



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**The Mediating Effect of Parental Control on Social Withdrawal, Academic Procrastination, and Maladaptive Perfectionism in Young Adults and Adolescents**

**<sup>1</sup>Tariq Ahmed, <sup>2</sup>Xing Qiang and <sup>3</sup>Mudassar Abdullah\***

1. Ph.D. Scholar, Education Department, Guangzhou University, Guangzhou China
2. Dean and Professor, Education Department, Guangzhou University, Guangzhou China
3. Lecturer, (Psychology), Department of Business Administration, Iqra National University, Pakistan

**\*Corresponding Author**      [mudassarabdullah@inu.edu.pk](mailto:mudassarabdullah@inu.edu.pk)

**ABSTRACT**

This study aimed to examine the interplay between social withdrawal, parental control, academic procrastination, and/ or maladaptive perfectionism. Social withdrawal is associated with academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism while parental control plays an important role in relating social withdrawal, academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism. Adolescents and young adults including male (52.4%) and female (47.6%) from different Universities and Colleges of Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa completed standardized questionnaires i.e., Parenting Control Scale (PCS), Adult Self-Report (ASR), Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS) and Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (FMPS). Descriptive and Mediation Analysis was performed. There was a significant association between social withdrawal, parental control and academic procrastination ( $B = .129, p < .05$ ). Furthermore, the findings also indicated a significant association between social withdrawal, parental control and maladaptive perfectionism ( $B = .271, p < .05$ ). The findings suggest that parental control reduced the impact of social withdrawal on academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism.

**Keywords:** Academic Procrastination, Parental Control, Maladaptive Perfectionism, Social Withdrawal

**Introduction**

Social withdrawal is a multidimensional construct of internalizing behavior that has a long lasting impact on academic performance of young people (Stenseng, Tingstad, Wichstrøm, & Skalicka, 2022). According to self-determination theory, humans have enormous tendency to engaged actively with their social surroundings (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Young people sometimes are unable to achieve their real goals as results. There can be many causes for it. Parents sometimes exerts unnecessary pressure or want to control their children in a way that effect their long-term performance in any field (Altaf, Hassan, Khattak & Iqbal, 2021). The learning activity is not actually authentic or make sense as well as it also brought harmony with commitments, special interest and deeply anchored values in a person, the fullest form of internalizing behavior occurs. (Barzeva, Richards, Veenstra, Meeus, & Oldehinkel, 2022). This study sheds light upon a very significant dimension of internalize model behavior in students who have social withdrawal. Social withdrawal is avoiding activities and people; a person usually enjoys or likes (Crumly, Thomas, McWood, & Troop-Gordon, 2022).

**Literature Review**

In academic settings, procrastination is a widespread phenomenon. This comprises of numerous consequences and reasons that caused failure in regulations of

learning (Suárez-Perdomo, Ruiz-Alfonso, & Garcés-Delgado, 2022; Uzun, LeBlanc, Guclu, Ferrari, & Aydemir, 2022). Another important phenomenon in this research is maladaptive perfectionism. This refers to the aggressive behavior of a person specifically in terms of achieving their unrealistic standard every time and their craze of controlling the environment. (Gu, Hu, & Wang, 2022). Perfectionists are aggressive with others, self-critical, while often caused mental illness in later age (Han, Wang, Jin, & Bismar, 2022). Consequently, the frustration of not being able to achieve goal and control the desired result every time (Wang & Wu, 2022).

Parents play an integral role in shaping their children's future. Because more controlling style exerted on kids, their real polished attributes would not be revealed. (Gutierrez et al., 2022) Authoritarian or helicopter parenting is also a form of parental control. Where orders are made or authority, pressure and orders are made instead of getting an opinion from children (Cohrdes & Göbel, 2022; Park, Nix, Gill, & Hostetler, 2022).

High rate success of students and their wellbeing is depended on their success rate of academic achievements (Liu, Qiu, Zhang, & Fan, 2022). In all that manner, parenting style and parental control have important effect and it is very necessary to improve the quality of life of a student and also significant to fulfil emerging needs of student. (Del Puerto-Golzarrri et al., 2022).

The rapid increase of need for achieving excellence among students have risen up to a great extent, moreover there are some reasons through which students unnecessarily delays their tasks or sometimes want a rapid control over unrealistic situations. This study highlights the impact of isolating a person from others on the above stated behaviors. Parenting plays a huge role between these relationships. Authoritarian parenting does not let the children career flourish by just imposing their own liking or disliking upon them. So, this study particularly highlights the main cause for a student's abnormal behaviors i.e., academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism. Therefore, we hypothesized the following:

**H1:** Social withdrawal influences significant impact on academic procrastination.

**H2:** Social withdrawal influences significant effect on maladaptive perfectionism.

**H3:** Parental control performs mediating role with relation of social withdrawal and academic procrastination.

**H4:** Parental control performs mediating role with the relation of social withdrawal and maladaptive perfectionism.

### Conceptual framework

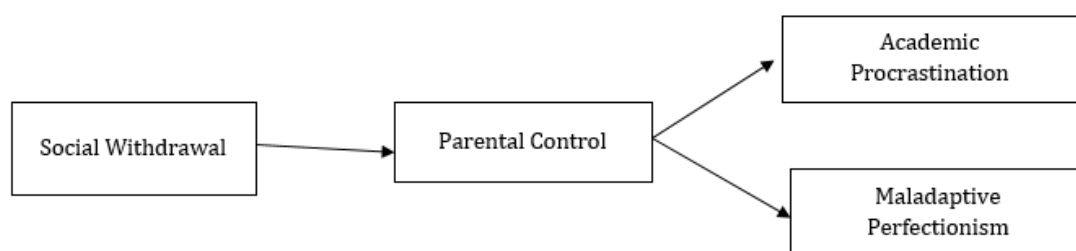


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

## Material and Methods

### Sample

Sample size of this study comprised of N=500 participants in the age range of 15-35yrs and above. Data was collected from different educational institutions i.e., universities and colleges. The sample was approached on the basis of convenient sampling procedure. As per inclusion criteria the later sample size comprised of 317 participants however the remaining were excluded on the basis of missing responses on the scales. Standardized measurement tools were used to assess participant's responses. The measurement tools are as follow:

### Instruments

#### Social Withdrawal Scale

Social withdrawal was assessed using Adult Self-report (ASR). The total items 102 are rated on a 3-point scale the higher score indicated the strong response and so does the lower indicated lesser response to Depression, Anxiety and social introversion. The scale has a total Cronbach's alpha  $\alpha = 0.85$ , however, subcomponents/ subscales from T4 - T6 have a Cronbach's alpha ( $\alpha = 0.91, 0.92, 0.93$ ) (Achenbach & Rescorla, 2003).

#### Parental control Scale

It was assessed using a Parental Control Scale (PCS). The 13 item PCS adults' version is scored on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1= almost never true to 4= almost always true 1 (almost never true). The scale has been validated across different cultures with a Cronbach's alpha ranging from  $\alpha = 0.71-0.91$  (Rohner & Khaliq, 2003).

#### Academic Procrastination Scale

It was assessed using a 16-item Tuckman Procrastination Scale (TPS) on a 4-point Likert-type scale, with 1 = that's me for sure to 4 = that's not me for sure. The scale has a Cronbach's alpha  $\alpha = 0.86$  (Tuckman, 1991).

#### Maladaptive Perfectionism Scale

It was measured with Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale (FMPS) comprised of 35-items included six factors on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly". The scale has a Cronbach's alpha  $\alpha = 0.91$  (Frost, Marten, Lahart, & Rosenblatt, 1990).

Confidentiality was ensured by the researcher. Researcher has maintained the privacy and confidentiality of his respondents during and after the research. Author did not reveal their identities throughout the whole procedure. Moreover, researcher has informed them in detail about the research questions and why this research is being conducted. Lastly, permission was secured from the authors for using their scales.

### Data Analysis

SPSS and AMOS were utilized in this study for descriptive and inferential statistics. Firstly, SPSS was used to conduct descriptive statistics and tests for normal distribution of data. The final data was then run in AMOS for inferential statistics. Structure Equation Modelling (SEM) was used as it was considered appropriate to

examine the mediating effect of parental control on the relationship among social withdrawal on academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism. SEM was conducted in two steps. In step one, the proposed model of this study was tested through composite reliability, convergent validity and discriminant validity. However, in second step significance of relationships among variables of the proposed model were determined. Sampling frame is a list of all the items of the whole population. The author collected data from students of different universities and colleges of Peshawar Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

## Results and Discussion

A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed, among 317 were received with proper responses. The male respondent's frequency was 166 following a percentage of 52.4 that was for the female respondent's frequency which was 151 with a percentage of 47.6. The frequencies for respondents in section of education has also various different ranges i.e. inter, graduation, post-graduation and others which was 38, 137, 106 and 36. Frequencies 78 with 24.6% falls in the age category of 15-22. So, with the other age ranges of 23-28, 28-35 and 35+ falls in the frequency range of 78, 93, 97 and 49 respectively. The percentage ranges for the stated age ranges falls as 24.6%, 29.3%, 30.6%, and 15.5% respectively. The designated sample of the study includes students from different colleges and universities however, for the collection of data researcher provided online survey links to various 500 students along with some questionnaires and strict compulsions of obtaining accurate responses from them. Moreover, researcher also applied strict compulsion on employees so that they could not leave the options blank or unanswered. The response rate was collected to be accurate as 70%. The table 1 shows that in the process of obtaining questionnaires from the respondents there were total 151 female respondents and 166 were males.

**Table 1**  
**Demographic traits**

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	166	52.4
	Female	151	47.6
	Total	317	100.0
Education	Inter	38	12.0
	Graduation	137	43.2
	Post-Graduation	106	33.4
	Others	36	11.4
	Total	317	100.0
Age	15-22	78	24.6
	23-28	93	29.3
	28-35	97	30.6
	35+	49	15.5
	Total	317	100.0

The table stated above explains and presents the minimum, maximum, means, standard deviation and skewness for all variables examined in the current research. The mean value for PCS, ASR, TPS, FMPS are 3.5186, 3.4164, 3.4280 and 3.3830 respectively. This table also shows the values of skewness for the studies variables. The skewness is not directly linked between the median and mean. However, a distribution with the negative skew might have its mean higher than or lower than the median, and same is the case for the positive skewness. The cut off value for the skewness ranges between -1 to +1 (Kim, 2013). The above stated table elaborates that the skewness values for PCS,

ASR, TPS, FMPS are -.729, -.528, -.591 and -.469 respectively. This elaborated the condition of the data that normality exists in the data and it is equally spread as all values lie between the cut off value of skewness. The table also shows that there is no outlier in the data that disturbs it.

**Table 2**  
**Descriptive of study variables**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error
PCS	317	1.00	4.90	3.5186	1.00508	-.729	.137
ASR	317	1.00	5.00	3.4164	1.18288	-.528	.137
TPS	317	1.00	5.00	3.4280	1.01586	-.591	.137
FMPS	317	1.00	5.00	3.3830	1.03690	-.469	.137
Valid N (listwise)	317						

PCS =Parental Control Scale, ASR = Adult Self-Report, TPS = Tuckman Procrastination Scale and FMPS = Frost Multidimensional Perfectionism Scale

The above stated table demonstrates the obvious major direct effect of social withdrawal on academic procrastination and the impact of social withdrawal on maladaptive perfectionism. The latter impact has p value .146 which rejects the hypothesis, whereas p value of social withdrawal impact on academic procrastination has shown in steric which means hypothesis is accepted. i.e. (SW → AP,  $\beta$  = -.444,  $p < 0.001$ ) (SW → MP,  $\beta$  = -.097,  $p \geq .146$ )

In case of mediation effect, we have seen that parental control holds positive significant impact on both of the relations and significantly mediates the relationship of these variables i.e. (SW → CP → AP,  $\beta$  = -.129,  $p < 0.05$ ) (SW → CP → MP  $\beta$  = -.271,  $p < 0.05$ ) both the hypothesis has shown p values in 2 steric showing significant mediation effect.

**Table 3**  
**Structural Model Results (N=500)**

Effects	Hypothesized Path	B	S.E	P value	Conclusion
Linear Effects					
Hypothesis 1	SW → AP	.444	.053	<.001	Accepted
Hypothesis 2	SW → MP	.097	.059	.146	Rejected
Mediation Effects					
Hypothesis 4	SW → CP → AP	.129	.045	<.05	Accepted
Hypothesis 5	SW → CP → MP	.271	.044	<.05	Accepted

\*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$

## Discussion

The current study aims to relate social withdrawal, parental control, academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism. The study further suggested that social withdrawal has significant association with academic procrastination however its relationship with maladaptive perfectionism was insignificant. This for instance can be understood that if a student is isolated or show a behavior of distancing himself from the environment unnecessarily, academic procrastination increases (Suárez-Perdomo et al., 2022). Researchers states that when a person is socially withdrawn his excuses for delaying projects or assignments and other tasks will increase, maybe because he don't want to engage in conversations, discussions and gatherings (Uzun et al., 2022). This

induces his attitude of isolation leading himself to academic procrastination. The overall performance of such student may decrease due to his introvert attitude.

Social withdraw was not significantly associated with maladaptive perfectionism. The reason for which is maladaptive procrastination deals with psychological issue or typically depression in which a person wants to control unrealistic environment, that leads towards depression (Barzeva et al., 2022; Crumly et al., 2022). Analysis has done after obtaining results from students according to which social withdraw has not proved to be a cause for maladaptive procrastination.

The direct and total effect of social withdrawal on academic procrastination is significant, which means there must be an indirect impact of a variable that exerts its effect strongly between the two variables. It means the existence of parental control explain the relation between social withdraw and academic procrastination. In the same way parental control mediates the relationship between social withdraw and maladaptive perfectionism. Parental control plays a very crucial role in strengthening the relationship of among social withdrawal, academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism. If parents are exerting authoritarian style on their children, their unnecessary delaying of assignments makes sense, along with their maladaptive perfectionism that is why students observes a frustrating attitude in them.

The research has done to check the impact of social withdrawal on maladaptive perfectionism and academic procrastination with the mediating role of parental control. Parental control is also important as parents who tends to have authoritarian behavior with their children tends to negatively impact the minds of their children which in a long run result in abnormal behaviors of their children. Where the children when grown up adopt strange behaviors of delaying something again and again to avoid reality results in academic procrastination.

## **Conclusion**

The study findings suggested that parental control reduced the impact of social withdrawal on academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism, additionally, controlling either parental control or social withdrawal may affect academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism in adults and adolescents.

## **Theoretical and practical implications**

This study supports the theory of self-determination. This theory concerns people's tendencies of innate growth and the inborn psychological needs. When a student is socially isolated, avoid gatherings or reluctant to meet people externally results in academic procrastination in a longer run or aggression to mold unrealistic situations according to their will and ease. That frustration can be a cause of parental control. Because aggression originate from some roots. Researchers suggest that forcing your child to do things unwillingly or not enabling them choose their path would never indulge their interest in whatever they are doing.

Practically sessions should be conducted in universities and schools to observe and guide the behaviors of students. Depression needs to be timely addressed otherwise it can damage a person psychological dimension. Parental control has caused students a lot of issues like academic procrastination and maladaptive perfectionism. Obedience is expected by the authoritarian parents. They show restricted behavior to their children in term of environment, rules and regulations. They are highly bossy and demanding,

with no flexible nature at all and restrictive in nature. To follow their instructions, they force them by punishing. That is why unfavorable factors regarding to parenting have a negative effect on academic achievement on their children. Because controlling can never let them flourish in their career. So, this study aims to highlight such important issue.

### **Limitations and future research indications**

Pros and cons are the part of every study, so is the case with this research which is to say that this research has some drawbacks and boundaries which are mostly the variables, the sample size, demographics and the software through which data has been tested. The sample size which has been selected is quite small because of cross-sectional nature of the study, so in future sample size can be increased. The data has collected from students of different universities and colleges; further research can be done in different cities other than Peshawar with different variables. Moreover, other dimensions of internalize model behaviors can be checked.

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