The Relationship between Motivation, Fear of Failure and Procrastination among Working Women

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Abstract: *With rapid growth of business and industry in the 21st century, more and more women are becoming a part of the workforce to make a mark and to show their potential. The present study investigates the relationship between the fear of failure and procrastination on the motivation of working women. The sample consisted of 60 participants and the scales used were Work Motivation Scale, Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory, (PFAI) and Adult Inventory of Procrastination (AIP). The findings suggested that there is a positive correlation between the variables.*

Keywords: motivation; fear of failure; procrastination

1. Introduction

A woman, as a wife is the better half of a man. If she is employed, she is the best asset not only of him, but also of his total family. Although money is a unique life factor for a competent life, its source is also very important. In general, the source turns out to be a job. Therefore, for a family man, his gain alone is not enough for a happy life. The use of women's employment, in this sense, is an important and inevitable source for a better maintenance of the family. Not only for the husband, but also for the parents, the earning girl is a better financial support until her marriage, sometimes even after the wedding. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru (2002) aptly confesses that "To awaken the people, it is the woman who must be awakened". Once she is moving, the family moves, the village is moving, the nation is moving. "

Vroom. VH (1964) considers that the motivation of an individual depends on three factors: (i) the perception that his effort will lead to good performance (expectation), (ii) the perception that good performance will generate rewards (iii)) perception that the rewards are worth. In a study conducted by Singh. P.N. and Wherry. R.J., (1963), 200 Indian plant workers stated that they accorded the highest priority to job security, personal income and benefits, all of which were less important. Blacksmith. C., Kendall. L.M. and Hulin. C.L., (1969) listed the important features of a job in which employees had emotional responses. They are self-employment, salary, promotion opportunities, supervision and co-workers. Look. S., Husain. M.G. and Rajul. P. (1994) found that employee motivation was influenced by the occupational level, that is, managers were highly motivated by supervisors and workers. According to a study conducted by Machunga. P. D. and Schmitt. N. (1983) in Zambia, motivation at work appears to be determined by six factors, such as the nature of work itself, opportunities for growth and advancement, material and physical arrangements (such as pay, benefits, safety) employment, favorable physical working conditions), relationships with others, equity or injustice in organizational practices and personal problems.

A specific aspect of motivation is intrinsic motivation. It can be defined as the accomplishment of a task by the inherent satisfaction that entails an individual rather than by a separate consequence (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Intrinsic motivation seems to combine elements of Weiner's

attribution theory (1974, 1980, 1986), Bandura's work (1977, 1993) on self-efficacy, and other studies related to targeting (Pintrich, 2001). It is important for this study that intrinsic motivation can be influenced in the educational context (Deci and Ryan, 2004). Intrinsic motivation increases when individuals attribute academic results to internal factors that they can control (attribution theory) (Weiner, 1980). Intrinsic motivation is further enhanced when individuals believe that they are able to achieve the desired goals (self-efficacy) (Bandura, 1977, Lent, Brown and Larkin, 1986, Marsh, Walker and Debus, 1991).

Depending on the consequences of failure and the dispositional tendencies of the individual involved, failure is seen as an opportunity for growth and development (Axelton, 1998, Diller, 1995). According to Alfi, Assor and Katz (2004), students are more likely to be prepared for the challenges of the future when their parents and teachers allow them to fail temporarily, but then seize the opportunity to teach life skills. While people may benefit from failure, for some people the fear of failure is so threatening and anxiety-provoking that any evaluative situation is distressing (Covington, 1984). Fear of failure is often perceived as a "dispositional tendency to avoid failure in successful contexts" because the humiliation and shame of failure are considered overwhelming (Elliott and Thrash, 2004, p. 958). Unfortunately, students who tend to fear failure often adopt inappropriate behaviors, for example, with little or no effort in academic tasks, preparing for what they fear: failure (Covington, 1984).

Procrastination is one way that individuals self-handicap and undermine their efforts to succeed in workplace (Rothblum, 1984; Covington & Omelich, 1979; Martin & Marsh, 2001; Senecal, Koestner, & Vallerand, 1995; Schouwenburg, 1992; Urdan & Midgley, 2001; Day, Mensink, & O'Sullivan, 2000; Ferrari, Keane, Wolf, & Beck, 1998). Procrastination defined by Tuckman (1991) is a "tendency to put off or completely avoid an activity under one's control" (p. 474). Solomon and Rothblum (1984) have suggested an additional element to the definition of procrastination defining it as "the act of needlessly delaying tasks to the point of experiencing subjective discomfort" (p. 503). Procrastinating behaviors may include such activities as waiting until the hour before an exam to study or writing a twenty-page research paper the night before it is due. In the short-term, procrastination may relieve people of the shame

and embarrassment of failure (Covington, 1992; Tice, 1991). Unfortunately, protecting oneself from short-term shame and embarrassment through procrastinating often leads to lower levels of motivation, performance and possible failure (Urdan & Midgley, 2001).

2. Need of the Study

We need to take a closer look at the aspects which motivates women in the workplace as they may tend to procrastinate or have a fear that they would fail at what they do. We as psychologists must provide the necessary interventions and counseling wherever necessary to help them better perform at their respective workplace.

3. Objectives

The present study aims at
- To assess the relationship between Motivation and Fear of Failure
- To assess the relationship between Motivation and Procrastination
- To assess the difference between married and unmarried women on Motivation

4. Hypotheses

- There will be significant relationship between Motivation and Fear of Failure
- There will be significant relationship Motivation and Procrastination
- There will be significant difference between married and unmarried women on Motivation

5. Method

Sample
Purposive random sampling method was employed for the data collection. The sample included 100 participants aged between 23 and 39 living in India. A total of 30 married women (50%) and 30 unmarried women (50%) participants took part in the study.

Tools

Demographical variables
Standardized questionnaires were used to collect data and the demographic information such as name, age, gender and place was collected.
- *Work Motivation Scale*
  It was given by Robert P. Brady in 2008 and consists of 32 statements related to work situations and environments. Respondents are asked to read each statement and then indicate how important the statement is to them and their work by recording their responses on the survey form. A Likert-type scale is used. Possible responses include the following: 5= Very Important, 4= Important, 3= Somewhat Important, 2= Of Little Importance and 1 Not Important. Split-half reliability analysis using the Spearman Brown formula yielded a high reliability coefficient (r = .89).

- *Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory, (PFAI)*
  Conroy's (2003) Performance Failure Appraisal Inventory, (PFAI) measures the strength of an individual's beliefs in five areas of failing. The 25-item uses Likert scale to evaluate the participants where they rated themselves on how often they believe each statement is true on statements such as "When I am failing, important others are disappointed" and "When I am failing, I worry about what others think about me." The range of scoring consisted of 0 (Do not believe at all), to 4 (Believe 100% of the time). According to Conroy et al., (2003), PFAI scores have exhibited factorial variance, internal consistency, external validity, and predictive validity across groups and across time.

- *Adult Inventory of Procrastination (AIP)*
  Adult Inventory of Procrastination (AIP) was given by McCown and Johnson (1989). The AIP scale measures the chronic tendency to postpone tasks in various situations (see Ferrari et al., 1995, for the complete list of items). The AIP is composed of 15 Likert-scale items such that respondents express an opinion on a 5-point scale (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree) to statements such as "I am not very good at meeting deadlines" and "I don't get things done on time." For seven items, scores are reversed so that high ratings indicate procrastination.

Procedure
Data was collected using standardized questionnaires from the respondents where participant was given three questionnaires. They were explained in an easier way to make them understand. The following instructions were provided- "Here are a set of questionnaires to measure the emotional regulation, self control and experiences in close relationships. Please rate yourself after reading the scale." Confidentiality of the study was emphasized.

Ethical considerations
The data were anonymized with careful protection on confidentiality. Approval was obtained from the guides at Amity University, Haryana prior to data analysis.

Data analysis
The analysis of data was done using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences version 16 (SPSS 16.0). A correlation analysis was constructed among all the variables in the study. The relationship between motivation and fear of failure as well as motivation and procrastination was tested using Pearson correlation analysis. The participant's Motivation score, Fear of Failure score and Procrastination score was entered. The amount of missing data for all the independent and dependent variables tested was less than 5% to ensure quality of data and generalizability of the research conclusions.

6. Result and Discussion

Co relational analysis were carried out in order to find out the degree of relationship between all the variables viz. motivation and fear of failure. A separate analysis was carried out for motivation and procrastination.

Table 1: Showing the Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Motivation	100	27	52	33.613	5.421
Fear of Failure	100	12	45	21.643	3.365
Procrastination	100	23	62	30.408	5.065
Male Female	100	1	1	2.496	0.8163
Valid N (listwise)	100				

Table 2: Shows Correlation between Motivation and Fear of Failure

	Fear of Failure
Motivation	-.691**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the above table it is clear that there is significant correlation at 0.01 level between Motivation and Fear of Failure. For Motivation and Fear of Failure, a value of -.691 significance was obtained.

Table 3: Shows Correlation Motivation and Procrastination

	Procrastination
Motivation	-.709**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

From the above table it is clear that there is significant correlation at 0.01 level between Motivation and Procrastination. For Motivation and Procrastination, a value of -.709 significance was obtained.

Table 4: Shows the T- Test among Male and Female

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t
Motivation	Married	30	50.2	6.722	0.042
	Unmarried	30	54.85	3.691	

Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation and the maximum and minimum values of the results obtained from a total of 60 samples. Mean values of 33.613, 21.643 and 30.408 were obtained for motivation, fear of failure and procrastination respectively.

From Table 2 it is clear that there is significant correlation at 0.01 level between Motivation and Fear of Failure. For Motivation and Fear of Failure, a value of -.691 significance was obtained. The above result was obtained with the help of SPSS 16.0. According to the results obtained, it is seen that there is a positive correlation between Motivation and Fear of Failure. According to previous research, fear of failure has a host of negative consequences including amount of effort expended, task persistence, achievement, and motivation (Birney, Burdick, & Teevan, 1969; Heckhausen, 1975; Atkinson & Feather, 1966).

From Table 3 there is significant correlation at 0.01 level between motivation and fear of failure with a significance of -.709. According to the results obtained, it is seen that there is a negative correlation between the two variables. Study conducted by Urdan & Midgley (2001) shows that protecting oneself from short-term shame and embarrassment through procrastinating often leads to lower levels of motivation, performance and possible failure.

Table 4 shows T-test analysis which shows a significant difference on motivation among married and unmarried women. A standard deviation of 6.722 and 3.691 were obtained for married and unmarried women respectively. The t-values obtained when equal variances were assumed and not assumed was .042 which shows that there is a great difference in the results with respect to motivation among women who are married.

7. Limitations

There are several other factors that has an effect on the motivation among women. External factors such as home or office environment, personality factors and characteristics should also be taken into consideration. Also, to generalize the findings, the study needs to be replicated on other populations as well.

8. Conclusion

This research adds knowledge on the associations between motivation, fear of failure and procrastination. A significant correlation was found between motivation and fear of failure as well as between motivation and procrastination. Also, there was significant difference between married and unmarried women on motivation factor. From the study conducted it could be said that as motivation decreases, the fear of failure as well as procrastination increases among working women. We as psychologists must provide the necessary interventions and counseling wherever necessary to help them better perform at their respective workplace.

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