

The Relationships of Self-Control and Social Support with Academic Procrastination Among Students

Marpren Karunia¹, Neviyarni²

^{1,2} Universitas Negeri Padang, Padang, Indonesia; marprenkarunia@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Academic procrastination is a prevalent self-regulation problem among adolescents and may be associated with both internal regulatory resources and external social support. This study examined the relationships of self-control and perceived social support with academic procrastination among junior high school students. A cross-sectional correlational design was employed with 175 Grade VII and VIII students at SMP Negeri 9 Kota Padang, selected through proportional stratified random sampling. Data were collected using Indonesian Likert scales measuring self-control, perceived social support, and academic procrastination. Pearson correlation, simple regression, and multiple regression were performed. Because the regression residuals showed non-normality and heteroscedasticity, coefficient inference used HC3 robust standard errors. Self-control showed a strong negative bivariate relationship with academic procrastination ($\beta = -.858$, $R^2 = .737$, $p < .001$), as did perceived social support ($\beta = -.801$, $R^2 = .642$, $p < .001$). In the multiple model, self-control remained significantly associated with procrastination ($\beta = -.692$, $p < .001$), whereas the unique coefficient of perceived social support was not significant ($\beta = -.188$, $p = .148$). The combined model explained 74.4% of the variance in academic procrastination. Self-control showed the strongest unique relationship with academic procrastination, while the association of general social support substantially overlapped with self-control. The findings support school counseling interventions that strengthen students' self-regulation and provide academic-specific support for task planning, deadline monitoring, and study management.

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Corresponding Author:

Marpren Karunia
Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia; marprenkarunia@gmail.com

1. INTRODUCTION

Academic procrastination is a persistent problem in education, characterized by the voluntary delay of intended academic tasks despite the expectation of negative consequences (Steel, 2007). During early adolescence, this behavior deserves particular attention because students face increasing academic demands while developing the capacity to regulate attention, emotions, impulses, and goal-directed behavior. Academic procrastination is therefore more than a problem of time management; it reflects difficulties in self-regulation that may interfere with task initiation, sustained attention, persistence, and timely completion of schoolwork (Sirois, 2023; Steel, 2007). From a self-regulated learning perspective, successful students are expected to set goals and regulate their cognition, motivation, and behavior toward those goals (Zimmerman, 2000). Understanding

the psychological and social resources associated with procrastination is consequently important for developing appropriate educational and counseling interventions.

Self-control represents an important internal resource in this process. It refers to the capacity to regulate impulses, attention, emotions, and behavior in accordance with valued goals (Tangney et al., 2004; Werner & Ford, 2023). In academic contexts, self-control enables students to initiate assignments, maintain attention despite distractions, resist immediately rewarding alternatives, regulate frustration, and persist until academic tasks are completed. These capacities are particularly relevant to procrastination because delaying schoolwork often involves a conflict between immediate preferences and longer-term academic goals. Theoretical and empirical literature has consistently positioned procrastination as a form of self-regulatory failure in which difficulties controlling impulses and maintaining goal-directed behavior increase the likelihood of delaying intended actions (Steel, 2007; Wennerhold & Friese, 2023).

Empirical studies further support the importance of self-control in students' academic behavior. Higher self-control has been associated with better adjustment, academic performance, and interpersonal functioning (Tangney et al., 2004). Research involving adolescents has also demonstrated a relationship between self-control and procrastination, including in environments characterized by multiple-screen and digital distractions (Gökalp et al., 2023). Furthermore, self-control has been identified as an important predictor of academic performance and persistence (Vazsonyi et al., 2022). These findings suggest that students who are better able to regulate their impulses and maintain goal-directed behavior may be less likely to postpone academic tasks. Nevertheless, self-control operates within a broader social environment, and students' academic behavior may also be related to the resources available through their relationships with others.

One such external resource is social support. Social support encompasses emotional support, informational guidance, instrumental assistance, and appraisal or encouragement obtained through interpersonal relationships (Cohen & Wills, 1985). For junior high school students, these resources may be provided by family members, peers, and teachers. Emotional support can provide reassurance when students experience academic difficulties, informational support can help them understand tasks and identify appropriate strategies, instrumental support can provide practical resources, and appraisal support can offer feedback and encouragement. Social support may therefore facilitate students' engagement with academic demands by providing interpersonal resources that complement their internal capacity for self-regulation. Previous research has emphasized the importance of accessible support for student engagement and educational experiences (Picton & Kahu, 2022), while research on procrastination has also indicated that social resources may be associated with students' tendency to delay academic responsibilities (Jannah & Yuzarion, 2025).

Self-control and social support, however, represent theoretically distinct but potentially overlapping resources. Self-control concerns the student's internal capacity to regulate behavior toward academic goals, whereas social support represents resources available through interpersonal relationships. Support from family, peers, or teachers may provide encouragement and practical assistance, but students must still translate those resources into goal-directed academic action. Conversely, students with stronger self-regulatory capacities may be better able to seek, interpret, and use available support. Consequently, a significant bivariate relationship between social support and academic procrastination does not necessarily indicate that social support will retain the same explanatory contribution when self-control is considered simultaneously. Examining the two predictors within the same statistical model is therefore important for distinguishing their individual relationships with procrastination from their unique contributions after their shared variance is taken into account.

Despite growing attention to academic procrastination, several gaps remain relevant. Previous studies have frequently examined self-control or social support separately, and many studies of procrastination have focused on university students rather than early adolescents. Studies

involving younger students are particularly important because self-regulatory capacities and patterns of social interaction continue to develop during this period. In addition, treating social support as a general construct without simultaneously considering internal self-regulation may obscure the extent to which its relationship with procrastination overlaps with students' personal regulatory resources. A simultaneous examination of self-control and perceived social support can therefore provide a more differentiated understanding of the internal and external resources associated with academic procrastination among junior high school students.

The issue is also evident in the context of SMP Negeri 9 Kota Padang. Preliminary observations and informal interviews conducted in January 2025 with 25 Grade VIII students indicated recurring delays in completing school assignments. Ten students identified online games as a source of delay, ten reported prolonged social-media use, and five reported forgetting assignments. Teachers and school counselors also observed late assignment submission, anxiety near deadlines, and difficulties maintaining consistent study routines. These preliminary observations are not intended as inferential evidence but indicate a practical need to examine factors associated with academic procrastination in this school context. Considering both students' internal regulatory capacities and the support available from their social environment may provide a more comprehensive basis for guidance and counseling practices.

Accordingly, this study examines the relationships of self-control and perceived social support with academic procrastination among Grade VII and VIII students at SMP Negeri 9 Kota Padang. Specifically, it investigates the relationship of each predictor with academic procrastination separately and their unique contributions when examined simultaneously. The study extends previous research by integrating an internal regulatory resource and an external interpersonal resource into a single analytical model in an early-adolescent school context. Given the cross-sectional correlational design, the study focuses on statistical associations and predictive relationships rather than causal effects. The findings are expected to contribute to guidance and counseling practice by clarifying whether academic procrastination is more strongly associated with students' self-regulatory capacity, perceived social support, or the shared contribution of these resources.

2. METHODS

This study used a quantitative cross-sectional correlational design. The population comprised 300 Grade VII and VIII students at SMP Negeri 9 Kota Padang. A sample of 175 students was selected through proportional stratified random sampling so that each class was represented. The sample size followed the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error. Data collection took place during regular school hours. Students received an explanation of the research, participation was voluntary, and responses were recorded without names in the analysis file.

Three instruments were developed in Indonesian from the theoretical dimensions used in the thesis framework. Each initial blueprint contained 40 items. The wording was adjusted to the junior high school context and reviewed by a guidance and counseling expert for content relevance, clarity, and age appropriateness. Negatively worded statements were reverse-scored according to the scoring key. Item quality was then examined using corrected item-total correlations. Items below the critical correlation of .148 were removed. The final instrument characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Instrument Characteristics

Variable	Dimensions	Final items	Representative item	Validity and reliability
Self-control	Impulse control, attention control, goal planning, and emotion regulation	38	I can return my attention to schoolwork after being distracted.	Corrected item-total $r = .247-.747$; $\alpha = .938$
Social support	Emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal support from family, peers, and teachers	38	When I have difficulty with schoolwork, I receive useful advice or practical help.	Corrected item-total $r = .165-.740$; $\alpha = .927$
Academic procrastination	Task delay, poor time management, deadline dependence, and distractibility	39	I delay starting school assignments even when I know the deadline.	Corrected item-total $r = .165-.614$; $\alpha = .887$

All items used a five-point Likert response format from 1 to 5. After reverse scoring, higher self-control and social-support scores indicated stronger resources, while higher academic-procrastination scores indicated more frequent delay behavior. Descriptive categories used the empirical mean and standard deviation of each scale. Scores below $M - 1$ SD were classified as low, scores from $M - 1$ SD through $M + 1$ SD as moderate, and scores above $M + 1$ SD as high. This rule was applied separately to each variable and provides a transparent basis for the categories.

Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, simple linear regression, and multiple linear regression. The assumptions were examined through the Shapiro-Wilk test for residual normality, the Ramsey RESET test for functional linearity, tolerance and variance inflation factor values for multicollinearity, and the Breusch-Pagan test for heteroscedasticity. The residuals were non-normal and heteroscedastic. Therefore, coefficient tests used HC3 heteroscedasticity-consistent standard errors, which provide more reliable inference when error variance is unequal (Hayes & Cai, 2007). The significance level was .05.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Findings

3.1.1 Descriptive Results

Table 2 presents the complete descriptive profile. Most students were in the moderate category for self-control, social support, and academic procrastination. The category limits were 98.68 and 159.63 for self-control, 97.89 and 150.97 for social support, and 85.12 and 132.70 for academic procrastination.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Categories

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max	Low n (%)	Moderate n (%)	High n (%)
Self-control	175	129.16	30.48	69	176	20 (11.4)	106 (60.6)	49 (28.0)
Social support	175	124.43	26.54	78	176	16 (9.1)	122 (69.7)	37 (21.1)
Academic procrastination	175	108.91	23.79	55	164	34 (19.4)	118 (67.4)	23 (13.1)

3.1.2 Regression Assumptions

The detailed assumption tests are shown in Table 3. The RESET result supported a linear functional form. Tolerance and VIF values did not exceed the conventional limits, although the two predictors were strongly related and therefore shared substantial variance. Normality and homoscedasticity were not met. The HC3 correction was applied to all coefficient tests rather than incorrectly describing the residuals as normal.

Table 3. Regression Assumption Tests

Assumption	Statistic	p	Interpretation and response
Residual normality	Shapiro-Wilk W = .900	< .001	Not met; robust coefficient inference used
Linearity	RESET F(1, 171) = 3.534	.062	No strong evidence of nonlinearity
Multicollinearity	Tolerance = .214; VIF = 4.665	-	Acceptable under VIF < 5, but predictor overlap is high
Homoscedasticity	Breusch-Pagan chi-square(2) = 17.093	< .001	Not met; HC3 robust standard errors used

3.1.3 Bivariate and Multiple Regression Results

The regression results are presented in Table 4. Self-control had a strong negative bivariate relationship with academic procrastination and explained 73.7% of the score variance. Social support also had a negative bivariate relationship and explained 64.2% of the variance when examined alone. The signs of the coefficients and t values are consistent in all models.

Table 4. Regression Results with HC3 Robust Standard Errors

Model and predictor	B	Robust SE	Beta	t	p	R2	Adjusted R2
Simple: Self-control	-.670	.042	-.858	-16.126	< .001	.737	.735
Simple: Social support	-.718	.048	-.801	-14.887	< .001	.642	.640
Multiple: Self-control	-.540	.103	-.692	-5.244	< .001		
Multiple: Social support	-.169	.116	-.188	-1.454	.148		
Multiple model				F(2, 172) = 250.068	< .001	.744	.741

In the multiple model, self-control remained the dominant predictor. General social support no longer had a statistically significant unique coefficient after self-control was controlled. The combined R2 was .744, which is correctly larger than the self-control-only R2 of .737. Social support therefore added about 0.8 percentage points of explained variance beyond self-control. The results support a negative relationship between each predictor and procrastination at the bivariate level, but only self-control showed a robust unique predictive relationship in the combined model.

3.2 Discussion

The findings indicate that self-control and perceived social support were negatively associated with academic procrastination among junior high school students, although their contributions differed when examined simultaneously. Self-control showed the strongest relationship with academic procrastination and remained statistically significant in the multiple regression model. In contrast, perceived social support demonstrated a strong negative relationship with procrastination when examined separately, but did not retain a significant unique coefficient after self-control was included. These findings suggest that internal self-regulation may have a particularly important role in understanding differences in academic procrastination among the students in this sample.

The strong negative relationship between self-control and academic procrastination is consistent with the conceptualization of procrastination as a self-regulatory failure (Steel, 2007). Academic tasks frequently require students to choose long-term educational goals over immediately rewarding alternatives. Students must initiate tasks even when motivation is low, maintain attention despite distractions, regulate frustration when difficulties arise, and persist until assignments are completed. These behaviors depend substantially on self-regulatory capacities. Tangney et al. (2004) similarly demonstrated that higher self-control is associated with better adjustment and academic functioning, while Werner and Ford (2023) conceptualized self-control as a capacity involving the regulation of behavior in accordance with valued goals. Thus, students with stronger self-control may be better able to translate academic intentions into sustained task-directed behavior.

The present findings are also consistent with research involving adolescents. Gökalp et al. (2023) reported a relationship between self-control and procrastination in the context of multiple-screen use, suggesting that self-control becomes particularly relevant when students encounter attractive competing activities. This issue is important for early adolescents because digital entertainment and social-media activities can provide immediate rewards that compete with school assignments whose benefits are comparatively delayed. The finding is also compatible with evidence that self-control contributes to academic functioning and performance (Vazsonyi et al., 2022). However, the present study extends this perspective to academic procrastination among Grade VII and VIII students in an Indonesian junior high school context.

The findings concerning perceived social support require a more cautious interpretation. When examined separately, social support showed a strong negative relationship with academic procrastination, indicating that students who perceived greater support from their social environment also tended to report less procrastination. This pattern is consistent with the theoretical view that social support provides emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal resources that can help individuals manage demands and stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). In educational settings, accessible support can also contribute to students' engagement by helping them connect interpersonal resources with their learning experiences (Picton & Kahu, 2022). Support from family members, peers, and teachers may therefore facilitate academic behavior through encouragement, practical assistance, information, feedback, and access to learning resources.

Nevertheless, perceived social support did not show a statistically significant unique coefficient after self-control was included in the multiple regression model. This result should not be interpreted as evidence that social support is unimportant. Rather, it indicates that the variance uniquely associated with the general social-support score was limited after its shared variance with self-control was statistically accounted for. The relatively high VIF value (4.665) also indicates substantial overlap between the two predictors. Therefore, part of the bivariate association between perceived social support and procrastination may reflect characteristics shared with students' capacity to regulate and organize their own academic behavior.

One possible interpretation is that receiving support and effectively using support are not equivalent processes. Emotional encouragement, advice, practical assistance, or feedback may provide useful resources, but students still need to initiate and sustain academic actions. A student may receive reminders about an assignment, for example, but completing the assignment still requires attention regulation, resistance to competing activities, and persistence. This interpretation is compatible with self-regulated learning perspectives in which students actively regulate their behavior toward academic goals rather than functioning solely as recipients of environmental resources (Zimmerman, 2000). However, because the present study did not test mediation or interaction effects, the mechanism linking self-control and social support cannot be determined from these data.

The measurement of social support should also be considered when interpreting this finding. The instrument combined emotional, informational, instrumental, and appraisal support from family, peers, and teachers into a general social-support score. Different forms and sources of

support may not have equivalent relationships with academic procrastination. For example, emotional encouragement may function differently from direct assistance with task planning or deadline monitoring. Previous research emphasizes that support becomes educationally meaningful when students can access and connect it to engagement in learning (Picton & Kahu, 2022). Consequently, the non-significant unique coefficient found here may partly reflect the broad measurement of social support rather than the absence of potentially important relationships between particular forms of academic support and procrastination.

The large proportion of explained variance also warrants careful interpretation. The combined model explained 74.4% of the variance in academic procrastination, only slightly exceeding the 73.7% explained by self-control alone. Although this finding demonstrates a strong statistical relationship within the present sample, it should not be interpreted as evidence that self-control determines procrastination. The three variables were measured using self-report instruments in the same sample, which may increase shared method variance. Other factors not included in the model, such as academic motivation, task difficulty, academic stress, self-efficacy, and digital-media habits, may also contribute to procrastination. The cross-sectional design further prevents conclusions regarding temporal order or causality.

From a guidance and counseling perspective, the findings support greater attention to observable self-regulation skills. School counselors may help students divide assignments into manageable steps, establish specific starting times, monitor deadlines, reduce distractions during study periods, and evaluate their progress regularly. Social support may complement these strategies when it is translated into academically relevant assistance, such as clear task guidance, reminders, access to learning resources, and constructive feedback. Rather than treating internal regulation and interpersonal support as competing explanations, counseling programs may integrate both by strengthening students' capacity to manage their own behavior while creating social environments that facilitate goal-directed academic action.

Overall, the findings suggest that self-control has a strong and stable statistical relationship with academic procrastination among the students studied, whereas the relationship of general perceived social support substantially overlaps with self-control. These results reinforce the importance of self-regulation in understanding procrastination while highlighting the need for more differentiated investigation of social support. Future research should examine specific sources and forms of support, particularly academic-specific support, and use longitudinal designs and independently validated instruments to clarify how internal and interpersonal resources jointly relate to academic procrastination.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that self-control and perceived social support are negatively associated with academic procrastination among Grade VII and VIII students at SMP Negeri 9 Kota Padang, although their unique contributions differ when examined simultaneously. Self-control showed the strongest and most stable relationship with academic procrastination, whereas perceived social support was strongly associated with procrastination at the bivariate level but did not retain a significant unique coefficient after self-control was statistically controlled. The combined model explained 74.4% of the variance in academic procrastination, indicating substantial overlap between the contributions of the two predictors. These findings emphasize the importance of self-regulation in understanding academic procrastination and suggest that school guidance and counseling programs should strengthen students' practical self-regulation skills while directing social support toward academically relevant assistance, such as task planning, deadline monitoring, study guidance, and constructive feedback. Because the study employed a cross-sectional design, self-report measures, and a sample from a single school, the findings should be interpreted as statistical associations rather than causal relationships and generalized with caution. Future research

should employ longitudinal designs, independently validated instruments, and more differentiated measures of social support to clarify how specific sources and forms of support interact with self-regulation in relation to academic procrastination.

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