

Presentation of a Model for Survey of the Effective Factors on Procrastination of Employees in Organizations

Hossein Azimi

Assistant Professor, Department of Management, University of Zanjan, Zanjan, Iran

Mehdi Ajalli¹

Postdoctoral Researcher of Industrial Management, Faculty of Management, University of Tehran

Mona Amari

M.A of Business Administration, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Zanjan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Zanjan, Iran

Abstract

In Century 21, due to the wide variety of environment and continual changes, effective individual and organizational management is encountered with considerable challenges. One of the challenges is procrastination phenomenon in organization. Latin term of procrastination is consisting of origins of “pro and “crastinus, meaning “put off till tomorrow”. This term is equal to postponing, delaying, or putting off. Various factors are effective on procrastination in the organization. The present study aimed to evaluate the effective factors on employees’ procrastination in the organizations. The recent researches considered the effective individual, environmental, and organizational factors on procrastination. The main approach of the present study is the evaluation of effective organizational factors on employees’ procrastination. The results of the study showed that the most important effective organizational factors on procrastination are unsuitable structure, extreme bureaucracy, evaluation system of unsuitable performance in the organization, having procrastinator managers and employees and the lack of supervision and control.

Keywords: Procrastination, Individual factors, Environmental factors, Organizational factors, Employees.

Cite this article: Azimi, H., Ajalli, M., & Amari, M. (2017). Presentation of a Model for Survey of the Effective Factors on Procrastination of Employees in Organizations. *International Journal of Management, Accounting and Economics*, 4(6), 675-681.

¹ Corresponding author's email: mehdiajalli2010@gmail.com

Introduction

Labor force is one of the most important capitals of an organization to have an important role in achievement of the organization to its goals. Today, the organizations spend considerable costs to keep and absorb human resources to compete with other competitors. If the organizations have the best technology and facilities but they have not specialized and efficient human resources and they don't use their capability, can't affect the environment, and be successful in competition. Thus, identification of features of human resources and effective factors on their efficiency to use the organizational capital well is one of the great concerns of leaders and managers of all the organizations. Unfortunately, this issue is not considered adequately in the organizations and institutions of Iran. By the investigation of effective factors on procrastination and presenting some solutions, we can solve one of the recent challenges of management. The organizations in which the people procrastinate, fatigue, despair, intention to leave, absence, failure, physical and mental problems are the features of the employees and lack of change, performance and efficiency failure are the organizational features (Beles, 1989). Procrastination leads to a useless task, it wastes time and a person feels guilty and others attitude toward him is changed. Procrastination is putting off a task to tomorrow (Sutton, 2009).

Procrastination

Latin term of procrastination is consisting of origins of "pro and "crastinus, meaning "put off till tomorrow". This term is equal to postponing, delaying, or putting off (Knaus, 2000). Some people consider procrastination equal to laziness but they are different. A lazy person don't want to do anything while in procrastination, a person does the task to make himself busy and to avoid the task that is on priority. From psychological views, procrastination means putting off the task we decide to do, it is an irrational behavior turning into a habit gradually (Ellis, 1996).

Procrastination is putting off a task we decided to do to tomorrow and we duck the issue by any rational or irrational reason. Thus, most of the procrastinations are with psychological pain. Thus, the exact definition of procrastination is challenging (Steel, 2010). Indeed, procrastination is escaping from living in present time (Dyer, 1997). Psychologists considered various factors for procrastination and they are considered in internal, psychological, external, environmental, and organizational factors.

Effective internal and psychological factors on procrastination

Internal and psychological factors mean abnormalities of the procrastinator himself as: Low self-esteem, shortsightedness, extreme expectation, low tolerance threshold, obsessive perfectionism, the lack of guilt determination, depression, and anxiety (Steel, 2007; Tracy, 2008; Sutton, 2009; Ayc, 1996; Aghatehrani, 2006, Azimi and Mirhadi, 2006; Gharachedaghi, 2006).

Effective external and environmental factors on procrastination

External and environmental factors mean the problems being emerged during the relationship with other people or surrounding environment. Some factors as dissatisfaction of the existing condition, irresponsibility to others, obstinacy with others, attempt to attract the attention of all, procrastination and passive aggressiveness, friendship with others, tempting and entertaining factors, extreme expectation of others (Ninan and Dryden, 2002; Nikfetrat, 2006, Aghatehrani, 2006).

Psychologists from various aspects (cognitive and behavioral) presented therapy methods and techniques to cope with procrastination and in therapy, we can refer to some methods as attempt to create motivation and avoiding laziness, avoiding justification, suggestion therapy, punishment and avoidant conditionality, environment change, affection and interest, finding a disciplined friend, playing with probabilities, self-regulation and reminders, using collaboration methods, not expecting rapid progress, emotional method of coping with procrastination (Steel, 2007; Aghatehrani, 2006, Rezapour, 1992).

Various studies conducted on procrastination in Iran were mostly psychological and they were raised in educational sciences and psychology and they are less about organizational field. The present study aimed to evaluate the effective factors on employees' procrastination in the organizations and work place.

Effective organizational factors on procrastination

Gronberg (1976) concluded that as the employees mostly compared themselves with others, if they find that they receive less than their co-workers, they feel dissatisfied. When there is a contradiction in perception of a person of attempt, reward compared with others, the employees attempt less and they will have low efficiency. The inadequate time and resources have direct relationship with procrastination. According to the supervisors, when a person wage is very low or very high, procrastination is mostly possible. When the employees were independent in their work, less delay is observed. Galue (1990) in a study entitled "An investigation of procrastination behavior at work" in Tulane University, found the following results: Procrastination at work potentially had negative effects on employees and productivity of organizations. Despite this fact, a few studies identified the important factors in employees' procrastination.

Robbins (1996) in his study found that: Delay at work like absence creates this belief that he is dissatisfied of his work. This shows that the person has no value for his job and has a rest most of the time at home. When he was also at work, he was only making phone calls and wasted the time and this condition is mostly prevalent in Iran.

In the study done by Dewitte& Schouwenburg (2002), "Procrastination, temptations, and incentives: The struggle between the present and the future in procrastinators" found the following results: procrastination was closely related to a lack of perseverance, that is, the inability to complete projects. This relation explained a large part of the well proved relation between conscientiousness and procrastination.

Lonergan (1998) in a study “The relationship between job characteristics and workplace procrastination as moderated by locus of control” found that:” despite the fact that procrastination in the organizations reduces productivity, there are a few studies on this field, he evaluated the effect of job characteristics (autonomy, job significance, job feedback from others) and locus of control on three types of procrastination (avoidance, arousal, and decisional).

Decisional procrastination had inverse association with all job characteristics except feedback of job from others and it had direct correlation with locus of control. There was a significant mutual effect between locus of control and autonomy and it shows that the highest introversion and autonomy is associated with low procrastination in decision making. The results can be affected by sociability of the participants. One of the situational factors that can involve in procrastination at work is the nature of the job itself. Job significance, job feedback and co-workers had linear inverse association with procrastination as more job significance and they and co-worker feedback led to the reduction of procrastination.

Briefly organizational factors are as followings:

- 1- Cause harm to the manager and supervisor
- 2- Unsuitable organizational structure and extreme bureaucracy
- 3- Evaluation system of unsuitable performance in organization
- 4- Having procrastinating managers and supervisors
- 5- Wrong organizational procedures
- 6- The lack of control and supervision
- 7- The procrastinating co-workers and friends
- 8- The lack of consistency of a person with job (Kazemi, Mostafa et al., 2010).

In Persian literature, it is frequently emphasized on not putting off the task to tomorrow. Although rich Islamic and Iranian culture considered procrastination as a serious problem, in the organizational and social environment, putting off the task (delaying) is common (Aghatehrani, 2006). In organizational literature, the increase of performance requires effectiveness and efficiency of resources including human being. If the labor force procrastinates to their duties, the work quality is decreased and other resources are wasted (Schraw, Wadkins& Olafson, 2007). The Conceptual model of study is shown in figure 1:

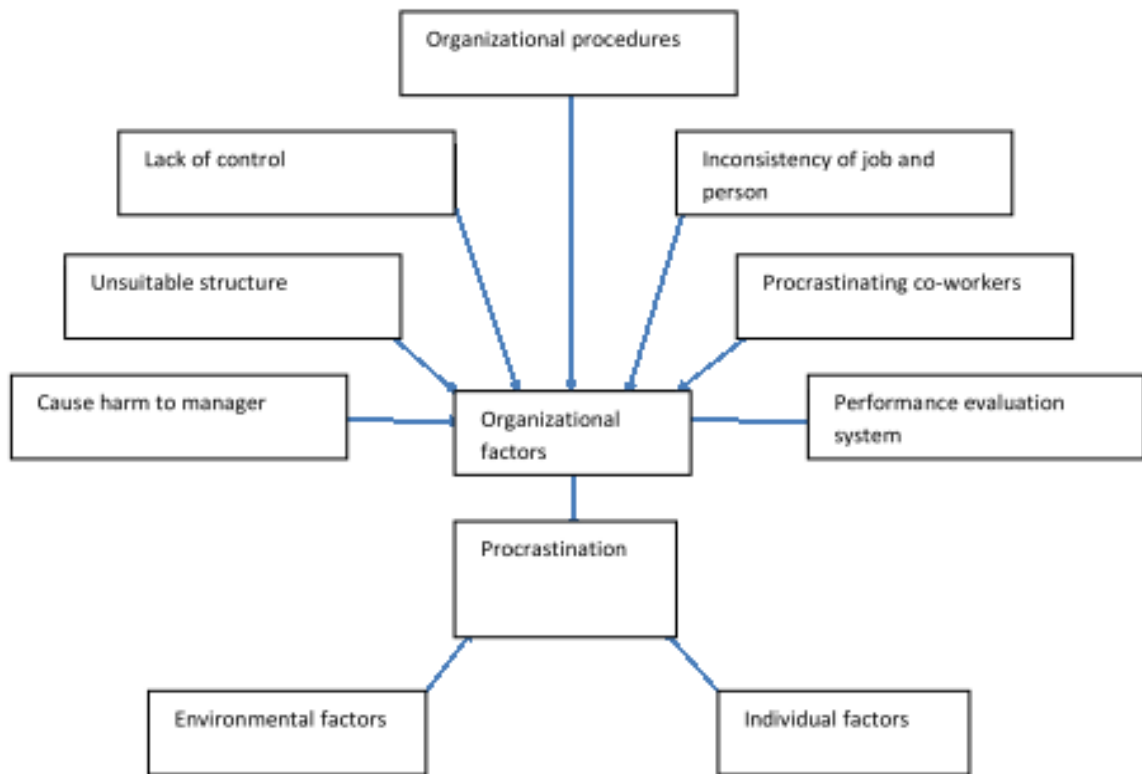


Figure 1: The Conceptual model of study

Conclusion

Procrastination has negative and adverse effects on organizations as reduction of productivity, dissatisfaction and delaying the clients, reduction of employees' motivation and increase of absence and mobility (Hank, 2006). Procrastination to respond to the customer means losing the customer, procrastination in machineries maintenances means their breaking down and stopping production line, procrastination in learning and training means forgetting and losing work and operational standards, procrastination in using the opportunities means losing competition market and procrastination in changing, means the reduction of durability. One of the most important solutions by which procrastination is prevented is teaching skills of time management. Other proposed solutions to eliminate the procrastination problem in the organizations are including 1- Creating goal-based behaviors to do the task, it is avoided, 2- Implementation of good strategies in evaluation of the performance of employees and assignment of good wage system. 3- Training the employees and using good control systems, 4- Employment of dynamic and motivated employees, 5- Clarification of organization rules to the employees.

Recommendation for future studies

For future study, the study of the effect of organizational culture on employees' procrastination is studied. The researchers can investigate the effect of leadership styles on employees' procrastination.

Reference

Aghatehrani, Morteza. (2006). *The study of the reasons and solutions of procrastination*. Qom. Qazvin:Publication center of training and research institution of Imam Khomeini. Qazvin.

Ariely dan, werten broch, Klaus (2002). Procrastin and performance psychological science .(vol 13 , no 3).

Coote, Elizabeth A, PhD (1987). Procrastination in the workplace. A study of the dispositional and situational determinants of delay behavior at work.

Dyer, Wayne. (2006). How to have healthy personality? (Overcoming anger). Translated by Badrolzaman Nik Fetrat. Science publications. Tehran.

Ellis, A. and Knaus, W. (2002). Overcoming procrastination New York. New American Library.

Ellis, Albert Venal; William, James. (2008). Procrastination psychology, overcome procrastination. (Translated by Mohammad Ali Farjad). Tehran : Roshd publications.

Galue, Alberto Jose, PhD (1990). Perceived job ambiguity, predisposition to procrastinate, work – related information and experience: An investigation of procrastination behavior at work. UNIVERSITY of TULANE.

Kazemi, Mostafa; Fayazi, Marjan; Kave, Manije. (2010). The study of prevalence of procrastination and effective factors among the managers and employees of University. Change management research. 2, 4. 42-63.

Mackenzie, Alec. (1992). Management and time productivity. (Translated by Seyed Mohammad Reza Rezapour). Tehran: Chame publications.

Nina, Michel; Dryden, Vindy. (2006). The life forming thoughts. (Translated by Naser Azimi, Tala Mirhadizade). Tehran: Tara.

Robbins P. Stephen.(2006). Organizational behavior, concepts, theories, applications. (Translated by Ali Parsayian and Seyed Mohammad Arabi). (Vol.2). Tehran: Cultural research office.

Schraw,G, Wadkins, T. and Olafson, L .(2007). Doing the things we do: a grounded theory of procrastination. Journal of Educational psychology, 99, 12-25.

Steel, Piers (2007). The nature of procrastination: A meta – analytic and theoretical Review of Quintessential Self. Regulatory Failure, university of Calgary.

Sutton, Joy (2009). Avoid procrastination. Urges action now, not later.



Tracy, B. (2003). *Eat That Frog!. 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time.* (Translated by Ashraf Rahmani, Kurosh Taremi). Tehran: Rashin publications.