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Student Procrastination: A clarification and
longitudinal analysis of its relationship to
perfectionism, locus of control, and stress in
university students.

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ABSTRACT

The current study sought to clarify the conflicting relationships between student procrastination and three academically related measures of personality: perfectionism, locus of control, and perceived stress. The study also examined the nature of these relationships in a longitudinal assessment over the course of a university semester. 213 first year undergraduate students (146 females and 67 males) completed the Aitken Procrastination Inventory, the Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale, the Academic Locus of Control Scale, and the Perceived Stress scale within the first four weeks of a university semester, and again one week before the end of semester examination period. High procrastination at both the start and the end of the semester was related to an external academic locus of control and low levels of self-oriented perfectionism. Stress and socially prescribed perfectionism had little relationship to levels of procrastination at both the start and the end of the semester. Only academic locus of control was elevated at the end of semester as compared with the start of semester. The only significant predictor of end of semester stress levels was a high level of socially prescribed perfectionism at the start of the semester. The results were discussed with regard to the personalizing of academic control, the retraining of maladaptive causal attributions, the procrastinators 'last minute rush' theory, and the implications of these factors for future procrastination intervention strategies.

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