it as a conscious phenomenon and do not try to fight it. For example, Participants Attractive and Brave mention that it has become a habit for them and they can't start things without it. Thus, Participant Attractive says: «Да, это это мое хобби, это второе я. Я очень люблю прокрастинировать и они не отдаю такому прям большое значение этому просто я знаю, что у меня есть ещё время, сейчас я лучше поделаю другие дела». In the same vein Participant Brave reports: «Я прокрастинирую и очень часто. Это происходит на постоянной основе, уже кажется что я не я без этого. Просто всегдаа и всё откладываю на потом, но это мне не мешает. У меня хорошие оценки».

It can also be noticed that in many cases they are used to getting good grades, they do not stress about it too much. On such a case Participant Talkative says: «И получается я могу иногда сказать себе, давай пораньше.. типа меньше нервов потрачу и эффективно займусь, в итоге все как всегда». This is also confirmed by the words of Participant Shy: «Отложив один раз ты это делаешь и в следующий раз. Плюс когда у тебя в итоге норм с оценками ты начинаешь быть увереннее из-за этого. Поэтому прокрастинирую я до сих пор и дальше буду наверное». The same situation with student Brave, he felt comfortable during deadlines week:

То есть, но при этом я смотрю на список своих дедлайнов на каждый предмет там по 2 дедлайна ещё стоит плюс файл плюс презентации ещё что-то ещё что-то... Я понимаю, что надо было чуть-чуть пораньше настроиться.... Есть доля сожаления, честно, но как бы ничего.

Strategies. Last but not least, this topic is about the strategies that participants use in extreme procrastination situations when there are deadlines. The strategy theme consists of 53 axial codes and all

of them cover sub-topics about a pleasant atmosphere for studying, working smart but not hard, and also sacrificing physical needs as a strategy. First, we found that location and atmosphere are very important to students when completing a task. They are in a state of hyperfocus at the deadline, when they are in a certain place and under certain conditions to actively counteract procrastination. It is evident in the words of Participant Attractive:

Мне важно, чтобы кто-то там смеялся, чтоб там кто-то болтал, поэтому в библиотеке мне невозможно концентрироваться, там только читать могу, а что-то писать.. что-то должно происходить на фоне, я себя чувствую намного круче, когда я уткнулась в ноутбук, а они там время тратят свое... а я нет.

While Participant Shy confirms the importance of quiet atmosphere during deadlines: “Мне нужна тишина, абсолютная тишина. Я не могу работать не в тишине”.

Moreover, it is important for all of them to study and do things at the university, because there is no such focus at home. For instance, Participant Competent said:

Я по идее стараюсь всегда в универе оставаться допоздна, потому что я все равно знаю, что я вот..приду домой, и я ничего не буду делать, буду в телефоне сидеть, либо там, еще что-то там, спать, но я все равно не буду ничего делать когда домой прихожу... даже если допустим у меня даже одна пара да, в универе, допустим днем, и которая заканчивается в 3, но я все равно стараюсь в универе до 8, до 9 оставаться чтобы быть как можно больше продуктивной можно сказать, потому что я знаю что вся моя продуктивность куда-то уходит когда я дома, и вот... потому что в университете, я редко когда прокрастинирую.

Also in situations of severe procrastination one thing that can help is that they listen carefully to the teacher and always

familiarize themselves with the criteria for grading an assignment before they start doing it after a long delaying. For example, Student Brave explained his thoughts as: “Так же на занятиях я стараюсь слушать преподавателя и понимать тему сразу, чтобы потом не приходилось переучивать. Потом когда горят дедлайны сажусь и выполняю”. The Participant Talkative mentions that listening to the teacher while explaining is an important step in completing assignments, because this way they memorize all the information:

Я слушаю учителя на уроках и понимаю, что он хочет сказать на том или ином занятии, и плюс-минус запоминаю, что он говорит на уроках, то есть из-за того, что я учусь на уроках из-за того, что я слушаю их, у меня получается так, что я не совсем тупой в плане академическом. И получается, благодаря этому, я могу стабильно и легко выполнять, получать хорошие результаты по разным заданиям.

The Participant Competent showed a similar reaction in her interview and described her strategy as follows: “Так же я часто посещаю внеклассные занятия как СРСП или даже на уроках пытаюсь спрашивать все, что нужно чтобы вникнуть в информацию”.

One of the main findings from the student interviews was that they sacrifice sleep or meal as a strategy when postponing academic tasks. Student Attractive says of this case that with severe procrastination, daily needs are often forgotten and she does not feel well:

Я считаю, что когда мы прокрастинируем, вот начинается сезон прокрастинации, когда не только с каким-то, да, дедлайном связано просто прокрастинация, когда ты не делаешь даже такие задачи, как пойти покушать, почистить зубы, то я такая.... Ну блин, мне нужен отдых значит. Оно у меня просится, если я не хочу ничего делать, и у меня ничего не делается, значит мне надо ничего не де-

лать, поэтому это немного такой, просто спокойный, грустный эпизод... Где я просто лежу. Как в фильме, в каком-то. типа Эйфория.

This experience is shared by another Participant Talkative who provides an example comparing usual day and day with a deadline:

Я начинаю чем-то жертвовать, либо сном, либо питанием. Получается, каким образом это происходит у меня? То есть, если вы неделю нормально спите, то есть вы спите в неделю 6 дней нормально и в день, когда нужно сдавать дедлайн, вы спите 3 часа, то я считаю это нормально... Ну а вот из того, чем я, как сказать, жертвую, часто бывает то, что я не кушаю в день, когда нужно сдавать дедлайн, то есть ты садишься и делаешь его полностью.

CONCLUSION

This study showed the real picture of procrastination among students with good grades. It was found that the postponement of academically successful sophomores can be described as conscious procrastination that results from having particular academic strategies that they use regularly and confidence in their knowledge. They also explained their procrastination behavior and showed that for them the main motivators for this state are their self-confidence in knowledge and not enough stress, which makes them put off tasks to the last drawer and not much worry about it. Also, the whole situation is influenced by the conditions of the academic task, as for students a certain atmosphere and location around can be an auxiliary tool in concentration or vice versa. With all this, students described their feelings, that at deadlines after procrastination, they are overwhelmed by a feeling of relief after all the efforts made. What can be noticed is that even with this outcome from procrastination, students continue to procrastinate time after time.

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