PROCRASTINATION AND SELF-ESTEEM AS PREDICTORS OF SELF-HANDICAPPING AMONG DEAN'S LISTERS

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Abstract:

This descriptive-correlational research delved into the interplay among procrastination, self-esteem, and self-handicapping among dean's listers of teacher education students, with a focus on self-handicapping tendencies and academic performance. Survey questionnaires served as the primary data collection method, enabling the assessment of procrastination and self-esteem levels through descriptive statistics—multiple regression analysis identified predictors of self-handicapping while Pearson correlation coefficient analysis elucidated the relationships between variables. The findings unveiled neutral levels of procrastination and low levels of self-handicapping. Furthermore, it is highlighted that procrastination and self-esteem are significant predictors of procrastination. The study proves the link between procrastination and self-esteem as significant predictors of self-handicapping among dean's listers. Recommendations entail considering situational factors, individual differences, and the multi-dimensional nature of self-esteem, while future research should examine the connection between academic success, peer relations, and identity to develop focused interventions for promoting adaptive coping skills and resiliency.

Keywords: education, procrastination, self-esteem, self-handicapping, academic performance

1. Introduction

Self-handicapping is a strategic phenomenon wherein individuals utilize authentic or fabricated measures and are strategically employed as seemingly credible justifications for prospective failures (Gupta & Geetika, 2020; Jensen & Deemer, 2020). For instance, self-handicapping is evident in scenarios where a student indulges in excessive recreational activities the night before an exam or when an athlete claims "I am sick"

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before a sports competition, intending to use it as a legitimate excuse for subpar performance (Török & Szabó, 2018). By employing the proactive and anticipatory strategy of self-handicapping, individuals can establish a favorable "win-win" situation before undertaking a task, resulting in a mutually beneficial outcome because success can be elucidated by abilities, prevailing even in the face of obstructive factors. In contrast, failure can be ascribed to transient factors, within one's control, and specific. When an individual excels in a task, it can be attributed to their exceptional capabilities, and when they falter, a discernible cause for their failure can be rationalized. Although this intentional creation of obstacles allows students to attribute potential failure to these handicaps rather than to enduring personal traits—such as low intelligence or incompetence, these behaviors strategically use excuses to justify potential failures, hindering personal development and preventing individuals from reaching their maximum potential.

While a substantial body of research has concentrated on identifying potential precursors of students' self-handicapping, the existing literature is disjointed, and the findings are frequently inconclusive (Schwinger *et al.*, 2022). Consequently, there is a dearth of understanding regarding which factors possess the greatest potential to instigate habitual self-handicapping among university students. Thus, the study of the interplay between procrastination and self-esteem, and their roles as predictors of self-handicapping, contributes meaningfully to the existing body of knowledge rather than solving a problem in the research field.

There are several related literatures in the global context that investigate the predictive roles of procrastination and self-esteem with self-handicapping. In the study of Yildirim and Demir (2019), a comprehensive exploration examining procrastination, test anxiety, self-esteem, and self-compassion as predictors of self-handicapping was conducted. Their findings revealed that procrastination emerged as the strongest predictor, followed by test anxiety, self-esteem, and self-compassion. Moreover, Demir *et al.* (2021) suggested that individuals with higher levels of self-esteem are less prone to experiencing a fear of negative evaluation, thus potentially exhibiting lower tendencies toward self-handicapping behaviors. The implication of this related literature to the present study lies in the enriched understanding of the multifaceted dynamics influencing self-handicapping. Synthesizing these findings may offer a more nuanced perspective on the intricate relationships between procrastination, self-esteem, and self-handicapping.

In this light, the Theory of Self-Handicapping by Jones and Berglas (1978) explicated a phenomenon where individuals intentionally impede their success by imposing obstacles in critical performance contexts to attribute poor performance to external factors and attribute good performance to internal factors. The study commences with an in-depth definition of self-handicapping, subsequently embedding it within the broader framework of psychological theories and relevant sociopsychological concepts on its forms and factors. Furthermore, it extensively explores two distinct manifestations of self-handicapping: behavioral and self-reported handicaps. The latter involves

verbally expressing the presence of an obstacle before undertaking a specific task, while the former entails the actual creation of an obstacle before initiating a task, thereby obstructing personal success. The theory further explains factors influencing self-handicapping, categorizing them into two dimensions: environmental and preventive factors. By encompassing these facets, the theory provides researchers with a comprehensive understanding of nature, factors, and manifestations of self-handicapping.

On the other lens, the Emotion Regulation Theory pioneered by James Gross, can be considered a supporting theory to elucidate self-handicapping behaviors among Dean's listers. Harley *et al.* (2019) elucidated that emotional regulation (ER) refers to an individual's attempt to regulate their emotional responses to various situations and can transpire intrinsically and extrinsically. In the context of self-handicapping, individuals illustrate self-handicapping behaviors as a pathway to regulate their emotional reactions to potential failures, protecting themselves from experiencing negative emotions that impede success. Correspondingly, the Attributional theory originally proposed by Fritz Heider in 1958 can also be a supporting theory for self-handicapping. Graham (2020) defined the theory as concerned with the perceived causes of both success and failure. In the context of self-handicapping among Dean's listers, this theory conveys that academic achievers engage in self-handicapping behaviors as an avenue to protect their well-being by attributing potential failures to external factors rather than internal abilities. Furthermore, using self-handicapping as a strategy to preserve their self-concept and self-esteem by creating obstacles or excuses for the anticipation of failing performance.

In contrast, various research studies indicate a negative correlation between self-handicapping behaviors and academic achievement. Adil *et al.* (2019) emphasized that a decrease in self-handicapping tendencies is linked to improvements in cumulative grade point averages (CGPA). These findings collectively underscore the negative correlation between self-handicapping tendencies among students and their academic performance in school. Thus, by addressing self-handicapping behaviors and fostering a positive school environment, students' academic outcomes may be enhanced.

Procrastination, one of the predictor roles of self-handicapping, is the inclination to delay or evade the initiation and completion of a task (Tuckman, 1991). Correspondingly, Yildirim and Demir (2019) recognized procrastination as a predictor of self-handicapping, contributing significantly to explaining 17% of the variance in self-handicapping. This stems from the idea that these concepts have significant overlaps, and each variable serves as a predictor for the other. Several studies back up this idea by showing procrastination as a predictor variable of self-handicapping. According to Jia *et al.* (2021), the study found a positive correlation between self-handicapping, academic anxiety, and procrastination, indicating that these factors are interconnected. Azarbadkan and Ebrahimabad (2018) extended this understanding by suggesting that self-handicapping is the more reliable predictor of academic procrastination when compared to Academic Expectations Stress. Moreover, the research conducted by Zandieh and Jafariharandi (2020) highlighted the direct and significant relationship

between academic procrastination, self-handicapping, and personality traits such as neuroticism and extraversion. These studies reinforce the connection between procrastination as a predictor of self-handicapping. Contrarily, multiple studies have examined self-handicapping as a predictor of procrastination. According to Živković (2020), he emphasized the significance of gender and claimed self-handicapping as the most potent predictor of procrastination, as demonstrated by standardized beta (β) coefficients in regression analysis. Moreover, Unda-López *et al.* (2022) also reinforced the positive correlation between academic anxiety, self-handicapping, and procrastination, further underlining the complex web of influences shaping academic procrastination behavior. These discoveries collectively emphasize the complex and multifaceted nature of the association between self-handicapping and procrastination.

The ongoing exploration of the connection between self-esteem and self-handicapping is a recurrent theme in academic research, shedding light on the intricate interplay between these concepts. Yildirim and Demir (2019), Del Mar Ferradás *et al.* (2018), and Curtis (2017) identified a significant negative association, indicating that self-handicapping tends to increase as self-esteem levels decrease. Students who have high levels of self-esteem have significantly lower self-handicapping tendencies. Similarly, Chen *et al.* (2018) discovered that self-esteem exerts an adverse effect on self-handicapping, positively influencing mastery goals while negatively affecting performance-avoidance goals. This association also applies to correlated behaviors and can be interpreted through the framework of academic self-handicapping. This concept serves as a means of protecting one's self-esteem by redirecting potential threats away from oneself. These collective findings emphasize the intricate connection between self-esteem and self-handicapping concerning academic achievement and psychological well-being.

There are various findings concerning students' self-handicapping, but the findings are often fragmented, and pieces of evidence keep on fluctuating (Schwinger *et al.*, 2022). Students who experience stigmatization are more likely to self-handicap (Wondra & McCrea, 2021). Additionally, Alodat *et al.* (2020) stated that there is a high correlation between maladaptive perfectionism and academic self-handicapping, indicating that the pressure to achieve unrealistically high standards set by maladaptive perfectionism can lead individuals to adopt self-handicapping strategies to avoid the risk of failure and protect their self-image. Moreover, Cooper (2023) asserted that unhealthy perfectionism is significantly associated with the adverse effects of self-handicapping.

These findings suggest that high-achieving students are not immune to self-handicapping behaviors, and these behaviors can be linked to underachievement and fear of failure. Hence, this study aimed to ascertain and disclose whether teacher education students employ self-handicapping strategies in their academic endeavors in connection with their educational merits, intelligence, and the idea of perfectionism. Much research has been done on self-handicapping and its effects. However, there is little to no research that specifically targets self-handicapping among prospective and aspiring teachers. Furthermore, the effects of self-handicapping go beyond educational contexts.

Therefore, assessing the effects of self-handicapping on the academic pathway of students is pivotal because this will create avenues that will alleviate the adverse effects of self-handicapping (Wyse *et al.*, 2023).

The purpose of this study is to identify the relationship between procrastination and self-esteem as predictors of self-handicapping among Dean's listers. Moreover, the study spotlights the tendencies of teacher education students to employ self-handicapping strategies. Self-handicapping yields outcomes that are not favorable and can induce long-term damaging effects on the learner's academic and personal life. Therefore, uncovering new knowledge concerning this field will harbor beneficial outcomes such as discovering remedies to combat the effects of self-handicapping, and provide ideas that will heighten the academic performance of prospective teachers and lessen the tendencies to self-handicap. Şahin and Çoban (2020) stated that a positive classroom climate, success-oriented perspectives, supportive stakeholders, and a conducive environment will lessen the likeliness of learners to self-handicap, and they are more likely to generate commendable grading remarks.

This study is contributory as it tackles a psychological and behavioral dilemma, self-handicapping, and induces alarming outcomes among learners. Remediating and uncovering new knowledge concerning this area will foster results that will be beneficial and advantageous to future researchers. Furthermore, this study delivers utilizable insights that will assist learners in overcoming self-handicapping and enable them to attain academic feats and satisfaction. This study aims to determine the relationship between procrastination and self-esteem as predictors of self-handicapping among Dean's listers at a private non-sectarian university in the Philippines. Also, this sought to ascertain the procrastination, self-esteem, and self-handicapping levels among dean's listers.

2. Material and Methods

The study involved 167 respondents who are Dean's listers in the academic year of 2022-2023 from various year levels and programs within the College of Teacher Education at the University of Mindanao, Matina Campus in Davao City, Davao del Sur. Total Population Sampling is a purposive sampling technique employed to analyze data that examines the entire population that possesses a particular set of characteristics. This approach ensures a representative sample that accurately reflects the entire population under the study (Tim, 2021). The findings of the study harbor notable implications for the Teacher Education programs and support systems. Specific selection criteria were in place to prevent bias and maintain equal representation across variables: respondents must be registered students at the University of Mindanao, enrolled in the College of Teacher Education program for the first semester of 2023-2024, and willing to participate in the study. The researchers excluded those who refused to participate or withdrew during the survey questionnaire administration, respondents who had dropped out, and those who transferred schools.

The tool employed in this study is a survey questionnaire to collect quantitative data from the respondents. Three questionnaires were adapted and have undergone validation and assessment in questionnaire design. These questionnaires were meticulously crafted with a focus on coherence and organizational structure. These questionnaires are the General Procrastination Scale (GPS), State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES), and Self-Handicapping Scale (SHS). These were utilized to determine the level of procrastination, self-esteem, and self-handicapping among the respondents in the study. The General Procrastination Scale (GPS), originally crafted by Clarry Lay in 1986, evaluates procrastination inclinations among the student populations assessed on a five-point scale. Ranging from "Always be a problem" (5), "Almost always a problem" (4), "Sometimes a problem" (3), "Almost never a problem" (2) and "Not a problem at all" (1). The questionnaire has been validated and pilot-tested, resulting in a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.821, which means that the survey questionnaire has good reliability and is greater than 0.70. The scale consists of 5 components: *Good planning, Delaying items, Doing things in the last minute, Good time management*, and *Poor time management*. In this study, the researchers adapted the modified version comprising 18 items following the context of the respondents and the adapted instrument.

The State Self-Esteem Scale (SSES), designed by Todd F. Hearthon and Janet Polivy in 1991 for self-esteem assessment, comprises a 20-item self-report questionnaire with a five-point agreement scale. The questionnaire has been validated and pilot-tested with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.835, which means that the survey questionnaire has good reliability and is greater than 0.70. The range spans from "Extremely" (5), "Very much" (4), "Somewhat" (3), "A little bit" (2), and "Not at all" (1). The scale consists of 3 components: *Performance Self-esteem, Social Self-esteem,* and *Appearance Self-esteem.*

The Self-Handicapping Scale (SHS), created by Savita-Gupta and Ms. Geetika in 2020, consists of 33 self-assessment statements rated on a five-point scale. The questionnaire has been validated and pilot-tested with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.838, which means that the survey questionnaire has good reliability and is greater than 0.70. The range spans from "Strongly Agree" (5), "Agree" (4), "Neutral" (3), "Disagree" (2), and "Strongly Disagree" (1). Moreover, the scale consists of 4 dimensions/components: *Behavioral Self-Handicapping, Claimed self-handicapping, Problems preparing an activity*, and *Failure to control attention.*

The level of procrastination was interpreted using a 5-point Likert scale method. A score of 4.20-5.00 indicates that procrastination is always observed at a very high level, while a score of 3.40-4.19 implies that procrastination is observed almost always at a high level. The middle range, with a score of 2.60-3.39, suggests that procrastination is sometimes observed and is at a moderate level. Correspondingly, a score range of 1.80-2.59 indicates that procrastination is almost never observed and is at a low level, and a score of 1.00-1.79 suggests that procrastination is never observed and is interpreted to be at a very low level. On the other lens, the level of self-esteem follows the same Likert scale method. A score of 4.20-5.00 indicates that the act always affects my self-esteem and is interpreted at a very high level and a score of 3.40-4.19 indicates that the act almost

always affects my self-esteem and is interpreted to be at a high level. Within the middle range, a score of 2.60-3.39 indicates that the act sometimes affects my self-esteem and is at a moderate level. A score of 1.80-2.59 reveals that the act almost never affects my self-esteem at a low level, and a score of 1.00-1.79 suggests that the act never affects my self-esteem at a very low level. Similarly, the levels of self-handicapping are interpreted using the same method. A score of 4.20-5.00 indicates that self-handicapping is always observed at a very high level, and a score of 3.40-4.19 reveals that self-handicapping is almost always observed at a high level. In the middle range, the score of 2.60-3.39 conveys that self-handicapping is sometimes observed at a moderate level, and a score of 1.80-2.59 demonstrates that self-handicapping is almost never observed at a low level. Lastly, a score of 1.00-1.79 implies that self-handicapping is never observed at a very low level.

The reliability of the scale employed in the study was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. The Cronbach's Alphas of procrastination is at 0.821, self-esteem's 0.835, and self-handicapping's 0.838. The values reveal that the scales employed in the study are reliable measures for procrastination, self-esteem, and self-handicapping among Dean's listers. Additionally, the validation sheet for the research questionnaire revealed favorable outcomes in multiple criteria. The questionnaire scored favorably, gaining a remark of "Very Good" in terms of clarity of directions, presentation of items, suitability of items, adequateness of items, attainment of purpose, and objectivity. However, the evaluation rating system got a remark of "Good." Overall, the validation results support the reliability and validity of the questionnaire.

The data gathered were subjected to statistical analysis with the utilization of a quantitative correlation design. A method is a non-experimental approach where the researchers delve deeper to determine the connection between two or more variables in a natural situation without changing. Moreover, the research design investigates the association between variables without the control and manipulation of the researcher (Bhandari, 2023).

The following statistical tools were employed to compute and analyze the data. Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) is employed in the study to analyze linear relationships between a dependent variable and more than one independent variable (Kim & Oh, 2021). To gain a better understanding of procrastination and self-esteem, as predictors roles for self-handicapping among Dean's listers. Mean and Standard Deviation were utilized to describe the respondents' procrastination and self-esteem levels. Additionally, the Pearson Correlational Coefficient is used to determine the highest and the lowest correlational coefficient. The data gathered is combined and tabulated for data interpretation, and further analysis has been undertaken by utilizing the statistical tools appropriate for interpretation. The following are the procedures that have been undertaken for the gathering of the study. The researcher constructed a letter to the Dean of the Department of College of Education of the University of Mindanao, Matina Campus. This has been executed to acquire permission to conduct the study that necessitates the involvement of the students under the program. After gaining full approval from the head of the department, the distribution of the survey questionnaires

was undertaken, ensuring their fullest discretion to partake in the study before providing them with the survey questionnaire sheets.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Level of Procrastination among Dean's Listers

Shown in Table 1 are the levels of procrastination among Dean's Listers. The results show that the overall mean score of procrastination ($\bar{x}$ = 2.78, SD = 0.46) indicates that the respondents moderately engage in procrastination. Among the results of the indicators of procrastination, the indicator *Doing things in the last minute* has the highest mean ($\bar{x}$=3.08, SD=0.398. On the other hand, *Delaying Items* attained the lowest mean score ($\bar{x}$=2.30, SD=0.77). Overall, these results demonstrate that Dean's Listers have a moderate level of procrastination, which is sometimes observed in 5 out of 10 instances.

Table 1: Level of Procrastination among Dean's Listers

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation
Good Planning	2.80	0.86
Delaying Items	2.30	0.77
Doing Things in the Last Minute	3.08	0.98
Good Time Management	2.78	0.64
Poor Time Management	2.96	0.58
Overall	**2.78**	**0.46**

While the overall procrastination levels of Dean's Listers are moderate, it was reported that among all the other indicators of procrastination, the Dean's Listers attained the highest mean score of procrastination in the category *Doing things at the last minute*. Items such as forgetting to prepare things for studying and having doubts about their ability are reflective statements that sometimes manifest among academic honors. This is because, according to the Yerkes-Dodson law (1908), which proposes an inverted U-shaped relationship between arousal (or stress) and performance, moderate levels of stress can enhance performance, but too much or too little stress can impair it.

On the contrary, the results suggest that the indicator in procrastination that attained the lowest mean score is *Delaying items*, including items such as not making decisions as soon as possible, preferring not to leave early for an appointment, not finishing a task sooner than necessary, not accomplishing all things planned for this day. This result can be explained based on the study of Tuckman (1991), where he found that high-achieving students tend to engage in proactive behaviors, such as effective planning and task prioritization, which mitigate their tendency to procrastinate. Additionally, Jones and Blankenship (2021) findings imply that students who avoid delays and submit their work early tend to achieve higher grades implying a possible correlation with time management, thereby reducing the likelihood of engaging in procrastination. The overall level of procrastination among Dean's listers revealed moderate, inferring that academically achieved students tend to have an observable but manageable tendency to

procrastinate, which does not necessarily affect their academic performance. Therefore, lower procrastination is more likely to experience flow, which leads to better academic performance (Dewitte *et al.*, 2019).

4.2 Level of Self-Esteem among Dean's Listers

Shown in Table 2 are the mean and standard deviation scores for the level of self-esteem among Dean's Listers. The results show that the overall mean score of self-esteem ($\bar{x}$ =2.94, SD=0.63) indicates that the respondents have a moderate level of self-esteem. Among the results of the indicators of self-esteem, the indicator of *Appearance Self-Esteem* attained the highest mean ($\bar{x}$ =3.24, SD=0.75). On the contrary, the indicator *Social Self-Esteem* has the lowest mean ($\bar{x}$ =2.63, SD-0.97). Overall, these results indicate that Dean's listers have a moderate level of self-esteem, which is sometimes observed in 5 out of 10 instances.

Table 2: Level of Self-esteem among Dean's listers

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation
Performance Self-Esteem	2.95	0.64
Social Self-Esteem	2.63	0.97
Appearance Self-Esteem	3.24	0.75
Overall	**2.94**	**0.63**

Based on the results, among the indicators of Self-esteem, the academic achievers attained the highest mean score in the category of *Appearance Self-Esteem.* Behaviors such as feeling satisfied with the way their body looks, feeling that other people respect and admire them, being satisfied with their weight, feeling good about themselves, being pleased with their current appearance, and feeling attractive are statements that sometimes manifest among the respondents. Moreover, Jirdehi *et al.* (2018) stated that Self-esteem, including appearance self-esteem, leads to academic achievement due to its effect on learning and motivation to study and achieve academically. On the other hand, Javed and Khan (2018) expressed that academic achievement and high degrees in education enhance self-esteem, including appearance self-esteem, demonstrating that academic success not only contributes to positive self-perceptions in academic domains but also spills over into individuals' evaluations of their physical appearance.

On the contrary, the indicator which has the lowest level of self-esteem is the *Social Self-Esteem*. Items such as not worrying whether they are regarded as a success or a failure, not feeling self-conscious, feeling pleased with themselves, not worrying about what other people think of them, not being concerned about the impression they are making, not worrying about looking foolish. Furthermore, Gál *et al.* (2022) asserted that students who adhere to fixed intelligence beliefs, which are more prevalent in individualistic cultures, may experience greater self-esteem loss when facing failures or setbacks, as their self-worth is highly contingent on external validation.

The overall finding of Self-Esteem among Dean's listers revealed moderate, therefore manifests that academically achieved students tend to have moderate levels of self-esteem. Contrary, to the findings of Steinmayr *et al.* (2019) the self-esteem levels of students with academic honors were not significantly higher than those without honors. Student's self-esteem is influenced by various factors beyond academic success, such as social support, emotional exhaustion, and perception of self-worth. Thus, the relationship between academic achievement and self-esteem is not linear, and individuals with moderate self-esteem may have a balanced self-perception that considers multiple aspects of their lives and self-worth.

4.3 Level of Self-Handicapping among Dean's Listers

Shown in Table 3 are the mean and standard deviation scores for the level of self-handicapping among Dean's Listers. The results show that the overall mean score of self-handicapping ($\bar{x}$=2.69, SD=0.45) indicates that the respondents have a moderate level of self-handicapping. Among the results of the indicators of self-handicapping, the indicator *Failure to Control Condition* attained the highest mean score ($\bar{x}$=2.69, SD=0.64). On the other hand, the indicator *Problem Preparing an Activity* has the lowest mean score of ($\bar{x}$=2.52, SD=0.80). Overall, these results demonstrate that the Dean's Listers have a moderate level of self-handicapping which is sometimes observed in 5 out of 10 instances.

Table 3: Level of Self-Handicapping among Dean's Listers

Indicators	Mean	Std. Deviation
Behavioral Self-handicapping	2.67	0.50
Claimed Self-handicapping	2.73	0.77
Problem Preparing an Activity	2.52	0.60
Failure to Control Condition	2.83	0.68
Overall	**2.69**	**0.48**

In these findings, among all the indicators of self-handicapping, the respondents achieved the highest mean score in the category of *Failure to Control Condition*. Behaviors under this category include not completing school assignments because of the overburden of schoolwork, letting any type of interference in schoolwork, not remembering what was learned for the exams, suffering from headaches while studying, and getting tired when studying. Consequently, Fernandez-Garcia *et al.* (2022) expressed that academic achievers are pressured to maintain high standards and achieve perfection which creates a sense of internal control and motivation but can also result in emotional exhaustion and vulnerability to maladaptive behaviors, especially when coupled with excessive self-criticism.

Contrarily, the lowest level among the indicators is *Problem Preparing an Activity*, including items such as not maintaining enough energy level to carry on everyday work smoothly, getting mentally exhausted during exams, schoolwork getting affected due to fatigue, and appreciation for good work. Academic achievers often possess a high level of self-efficacy, confidence in their abilities, and a proactive approach to tasks, which

helps them navigate activities with ease and success, highlighting that self-efficacy also plays a crucial role in students' educational success and vice versa (Park, 2023). Thus, emphasizing that academic achievers have the least tendency to have a problem preparing for an activity. The overall finding for self-handicapping reveals that dean's listers have a neutral level of self-handicapping due to factors such as self-esteem and motivation. This is justified by Fadhli *et al.* (2021), who suggested that the relationship between self-handicapping and academic achievement is moderated by factors such as self-esteem and self-compassion, indicating that contextual factors play a significant role.

4.4 Relationship between Procrastination and Self-Handicapping

Shown in Table 4.1 are the outcomes of correlation analysis to identify the relationship between procrastination and self-handicapping. The Pearson-r analysis revealed a significant relationship (p = .000), and a strong positive correlation (r = 0.543). From the position of coefficient guidelines, this result manifests that there is a significant relationship between procrastination and self-handicapping, similar to the claims of Yildrim and Demir (2019) wherein procrastination has a positive correlation with self-handicapping and is the strongest predictor, followed by test anxiety, self-esteem, and self-compassion with self-handicapping. The findings imply that procrastination strongly correlates with self-handicapping.

Table 4.1: Relationship between Procrastination and Self-Handicapping

Procrastination	Self-Handicapping				
	Behavioral Self-Handicapping	**Claimed Self-Handicapping**	**Problem Preparing an Activity**	**Failure to Control Condition**	**Overall**
Good Planning	.629**	.206**	.375**	.540**	**.548**
Delaying Items	.226**	-0.51	.261**	.162*	**.175***
Doing Things in the Last Minute	.396**	.449*	.405*	.501*	**.580**
Good Time Management	.398**	.133	.258**	.405**	**.377**
Poor Time Management	-.187*	-.226**	-.142	-.257**	**-.257**
Overall	**.540**	**.229**	**.433**	**.514**	**.543**

*p<0.05 **p<0.01

The findings revealed that the indicator ranking first among the indicators of self-handicapping, *Behavioral Self-Handicapping* (p = .000, r = .540), is an indicator that has a strong correlation to procrastination. This implies that the significant relationship between *Behavioral Self-Handicapping* and Self-Handicapping indicates that Dean's Listers who tend to delay school projects until the last minute, intentionally avoid homework, spend excessive time on distractions rather than studying, and constantly strive for perfection have strong procrastination tendencies. Coudevylle *et al.* (2020) provide

support for the relationship between self-handicapping and procrastination and found that behavioral self-handicapping strategies were frequently reported by students in an academic context. This implies that behavioral self-handicapping, including procrastination, was the most commonly reported self-handicapping strategy among the participants in the study.

Subsequently, the indicator with the lowest score, *Claimed Self-Handicapping* (p = .003, r = .229), is an indicator that has a weak positive correlation to procrastination. However, a weak correlation suggests that the relationship between the two variables is not very strong. This shows that Dean's Listers who fail exams due to unforeseen circumstances, get very worried before exams, get study time as their parents force them into household work, get ill before an exam, and obstacles come their way whenever they try to study tend to procrastinate slightly more, but this relationship is not particularly strong. Kuftyak (2022) found that students who frequently encounter frustration, psychological stress, and various adverse environmental factors are significantly more susceptible to procrastination. These stressors manifest in a range of psychosomatic symptoms, including nervousness, headaches, fear, and anxiety, which collectively contribute to the likelihood of delaying tasks. However, while there is a relationship between Claimed Self-handicapping and procrastination, it is not strong, indicating that other factors may also influence procrastination tendencies.

On the other hand, the indicator with the highest rank in procrastination, *Doing things in the last minute* (p = .000, r = .580), is an indicator that has a strong positive correlation to self-handicapping. This implies that the significant relationship between *Doing things in the last minute* and Self-Handicapping indicates that Dean's Listers who tend to forget to prepare things for studying and have doubts about their ability have strong self-handicapping tendencies. Van Eerde and Klingsieck (2018) examined the role of self-regulation in procrastination and found that cognitive deficits specific to each phase of self-regulation, including planning and prioritizing, concentrating on the task at hand, and low self-efficacy, contribute to procrastination. This implies that *Doing things in the last minute* is positively correlated with self-handicapping.

Conversely, the indicator that ranked last, *Delaying Items* (p = .023, r = .175), is an indicator that has a weak positive correlation to self-handicapping. However, a weak correlation suggests that the relationship between the two variables is not very strong. This shows that Dean's Listers who tend not to make decisions as soon as possible, prefer not to leave early for an appointment, not finish a task sooner than necessary, and not accomplish all things planned for this day have weak self-handicapping tendencies. Khaneghahi *et al.* (2022) found that learners who use self-regulatory learning strategies are less likely to commit self-handicapping. In simple terms, while there is a tendency for Dean's Listers who delay items to also exhibit some degree of self-handicapping behavior, this relationship is not particularly strong.

4.5 Relationship between Self-Esteem and Self-Handicapping

Shown in Table 4.2 are the outcomes of correlation analysis to identify the relationship between self-esteem and self-handicapping. The Pearson-r analysis revealed a significant relationship ($p = .000$), and a negative moderate correlation ($r = -0.422$). From the position of coefficient guidelines, this result manifests that there is a significant negative relationship between self-esteem and self-handicapping, similar to the studies of Yildrim and Demir (2019), Del Mar Ferradas *et al.* (2018), and Curtis (2017), which also identified a significant negative correlation between self-esteem and self-handicapping. The findings imply that self-esteem negatively correlates with the self-handicapping abilities of teacher education dean's lister students.

Table 4.2: Relationship between Self-Esteem and Self-Handicapping

Self-Esteem	Self-Handicapping				
	Behavioral Self-Handicapping	Claimed Self-Handicapping	Problem Preparing an Activity	Failure to Control Condition	Overall
Performance Self-Esteem	-.268**	-.305**	-.343**	-.300**	**-.400****
Social Self-Esteem	-.240**	-.391**	-.253**	-.312**	**-.403****
Appearance Self-Esteem	-.180*	-.170*	-.145	-.130	**-.204****
Overall	**-.285****	**-.371****	**-.302****	**-.312****	**-.422****

*$p<0.05$ **$p<0.01$.

The findings revealed that the first-ranked indicator in self-handicapping, *Claimed Self-Handicapping* ($p = .000$, $r = -.371$), is an indicator that has a moderate negative correlation with self-esteem. It shows that Dean's Listers who fail exams due to unforeseen circumstances, get very worried before exams, get study time as their parents force them into household work, get ill before an exam, and obstacles come their way whenever they try to study are likely to have lower levels of self-esteem. This suggests that there is a noticeable but not extremely strong relationship between the two variables. This affirms the research findings from Kaya and Uztork (2020), which show that self-handicapping behaviors were negatively correlated with self-esteem, meaning that higher levels of self-handicapping were associated with lower levels of self-esteem.

In addition, the lowest indicator, *Behavioral Self-Handicapping* ($p = .000$, $r = -0.285$), is an indicator that has a weak negative correlation with self-esteem. This implies that the significant relationship between *Behavioral Self-Handicapping* to Self-Esteem indicates that Dean's Listers who tend to delay school projects until the last minute, intentionally avoid homework, spend excessive time on distractions rather than studying, and constantly strive for perfection have lower levels of self-esteem. Borg *et al.* (2022) found that self-handicapping strategies, such as delaying tactics and avoidance, were negatively correlated with self-esteem, indicating that students with lower self-esteem were more likely to engage in self-handicapping behaviors. However, while the correlation is

statistically significant, the strength of the relationship between the two variables is considered weak.

Moreover, the findings revealed that the first-ranked indicator in self-esteem is *Performance Self-Esteem* (p = .000, r = -.403), which has a strong negative correlation to self-handicapping. It shows that Dean's Listers who feel confident about their abilities, do not feel frustrated or rattled about their performance, do not have trouble understanding things they read, do not feel that they have less scholastic ability than others, and do not feel like they are doing well have a lower level of self-handicapping behavior. Acosta-Gonzaga (2023) found that students who demonstrate a high level of commitment tend to exhibit a range of positive behaviors. These students consistently pay attention in class, actively participate in their activities, show genuine interest and enthusiasm for their coursework, and even derive enjoyment from their educational experiences. The study implies that students who attain high levels of academic performance, such as those on the Dean's List, possess higher performance self-esteem and consequently engage in lower levels of self-handicapping behavior.

Concurrently, the lowest indicator is *Appearance Self-Esteem* (p = .008, r = -.204), which has a weak negative correlation to self-handicapping. This implies that the significant relationship between *Appearance Self-Esteem* to Self-handicapping indicates that Dean's Listers who tend to feel satisfied with the way their body looks, feel that other people respect and admire them, are satisfied with their weight, feel good about themselves, are pleased with their current appearance, and feel attractive have lower level of self-handicapping behavior. Liu and Wang (2020) found that self-esteem was negatively correlated with self-handicapping behavior, meaning that higher self-esteem was associated with lower levels of self-handicapping behavior. This implies that individuals with high self-esteem use self-handicapping strategies less often than those with low self-esteem, as they have a more positive self-image and are less concerned about managing the implications of potential failures.

4.6 Procrastination Indicators as Predictors for Self-handicapping

Table 5.1 illustrates the regression analysis of procrastination as a predictor for self-handicapping among Dean's listers. The regression analysis results indicate that the model is statistically significant with p-values at .000 and shows a 45.1% variance in self-handicapping behavior. Moreover, the findings suggest that F=26.446, which signifies the overall significance of the regression model. The values underscore that procrastinatory indicators collectively have a significant relationship with self-handicapping.

Table 5.1: Procrastination Indicators as Predictors for Self-handicapping

Model	B	S.E	*B*	t	p	R2	F	p
(Constant)	1.673	.221		7.583	.000			
Good Planning	.162	.044	.286	3.674	.000			
Delaying Items	.011	.041	.018	.271	.787	.451	26.446	.000
Doing Things in the Last Minute	.197	.033	.394	5.884	.000			
Good Time Management	.070	.056	.091	1.244	.215			
Poor Time Management	-.088	.053	-.105	-1.666	.098			

p<0.05 p<0.01.

The table shows that the indicator that emerged as the most significant predictor is *Doing Things in the Last Minute* (B= 0.197, t= 5.884, p=0.000). This suggests that as the tendency to procrastinate increases, so does the likelihood of engaging in self-handicapping behaviors. Furthermore, this implies that Dean's listers who procrastinate by doing things at the last minute are more likely to engage in self-handicapping behaviors, and it also suggests that they are more likely to forget to prepare for significant studying matters and are more doubtful of their abilities. These behaviors are manifested to excuse potential poor performance. Correspondingly, Atoum (2019) asserted that self-handicapping increases in threatening situations, which impact the student's self-esteem, results in poor performance. On the other hand, other indicators, such as *Delaying Items, Good Time Management, and Poor Time Management* are not significant predictors of self-handicapping. This indicates that these indicators are not influential contributors to explaining self-handicapping behaviors among Dean's listers.

The significant positive relationship between the influential indicator *Doing Things in the Last Minute* and self-handicapping necessitates the need to formulate interventions encouraging Dean's listers to not rush or cram tasks. Rad *et al.,* (2023) argued that mindfulness training, such as self-reflection can be beneficial for self-regulation, which lessens procrastinatory tendencies and increases self-awareness. Moreover, learning time management skills, becoming more aware of the damaging effects of procrastination, acquiring effective study habits or techniques, gaining confidence in one's abilities, and seeking support from a counseling professional can lessen self-handicapping tendencies. These findings spotlight the significance of combating procrastinatory tendencies that encourage self-handicapping behaviors and enabling academic achievers to mitigate the adverse effects of performing acts that will hinder academic achievement.

4.7 Self-esteem Indicators as Predictors for Self-handicapping

Table 5.2 shows the regression analysis of self-esteem indicators as predictors for self-handicapping among Dean's listers. The results of the regression analysis indicate that the model is statistically significant with p-values at .000 and accounts for 21.2% of the variance in self-handicapping. Additionally, the findings show that F=14.646 expresses the overall significance of the regression model. The mentioned values highlight that the indicators of self-esteem demonstrate a significant relationship with self-handicapping.

Table 5.2: Self-esteem Indicators as Predictors for Self-handicapping

Model	B	S.E	*B*	t	p	R2	F	p
(Constant)	3.613	.187		19.313	.000			
Performance Self-esteem	-.202	.063	-.264	-3.195	.002	.212	14.646	.000
Social Self-esteem	-.138	.044	-.274	-3.166	.002			
Appearance Self-esteem	.012	.051	.019	.234	.815			

p<0.05 p<0.01.

The table shows that the most influential indicator is *Performance Self-Esteem* (*B*= -.264, t= -3.195, & p = .002). This conveys that the indicator is a significant predictor of self-handicapping behavior and implies that Dean's listers with higher levels of performance self-esteem are less likely to engage in self-handicapping behaviors. This spotlights the idea that as performance self-esteem increases, tendencies to engage in self-handicapping decrease. The outcome asserts that fostering positive perceptions of one's abilities may reduce self-handicapping tendencies among Dean's Listers. Being awarded academic accolades can positively impact students' academic performance. More so, Suppan and Gerber (2021) claimed that students who achieve a Dean's List status tend to perform better with the positive reinforcement of excellence, which can influence students' self-perception and motivation, and reduce self-handicapping behaviors. On the other hand, Appearance Self-Esteem is the least influential indicator to predict self-handicapping behaviors among Dean's listers. The indicator illustrates a small positive coefficient. However, it is not statistically significant with a p-value at .825, implying that it does not have a meaningful influence on self-handicapping. This suggests that Dean's listers' confidence in their appearance does not significantly influence their tendency to engage in self-handicapping.

The negative relationship between performance self-esteem and self-handicapping among academic achievers necessitates further improvement and reinforcement. Lisnyj *et al.* (2021) asserted that exposure to a healthy environment, creating bonds, and positive feedback, can foster a healthier outlook, alleviating academic stress and elevating both performance and social self-esteem. More so, practical applications such as workplace training, where individuals are exposed to professional development that focuses on performance enhancement and team-building activities, can be undertaken to improve confidence and reduce the likelihood of self-handicapping.

4.8 Procrastination and Self-Esteem as Predictors for Self-handicapping

Table 5.3 illustrates the regression analysis of procrastination and self-esteem as predictors for self-handicapping. The results exhibit that procrastination and self-esteem as predictors effectively predict the self-handicapping tendencies among Dean's listers. The R-Square value of 0.346 implies that approximately 34.6% of the variance in self-handicapping is explained by both procrastination and self-esteem. Suggesting that both procrastination and self-esteem are significant factors in understanding self-handicapping tendencies among Dean's listers. Moreover, the F-statistics stands at 43.381

indicating that the involvement of procrastination and self-esteem enhances the predictive capacity in determining self-handicapping tendencies among Dean's listers.

Table 5.3: Procrastination and Self-Esteem as Predictors for Self-handicapping

Model	B	S.E	*B*	t	p	R2	F	p
(Constant)	1.939	.303		6.410	.000			
Procrastination	.470	.073	.446	6.483	.000	.346	43.381	.000
Self-esteem	-.189	.053	-.245	-3.567	.000			

p<0.05 p<0.01.

The results show that both procrastination and self-esteem are proven to be significant predictors of self-handicapping as seen in the p-values of .000. The outcomes reveal that higher levels of procrastination are associated with increased levels of self-handicapping tendencies among Dean's listers as indicated by the positive coefficient of 0.470. This suggests, that as procrastinatory behavior increases, self-handicapping tendencies also increase. Correspondingly, Shamsnezhad *et al.* (2020) asserted that the positive correlation between procrastination and self-handicapping indicates that procrastinatory habits are contributory behaviors that fuel self-handicapping that can lead to test anxiety and low achievement motivations. Similarly, Chen and Zhang (2023) affirmed that students' poor self-perception and high procrastinatory behaviors are triggering factors that enable students to undertake self-handicapping behaviors. Additionally, Malobabic (2018) asserted that self-handicapping in achievement areas harbors a positive association with procrastination. This entails that procrastination, as a predictor for self-handicapping, has an influential impact among Dean's listers.

On the other lens, the inclusion of self-esteem deepened the findings. The negative coefficient for self-esteem, with a value of -0.189 highlights the protective role of self-esteem and exhibits a negative relationship between self-handicapping. This shows that higher levels of self-esteem are associated with lower levels of self-handicapping tendencies among Dean's listers. Bae *et al.* (2022) argued that the negative association between self-esteem and self-handicapping can significantly impact the respondents' self-worth. Hence, it is pivotal that Dean's listers practice positive coping mechanisms such as practicing mindfulness and seeking help to reduce self-handicapping behaviors and improve self-esteem.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study delved into the relationship between procrastination, self-esteem, and self-handicapping among dean's listers. Findings revealed a moderate procrastination level, with specific indicators such as *Doing things in the last minute* as the highest mean among indicators exhibiting varying impacts, revealing that the respondents sometimes engage in procrastination. In addition, the dean's listers demonstrated moderate self-esteem levels with the indicator *Appearance Self-esteem* as the highest mean among all indicators. Additionally, the findings show moderate self-handicapping levels of the respondents,

which reveal that dean's lister sometimes engages in self-handicapping. Furthermore, the results suggest that procrastination has a strong positive correlation with self-handicapping among respondents, while self-esteem has a moderate negative correlation with self-esteem. Additionally, regression analyses revealed that procrastination and self-esteem are significant predictors of self-handicapping, with procrastination indicated by the positive coefficient while self-esteem is indicated by the negative coefficient, exhibiting a negative relationship between self-handicapping, highlighting the significant correlation and predictive roles of procrastination and self-esteem to self-handicapping among dean's listers

The result of the study rejects the null hypothesis posited among the relationships of procrastination, self-esteem, and self-handicapping. In contrast with the null hypothesis, the result reveals a strong positive correlation between procrastination and self-handicapping, and a moderate negative correlation between self-esteem and self-handicapping. Moreover, the regression analysis identifies that procrastination and self-esteem significantly predicted the self-handicapping tendencies among dean's listers, underscoring the relationship of the predictors to self-handicapping. This study offers knowledge to educational institutions to bring the necessary support to students who need to overcome this behavior. The alignment between the theoretical framework and the result of this research emphasizes its practicality, highlighting the importance of employing interventions to address the self-handicapping tendencies among dean's listers.

To attain a better understanding of procrastination among high-achieving students, it is contributory to consider a thorough analysis of contextual factors and personal differences that affect procrastination, such as task nature, personality traits, and motivation. Moreover, there is a need for more studies on self-esteem's multidimensionality among Dean's listers, considering academic self-efficacy and its role in determining whether the student will engage in procrastination or self-handicapping. Also, consider how academic stress, perfectionism, and achievement motivation influence the development of self-handicapping behaviors in individuals with exceptional academic performance. Creating interventions aimed at curbing procrastination and improving self-esteem that are specific to Deans' listers can be helpful in this regard. Additionally, the researchers recommend conducting longitudinal studies to establish what effect procrastination, self-esteem, and self-handicapping have on the overall growth of students with good grades at school as well as beyond the academic context and future research endeavors in this area should consider a multifaceted or a mixed-method approach to capture the complexity of procrastination, self-esteem, and self-handicapping behaviors among Dean's listers.

To gain a profound understanding of the interplay between the variables, it is best to expand the number of respondents. The respondents of this study stand at 167, which constitutes a limitation. Therefore, the researchers propose that the investigation concerning this field of study should expand to the extent of the inquiry by incorporating a great number of respondents. By addressing the gaps identified in the current literature

and building upon the rich insights provided by this study, researchers can further develop our understanding of the psychological processes underlying academic achievement and well-being among high-achieving students, ultimately informing evidence-based interventions and support services tailored to their unique needs.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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