

**PERFECTIONISM AND MINDFULNESS AS PREDICTORS OF ACADEMIC  
PROCRASTINATION: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF FEAR OF FAILURE IN  
VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

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**ABSTRACT**

Academic procrastination is an interesting phenomenon that can negatively impact student performance. This study aims to analyze the influence of perfectionism and mindfulness on academic procrastination, mediated by fear of failure, in vocational high school students. This study uses a quantitative approach with a survey method. The population of this study was 206 students with a research sample of 136 people selected using purposive sampling technique. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method using SmartPLS software. The results showed that perfectionism positively and significantly influenced Fear of Failure and academic procrastination. In contrast, Mindfulness negatively and significantly influences Fear of Failure and academic procrastination. Fear of Failure was also found to positively and significantly influence academic procrastination, as well as mediate the relationship between perfectionism and procrastination, and between Mindfulness and procrastination. The findings emphasize the need for psychological interventions to manage expectations and develop Mindfulness to reduce Fear of Failure and procrastination.

**Keywords: Perfectionism, Mindfulness, Fear of failure, Academic procrastination**

**ABSTRAK**

Prokrastinasi akademik merupakan fenomena menarik yang dapat berdampak negatif pada kinerja siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh perfeksionisme dan Mindfulness terhadap prokrastinasi akademik dengan mediasi Fear of Failure pada siswa SMK. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan metode survei. Populasi penelitian ini adalah 206 siswa dengan sampel penelitian 136 orang yang dipilih menggunakan teknik purposive sampling. Analisis data dilakukan dengan metode Partial Least Squares - Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) menggunakan perangkat lunak SmartPLS. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa perfeksionisme secara positif dan signifikan memengaruhi Fear of Failure dan prokrastinasi akademik. Sebaliknya, Mindfulness secara negatif dan signifikan memengaruhi Fear of Failure dan prokrastinasi akademik. Fear of Failure juga ditemukan berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap prokrastinasi akademik, serta memediasi hubungan antara perfeksionisme dan prokrastinasi, dan antara Mindfulness dan prokrastinasi. Temuan ini menekankan perlunya intervensi psikologis untuk mengelola ekspektasi dan mengembangkan Mindfulness guna mengurangi Fear of Failure dan prokrastinasi.

**Kata kunci: Perfeksionisme, Mindfulness, Fear of failure, Prokrastinasi akademik**

## INTRODUCTION

The demands of the modern labor market require not only technical competencies but also psychological readiness among students. Vocational High Schools (SMK) are designed to prepare students with job-specific skills and professional discipline. However, despite their career-oriented curriculum, many vocational students struggle with psychological obstacles that impede their academic performance, one of which is academic procrastination. Academic procrastination is the deliberate postponement of academic assignments, frequently in spite of awareness of the possible drawbacks (Kholifah et al. 2022). This behavior is commonly associated with psychological traits such as perfectionism and fear of failure, as well as insufficient emotional regulation. While several studies have explored the relationships among these variables, gaps remain. Previous research often focused on university students and overlooked the vocational school context. Moreover, studies that examined perfectionism and mindfulness together rarely included fear of failure as a mediating factor.

Preliminary findings from a pre-survey of 106 students in the Office Management and Business Services (MPLB) program at Public Vocational High School (SMKN) 1 Bogor revealed that 56.6% of students submitted assignments late or failed to submit them at all, and 93.75% admitted to delaying academic tasks. Furthermore, high levels of perfectionism (90.63%), mindfulness (96.88%), and fear of failure (87.50%) were reported. These results underscore a complex interplay among the three variables. Interestingly, students with high mindfulness still engaged in procrastination, indicating that different aspects of mindfulness specifically, Acting with Awareness and Nonjudgmental Acceptance may have distinct effects on procrastination.

Academic procrastination is a common challenge among vocational high school students and is often associated with psychological and behavioral factors. Perfectionism can contribute to procrastination, as students with high standards may delay tasks due to fear of making mistakes or not meeting expectations (Mansouri et al., 2022). Fear of failure mediates this relationship by intensifying anxiety and avoidance behaviors. Conversely, mindfulness—defined as present-moment awareness without judgment—has been shown to reduce procrastination by enhancing self-regulation and decreasing stress (Utami et al., 2023). Prior research suggests that integrating mindfulness practices may buffer the negative effects of perfectionism, thereby lowering academic procrastination (Schuman-Olivier et al., 2020). Given these gaps, this study explores how perfectionism, mindfulness, and academic procrastination among vocational students are mediated by fear of failure. The findings are expected to offer theoretical enrichment and practical insights for educators and counselors to develop targeted interventions that foster academic discipline and emotional resilience in vocational education settings.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Academic Procrastination

As defined by Yue et al. (2024), procrastination is the habit of needless delaying that someone engages in because they are afraid of failing and because they believe that everything must be done perfectly. This makes them feel safer not to do it right away because it will result in less-than-ideal work. Academic procrastination is the term for procrastination that takes place in the academic setting. According to Ferrari (in Obenza et al., 2024) defines academic procrastination as students' ongoing propensity to put off assignments until the last minute, which frequently results in stress. Academic procrastination is a complicated, multifaceted habit that impedes the learning process of self-regulation, claim González-Brignardello and Sánchez-Elvira Paniagua (2023). Their research confirmed that academic procrastination can be measured with the Multidimensional Academic Procrastination Scale, which has a structure of three valid and reliable indicators. The three indicators include: 1) Core Procrastination,

reflects delays in task initiation and development and difficulties in making the decision to start learning. 2) Poor Time Management, describes students' difficulty in staying on top of their studies and tendency to fall behind on assignments. 3) Work Disconnection, reflects disorganized behavior while studying, such as frequently interrupting work or wasting time on irrelevant information.

### **Perfectionism**

In accordance with definitions, perfectionism is frequently linked to having high standards for oneself, worrying excessively about making mistakes, feeling that one's parents have high expectations of oneself, being worried about receiving harsh judgment from one's parents, doubting the quality of one's acts, and preferring order and structure (Frost et al., 1990). Hollender (1965) asserts that perfectionism is a fundamentally undesirable personality trait that shows out as unreasonable demands for oneself or others to do well everywhere and at all times. According to Liu & Berzenski (2022) the indicators of academic perfectionism, validated through the College Academic Perfectionism Scale (CAPS), are 1) Self-Oriented Academic Perfectionism, is one of the factors found in the CAPS scale and represents an individual's desire to pursue perfection in academics. 2) Academic Self-Criticism, measures an individual's tendency to harshly criticize themselves when their performance is unsatisfactory. 3) Doubts about Actions, represents an individual's hesitant behavior and concerns regarding the need to be perfect. 4) Socially Prescribed Academic Perfectionism, symbolizes a person's propensity to actively sense social factors that promote perfectionism.

### **Mindfulness**

The awareness that results from focusing on the here and now without passing judgment is known as mindfulness. The Pali word *sati*, which appears in Buddhist scriptures and means "recollection, recollection, call to mind, awareness, certain specific facts," but is sometimes referred to as "clear awareness" or "mindfulness," was translated into English by British scholar Rhys Davids in 1881 (Schuman-Olivier et al., 2020). Eastern spiritual traditions provide descriptions of mindfulness and techniques for cultivating it. They imply that regular meditation practice can foster mindfulness and that it is likely to result in an increase in virtues like awareness, insight, wisdom, compassion, and composure (Baer et al., 2006). The following indicators of Mindfulness according to Baer et al. (2006) are 1) Acting with awareness, which refers to present-centered awareness. A person acts deliberately and consciously in completing their activities with concentration and undivided attention. They complete each task with full concentration, ensuring that no distractions divide their attention during the process. 2) Experience is received without judgment, when a student is in a mindful state, they are able to develop a more focused attitude and engage in the learning process without self-judgment.

### **Fear of Failure**

The term Fear of Failure (FOF) was introduced by Atkinson in 1987. The term describes people who tend to avoid failure for fear of feeling embarrassed as a result of the failure. Since failure is often perceived as a threat, Fear of Failure is a defensive response used to protect oneself from the negative impacts that may arise from failure (Lee et al., 2024). Conroy (2001) defines Fear of Failure as an emotional response that occurs when individuals think that a situation threatens their goals or self-esteem. If the individual sees a threatening situation, they will feel afraid of failure and appear in various behaviors, such as procrastination, self-handicapping, or avoiding challenging tasks (Al Farisi et al., 2020). According to Alabduljabbar et al. (2022) there are five indicators for the Fear of Failure variable, namely 1) Shame and humiliation, fear of shame and humiliation often arise when academic failure occurs in public. Individuals who feel their failure will be known to many people tend to postpone

tasks to avoid potential failure. 2) Decreased estimation, the fear of decreased self-estimation often arises when individuals feel they have failed to achieve goals. This fear can lead to feelings of incompetence in individuals, which affects their self-confidence. 3) Future uncertainty, the fear of future uncertainty arises when individuals believe that failure can affect the course of their lives. This fear stems from the belief that failure will bring unpredictable negative changes to their lives. 4) Loss of social influence, the fear of losing social influence arises when individuals feel that failure can damage their image in the eyes of others. 5) Fear of being perceived as disappointing important people, the fear of disappointing important people arises when individuals feel that failure will disappoint the closest people in their lives. This fear often involves anxiety about criticism from parents or other important figures.

The hypothetical model for this study can be seen in Figure 1.

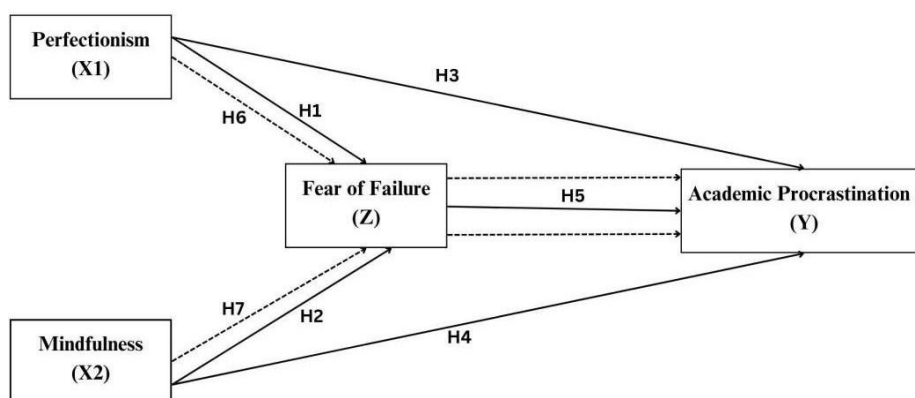


Figure 1. Hypothetical Research Model

H1: Perfectionism has a positive effect on Fear of Failure

H2: Mindfulness has a negative effect on Fear of Failure

H3: Perfectionism has a positive effect on Academic Procrastination

H4: Mindfulness has a negative effect on Academic Procrastination

H5: Fear of Failure has a positive effect on Academic Procrastination

H6: Fear of Failure mediates the relationship between Perfectionism and Academic Procrastination

H7: Fear of Failure mediates the relationship between Mindfulness and Academic Procrastination

## METHOD

This study employed a quantitative methodology and a correlational design to examine how mindfulness and perfectionism affect academic procrastination, which is mediated by fear of failing. Self-regulation theory, which describes how people control their thoughts and emotions to achieve their goals, and affective-motivational theory, which links emotional inclinations and fear to avoidance behaviors like procrastination, serve as the theoretical foundations for the framework. A self-report questionnaire modified from recognized and validated scales served as the data gathering tool. Academic procrastination was measured using the Multidimensional Academic Procrastination Scale (González-Brignardello & Sánchez-Elvira, 2023) consisting of 11 items. Perfectionism was assessed with 15 items from the College Academic Perfectionism Scale (Liu & Berzenski, 2022). Mindfulness was measured using 10 selected items from the Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (Baer et al., 2006), focusing specifically on the dimensions of Acting with Awareness and Nonjudgmental Acceptance. Meanwhile, Fear of Failure was assessed using 15 items based on the five-dimensional framework developed by Alabduljabbar et al. (2022), which includes shame and

humiliation, decreased self-esteem, future uncertainty, loss of social influence, and fear of disappointing significant others. All items were translated into Bahasa Indonesia and subjected to a back-translation process to ensure semantic equivalence. Responses were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The population comprised 206 students from grades X and XI in the Office Management and Business Services (MPLB) program at SMKN 1 Bogor. Using the Taro Yamane formula with a 5% margin of error, a minimum sample size of 136 students was determined. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure proportional representation from each class (e.g., X MPLB 1, XI MPLB 2). Data were analyzed using SmartPLS 4.0, employing the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique. The model assessment included Outer model analysis for construct validity and reliability, Inner model analysis for hypothesis testing via path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values (bootstrapping with 5000 subsamples), Mediation analysis following the indirect effect criteria by Hair et al. (2022).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity refers to the notion that there is minimal association between the measures (manifest variables) of multiple conceptions. Discriminant validity can be tested using reflective indicators. The results of the discriminant validity test in this study are supported by Fornell Larcker's Discriminant Validity, which is displayed in the Table 1. The values on the diagonal are higher than the correlations between constructs, indicating that each construct is empirically distinct from the others. Thus, the discriminant validity criteria are fully met, confirming that the measurement model is appropriate for further structural analysis.

Table 1. Discriminant Validity Fornell Larcker

	<b>X1</b>	<b>X2</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Z</b>
<b>X1</b>	0.799			
<b>X2</b>	-0.737	0.778		
<b>Y</b>	0.454	-0.808	0.853	
<b>Z</b>	0.740	-0.895	0.778	0.778

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

### Composite Reliability

The accuracy, consistency, and precision of the device in measuring structures are demonstrated by reliability testing. PLS-SEM uses the SmartPLS 4.0 program to measure construct reliability with reflective indicators using Composite Reliability. A rule of thumb often used in assessing composite reliability is that it should be greater than 0.7. In addition to composite reliability, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) factor and Cronbach's alpha are used in this study to assess reliability. The following Table 2 shows the findings for Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) index. All values exceeded the recommended thresholds, indicating that the measurement model demonstrates strong internal consistency and reliability. The variable is regarded as extremely dependable if the composite reliability value is greater than 0.7 and the AVE value is greater than 0.5. Based on the composite reliability test findings in Table 2, it can be said that all of these constructs are trustworthy because each variable has an AVE value > 0.5, Cronbach's alpha > 0.7, and a composite reliability value.

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Composite Reliability, dan Cronbachs Alpha

	<b>Cronbach's alpha</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_a)</b>	<b>Composite reliability (rho_c)</b>	<b>Average variance extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>X1</b>	0.956	0.959	0.961	0.638
<b>X2</b>	0.918	0.921	0.932	0.605
<b>Y</b>	0.958	0.960	0.964	0.728
<b>Z</b>	0.953	0.956	0.958	0.606

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

### R-square

R-Square is utilized in this study to explain whether endogenous latent variables have a substantial impact, as well as to assess the degree to which the ratio of dependent latent factors can be described by independent latent variables. Strength, moderate, and weakness are indicated by the R-Square values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19, respectively. The findings from Table 3 show that the Academic Procrastination variable (Y) has an R-Square value of 0.606, meaning that the Perfectionism (X1) and Mindfulness (X2) variables can account for 60.6% of the variability in Academic Procrastination through the mediating variable Fear of Failure (Z). Other factors outside the scope of this study model account for the remaining 39.4%. According to the R-Square value of 0.815 for the Fear of Failure (Z) variable, Perfectionism (X1) and Mindfulness (X2) account for 81.5% of the variability in this variable. It can be inferred that the model has a high predictive capacity in explaining the association between these variables because this value is categorized as very strong.

Table 3. R-square

	<b>R-square</b>	<b>R-square adjusted</b>
<b>Y</b>	0.606	0.603
<b>Z</b>	0.815	0.812

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

### F-square

F-Square is used to determine the relative impact of the independent factors on the dependent variable. Weak findings are indicated by an F-Square value of 0.02, moderate results by 0.15, and strong results by 0.35. Based on Table 4 of the F-Square calculation results, the effect value of Perfectionism (X1) on Fear of Failure (Z) is 0.077 which is classified as weak. Meanwhile, the F-Square value of Mindfulness (X2) on Fear of Failure (Z) is 1.449 which is included in the very strong category, so it can be concluded that Mindfulness provides a dominant influence in explaining Fear of Failure. In addition, the F-Square value of Fear of Failure (Z) on Academic Procrastination (Y) is 1.536, which is also included in the very strong category, indicating that this mediating variable has a major influence on the emergence of academic procrastination behaviour in individuals. Thus, the relationship between variables in this model is dominated by the strong influence of Mindfulness on Fear of Failure and the influence of Fear of Failure on Academic Procrastination.

Table 4. F-square

	<b>X1</b>	<b>X2</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Z</b>
<b>X1</b>				0.077
<b>X2</b>				1.449
<b>Z</b>			1.536	

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

**Hypothesis Testing**

Table 5. Path Coefficients

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values	Decision
X1 -> Z	0.176	0.176	0.072	2.464	0.014	Accepted
X2 -> Z	-0.765	-0.767	0.061	12.440	0.000	Accepted
X1 -> Y	0.137	0.137	0.056	2.464	0.014	Accepted
X2 -> Y	-0.595	-0.600	0.064	9.298	0.000	Accepted
Z -> Y	0.778	0.781	0.042	18.669	0.000	Accepted

Source: Data processed by the researcher (2025)

Several important conclusions were drawn from the data analysis utilizing PLS-SEM based on Table 5.

*H1: Perfectionism has a positive effect on fear of failure.*

In accordance with the analysis, fear of failure is positively and significantly impacted by perfectionism ( $\beta = 0.176$ ;  $p = 0.014$ ). This suggests that a student's fear of failing increases with their degree of perfectionism. This result is consistent with other research by Pamungkas & Muhid (2020), Cengiz (2023), and Al Farisi et al. (2024), which discovered that academic perfectionism positively predicts fear of failure. Pupils who hold themselves to unreasonably high standards are more likely to feel anxious about failing, which exacerbates their fear of failing. psychological assistance to control excessive expectations for oneself and lessen the strain brought on by failure-related anxiety.

*H2: Mindfulness has a negative effect on fear of failure*

The findings demonstrated that fear of failure is significantly and negatively impacted by mindfulness ( $\beta = -0.765$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that pupils who are more mindful also typically have less fear of failing. This result is in line with earlier research showing that mindfulness helps lessen anxiety and fear-related reactions (Wulandari & Rinaldi, 2024; Sode & Chenji, 2021). Being mindful makes it easier for people to control their negative emotions and internal pressure, which frees them from an overwhelming fear of failing.

*H3: Perfectionism has a positive effect on academic procrastination*

The analysis indicated that perfectionism positively and significantly affects academic procrastination ( $\beta = 0.137$ ;  $p = 0.014$ ). This implies that students with higher perfectionism are more likely to delay academic tasks. This finding supports previous research by Ashraf et al. (2023), Basaria et al. (2021), and Huang et al. (2022), which demonstrated that maladaptive perfectionism increases procrastination due to fear of not meeting excessively high standards and internal pressure.

*H4: Mindfulness has a negative effect on academic procrastination*

The findings showed that academic procrastination is significantly and negatively impacted by mindfulness ( $\beta = -0.595$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This implies that procrastination tendencies are generally reduced among students who exhibit higher levels of awareness. This result is consistent with other research by Yue et al. (2024), Puspita & Surhadianto (2021), and Einabad et al. (2019), which discovered that mindfulness improves emotional regulation and present-moment awareness, assisting students in staying focused on assignments and lowering procrastinating behavior.

*H5: Fear of failure has a positive effect on academic procrastination*

The results showed that academic procrastination is positively and significantly impacted by fear of failure ( $\beta = 0.778$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This indicates that academic assignments are more likely to be put off by students who have a high fear of failing. Previous studies like Kumari & Malik (2021), Tan & Prihadi (2022), and Usman & Maulidia (2020) have found that fear of failure is a powerful psychological element that causes avoidance behavior, including procrastination. These findings confirm this conclusion.

*H6: Fear of failure mediates the relationship between perfectionism and academic procrastination*

The association between academic procrastination and perfectionism is considerably mediated by fear of failure, according to the mediation study. This indicates that procrastination is influenced by perfectionism both directly and indirectly, as it increases the fear of failing. According to research by Cho & Lee (2022), Mansouri et al. (2022), and Rezaeisharif et al. (2021), perfectionistic people frequently procrastinate as a coping strategy because they are afraid of falling short of expectations.

*H7: Fear of failure mediates the relationship between mindfulness and academic procrastination*

Additionally, the analysis revealed that the association between academic procrastination and mindfulness is considerably mediated by fear of failure. This implies that mindfulness lowers fear of failure, which in turn lowers procrastination both directly and indirectly. This result is in line with studies by Yuliana (2017) and Parlade (2022), who highlighted that people who are more aware are better able to control their emotions and lessen concern about performance outcomes, which lowers their procrastinating tendencies.

In summary, the findings of this study emphasize the central role of fear of failure in mediating the effects of perfectionism and mindfulness on academic procrastination. Students who are highly perfectionistic tend to experience greater fear of failure, which leads them to avoid academic tasks as a coping strategy. Conversely, mindfulness helps reduce fear-related responses and promotes engagement in academic responsibilities. These results underscore the importance of integrating emotional regulation training, particularly mindfulness-based interventions, into educational programs to help students manage perfectionism and reduce procrastination. Furthermore, the significant indirect pathways observed in the model highlight the need for comprehensive psychological support systems in vocational education environments.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

According to the study's findings, academic procrastination among vocational students is greatly influenced by perfectionism and mindfulness, both directly and indirectly through failure-related dread. In particular: (1) perfectionism makes people more afraid of failing; (2) mindfulness makes people less afraid of failing; (3) perfectionism makes people put things off more; (4) mindfulness makes people put things off less; (5) fear of failure makes people put things off more; (6) fear of failure mediates the relationship between procrastination and mindfulness; and (7) fear of failure also mediates the relationship between mindfulness and procrastination. These results support the important role that psychological variables play in influencing vocational students' academic behavior. From a practical perspective, interventions aimed at reducing maladaptive perfectionism, enhancing mindfulness, and addressing fear of failure are essential for promoting time management and academic engagement. Schools and teachers are encouraged to implement counseling programs that incorporate emotional regulation strategies and cognitive-behavioral techniques. Parents should foster a supportive home environment that encourages growth through failure rather than perfection. Future

research may explore additional moderating factors such as gender, age, and self-efficacy to gain deeper insight into the mechanisms underlying academic procrastination in different educational contexts.

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