

## **Academic Procrastination in Language Learning: Adolescent Learners’ Perspectives**

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### **Abstract**

Despite the abundance of studies investigating the impact of academic procrastination on several aspects of learning, less is known about how this construct is perceived by adolescent foreign language learners with different levels of academic procrastination and their reasons to delay tasks and potential suggestions to reduce it. This study was designed to find out the academic procrastination behaviors of 136 learners aged 11-12. Additionally, another major aim was to find out how the participants’ reasons to procrastinate and suggestions to reduce it differed according to gender and their academic procrastination level. The participants were divided into three groups as low, average, and high procrastinators considering their mean scores on the academic procrastination scale. A focus group interview was conducted with 12 learners to create a list of reasons, replacement activities, and suggestions. The findings indicated that all three groups followed a similar academic procrastination behavior pattern. However, in terms of reasons, while boys preferred playing computer games as a replacing activity, girls were more inclined to read books. Some suggestions were also provided by the learners to reduce it. The study provides implications for teachers, parents, and learners.

**Keywords:** *Academic Procrastination, Adolescent Learners, Differences between Academic Procrastinators, Foreign Language Learning, Gender-based Differences*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Almost everyone has tasks and responsibilities to fulfill in several areas of their life. However, due to various reasons, it is a frequently observed phenomenon that the tasks or responsibilities to be fulfilled are postponed to the last moment. It is so prevalent that in some cases it becomes a way of life for some people (Steel, 2007). However, although simply delaying what has to be done at a later date may take place in everyone’s life, procrastination

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has become a modern illness appearing in both developed and developing countries (Milgram & Tenne, 2000).

Procrastination is regarded as the difference between people's intentions and actual behaviors. There is a positive correlation between this difference and the procrastination level (Schraw et al., 2007). It is considered a stable personality trait bringing negative consequences (Choi & Moran, 2009). From this point of view, it can easily be assumed that people may show the same characteristics in their academic life through having a tendency to intentionally postpone academic tasks (Steel, 2007).

Students of all ages, degrees, and all educational institutions show academic procrastination behavior to some extent. The ratio of the students defining themselves as procrastinators reaches up to 80% (Steel, 2007). However, despite the high ratio, procrastination causes stress and various illnesses in the long term despite the short-term pleasure it provides (Tice & Baumeister, 1997). Hence, 95% of the procrastinators are willing to reduce it somehow (O'Brien, 2002). Although people tend to reduce it, procrastination levels of the people are reported to show consistency across time (McCloskey, 2011). In relation to this fact, studies have proved that one out of five adults suffers from chronic procrastination (Klassen, et al., 2008).

Procrastination, especially in the context of education, may be seriously decisive for students' academic success as it is mostly considered a substantial hindrance to learners' academic achievement (Scher & Osterman, 2002). On account of its prevalence and significantly negative impact, the relationship between academic procrastination and several other constructs has been investigated in the research studies so far, such as achievement in science (Bezi & Sungur Vural, 2013) and research methods (Jiao et al., 2011), burnout (Balkis, 2013), assignment and test performance (Yılmaz, 2017), motivation (Klassen & Kuzucu, 2009). Language learning is not exceptional in this context. Studies conducted so far have provided negative correlations between academic procrastination and academic achievement in language learning (Akpur, 2017; Aydoğan & Akbarov, 2018). A negative correlation was also found between academic procrastination and motivation to learn a foreign language (Bekleyen, 2017). However, surprisingly, it is also among the results that the level of academic procrastination of individuals increases as their language proficiency increases (Lowinger et al., 2016).

Apart from providing students' academic procrastination level and its potential relationship with some other constructs, several researchers have also worked on the solutions for academic procrastination (Davis & Abbitt, 2013; Xu, 2015; Yeşil, 2012). Suggestions, such as encouraging students' active participation in the lesson, easy use of library and internet resources, providing students with the methods of studying, the opportunity of having a study room for the student (Yeşil, 2012), increasing tasks' importance and appeal, using effective grading systems and some applications for smartphone and tablets (Xu, 2015), and SMS (Davis & Abbitt, 2013) have been put forward.

However, the participants of the majority of the studies mentioned above have been adults or university students. Perspectives of adolescents concerning academic procrastination have been ignored, and they have been the concern of only a few researchers (Korkmaz et al., 2018). A brief literature review reveals the gap in the related literature regarding academic procrastination among adolescents and their potential suggestions about how to reduce it. Considering this fact, this study attempts to bridge this gap to fully understand adolescents' (aged 11-12) procrastination levels and their suggestions to reduce it.

### **Academic Procrastination**

Procrastination is defined as “the act of needlessly delaying tasks to the point of experiencing subjective discomfort” (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984, p. 503). As it is so common in the life of people, there are different types of procrastination listed in the relevant literature. Life routine procrastination referring to the difficulty in managing the daily routine tasks (Lay, 1986) and compulsive procrastination meaning deferring tasks and decisions (Ferrari, 1991) are among these types. Following these two types, the most prevalent types are decisional procrastination (Ferrari & Dovidio, 2000) appearing in the case of choosing among the alternatives in complex and conflict situations, and academic procrastination emerging in academic settings where students, for one reason or another, postpone or dilatorily act on their academic tasks, such as writing a term paper, getting ready for tests, preparing their assignments, reading, and doing administrative and attendance tasks (Schowuenburg et al., 2004; Uzun Özer et al., 2009).

Although procrastination, in general, is considered to be a personality trait (Ferrari et al., 1995), the people who are not inclined to defer their daily tasks or decisions may procrastinate in academic tasks due to several reasons, such as study habits, underestimating the deadlines, or the idea that they can easily accomplish the task (McCloskey, 2011). This fact reveals the difference in academic procrastination from which a great number of students suffer. Although particular emphasis is given to university students’ academic procrastination due to its being extremely common among these learners (McCloskey, 2011; Uzun Özer & Saçkes, 2011), it can be observed among students of all ages (McCloskey, 2011).

The factors influencing this construct have been investigated in the literature by several researchers (Burka & Yuen, 1983; Solomon & Rothblum, 1984; Uzun Özer et al., 2009; Visser et al., 2018). Individuals’ cognitive processes, evaluation anxiety, problems in taking a decision, perfectionist expectations (Burka & Yuen, 1983), fear of failure and task aversiveness (Solomon & Rothblum, 1984), risk taking, laziness, rebellion against control (Uzun Özer et al., 2009) are among the factors affecting one’s academic procrastination. Steel (2007, 2010) makes it clear that learners delay a task specifically when one of the following issues come true: low possibility of being successful, no potential expectation of joy and value, and the long time between the task completion and meaningful benefit they will receive out of it. Internet is also considered to be an important factor affecting academic procrastination with its games, applications, and entertaining content (Thatcher et al., 2008). Maladaptive thoughts and reduced hopefulness were other constructs that were associated with academic procrastination (McCown et al., 2012).

As academic procrastination is so prevalent in students’ life, the number of scholars associating the relevance of this construct with others is rather high. Nevertheless, language learning and language learners’ academic procrastination appear to be neglected in the related literature although it requires fulfilling several tasks during which the possibility of delaying tasks may increase. Despite this fact, the scarcity of studies investigating language learners’ academic procrastination can easily be detected (Bekleyen, 2017). In one of these rare studies, Bekleyen (2017) investigated 313 freshmen studying English at university in their first year. The relationship among academic procrastination, gender, age, satisfaction with the major, and self-reported motivation of the students was examined. The results indicated a negative correlation between motivation and academic procrastination, and males reported to procrastinate more than females.

In another study, Akpur (2017) examined academic procrastination and its relationships with academic achievement in language learning, foreign language classroom anxiety, and motivation. Data gathered from 211 university first-year students indicated a significant negative relationship between motivation and academic procrastination; and academic achievement in language learning and academic procrastination. A negative correlation was also found between self-reported English proficiency and English grades of 213 university students and their academic procrastination in the study by Aydoğan and Akbarov (2018). Academic procrastination of EFL learners was found to be positively and negatively correlated with extrinsic and intrinsic motivation to learn a foreign language respectively in their study.

Similar to the scarcity of studies on academic procrastination in relation to language learning, there are also a very limited number of studies investigating self-reported solutions or suggestions with regard to academic procrastination although 95% of the procrastinators are willing to reduce it in general (O'Brien, 2002). One of the studies aiming to come up with some suggestions to reduce academic procrastination examines the views of 691 freshmen and senior students studying in different majors at an education faculty of a university in Turkey (Yeşil, 2012). The data gathered through a scale indicated that the techniques ensuring students' active participation in class, the opportunity for students to easily use internet sources and library, possessing a study room of their own, the opportunity for students to ask questions and express their ideas in class, informing students about how to study, and mentioning some examples from teachers' study habits are among the suggestions.

Interestingly, the scarcity of studies investigating language learners' academic procrastination is even more apparent in the context of adolescents. Although it has been reported to be observed with students of all ages (McCloskey, 2011), the main focus of academic procrastination studies has been university students, and the case with the younger learners has been partly investigated (Klassen & Kuzucu, 2009; Korkmaz et al., 2018). Yet, these studies were out of the context of language learning.

One of these studies (Korkmaz et al., 2018) examining academic procrastination of 496 Turkish sixth, seventh, and eighth graders diagnosed as gifted and not gifted showed a negative correlation between academic achievement and academic procrastination for not gifted learners. Their results also illustrated a positive relationship between academic procrastination and self-efficacy and the locus of control of gifted learners. Another study was designed to find out the academic procrastination and motivational variables in adolescents studying in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh grades in a state secondary school (Klassen & Kuzucu, 2009). No difference was reported in terms of gender in their academic procrastination. Self-regulation was found to be the strongest predictor of academic procrastination. Writing was the task on which both genders procrastinated the most. Whereas the most preferred activities by male students while procrastinating included getting something to eat and drink, playing computer games, and going online for web surfing; they were reading books and magazines, getting something to eat and drink, and talking with friends for girls.

Procrastination appears as a troubling issue that does not only create problems for the procrastinators but also affects the lives of other people who rely on them (Steel & Ferrari, 2013). The only advantage it provides is for the procrastinator to keep away from stress by deferring tasks and to obtain a short-term relief (Boice, 1996). Although this construct has mostly been notorious, the pressure stemming from deferring tasks may also improve performance (Kim & Seo, 2013). Despite the abundance of studies investigating academic procrastination, another neglected aspect concerning this construct is the categorization of participants according to their levels of procrastination (Visser et al., 2018). In one of these rare studies in which participants were categorized according to their academic procrastination

levels, Visser et al. (2018) compared learning characteristics and self-regulation behaviors of three groups of freshmen students studying in teacher education programs. Six themes were found as the results of the analysis of the interviews. The factors leading to academic procrastination behavior among average-level procrastinators were found to be different from the ones with high or low-level procrastinators.

Though much is known about the factors influencing academic procrastination, especially in the university level, less is known and investigated about how these factors and potential suggestions to reduce academic procrastination differ for various adolescent learners procrastinating in different levels. Considering this fact, to our knowledge, this study is the first study to investigate adolescents' academic procrastination behaviors, the reasons for it, the activities taking place during procrastination, and their self-reported suggestions to reduce academic procrastination in the context of EFL categorizing these learners as low, average, and high academic procrastinators. The research questions that guide the present study are as follows:

1. What are the academic procrastination perceptions of low, average, and high academic procrastinators in language learning?
2. Are there any gender-based differences among the students with low, average, and high levels of academic procrastination in terms of the reasons for academic procrastination, replacement activities, and suggestions to decrease it in language learning?

## **METHODS**

### **Participants**

Participants were 136 adolescents (aged 11-12) studying in sixth and seventh grades in an urban public school situated in the western region of Turkey. These students have been taught English by the same English teacher since they started sixth and seventh grades. The participants started learning English in second grade. Sixth graders had three, seventh graders had four hours of weekly English classes (40 minutes each).

### **Data Collection**

The students' academic procrastination was measured with the adapted version of the scale developed by Çakıcı (2003) including 19 (12 negative and 7 positive) items. The adaptation of this scale was implemented by adding 'English' to all items in this scale to limit the context and let the students think of their procrastination behavior specifically in the context of English language learning. As for this, a sample item "I study for my lessons regularly" was transformed into "I study for my English lesson regularly". The students were supposed to choose one of the five options ranging from '1- never true of me' to '5-extremely true of me'. Those choosing '1-never true of me' get 1, and those choosing '5-extremely true of me' get 5 points. The high score obtained from the scale shows that students are academic procrastinators. The scale was originally developed in Turkish, and it was administered in Turkish in this study.

To ensure the reliability and validity of the scale, some steps have been taken. First, two experts in the field of language learning were consulted to ensure face validity. Their suggestions were taken into consideration for the wording of the items. Second, a pilot test was administered with the participation of 30 participants who were not involved in the main study.

Students' understanding of the items was checked during this study. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency of the scale was found to be 0.817.

To know what level of academic procrastination the students experience just one week before their first English test, all students' (N = 136; 61 males, 75 females) academic procrastination was measured with the adapted version of Çakıcı's academic procrastination scale (2003). The outcomes of the students were ranked and classified into three groups in line with their mean scores on this scale. The descriptive statistics run on the data showed that the difference between the student with the lowest mean score ( $M = 1.16$ ) and the student with the highest mean score ( $M = 3.74$ ) was found to be 2.58. This score was divided into three and the result (0.86) was added to the lowest mean score ( $M = 1.16$ ) and subtracted from the highest mean score ( $M = 3.74$ ). As a result of the calculations, the students were categorized into three academic procrastination levels. The mean score ranges were from 1.16 to 2.02 for the low procrastinators, from 2.03 to 2.88 for the average procrastinators, and 2.89 to 3.74 for the high procrastinators. The information regarding the distribution of the gender and academic procrastination mean scores of students across the groups is provided in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Distribution of Genders and Mean Scores across the Academic Procrastination Levels

Academic procrastination	Gender					
	Female			Male		
group	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Low	26	1.70	.246	22	1.63	.226
Average	37	2.39	.238	31	2.39	.228
High	12	3.13	.227	8	3.28	.341
Total	75	2.27	.544	61	2.23	.59

Following the analysis and grouping of the participants, a focus group interview was conducted with the participation of 12 students (6 males, 6 females). These students (2 males, 2 females) were chosen from each procrastination level. During the interview, three descriptive questions were asked. The students' perspectives regarding the reasons why they procrastinate for their English studies, the activities they do while procrastinating, and their potential suggestions to reduce procrastination were gathered.

The items (7 items for reasons, 7 items for activities while procrastinating, 6 items for suggestions) generated from the students' responses were listed and pilot tested with the participation of 30 participants. With slight modifications, the items were distributed to the same group of students (N = 136).

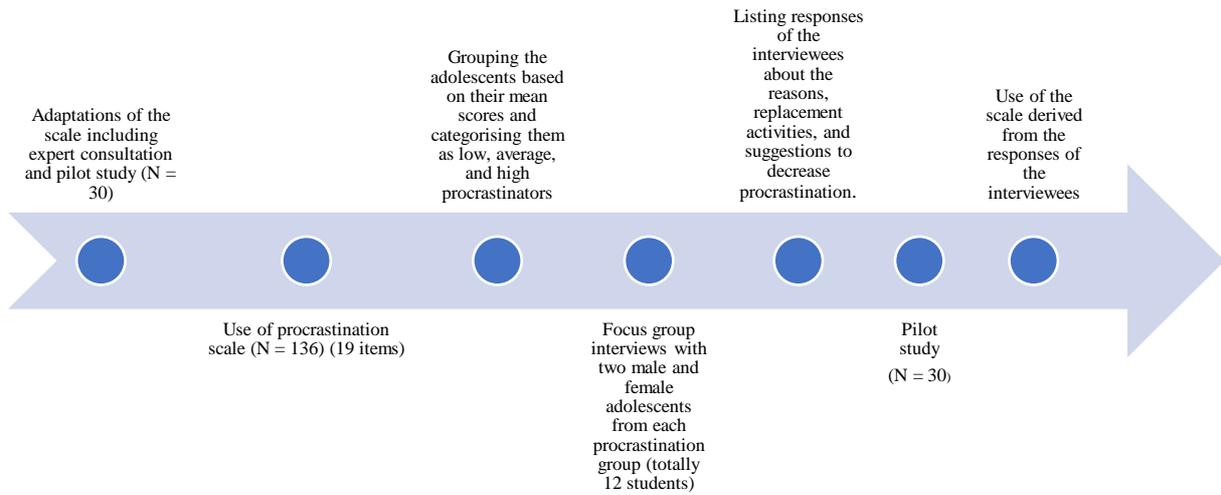


Figure 1. Flowchart of the Study Design

### Data Analysis

For the analysis, first, descriptive statistics were run to group learners into three procrastination levels. After the grouping phase, frequency and percentages were found for the participants' responses regarding the reasons for procrastination, the activities they do while procrastinating, and their suggestions to reduce academic procrastination.

### RESULTS

The findings found for the first research question to illustrate the academic procrastination perceptions of low, average, and high academic procrastinators are presented below in Table 2. The mean score range was from 1 to 5. High mean scores represent higher academic procrastination.

Table 2. Academic Procrastination Perceptions of Low, Average, and High Academic Procrastinators

Items/Academic procrastination level	Low		Average		High	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
3. I give up studying English to do more enjoyable things.	1.81	1.04	2.57	1.01	3.60	1.18
5. Whenever I start studying, I have other things to think of	1.83	1.01	2.60	1.24	3.90	1.48
6. Even if they are important, I delay studying for the exams unnecessarily to the last day.	1.31	.657	2.32	1.28	3.00	1.33
8. I delay studying for the boring topics in English until the last minute.	1.89	1.07	2.79	1.31	3.70	1.38

10. While studying, I often take a break for doing something, talking to someone, drinking tea or coffee, etc.	1.58	.846	2.51	1.12	3.20	1.19
12. Even if the date is announced beforehand. when the English exam day approaches, I deal with other non-priority work.	1.37	.815	2.50	1.21	3.05	1.05
14. I delay studying important English topics till the last minute.	1.27	.535	1.86	1.04	2.80	1.23
15. There are times I fail English exams, because I delay studying until the last day.	1.89	1.17	2.80	1.34	3.80	1.10
16. I cannot submit my English homework/projects on time.	1.41	.682	2.40	.90	2.85	1.26
18. I delay my English homework/projects to the last day for unimportant reasons.	1.41	.846	2.44	1.05	2.85	1.42
19. I am a student who delays his English studies to the last moment but says that next time he will start studying on time.	2.02	1.46	3.01	1.41	4.05	1.23
1. I study for my English classes regularly.	1.26	.639	1.76	.96	2.75	.911
2. I delay my English tasks/projects till the last minute.	3.08	1.64	3.32	1.35	3.90	1.33
4. I have time to revise what I have learned in English classes before the exams.	1.50	.945	2.20	1.16	2.85	1.56
7. I come prepared for English lessons.	1.54	.682	2.44	1.14	2.80	1.36
9. Before I go to the English classes. I do all the reading required.	1.89	1.25	2.44	1.17	3.45	1.05
11. I submit my English homework/projects on time.	1.25	.483	1.66	1.00	2.75	1.51
13. If I have prepared myself for an English study program, I follow it.	1.37	.703	2.16	1.12	3.55	1.05
17. I study all English topics thoroughly before the exam.	1.56	.741	2.39	1.12	3.05	.94

As shown in Table 2, there are mostly commonalities among the groups. To start with, total mean scores of the groups were 1.67 for low procrastinators ( $SD = .23$ ), 2.39 for average procrastinators ( $SD = .23$ ), and 3.19 for high procrastinators ( $SD = .28$ ). The lowest scored items indicating low academic procrastination showed similarity among the groups despite slight differences. Item number 1 ‘I study for my English classes regularly’ and item number 11 ‘I submit my English homework/projects on time’ were among the top two lowest scored items for all groups. Additionally, item number 14 indicating deferment of studying English till the last minute was among the lowest scored items for all groups.

In terms of high scored items, all groups agreed on item number 19 stating procrastination in studying English but feeling regret later. Moreover, item number 2 ‘I delay my English tasks/projects till the last minute’ was among the highest scored items for low, average, and high procrastinators as well. In addition to these, boring topics (item 8) were another significant factor for the students in all groups to procrastinate in studying English. Thinking of something else in the initial phase of studying (item 5) was rife specifically in low ( $M = 1.83$ ,  $SD = 1.01$ ) and high procrastinators ( $M = 3.90$ ,  $SD = 1.48$ ). Likewise, failure

in English examinations due to procrastination (item 15) was another item on which all the groups reached a consensus.

The second research question addressed in this study was related to differences between genders among the groups of low, average, and high procrastinators regarding the reasons for academic procrastination, the replacement activities, and suggestions to reduce it. Table 3 below illustrates the reasons why boys and girls having different academic procrastination levels delay their studies.

Table 3. Distribution of Academic Procrastination Reasons for both Genders among three Academic Procrastination Levels

Reasons for procrastinating	Male						Female					
	Low		Average		High		Low		Average		High	
	<i>f</i>	%										
1. I do housework and help my brother/sister	1	4.5	2	6.4	1	12.5	6	23	9	24.3	5	41.6
2. I feel tired	3	13.3	5	16.1	1	12.5	3	11.5	2	5.4	1	8.3
3. Because of the homework I postponed earlier	3	13.3	3	9.6	3	37.5	2	7.6	3	8.1	4	33.3
4. To do more test	5	22.7	7	22.5	0	0	6	23	8	21.6	0	0
5. Because I forget	2	9	2	6.4	1	12.5	2	7.6	3	8.1	2	16.6
6. Because I don't understand the topic	5	22.7	5	16.1	0	0	4	15.4	7	18.9	0	0
7. Because it is boring	3	13.3	7	22.5	2	25	3	11.5	5	13.5	0	0
Total	22	100	31	100	8	100	26	100	37	100	12	100

The results indicated some major gender-based differences in terms of the reasons for academic procrastination. The most important difference distinguishing girls from boys is the support they give to their parents about caring for housework and siblings. Additionally, participants from both genders try to do more tests on other school subjects, and they procrastinate when they do not grasp the topic thoroughly.

The differences are not limited solely to gender. While the low and average procrastinators defer their studies to do more tests on other school subjects and in the case of not grasping the topic in English classes, high procrastinators do not do their tasks on time due to the postponement of the previous task.

The respondents were also asked about the activities they do while they are procrastinating to figure out what takes their attention. Table 4 below shows the clear picture in this respect.

Table 4. Distribution of Activities Preferred during Procrastination for both Genders among three Academic Procrastination Levels

The activities when procrastinating	Male						Female					
	Low		Average		High		Low		Average		High	
	<i>f</i>	%										
1. Watching TV	1	4.5	1	3.2	1	12.5	2	7.7	4	10.8	2	16.6
2. Smartphone	7	31.8	10	32.2	2	25	6	23.1	10	27	3	25
3. Playing computer games	10	45.4	15	48.4	5	62.5	1	3.8	1	2.7	1	8.3
4. Do a test (other than English)	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3.8	1	2.7	0	0
5. Reading book	1	4.5	1	3.2	0	0	9	34.6	12	32.4	4	33.3
6. Listening to music	1	4.5	1	3.2	0	0	1	3.8	1	2.7	0	0
7. Get something to eat and drink	2	9.1	3	9.7	0	0	6	23.1	8	21.6	2	16.6
Total	22	100	31	100	8	100	26	100	37	100	12	100

As illustrated in Table 4, boys are more likely to spend time with technological devices, such as computers and smartphones while girls are more likely to read books and get some snacks and drinks when procrastinating. Regarding the differences in academic procrastination levels, high procrastinators seem to watch TV more than the other activities during procrastination in both genders.

The last aspect of the second research question is the suggestions of the students to reduce their academic procrastination. Students' responses are presented in Table 5 below.

Table 5. Distribution of Suggestions to Reduce Academic Procrastination for both Genders among three Academic Procrastination Levels

Suggestions to reduce procrastinating	Male						Female					
	Low		Average		High		Low		Average		High	
	<i>f</i>	%										
1. Study regularly	3	13.6	5	16.1	1	12.5	5	19.2	6	16.2	2	16.6
2. Using reminder stickers	6	27.3	8	25.8	2	25	7	26.9	8	21.6	3	25
3. Increase motivation to do homework on time	1	4.5	2	6.4	0	0	2	7.7	3	8.1	4	33.3
4. Getting extra marks from the teacher	5	22.7	3	9.7	0	0	9	34.6	12	32.4	1	8.3
5. Have a study room	2	9.1	3	9.7	0	0	2	7.7	6	16.2	0	0
6. The class should be like a video game	5	22.7	10	32.2	5	62.5	1	3.8	2	5.4	2	16.6
Total	22	100	31	100	8	100	26	100	37	100	12	100

There are some immediately apparent differences between males and females considering their suggestions to reduce academic procrastination. The consensus among the males is that the classes should be as interesting or exciting as the video games. However, the females considered receiving teachers' extra marks as the motivating factor to eliminate or decrease procrastination. For both genders, using reminder stickers is a popular suggestion to reduce academic procrastination. Additionally, although having a separate room to study and getting extra marks from teachers are not considered a way to reduce procrastination by high procrastinators, increased motivation (for females) and using reminder stickers serve for reducing procrastination.

## DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted to investigate the perceptions of adolescent learners' academic procrastination in studying English and to extend the understanding concerning reasons for academic procrastination and suggestions to reduce it. The participants were divided into three groups (low, average, and high procrastinators) based on their mean scores.

The results revealed that all three groups had quite similar perceptions regarding academic procrastination. The groups agreed on not studying English regularly and not submitting tasks on time which shows procrastinating behaviors. Similarly, students in low, average, and high academic procrastination levels think that they delay tasks till the last minute with the belief in their mind that they will not repeat it. Interestingly, it is obvious from the findings that boredom in class resulted in academic procrastination for all learners. This finding is in line with the results of several studies (Blunt & Pychyl, 1998; Ferrari, 2000; Vodanovich & Rupp, 1999). Supporting this view, Steel (2007) also stated that "the more boring and difficult a task was made, the more likely people were to delay doing it" (p. 75).

The results also indicated that the students in all three academic procrastination levels agreed on the deteriorating impact of academic procrastination on their test scores which is also in accordance with the results of the studies conducted in foreign language contexts (Aydođan & Akbarov, 2018) and in other school subjects (Bezci & Sungur Vural, 2013; Korkmaz et al., 2018; Yılmaz, 2017; You, 2015).

Surprisingly, the female students reported slightly higher academic procrastination than the male students did which contradicts the results of Bekleyen (2017) investigating university students' academic procrastination attitudes, and those of Klassen and Kuzucu (2009) who found no significant difference between academic procrastination levels in two genders with Turkish adolescents.

Major differences were found between the females and the males concerning the reasons for procrastinating. Helping their parents with home chores and taking care of their brothers and sisters was the highest scored reason for procrastination for females in all three academic procrastination levels which was reported as one of the least important reasons for males. This fact may stem from the culture they were born in, and similar findings have been found in the literature (Rothchild, 2006). In terms of the views of Turkish adolescents, although males were found to be doing fewer home chores than females, it was not the main reason for procrastinating for girls in the study of Klassen and Kuzucu, (2009), which is not in line with the findings of the current study. It may be concluded that despite educational reforms taking place in Turkey where modernity is perfectly combined with traditionalism, societal gender roles which require more home chores from women can still be observed even at an early age (Caner et al., 2015). The cultural bias against girls in socially conservative societies may result in the academic procrastination of girls in several school subjects. Apart from this, it is

interesting that high procrastinators in both genders did not consider doing more tests on other school subjects a reason for procrastination despite its being one of the top reasons for low and average procrastinators in both genders.

The results concerning the replacement activities when procrastinating showed that the males spend time with the computer games and smartphones, and the females spend time reading books and getting snacks and drinks. These findings were also in accordance with those of Klassen and Kuzucu (2009). The results also show the severity of the internet and video game addiction problem, especially among males, which offers instant gratification and serves as a distraction (Nordby et al., 2019). Although they have not found a significant relationship between video gaming and procrastination, students played it to escape reality and to reduce stress (Nordby et al., 2019). Moreover, as video games are mostly played online these days, internet addiction can also be considered in this context which has been found to increase academic procrastination in recent studies in Turkish adolescents (Can & Zeren, 2019; Demir & Kutlu, 2018).

The last concern of this study was to reveal adolescents' suggestions to reduce academic procrastination and potential differences between the genders and among three academic procrastination levels. The most distinct difference could be observed in the suggestions of males and females. While the former favor the classes being like a video game, the latter tend to receive extra marks from teachers to reduce academic procrastination. It can be interpreted that traditional classroom design does not take the attention of males in English classes anymore, and they ask for a video game-based design in which they would receive instant gratification (Nordby et al., 2019) to do the tasks on time. The popularity of this suggestion among the males may also stem from video game addiction which has also been on the rise recently. As these games target a variety of people, adolescents are not exceptions. Although there are several reasons for these games to be popular, being sophisticatedly designed grasps learners' attention by evoking and amazing their curiosity (Eskasasnanda, 2017). The males' overwhelming desire for video game-based design of the classes exhibits their higher addiction to video games compared to the females which is in line with the literature (Altun & Atasoy, 2018; Zorbaza Demirtaş et al., 2014). On the other hand, the girls' response to receiving extra marks from teachers to reduce academic procrastination may be interpreted as they are extrinsically motivated to learn English. They are predominantly grade-oriented. Interestingly, although female adolescent learners may have lower intrinsic motivation, their achievement does not get affected this much (Corthright et al., 2013).

## **PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS**

In terms of implications, although adolescent learners' academic procrastination may be frustrating, understanding the reasons, alternative replacing activities, and suggestions is a valuable initiative for parents, teachers, and other stakeholders working with these learners (Klassen & Kuzucu, 2009). Therefore, considering its deteriorating impact on the academic success of the learners (Akpur, 2017), teachers and parents should be aware of the academic procrastination perspectives of the learners by observing them with the ultimate aim of eliminating these factors that trigger procrastination. Despite the parallelism in the perspectives of the learners in low, average, and high procrastination levels, the reasons for procrastination are markedly different between the genders and among the levels of procrastination. It is obvious that only the females feel responsible for home chores or taking care of their sisters/brothers rather than the males. The underlying assumptions of both students and their parents should be altered by reinforcing the idea that both genders are equally responsible for home tasks. Only in this way could it be possible to enhance gender equality in the society and

it may help the females to have less academic procrastination by maintaining a balanced separation of duties at home.

The difference between the high procrastinators and low and average procrastinators concerning the reasons to procrastinate indicated that high procrastinators defer the tasks since they had delayed the previous tasks, and it becomes a procrastination chain for them which never allows them to do the tasks on time. To overcome this, learners should be encouraged to do their tasks on time by providing positive reinforcement or to be organized by using some online schedulers or organizers that may take their attention.

Considering the suggestions to reduce academic procrastination and the replacement activities, the use of smartphones and playing video games seem to adversely affect learners' performance. In this respect, a combination of the use of smartphones and game-like learning environments may be a solution since the majority of the studies provided positive impacts of the use of student response systems in classes (Asmalı, 2018; Wichadee & Pattanapichet, 2018) and video game-based learning platforms (Aydın, 2013; Balçıkanlı, 2012). Moreover, considering especially males' technology use inclination, smartphone-based applications may be employed instead of reminder stickers as students suggested in this study to reduce academic procrastination (Lukas & Berking, 2018).

Despite the valuable findings that may encourage stakeholders and the learners themselves to reduce academic procrastination, further research is needed to address the limitations of this study. The first limitation is the small sample size of this research. Therefore, a larger sample with the participation of younger and older learners may provide a clearer picture of academic procrastination behaviors of the learners on a larger scale. The suggestions, reasons, and replacement activities listed in this study were limited to the ones mentioned in the focus group interview. Thus, this list may be enriched with the findings of potential individual interviews. Additionally, with the insights of the results of the current study, it may be interesting to find out the impacts of different interventions or techniques on learners having different academic procrastination levels in further studies.

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