Personal Enjoyment And Pleasure As Reasons Of Procrastination

Procrastination is defined as an irrational tendency to delay tasks that should be completed (Lay, 1986). Everyone puts things off sometimes, but procrastinators keep avoiding continuously and keep looking for distractions. We all make similar situations every now and then. Like that time when you didn't sleep the whole night just to finish the research paper in social science or that time when you watched movies all day even though you had a bunch of work to be done. We all procrastinate sooner or later. Procrastination is one of those matters everybody has a little background with. Irrespective of how self-disciplined you are, you have sometimes found yourself wasting your time on trivial pursuits, while you must have been spending that time on school or work-related tasks. There is this "I don't feel like it" saying that takes precedence over goals. Procrastinating keeps us away from reaching our potential. "Things may come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle."-Abraham Lincoln. But, what leads us to procrastination?

The science of the mind of a human being is complicated. There are many reasons which make a person procrastinate. Researchers claim that the issue can be especially seen among students. Almost 25 to 75 percent of the students in university procrastinate on their assignments and home-works. A study was carried on in 2007, which showed that 80 to 95 percent of university students procrastinated on regular basis, especially when it came to completing home-works and assignments. Dilatoriness is one of the top reasons why students and Ph.D. candidates fail in completing their term thesis. However, it is not just student who procrastinate. Also adults fall into the "I will do it later" trap. Many researchers have attempted to understand the causes of procrastination. Researchers Grund and Fries found that there is a positive relationship between procrastination and orientation to personal enjoyment and well-being. This means that people put things off because they do not want to go out of the comfort zone and deal with nasty tasks, so they chose to delay and postpone these difficult tasks till the last minute.

Other researchers, Burka and Yuen (1983), claimed that procrastinators put unrealistic demands on themselves. They observed that procrastinators have very similar characteristics with perfectionists.

Theory:

The initial hypothesis of this study would be that personal enjoyment and pleasure is one of the reasons of why people procrastinate. People do not like difficult tasks, so it is simpler to postpone them till the deadline. In fact, there is far more science behind procrastination than we think. In the last years, researchers and scientists all over the world have asked the question: what is it in the mind of human that encourages us to take away the things that are really important for us?

The second hypothesis would be that procrastination is a sign of perfectionism. But, what is perfectionism? Perfectionism is a personality trait that is characterized by a person's struggles

to achieve high standards, accompanied by critical self-evaluations and concerns regarding others' evaluations. Perfectionists tend to have very high expectations from themselves. They focus on the results of everything they do and those results must be successful. Everything they do must be perfect. Perfectionists are not satisfied easily because they think that there is always more to do and accomplish. They are the harshest critics of themselves. It is good to be a high demanding person because it helps you to improve yourself as much as possible but, perfection does not exist. Moreover, perfectionism is not necessary in day to day life, unless you are a brain surgeon. Looking at the definition of perfectionism, we think, - how can perfectionism be related with procrastination? Well, they are two totally different traits that connect at one point, fear. Perfectionists fear being unable to complete a task perfectly, so they prefer to put it off as long as possible (Flett, Hewitt, Blankstein, & Mosher, 1991; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984).

Findings:

The human brain is designed to procrastinate at some point or another. We can imagine the entire mechanism like a war that has been set off among the two parts of the brain, when it deals with difficult and tiring tasks. It is a conflict among the limbic system (the unconscious region which includes the centre of the comfort and pleasure) and the prefrontal cortex (the inside "coordinator"). When the limbic system takes precedence over the prefrontal cortex, which is very usual, the result is delaying and postponing for later what must have been done earlier. It is useless to criticize your procrastination habits or horoscope. Your choice to postpone and delay everything till the last minute comes from a very simple thing – the electrification of your brain.

The other significant trait for a procrastinator is whether the person is a perfectionist or not. Some studies made by Solomon and Rothblum (1984) and by Ferrary (1992) have suggested that there is a link between perfectionism and procrastination. Fear of failure is one of components of procrastination (Rothblum, Solomon, & Murakami, 1986; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984).

People think that procrastination is bad, but perfectionism is fine. This way of thinking is wrong. Neither of them is actually fine. They tend to appear together forming an infinite loop that can destroy your psychology and can stop you to reach your goals. Perfectionists fear not being able to meet their goals because according to them, if they do not meet the goals mean that there is something wrong with them. The more they fear failure, the more they procrastinate. Procrastination is not just laziness. Sometimes, when you have a difficult task to complete, it takes a long time. This is not because it really needs a long time to be completed, but because you keep thinking about it repeatedly. So, it takes less time to do the task than to think about it. There are several reasons of why people procrastinate, but the most common ones are fear of imperfection and lack of self-confidence. These two reasons are related with perfectionism. As I said before, it forms an infinite loop. Why do people return to the same cycle if they know the result of that cycle? Well, they return to that same cycle because that is simply what they know. But, it is very important to break the loop, because perfectionism, which leads to procrastination as well, is the worst enemy of productivity and creativity. Moreover, it is not only the enemy that stops you from reaching your goals, it is also the enemy of your health. Thinking too much about the outcome of something, which must be perfect and successful according to perfectionists, leads to constant stress. This stress weakens your body and causes health problems like insomnia or digestive problems. It causes mental health problems as well. When

the loop is broken, you will understand how much easier the tasks really are and how little time they really need to be completed.

There was research which was conducted on about 130 students that had to complete surveys related to procrastination. This research showed that socially prescribed perfectionism was very closely related with both academic procrastination and generalized procrastination. To sum up, the study suggested that procrastination can come from the anticipation of social disapproval from individuals with perfectionistic standards for others. In other words, procrastinators keep avoiding and putting things off till the deadline because they fear the judgment of other.