

# CANADIAN THESES ON MICROFICHE

## THÈSES CANADIENNES SUR MICROFICHE



National Library of Canada  
Collections Development Branch

Canadian Theses on  
Microfiche Service

Ottawa, Canada  
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale du Canada  
Direction du développement des collections

Service des thèses canadiennes  
sur microfiche

### NOTICE

The quality of this microfiche is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Previously copyrighted materials (journal articles, published tests, etc.) are not filmed.

Reproduction in full or in part of this film is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30. Please read the authorization forms which accompany this thesis.

**THIS DISSERTATION  
HAS BEEN MICROFILMED  
EXACTLY AS RECEIVED**

### AVIS

La qualité de cette microfiche dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

Les documents qui font déjà l'objet d'un droit d'auteur (articles de revue, examens publiés, etc.) ne sont pas microfilmés.

La reproduction, même partielle, de ce microfilm est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30. Veuillez prendre connaissance des formules d'autorisation qui accompagnent cette thèse.

**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ  
MICROFILMÉE TELLE QUE  
NOUS L'AVONS REÇUE**

**Canada**

**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CAUSES, MANIFESTATIONS AND  
EFFECTS OF PROCRASTINATION AS PERCEIVED BY  
SPORT ADMINISTRATORS.**

by

Carol Anne Parsons

A thesis  
presented to the University of Ottawa  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Master of Physical Education  
in  
Department of Physical Education  
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

© Carol Anne Parsons, Ottawa, Canada, 1985.



UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA  
UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

### Abstract

Time is something we are all conscious of, and in management positions a common complaint is that this is something we never have enough of. While procrastination addresses the time management issue, it also examines other factors that affect people's ability to carry out their work effectively.

The major problem investigated in this study was the procrastination behaviors of sport administrators. Person-related and organizational environment factors, two general causes of procrastination, were also addressed. Person-related factors are those imposed by the individual, while organizational environment factors are imposed by the organization. The main emphasis of this study was to determine what the perceived causes of procrastination are among sport administrators.

A self-constructed questionnaire consisting of twenty-five Likert-type statements was used to measure procrastination (the dependent variable). An individual section of the instrument consisting of seven open-ended questions was also used to test the hypotheses postulated in this study. Various procedures were applied to increase the validity and reliability of the research instrument. The overall mean correlation for the twenty-five items in the questionnaire was .71.

The selection of subjects was accomplished through the use of a non-probability sampling technique called convenience or chunk sampling. The sample consisted of sixty-three (N=63) sport administrators from the National Sport and Recreation Center (NSRC) in Ottawa.

The data were collected over a period of approximately four weeks through internal mail at the NSRC. Appropriate statistical procedures were used to establish whether the hypothesis and sub-hypotheses presented in this research study were supported or rejected.

"Unpleasant", "unimportant", and "insignificant" tasks were the major perceived causes of procrastination reported by the sport administrators who responded to the open-ended segment of the research instrument. The subjects surveyed also reported that they try and modify their work habits to avoid procrastinating. According to them, changing their habits and improving their planning and time management skills would help them to procrastinate less. These findings appear consistent with theoretical considerations found in the literature in the area of psychology. The data obtained in testing the main hypothesis suggest that organizational environment factors play a greater role in procrastination than person-related factors. In testing the first sub-hypothesis the results revealed that sex does not appear to be a factor influencing the causes of procrastination. The second sub-hypothesis investigated the effect of years of

work experience on reporting work-related causes of procrastination: this hypothesis was not supported. However, years of work experience appear to be an independent variable that affects the reporting of person-related factors of procrastination among the sport administrators surveyed.

Several conclusions can be drawn from the results obtained in this study. First, sport administrators procrastinate more at tasks they perceive to be unpleasant, unimportant, and insignificant. Second, in attempting to decrease procrastination behavior, sport administrators try to modify their work habits. Improved planning, clearer work-related goals, and better time management skills appear to be important behavior modifications for minimizing procrastination. Third, sport administrators perceive organizational environment factors as contributing more to procrastination than person-related factors. Fourth, there is no difference between male and female sport administrators as to their perception of procrastination behavior. Fifth, sport administrators with more years of work experience appear to procrastinate less than their less experienced colleagues.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Abstract</b> . . . . .	ii
<b>Chapter One</b> . . . . .	1
Introduction . . . . .	1
Need for the study . . . . .	4
Purpose of the study. . . . .	5
Statement of the problem . . . . .	5
Hypotheses . . . . .	6
Terminology . . . . .	6
Limitations . . . . .	8
Delimitations . . . . .	9
Overview . . . . .	10
<b>Chapter Two</b> . . . . .	11
Review of Literature . . . . .	11
Historical Literature . . . . .	11
Modern Literature . . . . .	12
Behaviorism . . . . .	17
Rational-Emotive Theory . . . . .	21
Relevant Research . . . . .	24
Summary . . . . .	27
<b>Chapter Three</b> . . . . .	28
Methodology . . . . .	28
Research Instrument . . . . .	28
Validity of the research instrument. . . . .	28
Reliability of the research instrument. . . . .	30
Selection of subjects . . . . .	34
Collection of data . . . . .	34
Statistical treatment. . . . .	37
<b>Chapter Four</b> . . . . .	39
Results and Discussion . . . . .	39
Analysis and discussion of responses to the open- ended segment of the questionnaire. . . . .	39
Analysis and discussion of results pertaining to organizational-related versus person-related causes of procrastination. . . . .	44
Analysis and discussion of results pertaining to sex as a variable affecting procrastination. . . . .	52
Analysis and discussion of results pertaining to work experience as a variable affecting procrastination behavior. . . . .	56

<b>Chapter Five</b> . . . . .	<b>63</b>
<b>Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations</b> . . . . .	<b>63</b>
<b>Statement of the problem</b> . . . . .	<b>63</b>
<b>Overview of related literature.</b> . . . . .	<b>63</b>
<b>Methodology</b> . . . . .	<b>66</b>
<b>Results</b> . . . . .	<b>68</b>
<b>Conclusions</b> . . . . .	<b>70</b>
<b>Recommendations for future study</b> . . . . .	<b>71</b>
<b>Appendix I: Pilot study conducted on the original version of the research instrument</b> . . . . .	<b>75</b>
<b>Appendix II: Final Research Instrument</b> . . . . .	<b>93</b>
<b>Appendix III: Covering Letter</b> . . . . .	<b>102</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> . . . . .	<b>104</b>

## Chapter One

### Introduction

Time is something we are all conscious of, and in management positions a common complaint is that this is something we never have enough of. The study of time management developed out of this concern to make better utilization of available time. Some researchers (McKay, 1958; Douglass & Goodwin, 1980) equate lack of time with poor management skills. To add to this problem, McKay, (1958) also noted:

"Time management" is misleading. Many administrators think of time as something that happens to them...time cannot be managed... time is a constant, a given...still we persist in talking about our ability to manage time. Most of us approach the subject as if it were us against the clock. And because we do, we fail to focus on the things necessary to make improvements. (P.12)

While McKay's observations hold an element of reality, they do not reflect the whole picture. McKay (1958) and others (Burka & Yuen, 1982; Douglass & Goodwin, 1980; Montgomery, 1982; Rottenbury, 1978) all dealt with the solution to effective use of time by telling people to: break large projects into manageable pieces, develop a priority system, limit telephone conversations to a minimum, follow one of various decision-making processes, try not to do too many things at once, locate your work environment away from external distractions, delegate work of lesser importance,

clear your desk of all but the task at hand, and the list of helpful hints is endless. Yet few authors have addressed the real issue.

The real issue is, what causes this mismanagement of time? Douglass and Goodwin (1980) stated that it was indecision and the: "reason for indecision is the fear of being wrong, or the strong desire to be right" (p.92). Psychologists labelled this fear of making wrong decision and or desire to be right, procrastination.

Silver and Sabini (1982) placed a qualification on procrastination by stating, "To qualify as the real thing, procrastination has to be irrational." They further clarified this qualification by stating, "Thus the irrationality of procrastination is rooted in rationality: it depends on a person's knowing what to do and then doing something else" (p.40). Silver and Sabini further developed their view of what constitutes procrastination by adding that putting off something you can get out of was not procrastination, while putting off something you cannot get out of was procrastination. In this way, they developed the concept of responsibility. If you are to be held solely responsible for a project or for a project or action and you fail to take action by using delaying tactics, you are procrastinating. However, if you delay action long enough to have someone remove the responsibility for action and outcomes from your shoulders and you are reasonably certain that this will occur, then you are not procrastinating.

This assumption that procrastination has to be irrational to be truly procrastination was too restrictive. It also failed to recognize short term procrastination, where an individual stalled for a period of time and then eventually completed the task. Silver and Sabini, like other authors in the area of procrastination, offered prescriptions without examining the causes and effects of this behavior, and dealt only with how this behavior exhibited or manifested itself. To rely solely on this psychological explanation, would have necessitated psycho-analyzing each individual's motives and rationale for delaying the inevitable, as well as examining each instance of suspected irrational delay to test if it were truly procrastination. The scope of such a task would have been tremendous and yet it would still not have represented the whole picture.

While procrastination is sometimes pathogenic (Silver & Sabini, 1982, p.39), it is also a human reaction to the pressures of our everyday lives. Procrastination permeates our society and it has been the subject of writings for hundreds of years (Demarest, 1974). We all agree that we have procrastinated at some time or another, yet little empirical research exists to help us cope with this problem. We do not know empirically how it manifests itself or what the effects are, nor do we know what causes procrastination. This lack of research is somewhat difficult to understand because if procrastination is as widespread as people believe it to be,

it is one of the most pervasive problems facing modern society.

#### Need for the study

Little has appeared in the literature on the subject of procrastination. A thorough review of the literature revealed only five empirical inquiries on procrastination, and all of these examined the issue as it affected students and academic achievement. Therefore, there was a need for further exploration of this phenomenon in order to increase the body of knowledge in the broader area of organizational psychology.

This study was important to the field of sport administration because, as was identified in the literature, almost everyone procrastinates and suffers the consequences. Procrastination can have detrimental effects on the career of the individual, as well as the efficiency of the organization. It is important, therefore, that the causes, manifestations and effects of this pervasive and potentially harmful behavior be identified. In the case of the sport administrator this involved identifying his perceptions of how he procrastinates, what he procrastinates at, and what the perceived consequences are. Once these factors have been identified a consultant can aid the administrators in modifying their work environment and behavior to minimize the need or desire to procrastinate.

### Purpose of the study.

The purpose of this study was to identify the causes, manifestations and effects of procrastination behavior among sport administrators. The main emphasis was placed on determining what the perceived causes of procrastination are among sport administrators. The manifestations and effects were also examined as a means of shedding new light on this behavior. Specifically interest was focused on procrastination behaviors, and person-related or organizational environment factors, which elicit procrastination on the part of sport administrators.

### Statement of the problem

The major problem investigated in this study was the procrastination behaviors of sport administrators. In order to more accurately examine this problem, two sub-problems were also addressed; person-related factors and organizational environment factors.

Person-related factors are imposed by the individual and include: self-confidence, poor time management, laziness and inability to say no. Organizational environment factors are imposed by the organization, its structure, climate and policies, and include: enormity of the task, unpleasant aspects of the work, perceptions as to the significance and importance of the task, existence of guidelines, number of task related alternatives, delegated workload, and time lim-

its. Therefore, this study sought to answer the following questions: 1)- What are the most common procrastination behaviors in which sport administrators are engaged? 2) What are the most commonly perceived causes behind these behaviors?

### Hypotheses

In order to guide this research, the following hypothesis and sub-hypotheses were adopted:

Organizational environment factors will be reported as contributing more to procrastination, as perceived by sport administrators, than person-related factors.

1) There is no perceived difference on the reporting of procrastination behaviors between male and female sport administrators.

2) Years of work experience is a contributing factor in lessening the impact of work related (organizational environment) factors associated with procrastination.

### Terminology

Little is known about procrastination, and consequently a precise definition of this behavior does not exist. Therefore, in an effort to learn more about this behavior a global definition was used in an attempt to avoid overlooking or excluding as many aspects of this behavior as possible.

Procrastination, as used in this study, was the delaying or avoiding of decisions or actions for which you are responsible.

A cause of procrastination in this study was limited to the respondents perceptions about the items within the person-related and organizational environment related factors presented in the instrument.

Manifestations referred to how the procrastination behaviors were exhibited by the individual or the actions, decisions or lack thereof that were revealed by the individual, and were perceived to be related to their procrastination.

Effects were the results and/or outcomes that were reported by the individual, and that were perceived to occur or develop as a direct or indirect result of their procrastination.

Sport administrator referred to persons working in administrative/ management positions at the National Sports and Recreation Center at 333 River Road in Ottawa. These individuals represent a specific segment of the population. They have similar goals and objectives and yet are a heterogeneous group in that they have differing sport and educational backgrounds and represent the various regions of Canada. They do however, share the philosophy, aims and objectives of the various organizations they represent.

There are sixty associations housed in the River Road complex and the respondents for this study represented a sample of persons in administrative positions from these sixty associations.

### Limitations

Certain restrictions arise in the investigation of a specifically defined problem. First, the independent variables selected for this investigation were not the only factors that contribute to or cause procrastination. However, from reviewing the empirical research in this area and having considered the information in the lay literature, the independent variables that were investigated are those that were identified as possible causes of procrastination behavior for the area (sport administration) under investigation. Second, the sample of sport administrators was from the National Sport and Recreation Center and may not be representative of all sport administrators due to the wide variety of associations in the Center and the varied backgrounds and positions of those sampled. However, this was not a major limitation. A third and final factor which may have limited the application of the findings was an aspect of the self-report questionnaire which required that respondents reply openly in order for the instrument to be effective. The topic, procrastination, carries with it certain negative connotations and respondents may have been hesitant to

admit to certain aspects of this behavior. For this reason, great care went into wording the instructions and the items in the instrument to encourage the respondents to share their views, and feel that their responses would be treated with the strictest confidence. The identity of the respondents was protected by having a neutral party distribute the instruments. Also, the instruments were returned to a local office in the stamped self-addressed envelopes that accompanied them when they were originally distributed. In this way none of the returned questionnaires could have been associated with a specific respondent.

Using the Likert scale may have been a limitation in that it allowed respondents to select a neutral item. However, this scale also allowed for unidimensionality, i.e. "making sure that all the items measure the same thing" (Oppenheim, 1966, p.133). It was important in this study that all items measured procrastination behavior and that the respondents felt their confidentiality was respected.

Delimitations

The sample for this study consisted of (N=63) sport administrators from the National Sport and Recreation Center at 333 River Road, Ottawa. These administrators held various management positions in a wide variety of associations. The sample of administrators was a heterogenous group in that their background, education and specific sport experiences were quite diverse.

### Overview

Procrastination affects all of us to a greater or lesser extent. The empirical literature, although very limited, has suggested a few possible causes of general exhibited procrastination among university students and has hinted at how this behavior may adversely effect the quality of education in its victims. The management and psychology literature presented numerous cases of frustration and failure among affected individuals and offered a wide selection of prescriptive-coping strategies. From this body of knowledge however, we are still not certain what factors cause procrastination in general or specific situations. This study can therefore contribute to the expansion of further knowledge in this field.

Many, if not all, of the people who run the national sport centers are procrastinators. It can negatively affect their work and the functioning of their association. There is a need, therefore, to identify the causes of this potentially harmful and widespread behavior in order to assist sport administrators in carrying out their management responsibilities in a more constructive and efficient manner. In this way, sport administrators can constructively modify their work environment and work habits to minimize their procrastination behavior and its effects.

## Chapter Two

### Review of Literature

Procrastination is a problem we all face in some aspects of our lives, and it has been discussed in various forms for hundreds of years (Demarest, 1974) and yet little is known of this behavior.

Articles on procrastination in professional journals are scarce, except in the educational literature on self-paced instruction and psychological literature on achievement and self concept. Management journals have dealt mainly with a prescriptive approach to minimizing poor time management, one suspected cause of procrastination for administrators.

### Historical Literature

The origin of the term procrastinate comes from Latin and French. The prefix pro means forward (Parttridge, 1966, p.257) and the suffix cras or crastinus means "tomorrow, a matter for" (Klein, 1967, p.1247).

The early writings equate procrastination with sloth and indolence, both of which indicate a disinclination to exertion or effort. Sloth has its basis in Aristotelian psychology and was described as a disorientation in emotional life or a disorder of effectiveness or inaction. Sloth was

originally known as a monastic vice (Wenzel, 1967) and was previously called acedia, a Greek word meaning "the torpor of mind by which one either neglects to begin good works or grows weary in finishing them" (Wenzel, 1967, p.67). Since monks were required to be industrious and dutiful, their sloth was labelled the "noontday demon". Wenzel (1967, p.67) states "it was looked on as a form of negligence or psychic exhaustion that interfered with their service to God "

During the Middle Ages, Thomas Aquinas declared sloth a sin for all people when he incorporated it into The Seven Deadly Sins (Mortimer, 1962). At this time in the history of man, sloth was redefined somewhat as a state of languor, remissness, failure to perform duties, and negligence to fulfill obligations.

### Modern Literature

The more recent writings on the subject of procrastination have appeared in popular magazines, journals, texts, and doctoral dissertations. Some of these readings have been quite insightful (Burka & Yuen, 1982, 1983; Briody, 1979; Douglass, 1978) while others (Danbrot, 1978; Fader, 1979; Fein, 1979) have done little to advance our understanding in this area. The literature presented here draws heavily from the fields of psychology and management (or administration).

Several authors and practitioners have made concerted efforts to increase our understanding of procrastination behaviors.

One such practitioner is Douglass, a management consultant. Douglass (1978) defined procrastination as "doing low priority actions or tasks rather than higher priority ones"(p.40). Douglass claims that in order to really understand this behavior the relationship of habit and inertia must be examined. He describes habit as a pattern of behaviors and thoughts an individual has become so comfortable with, that they do not realize they are doing them. Douglass states that "this is certainly the case with procrastination"(p.41). The cure is to change these groups of habits that the individual associates with procrastination. Inertia is simply described in physics terminology in that a person, like any other body will tend to remain at rest unless a force acts upon him or it. Douglass adds "to conquer procrastination you must overcome your inertia; then you will find that once begun, action is much more likely to continue"(p.42).

Douglass also states that a majority of procrastination is the result of three causes: unpleasantness, difficult projects, and indecision. Avoiding unpleasant tasks according to Douglass is an expression of the individual's attempt to make life easier. He also points out that "procrastinating on the task actually increases unpleasantness, since the job still has to be done"(p.42). He recommended telling coworkers about the deadline set to cope with unpleasant tasks so they can offer support, and self-reward for completion.

Douglass also notes the Pareto principle as something to keep in mind when faced with unpleasant tasks. The Pareto principle or 80/20 rule means that the majority of value is gained from a minority of elements. In other words eighty percent of the value comes from twenty percent of the factors, while the remaining twenty percent of the value comes from eighty percent of the factors. As Douglass notes "some have called this the concept of the important few and the trivial many" (p.43). Thus, eighty percent of your problems can be solved with twenty percent of the information. This principle was also discussed by Briody (1979) in his investigation of procrastination, where; lack of information, unpleasant tasks, and enormity of the task were examined as possible causes of procrastination.

Douglass's second cause of procrastination, difficult projects, arises from the complexity and or size of a task being seen as so large or so difficult that one does not know where to start. Douglass suggests breaking large tasks into smaller, more manageable pieces.

Indecision, the third cause discussed by Douglass, can result from a strong desire to be right, desire for perfection, and fear of failure. These sources of indecision lead to anxiety and low productivity.

Douglass summarized how to avoid procrastination with these hints: 1) clarify your objectives; 2) develop the habit of planning every day; 3) admit when you are wasting your time.

Silver's (1974) writings are similar on content and philosophy to those of Douglass. Instead of equating indecision with fears, however, Silver used choice points. He postulated that the more choice points (alternatives) a task has, the more susceptible it is to procrastination, and that choice points are sources of stress. Tasks that require fewer choices (less cognitive structuring) are more likely to be continued or prolonged when stress increases. Therefore, the greater the stress (more choice points) attached to a particular task, the more likely an individual is to postpone that task by preserving a less stressful task (fewer choice points).

There comes a point, however, when the individual finds it more stressful to delay than to act on the appropriate task. Silver (1974) adds that "one indication of procrastination is that a person engages in activities he would ordinarily find boring, trivial, and idiotic"(p.51). This is very similar to Douglass's (1978) theory of misplaced priorities resulting in the individual performing low priority tasks instead of high priority tasks.

Silver (1974) describes the personal effects of procrastination as: decreased sense of power, decreased purposefulness in the individual's life, lowered self-image, and increased stress. He sees procrastination as a cycle, and summarized his views as follows:

The procrastinator knows that procrastination will not enable him to avoid pain, instead, it will prolong the pain. He realizes that he is buying

small momentary decreases in stress at the cost of much larger long term increases. Yet, still procrastinating, he discredits his self-image as a person in control of his life

(p.53).

Although Attribution Theory does not expressly examine procrastination, an understanding of it may be helpful in examining the findings of this research study. According to Lindzey et. al., (1975) "an individual attributes attitudes and traits under conditions of uncertainty, when he knows only a few relevant facts" (p.627). On the basis of these few facts the individual infers some pervasive underlying trait, assumption or ability. When making decisions under uncertainty the individual's knowledge of the facts are limited and his actions may result in negative consequences. The individual, therefore, tends to attribute positive results and outcomes to himself and negative results and outcomes to his external environment.

A number of psychological theories have been examined by various authors in an attempt to shed light on the causes of procrastination: locus of control (Passman, 1977), psychoanalytic theory (Bischof, 1970), behaviorism (Glasser, 1976; Burka & Yuen, 1982, 1983) and rational-emotive theory (Ellis, 1973; 1979; Ellis & Knaus, 1977; Knaus, 1973; Silver & Sabini, 1982). Of these theories behaviorism and rational-emotive theory (RET) offer the best, although incomplete, insight into procrastination.

## Behaviorism

Behaviorism is a mechanistic, objective way of viewing aspects of personality. Also known as learning theory, behaviorism "holds that the subject matter of human psychology is the behavior of the individual" (Watson, 1969, p.2.). Behaviorism consists of classical conditioning and operant conditioning. Operant conditioning, popularized by Skinner (1964) examines the likelihood of certain behaviors occurring more or less often as a result of given events which follow a response e.g. procrastination. From this, Briody (1979) speculated that procrastination could be associated with either inadequate learning of a response or the learning of an inappropriate response. Procrastination could, therefore, be viewed in terms of rewards to the individual for delaying, and punishment or lack of response for task completion or goal-oriented behavior.

Braid (1983), a management consultant and professor of management also discusses learning theory in relation to procrastination. Braid (1983) states that "two primary causes of procrastination are complexity and fear" (p.11). Tasks or projects, he explains initially seem complex because the individual feels they do not have all the answers, or else is overwhelming because they do not know where to begin. Fear can be a cause of procrastination when faced with unpleasant tasks.

Braid's views on learning theory, although not lengthy, are insightful. According to learning theory an action that is positively reinforced will be more likely to be repeated. For a number of procrastinators, this positive reinforcement becomes a problem. Their postponement and crisis-stimulated last minute action allows them to complete a task satisfactorily. Consequently, they receive praise and/or recognition for a job well done. This external image of success developed by one's superior positively reinforces the delay-panic cycle that only the procrastinator is aware of.

Burka and Yuen, clinical psychologists, have done a great deal of work in the area of counseling procrastinators. Although not expressly proponents of behaviorism, their strategy in counseling and their personal view that this behavior is rooted in environmental factors, identify them as belonging to this group of theorists.

They view procrastination as serving a protective function for people, "delaying may be a strategy that protects them from facing some difficult fears and anxieties" (p.X). However, unlike RET proponents, Burka and Yuen (1983) do not see these fears as a personality dysfunction that the individual is predisposed to, but rather as a reaction or defence mechanism for dealing with pressures and expectations imposed on the individual by his environment. Procrastination they say "plagues people of all occupations" (p.3.).

In defining procrastination, Burka and Yuen (1983) state "procrastination is the behavior of postponing" (p.5). In differentiating between a convenient delay and problem procrastination, they say it hinges on how troublesome your delaying is for you. From their clinical practice, Burka and Yuen found that procrastination can take two forms of troublesomeness. The first form occurs when delay leads to external consequences "ranging from innocuous (a fine for late books) to severe (losing a job or jeopardizing a marriage)" (p.5). The second form is the manifestation of internal consequences which affect the procrastinator himself these range from "mild irritation and regret to intense self condemnation and despair" (p.5).

Burka and Yuen (1983) also developed their own cycle of procrastination. While they note that there are individual variations of the sequence, they have found that the cycle fits most procrastinators.

Step one "I'll start early this time" begins with the individual expressing their best intentions for starting the task and progressing in a logical timely manner. However, as Burka and Yuen (1983) note, they are reluctant to begin immediately; "procrastinators often believe that this start will somehow spontaneously occur, with no planned effort on their part" (p.8).

As they begin to realize that their work on the task has not yet begun, their good intentions change to apprehen-

sion and step two "I've got to start soon" begins. The internal emotions begin to push the procrastinator to act until they realize the deadline is still some time away. Burka and Yuen (1983) express step three "what if I don't start?" as "the procrastinator, imagining that he or she may never start, may have visions of horrible consequences that will ruin life forever"(p.9).

Step four "There's still time" signifies renewed hope in the person's ability to do the task. Step five "There's something wrong with me", expresses their desperation. Now instead of starting the task, the individual internalizes and feels that they are lacking something everyone else has. Burka and Yuen (1983) state "this something is usually seen as self-discipline, intelligence, luck, or courage"(p.9). Step six termed "The final choice: to do or not to do" is where the procrastinator is faced with two choices and selects one. The choices are: to start the task or to give up. When the individual decides to start the task Burka and Yuen state "the deadline is so close or your (the procrastinator's) inertia has become so painful that it is finally worse to do nothing than to take action"(p.10).

Step seven, the final step regardless of the choice made in the previous step, is the same for all procrastinators. Here the individual states they will never procrastinate again. Burka and Yuen (1983) conclude that "in spite of their sincerity and determination, however, most pro-

crastinators find themselves repeating the cycle over and over again" (p.11).

Burka and Yuen (1983) see the causes of procrastination as primarily environmental and include imposed success orientation, others unrealistic expectations of our abilities, and fears. Fears of success, failure or personal pain are all incorporated under one general category of causes because as Burka and Yuen (1983) point out:

A theme that is common to all these fears is the belief that you must choose between having success and having love... If you expect your success to be evaluated in a negative light, you may not want to risk the possibility of alienating the people around you

(p.41).

While Burka and Yuen have developed this theory behind the fears of procrastinators, the literature search for this study revealed no support for this explanation. Rather, as Douglass (1978) has written, the fears are a rationalization by the individual for procrastinating, a type of self-fulfilling prophecy.

### Rational-Emotive Theory

Another theory that can be used to explain the causes of procrastination is rational-emotive theory (RET). RET views personality (as being potentially rationality or irrational; this is dependant upon childhood experiences, influences of others, and significant events... A number of authors, (Douglass, 1978; Briody, 1979; Montgomery, 1978;

1982; Danbrot, 1978; Fein, 1979; Fader, 1979) state that irrationality, fear of failure, perfectionism, hostility and resentment, low frustration tolerance, poor organization skills, attitudes of indifference, and the unpleasant nature of tasks are the major causes of procrastination. These causes all appear to have their basis in RET.

RET is based on the belief that although biological and early environmental factors contribute to personality patterns, the responsibility for allowing to be disturbed, or not to be disturbed rests with the individual (Ellis, 1973). Ellis also notes that although people have a predisposition for self actualization which is characterized by rationality, they are also capable of self-destructive behaviors are characterized by irrationality.

RET stresses that people think, emote, and act simultaneously and emphasizes that dysfunctional behavior (e.g. procrastination) can be corrected by helping the individual self-actualize (Ellis, 1974). Thus RET concludes that dysfunctional behavior is the indoctrination of irrational beliefs that are retained by the individual in a continuous program. This is very similar to Burka and Yuen's (1983) "cycle of procrastination"

The RET literature has made a contribution to the understanding of this behavior by defining procrastination. Ellis and Knaus (1977) major authors in RET, define it as "putting off something until a future time...postponing

deferring action on something you have decided to do" (p.7). They also list three causes of procrastination as being self-downing, low-frustration tolerance, and hostility. Ellis and Knaus (1977) have developed a series of eleven steps in procrastination behavior, and they believe that in the process of exhibiting this behavior one will go through several of these:

1) You wish to do something, or at least agree to do it even though it intrinsically does not appeal to you, because you desire some favorable result that probably will ensue if you do this thing.

2) You make a definite decision to do it.

3) You needlessly delay doing it.

4) You observe the disadvantages or lack of advantages of delay.

5) You still postpone doing the thing you decided to do.

6) You berate yourself for procrastinating (or you defend yourself against self-downing by rationalizing or pushing the project out of your mind).

7) You continue to procrastinate.

8) You finish the project barely on time by making a last minute rush to complete it, or you never finish it.

9) You feel uncomfortable about your lateness and berate yourself for unnecessary delay.

10) You assure yourself that such procrastination will not happen again, and that this time you really mean it.

11) Not too long afterward, especially if you have a complicated, difficult, and time-consuming project to complete, you procrastinate again.

(p.7).

These steps are similar to those of Burka and Yuen (1983) and like their colleagues, is incomplete. How many steps are required to constitute true procrastination? Are all the steps equally significant as measures of this behavior? What exceptions to this series of events, if any, exists? Answers to these questions have not been found in the literature.

### Relevant Research

While five doctoral dissertations (Briody, 1979; Taylor, 1979; Green, 1981; Skiffington, 1982; Young, 1982) were found in a literature search on procrastination, only three of these (Briody, 1979; Taylor, 1979; Green, 1981) examine the causes of procrastination. These papers are in the field of clinical psychology and address general procrastination, primarily among graduate students.

Briody (1979) found that forty seven percent of his sample identified task characteristics as a major cause of their procrastination. From this he stated "it appears that situational factors, i.e. boring, difficult, and unpleasant, etc. could represent one category from which procrastination can be conceptualized"(p.78).

Personal factors such as fear of failure, low self-confidence, poor organizational skills etc. were also seen as offering some insight into this behavior. Briody found that forty percent of the sample he studied reported fear of

failure as a cause of their procrastination. Briody did note that any one of the personal factors could have contributed to his findings.

In an analysis of twenty three infrequent responses to a particular item on his open-ended questionnaire, Briody found that vague or indefinite guidelines was reported as an external factor contributing to procrastination. This is consistent with Green's (1981) findings that "situational procrastinators were particularly susceptible to the lack of structure"(p.84).

Briody also examined procrastination with respect to reality theory. In his rationale Briody (1979) explained that the emphasis on task characteristics suggests a behavioral model that may help conceptualize this behavior. He feels this is possible because of "the lack of reinforcing qualities inherent in the activities about which people procrastinate"(p.90). Reality theory Briody (1979) states "applies in this case because in addition to emphasizing the value of reinforcements in the moulding of a specific behavior, reality theory has a cognitive-affective precept, the notion of identity"(p.91). Although reality theory is basically a learning theory, it recognizes the need for love and a sense of self-worth. This relationship of a need for love as a reinforcing factor is similar to that developed by Burka and Yuen (1983).

Briody (1979) also points out that reality theory is helpful in analyzing the low self-confidence factor. According to reality theory, one's social identity forms at approximately age five. The basis of social identity is one's self-image and self-esteem, which provides the orientation for the individual to establish either a success or failure identity. Briody (1979) explains "Success identities are characteristic of individuals who are actualized. A failure identity is indicative of people who exhibit mood, thought, or behavioral problems" (p.93). This concept of identity is parallel to the view of RET presented by Ellis's (1973) discussion of self-actualization and rationalization versus self-destructive actions and rationality as a key to understanding procrastinatory behaviors.

Green (1981) in her investigation of the effect of counseling on dissertation procrastination used the Adjective Checklist Subscales (ACL) to identify the characteristics of her control (moderate and non-procrastinators) and treatment (procrastinators) groups. Green found that the control subjects were more success oriented, aggressive, self-confident, and able to have fun, than their counterparts.

She also found that those identified as situational procrastinators, were particularly susceptible to the lack of structure in the dissertation process. She explained that "People who are situational but not chronic procrastinators,

however, are more likely to self-impose organization and to be bothered more by delays, blocks, and avoidances" (p.84).

Taylor (1979) in his investigation of personality and situational correlates of procrastination behavior for achievable tasks also found that this behavior "is more a function of certain situational and specific task variables than stable personality dispositions" (p.139).

### Summary

As seen from this brief review of research on procrastination person-factors and environmental or situational factors both appear to cause procrastination. Briody (1979) and Green (1981) successfully narrowed down the list of possible causes of procrastination to personal factors including: self-confidence and poor organization and/or time management skills, and environmental factors including; size of the task, unpleasant nature of the work, and existence of guidelines.

Support for these two categories of causes was also found in the lay literature by Douglass (1978), Montgomery (1978, 1982), Braid (1983), Douglass and Goodwin (1980), Silver (1974), and in the psychological literature by Ellis (1973, 1974), Ellis and Knaus (1977), and Burka and Yuen (1982, 1983).

## Chapter Three

### Methodology

In this chapter the procedures that were used to verify the research hypothesis of this study, will be described. The chapter contains four sections: (1) the selection of the research instrument and questionnaire design; (2) the selection of subjects; (3) the collection of data, and; (4) the statistical treatment.

### Research Instrument

The review of literature on procrastination revealed a few research instruments. However, these instruments were not applicable, in that they were not designed to measure procrastination in sport administration. Therefore, it was decided that an appropriate instrument would be constructed.

### Validity of the research instrument.

The first step that was taken in designing the research instrument was to compile a list of all possible causes of procrastination. A comprehensive list of statements was developed from the literature. The list included modified items used by Briody (1979) and Green (1981), as well as items derived from commonly accepted theories presented in the literature (Douglass, 1978; Burka and Yuen, 1982, 1983).

All items were independently examined for content validity, clarity and relationship to the dependent variable, procrastination. This list of statements was then independently analyzed by the author and the advisor in an effort to determine which statements measured procrastination, second, which aspects of this behavior were addressed in the statements, and third, if the statements were clear, concise, and easy to understand. Of the original sixty statements, forty-nine were retained.

These forty-nine statements were then given to a sample group of ten project managers working for a firm in New York State. Their role was to respond to the forty-nine statements in terms of comprehension. The statements were either easily understood or they were not. As a result of this process all forty-nine statements were retained as all of them were viewed as easily understood. The only change which was made to the instrument was that the items were changed from question format to statement format to make them more direct and concise, the statements were worded in the third person (Kusyszyn, 1968).

All these procedures were conducted in an attempt to increase the validity of the instrument. In terms of the validity of questionnaires it is not easy to verify since, as Oppenheim (1966) explained, it is nearly impossible to identify a criteria with which to make comparisons. According to Seltiz (1959), to validate a research instrument in

the social sciences, there should be an evident relationship between the items and the characteristic you wish to measure.

#### Reliability of the research instrument.

After the research instrument was elaborated; and attempts made to increase its validity, it was tested for reliability in a pilot study. The sample for this pilot project consisted of ten professors in the departments of physical education and kinanthropology at the University of Ottawa. The questionnaires were distributed to them through internal mail and each questionnaire was coded so that it could be identified. These were returned to a drop box in the departmental secretary's office.

One week later the process was repeated, and the subjects were again requested to answer and return the instruments to the front office. The questionnaire results were recorded in pairs with a test/retest set of data for each subject by code number. A correlation coefficient (Appendix I) was obtained from the data for each of the forty-nine items in the instrument. Only those items with the highest correlations ( $r > .51$ ) were retained. However, in selecting the final questionnaire statements consideration was also given to the sub-categories in the instrument addressing person-related factors and organizational environment factors so as to retain a fairly equal number of items within

each sub-category. This resulted in four items with correlations of less than .51 being retained because they were the highest items in that category. This procedure resulted in the following questionnaire format: twenty-five closed questions with a five-point scale and seven open-ended questions. The twenty-five items were recorded and scored on a scale where 1 represented strongly disagree and 5 represented strongly agree. The open-ended questions were used to provide a general overview of the manifestations of procrastination.

The twenty-five closed items were used to measure the respondent's perceptions with respect to the two primary causes of procrastination: person-related and organizational environment factors. There were nine items pertaining to person-related factors: laziness (2 items), self-confidence (3 items), poor time management (2 items), and inability to say no (2 items). There were sixteen items pertaining to organizational environment factors: enormity of the task (3 items), unpleasant tasks (3 items), insignificant/unimportant jobs (3 items), too many options/no guidelines (3 items), too much delegated to one person (1 item) and, no established time limit (3 items). The overall mean correlation for these twenty-five questionnaire items was .71.

Amos (1965) and Mathews (1969) both agree that a correlation coefficient of .70 to 1.00 is equivalent to a high correlation in psychology and education. Mathews (1969)

stated that "quite a number of acceptable coefficients may appear in this range"

An independent t-test was also conducted between the retest data of the pilot sample and the test data of the research sample of sport administrators. The results of this procedure are presented in Table 3.1. The reported value of the test statistic (.763) did not exceed the critical value ( $t_{cv}=2.00$ ) indicating a strong correlation to the dependent variable, procrastination. From this it was concluded that the research instrument used in the present investigation is reliable.

Table 3.1

Independent t-test on pilot and final sample data.

Category	M	SD	SEM	t	cvT
retest	3.09	.36	.11		
				.76	2.00
test	3.19	.40	.05		

Note. Critical values of t are taken from Table 2, p.362 of Hinkle et. al., Basic Behavioral Statistics, Houghton Mifflin, Co. Boston.  $P < .05$  Df=71

### Selection of subjects

The sample for this study consisted of sixty-three (N=63) sport administrators from the various associations housed in the National Sport and Recreation Centre at 333 River Road in Ottawa.

The selection of subjects was achieved through the use of a nonprobability sampling technique called convenience sampling. This technique may also be found under the heading of chunk or incidental sampling.

Convenience sampling (Hinkle et. al., 1982) involves using an already existing segment of a population. In this case the group consists of program co-ordinators, technical directors and executive directors, working for various associations in the National Sport and Recreation Centre. As mentioned earlier this group of sport administrators was heterogenous, they had varied educational and sport backgrounds, and represented various geographical regions of Canada. Chunk sampling was utilized to increase the response rate and decrease the time necessary to collect the data. A description of the sample is presented in table 3.2.

### Collection of data

The subjects were informed of the nature and purpose of the study through a covering letter (Appendix III) which accompanied each questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed and returned by internal mail from the C.A.P.H.E.R.

national office, one of the associations housed in the National Sport and Recreation Centre. Precise instructions on how to answer the instruments were included.

One month later the completed questionnaires were picked up from the C.A.P.H.E.R. office and the results were coded onto computer scanning sheets. No identifying marks were placed on the questionnaires at any point in this process. In this way the anonymity of the respondents was preserved, and the information obtained from the instruments remained confidential.

Table 3.2

## Description of subjects surveyed

Sex	Mean years of work experience	N	Mean age	% of total N
Males	7.23	42	34.59	66.6
Females	4.76	21	29.66	33.3

### Statistical treatment.

Appropriate statistical procedures were used to establish whether the hypothesis and sub-hypotheses presented in this research study were supported or rejected. The SAS program was used to analyze the data. The following procedures were applied:

#### (1) Frequency analysis

The SAS program was used to compile the distribution of scores, the sum of the squares, and the variance of all scores obtained on the questionnaires. Frequencies were also calculated for all responses for males only and for females only.

#### (2) Rank ordering of means

The sub-category of causes for each main category of procrastination were rank ordered by mean. In this way it was possible to determine which main cause was reported as more of a contributor to procrastination by sport administrators. This procedure was performed to test the main hypothesis presented in this research study.

#### (3) T-test

The t-test was used to verify any significant differences obtained between the mean responses of the male and female sport administrators for the two main categories of items on the questionnaire. This statistical procedure was performed to test the first sub-hypothesis presented in this research study.

#### (4) F-test

The f-test was used to determine the ratios between the four categories of years of work experience. These categories were created based on the data gathered from the general information section of the questionnaire that related to years of work experience. From the raw data obtained from the subjects a frequency distribution of years of work experience was created. Based on this distribution four categories were obtained. Great care was taken in forming these categories so that the resulting information would be as beneficial as possible in broadening our understanding of procrastination.

#### (5) Scheffe post hoc

The Scheffe post hoc test was used to verify any further significant differences between the other sets of means not calculated by the f-test in the procedure mentioned above.

The f-test and the Scheffe post hoc were used to test the second sub-hypothesis presented in this research study.

The .05 level of significance was used for all comparisons between means (t-test and f-test). The .05 level was selected because as Hinkle et.al., (1982) and Hays (1973) discussed the .05 level is the most commonly applied and accepted level of significance used in the social sciences.

## Chapter Four

### Results and Discussion

This chapter consists of four sections. Section one contains a summary of the responses to the seven open-ended questions that were included in the second segment of the research instrument. The next three sections present the results of the statistical procedures that were conducted to verify the main hypothesis and the two sub-hypotheses investigated in this study. In each section the results are also examined in relation to the precepts and major theories presented in the literature on procrastination.

#### Analysis and discussion of responses to the open-ended segment of the questionnaire.

The second segment of the research instrument contained seven open-ended questions. The responses to these questions are presented in Table 4.1. The purpose of this portion of the research instrument was to gather additional data on the procrastination behavior of sport administrators, and to use this data in interpretation and analysis of the quantified data from the closed-question section of the research instrument. These findings are presented first in order to present the reader with a general understanding of the phenomenon under investigation in this study.

Table 4.1

Responses to open-ended questions reported  
frequencies of five and more.

1) Why do you think you sometimes procrastinate?

Response	Freq.	%ofN
1. unimportant/insignificant jobs	14	35
2. unpleasant task	13	32.5
3. not enough time to finish job	8	20
4. doing high versus low priorities	8	20
5. too many options/no guidelines	7	17.5
6. too much work to do	5	12.5

N=40

2) When you put off doing something that you need to be working on, how do you feel about it?

Response	Freq.	%ofN
1. guilty	19	49
2. concerned/worried	7	18
3. frustrated	6	15
4. apprehensive/anxious	6	15
5. depressed	5	13

N=39

3) Do you try to make changes to your work habits to avoid procrastinating?

Response	Freq	%ofN
1. Yes	37	93
If so what are they?		
1. set deadlines	11	28
2. manage my time better	10	25
3. set more reasonable objectives	5	13

N=40

4) What do you think you could change within yourself to help avoid procrastinating?

Response	Freq	%ofN
1. more self-discipline	9	23
2. concentrate more	5	13

N=40

5) What types of job-related decisions or tasks do you procrastinate about?

Response	Freq	%ofN
1. big reports/projects	17	43
2. unimportant/insignificant tasks	7	18
3. employee evaluations/reprimands	6	16

N=40

6) What job-related setbacks or consequences has your procrastination caused you in the past?

Response	Freq	%ofN
1. nothing serious	22	58
2. not meeting deadlines	7	18
3. long hours/late nights	7	18
4. being rushed/doing a sloppy job	6	16

N=38

7) What changes do you think could be made at your office that would help people control their tendency to procrastinate?

Response	Freq	%ofN
1. regular staff review of goals and objectives	17	44
2. clearly stated priorities	9	23
3. set deadlines for projects	8	21
4. receive recognition of completed tasks.	7	18
5. hire more staff	7	18
6. distribute work more evenly	6	15

N=39

Several observations can be drawn from the data in Table 4.1. However, the data may not reflect the behavior of all 63 sport administrators in this study as only 38 to 40 subjects responded to any one of the open-ended questions. First, the responses indicate that "unimportant or insignificant jobs" and "unpleasant tasks" represent two major reasons why sport administrators procrastinate (question 1). The matter of perception appears to be quite important here. It is possible that the tasks at hand may or may not be "unimportant", "insignificant" or "unpleasant". However, the fact appears to be that the respondents perceive them to be so, and consequently, they will procrastinate about these tasks.

Second, 49 percent of the sport administrators that responded to question 2, report that they feel guilty when they are procrastinating. Yet most of them do not seem to think that the consequences are too serious for them (question 6). Feelings of guilt are common among procrastinators according to Burka and Yuen (1983). They theorize that guilt and frustration are major components of the procrastination cycle.

In question three, 93 percent of the respondents stated they try to modify their work habits to avoid procrastinating. According to them, changing their habits and improving their planning and time management skills would help them to procrastinate less (question 3). Self-discipline and clear

goals and objectives would also help considerably (question 4 and 7). In fact, all these considerations are consistent with the patterns of behavior theorized by Burka and Yuen (1983) in their "cycle of procrastination" as presented in chapter two.

Analysis and discussion of results pertaining to organizational-related versus person-related causes of procrastination.

The major hypothesis under investigation in this research stated the "organizational environment factors would be reported by sport administrators as contributing more to procrastination than person-related factors"

This hypothesis sought to test the validity of the management literature on procrastination which views the individual's external or organizational environment as the primary source of stimulus for procrastination (Braid, 1983; Douglass, 1978, 1980; Montgomery, 1979, 1982). The researcher therefore, attempted to determine if sport administrators would attribute their procrastination to the organization rather than to themselves.

The organization-related causes of procrastination tested in this hypothesis include: insignificant/unimportant jobs, too many options/no guidelines, too much delegated to one person, no established time limit, enormity of the task, and unpleasant tasks. The person-related causes investigated

include: laziness, self-confidence, poor time management, and inability to say no.

Results pertaining to this hypothesis are presented in Table 4.2 and 4.3. Table 4.2 presents a rank order of the means obtained for each sub-category of causes related to either the organizational environment or the person. Table 4.3 presents the percentages of responses received from the sport administrators for each sub-category of causes of procrastination.

The main hypothesis was supported as five of the organizational environment factors were ranked higher (Table 4.2) than all person-related factors, with the exception of "inability to say no", and the percentage of agreement is higher than disagreement for all organization factors (Table 4.3). However, as mentioned in chapter three "inability to say no" could be a person or organizational environment factor in procrastination depending on the individuals level in the organization. From the data in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 it is evident that the sport administrators in this study perceive "inability to say no" as a major cause of their procrastination. This cause was ranked first with a mean of 3.88 (Table 4.2) and 81 percent of the respondents (Table 4.3) agree that it is a major reason why they procrastinate. The next five highest ranked causes also pertain to organizational environment, while, "poor time management", a person-related cause ranked seventh with a mean of 3.09 (Table 4.2) and

received only 47 percent agreement (Table 4.3). Laziness and self-confidence ranked ninth and tenth (Table 4.2) with 39 and 32 (table 4.3) percent agreement respectively.

Table 4.2

Rank ordering of mean scores obtained for each sub-category of causes of procrastination.

Rank	Cause	Mean	Factor
1	Inability to say no	3.88	P/O
2	Unpleasant tasks	3.41	O
3	Too much delegated to one person	3.33	O
4	Too many guidelines/no guidelines	3.32	O
5	No established time limit	3.27	O
6	Unimportant/insignificant jobs	3.23	O
7	Poor time management	3.09	P
8	Enormity of the task	3.03	O
9	Laziness	2.87	P
10	Self-confidence	2.57	P

O= organization-related factor

P= person-related factor

**Table 4.3**  
 Percentages of responses for each sub-category  
 of causes for procrastination.

Causes	%Agree to Strongly Agree	%Disagree to Strongly Disagree
<b>A. Organizational factors</b>		
Insignificant/unimportant jobs	56	34
Too many options/no guidelines	58	29
Too much delegated to one person	54	25
No established time limit	54	35
Enormity of the task	44	41
Unpleasant tasks	59	27
<b>B. Person factors</b>		
Inability to say no	81	12
Poor time management	47	42
Laziness	39	48
Self-confidence	32	52

The data presented in these two tables tends to suggest that organizational environment factors play a greater role in procrastination than person-related factors. The ranking of the organizational causes suggests that for the sport administrators surveyed, "unpleasant tasks" is a major cause of their procrastination. This is consistent with Briody's (1979) findings where 47 percent of his sample identified "situational factors, boring, difficult, and unpleasant tasks" (p.78), as a major cause of their procrastination. The rationale for unpleasantness as a cause of procrastination has been examined by a number of authors (Braid,1983;Briody,1979;Douglass,1978;Burka & Yuen,1982, 1983). According to reality theory and learning theory (Braid,1983) the perceived "unpleasantness"of tasks makes them more susceptible to procrastination due to the lack of positive reinforcements associated with these tasks.

The data in Tables 4.2 and 4.3 also suggests that for the sport administrators surveyed, having too many decisions and lack of guidelines is also a cause of their procrastination. This cause is adopted from the management articles of Douglass (1978,1980) and Braid (1983). In their work on time management and procrastination they theorize that too many options and lack of guidelines create a cycle of frustration in the decision-making process, and that this frustration is a cause or contributing factor in procrastination.

As pointed out in chapter three "inability to say no" appears to have been perceived as an organizational environment factor. Items 7 and 14 of the closed-questions examine the individual's ability to say no to the requests of superiors and co-workers. Item 7 states "People take on more than they should because they cannot seem to say no." Item 14 states "Unless people learn to say no, they will wind up with far more work than they can reasonably handle."

Why then do individuals have trouble saying no? According to Burka and Yuen (1983) people need and desire to be needed and accepted. To refuse the requests of others is difficult because we all want to be seen as kind, caring, helpful human beings, and to say no is viewed negatively by both individuals. Burka and Yuen (1983) also state "one of the biggest fears of procrastinators is being alienated, or alienating the people around them"(p.41). Burka and Yuen's (1983) theories tend to reflect person-related causes of this behavior. If however, "inability to say no" is perceived as an organizational factor, what accounts for these results.

One explanation may be attribution. As discussed in chapter two, attribution theory is an explanation of how people organize behavior and make it meaningful. "Inability to say no" was ranked highest, and the sport administrators perception of not being able to refuse requests to take on more work may or may not reflect reality. According to Lind-

zey et.al.,(1975) "an individual attributes attitudes and traits under conditions of uncertainty, when he knows only a few relevant facts"(p.627).As discussed in chapter two the individual, therefore, tends to attribute positive results and outcomes to himself and negative results and outcomes to his external environment. The sport administrators in this study attribute a majority of their procrastination to their work environment. The six highest ranked causes including "inability to say no" reflect the individual attributing his procrastination, which most people perceive as negative (Briody,1979) to his work environment. Since sport administrators were consistent in attributing five of the top six causes to the organization, it is likely that "inability to say no" was also attributed to the organization. All of the sport administrators surveyed are accountable to an executive director or board of directors, therefore their perceived "inability to say no" when they already have more than enough work to do, probably reflects their perceptions of the consequences of saying no and their position in the organization.

Of the person-related factors the highest ranked cause is "inability to say no " it is ranked first (Table 4.2). However if this sub-factor is excluded from this category " poor time management" which ranked seventh (Table 4.2) becomes the highest ranked person-related factor. Forty-seven percent of the respondents agreed that "poor time man-

agement" is a cause of their procrastination. Why would such a high percentage of respondents agree to this person factor as a cause if they attribute negative outcomes to their external environment? One possible explanation may be social stigma. Time management workshops, self-help books, and helpful hint newspaper columns have become more prevalent in the last ten years. Therefore, with increased interest in time management skills and seminars perhaps "poor time management" may have less social stigma than other person causes of procrastination. If this is true perhaps sport administrators perceive "poor time management" as less of a negative reflection on them as individuals, so they are more likely to admit to this person-related cause than laziness and self-confidence which were ranked ninth and tenth (Table 4.2) (and received only 39 and 32 percent agreement (Table 4.3) respectively.

Laziness carries with it certain negative personal connotations, and so does self-confidence. Therefore, individuals would be less likely to agree that these two factors are causes for them because they would be attributing negative outcomes to themselves.

#### Analysis and discussion of results pertaining to sex as a variable affecting procrastination.

The first sub-hypothesis investigated in this study was: "There are no perceived differences on the reporting of

procrastination between male and female sport administrators".

To test this sub-hypothesis an independent t-test was conducted to verify any significant differences between the mean responses of male and female sport administrators for organizational environment and person-related factors. The results of this procedure are presented in Table 4.4.

As can be seen from the data in Table 4.4 the test statistic obtained from the means between male and female sport administrators on organizational environment factors .195, does not exceed the critical value of the test statistic ( $cvT=2.00$ ). The data also illustrates that the test statistic obtained from the means between male and female sport administrators on person-related factors is .109. Since neither test statistic exceeds the critical value ( $cvT=2.00$ ) the sub-hypothesis is retained at the .05 level of significance with 61 degrees of freedom.

None of the empirical studies (Briody, 1979; Green, 1981; Skiffington, 1982; Taylor, 1979; Young, 1982) available on procrastination, examined possible differences in procrastination behavior between males and females. In the management and psychological literature available on procrastination (Burka & Yuen, 1982, 1983; Braid, 1983; Douglas, 1978, 1982; Ellis & Knaus, 1977; Silver & Sabini, 1982) no mention is made of clinical findings or theoretical arguments, that differences exist or do not exist between

the procrastination behavior of males and females. Therefore, this study tested the null hypothesis regarding this variable. Possible differences may have been anticipated from the current notion that practicing female administrators appear to be better organized in their work habits and more goal oriented and action oriented than their male counterparts.

f

Table 4.4

Summary of t-test results between males and females  
for organizational environment and person factors.

Category	Mean	SD	S.E.M.	t	cvt
Org: Env. Factors					
Females	3.26	.48	.104		
				.195	2.00
Males	3.24	.37	.057		
Person Factors					
Females	3.13	.43	.09		
				.109	2.00
Males	3.11	.49	.07		

Note. Critical values of t are taken from Table 2, p.362 of  
Hinkle et. al., Basic Behavioral Statistics, Houghton Miff-  
lin, Co.

P<.05,

DF=61

Analysis and discussion of results pertaining to work experience as a variable affecting procrastination behavior.

The second sub-hypothesis examined in this study stated that "Years of work experience is a contributing factor in lessening the impact of work-related (organizational environment) factors associated with procrastination". Four categories of years of work experience were created from the data obtained in the general information section of the questionnaire: 1-2, 3-5, 6-10, and 11 years or more of related work experience. An f-test was then applied to the data to test this sub-hypothesis.

Table 4.5

Comparison of procrastination scores of sport administrators with 1-2, 3-5, 6-10, and 11+ years of work experience on organizational environment factors.

Work Experience (Years)	N	Mean	Source of variance	DF	SS	MS	F Ratio
1-2	19	3.29	Between	3	.54	.18	1.06
3-5	17	3.34	Within	59	10.41	.17	
6-10	13	3.17	Total	62	10.95		
11+	14	3.11					

$cvf=2.76$  when  $P<.05$  (taken from Table 4, p.364 of Hinkle et.al., Basic Behavioral Statistics, Houghton Mifflin, Co. Boston.)

As illustrated in Table 4.5, the mean procrastination scores of sport administrators with more years of work experience were generally lower than the means of administrators with less experience (means were 3.17 and 3.11 for the 6-10 and 11+ years of experience groups as opposed to means of 3.29 and 3.34 for the 1-2 and 3-5 years of experience groups). This would indicate that the more experienced sport administrators attribute procrastination to organizational environment factors to a lesser degree than their less experienced colleagues. However, as depicted in Table 4.6, the f-test failed to indicate any significant differences between the means of the four sub-groups of sport administrators. The calculated f-value was 1.06 and the critical f-value was 2.76. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected at the .05 level of significance. In other words, years of work experience as an independent variable did not appear to be a contributing factor in affecting the reporting of organizational environment factors, one aspect of the dependent variable.

Although not a stated hypothesis, the researcher was curious whether there was a relationship between years of work experience and person-related factors of procrastination, among the sport administrators surveyed in this study. The same four categories of work experience were examined. An f-test was then applied to the data on person-related factors of procrastination.

As illustrated in Table 4.6, the mean procrastination scores of sport administrators with more years of work experience were generally lower than the means of administrators with less experience (means were 2.95 and 2.83 for the 6-10 and 11+ years of experience groups as opposed to means of 3.35 and 3.25 for the 1-2 and 3-5 years of experience groups). As depicted in Table 4.6, the f-test indicated a significant difference between the means of the 1-2 and 11+ years of experience groups of sport administrators. The calculated f-value was 5.16 and the critical f-value was 2.76. Therefore, years of work experience appear to be an independent variable that affects the reporting of person-related factors of procrastination (dependent variable), among the sport administrators surveyed in this study.

A Scheffe post hoc was conducted to test for any further differences. No significant differences between the other groups of means were found.

Table 4.6

Comparison of procrastination scores of sport administrators with 1-2, 3-5, 6-10, and 11+ years of work experience on person-related factors.

Work experience (years)	N	Mean	Source of variance	DF	SS	MS	F Ratio
1-2	19	3.35	Between	3	2.82	.94	5.16*
3-5	17	3.25	Within	59	10.73	.18	
6-10	13	2.95	Total	62	13.56		
11+	14	2.83					


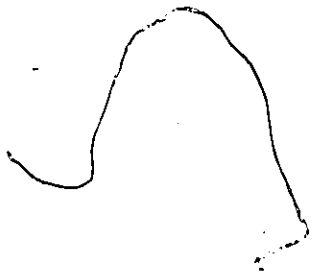
\* $P < .01$   $cvf = 4.13$  (taken from Table 4, p.364 of Hinkle et.al., Basic Behavioral Statistics, Houghton Mifflin, Co. Boston).

The sub-hypothesis "years of work experience is a contributing factor in lessening the impact of work-related (organizational environment) factors associated with procrastination", was based primarily on the writings of Douglass (1978, 1980) and Braid (1983). Braid and Douglass theorized that the majority of procrastination is the result of task complexity and lack of knowledge of how to handle that task, resulting in fear and or uncertainty. It appeared possible that as years of work experience increased, uncertainty about how to handle complex tasks would decrease. This assumption was not validated in the results obtained in this study.

One possible explanation of the results may be that while the sport administrators have differing years of work experience, perhaps they have not either spent all their time working for the same association or doing the same types of tasks and projects.

In examining years of work experience in relation to person factors differences were found between the sport administrators with 1-2 and 11 and more years of work experience. Could it be that those with more years of work experience have better time management skills and or are more work oriented than their less experienced colleagues? Or could these results reflect that sport administrators with more years of work experience are less likely to report procrastination behaviors because they attribute their

behavior to the normal routine of the office? "Things just take time, and no matter what you do something will have to be changed because that's the way things work around here", may be a common attitude among those with more years of work experience. Sport administrators with more years of work experiences may be more mature and relaxed about deadlines. They may have learned from experience that things find a way of being completed when you need them, so they are less likely to panic. It may also be that sport administrators with more years of work experience are more self-confident, and feel they have more control over their work than their less experienced colleagues.



## Chapter Five

### Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Chapter five contains a brief overview of the purpose, procedures, and findings that resulted from this research study of procrastination among sport administrators.

### Statement of the problem

The major problem investigated in this study was the procrastination behaviors of sport administrators. Person-related and organizational environment factors, two general causes of procrastination were also examined. Person-related factors are imposed by the individual, while organizational environment factors are imposed by the organization. The main emphasis of this study was to determine what the perceived causes of procrastination are among sport administrators. The manifestations and effects were also examined as a means of shedding more light on this behavior.

### Overview of related literature.

While procrastination has been the object of writings for hundreds of years, little is known about it. However, several authors and practitioners have made concerted efforts to increase our understanding of procrastination.

Douglass (1978) defined procrastination as "doing low priority actions or tasks rather than higher priority ones" (p.40). Douglass views procrastination as a bad habit that people fall into and says that these individuals should simply change their bad habits associated with procrastination. He also feels that an individual like any other object will tend to remain at rest unless a force acts upon him. Therefore, Douglass feels procrastinators will not change unless forced to do so. Douglass also feels that a majority of procrastination is the result of unpleasant and difficult projects, and indecision.

Silver's (1974) writings are similar on content and philosophy to those of Douglass; however, he attributes procrastination to the number of alternatives a task has. Silver postulates that the more alternatives a task has the more susceptible it is to procrastination.

Two major psychological theories have been used to explain procrastination, these are behaviorism or learning theory (LT) and rational emotive theory (RET). The major proponents of LT believe that tasks that are—positively reinforced and or rewarded are less susceptible to procrastination. Burka and Yuen, two psychologists working in this area, view procrastination as serving a protective function for the individual. They further theorize that postponing may be a technique that protects the individual from facing fears and anxieties. Unlike RET proponents, behaviorists do

not see these fears as a personality dysfunction that the individual is predisposed to, but rather as a reaction or defence mechanism for coping with the pressures and expectations imposed on the individual by his environment. Procrastination, according to Burka and Yuen (1983), "plagues people of all occupations" (p.3).

Rational-emotive theory (RET) views personality as being potentially rational or irrational. RET is based on the belief that although biological and early environmental factors contribute to personality patterns, the responsibility for being disturbed rests with the individual. Ellis and Knaus (1977), major authors in RET, define procrastination as "putting off something until a future time...postponing, deferring ~~action on~~ something you have decided to do" (p.7). They also list three causes of procrastination as being self-downing, low frustration tolerance, and hostility.

Five doctoral dissertations (Briody, 1979; Taylor, 1979; Green, 1981; Skiffington, 1982; Young, 1982) were found in the literature on procrastination. However, only three of these (Briody, 1979; Taylor, 1979; Green, 1981) examine the causes of procrastination, and all three papers are in the field of clinical psychology.

Briody (1979) found that forty-seven percent of his subjects identified task characteristics as a major cause of their procrastination. He also found that situational factors such as boring, difficult, and unpleasant tasks con-

tributed to the procrastination of his subjects. From results obtained in the open-ended segment of his instrument Briody states that vague or indefinite guidelines were reported as an external factor contributing to procrastination. This is consistent with Green's (1981) findings that "situational procrastinators were particularly susceptible to lack of structure" (p.84).

In her study of the effect of counseling on dissertation procrastination, Green (1981) found that moderate and non-procrastinators were more success oriented, aggressive, self-confident, and able to have fun, than procrastinators. She also reported that situational procrastinators are likely to impose organization on themselves and be bothered by delays.

In his investigation Taylor (1979) found that procrastination is more a function of situational and task variables than personality type.

As seen from this brief overview of the literature and research on procrastination, person-related factors and environmental factors both appear to cause procrastination.

### Methodology

In order to conduct this study it was necessary to develop an appropriate research instrument as none of the available instruments (Briody, 1979; Green, 1981; Skiffington, 1982; Taylor, 1979; Young, 1982) were designed to

address either sport administrators or the research hypotheses investigated in this study.

Certain steps were taken to increase the validity of the instrument. These include compiling a list of statements from the literature and examining all items for content validity, clarity, and relationship to the dependent variable.

In ascertaining the reliability of the research instrument a test-retest pilot study was conducted and a correlation coefficient was obtained for each item in the instrument. As a result of this procedure twenty-five of the original forty-nine items were retained. The overall mean correlation for the final research instrument was .71.

An independent t-test was also conducted between the retest data of the pilot sample and the test data of the research sample. The results indicated a strong correlation to the dependent variable, procrastination.

The selection of subjects was accomplished through the use of a nonprobability sampling technique called convenience or chunk sampling. The sample for this study consisted of sixty-three (N=63) sport administrators.

Appropriate statistical procedures were used to establish whether the hypothesis and sub-hypotheses presented in this research study were supported or rejected.

## Results

Unpleasant, unimportant, and insignificant tasks were the major causes of procrastination reported by the sport administrators who responded to the open-ended segment of the research instrument. When procrastinating forty-nine percent reported that they feel guilty. The sport administrators surveyed also reported that they try and modify their work habits to avoid procrastinating. According to them, changing their habits and improving their planning and time management skills would help them to procrastinate less. These findings appear consistent with theoretical considerations found in the area of psychology.

The main hypothesis investigated in this study stated that organizational environment factors would be reported by sport administrators as contributing more to procrastination than person-related factors". This hypothesis was supported as five of the organizational environment factors were ranked higher than all person-related factors with the exception of "inability to say no". As discussed in chapter four the respondents probably attributed this last factor to the organization. The data obtained in testing this hypothesis suggests that organizational environment factors play a greater role in procrastination than person-related factors.

The first sub-hypothesis investigated in this study stated that "there is no perceived difference on the reporting of procrastination behaviors between male and female

sport administrators". This sub-hypothesis was supported. Therefore, sex does not appear to be a factor affecting the causes of procrastination.

The second sub-hypothesis investigated in this study stated that "years of work experience is a contributing factor in lessening the impact of work-related (organizational environment) factors associated with procrastination". The mean procrastination scores of sport administrators with more years of work experience were generally lower than the means of administrators with less experience. However, the f-test failed to indicate any significant differences between the means of the four sub-groups of sport administrators surveyed. This sub-hypothesis related to this factor was therefore not supported. It had been speculated that sport administrators with more work experience would be more at ease with the handling of complex tasks and less fearful of difficult tasks imposed by the organization.

Out of curiosity the researcher examined whether or not there was a relationship between years of work experience and person-related factors of procrastination. The mean procrastination scores of sport administrators with more years of work experience were generally lower than the means of administrators with less experience. The results of an f-test indicated a significant difference between the means of the 1-2 and 11+ years of work experience groups of sport administrators. Therefore, years of work experience appears

to be an independent variable that affects the reporting of person-related factors of procrastination (dependent variable), among the sport administrators surveyed. It was suggested that a more experienced sport administrator possibly possesses more self-confidence, and more control over his assigned duties and possibly better time management skills.

### Conclusions

Considering the limitations of this study and the results obtained in testing the hypothesis and two sub-hypotheses, the following conclusions can be made.

1. Sport administrators procrastinate more at tasks they perceive to be unpleasant, unimportant and insignificant.
2. In attempting to decrease procrastination behavior, sport administrators try to modify their work habits. Improved planning, clearer work-related goals, and better time management skills and learning when and how to say no appear to be important behavior modifications for minimizing procrastination.
3. Sport administrators perceive organizational environment factors as contributing more to procrastination than person-related factors. Therefore, they attribute their procrastination to their work environment rather than to themselves.

4. There is no difference between male and female sport administrators as to their perception of procrastination behavior.
5. Sport administrators with more years of work experience appear to procrastinate less than their less experienced colleagues. This may be explained by the fact that the more experienced administrators are a little more self-confident, and possibly possess better time management skills.

#### Recommendations for future study

The following suggestions are recommended for future research in the area of procrastination in sport administration:

1. This study elaborated a new and original research instrument to measure procrastination behavior in sport administration. There is a need to strengthen and refine this instrument for future research endeavors, particularly in terms of clearly clarifying other possible dimensions contributing to the variance for such a complex phenomenon which procrastination is.
2. Sport organizations have different bureaucratic structures. Do administrators occupying different functions within such structures have different perceptions of procrastination behavior? It would also be of interest to

investigate this phenomenon comparing full time salaried sport administrators and volunteer sport organization executives.

3. Since this investigation discovered that more work experience as a sport administrator appears to decrease procrastination behavior, it would be necessary to probe further into this area, and investigate, in more depth, why this is the case. It would, of course also be useful to study larger populations of sport administrators across Canada, and include in the comparisons, more sub-categories of the number of years of work-related experience.
4. There is apparent evidence in this study that sport administrators of all ages and with varying degrees of work experience have a tendency to attribute the causes of their own procrastination to the organization rather than to themselves. Is this simply a case of people not wanting to admit to something which is viewed as "negative" and "bad" by most people? Again, more research needs to be conducted to identify the reasons why this is so.
5. As a result of conducting this study, the author was left with an impression of complexity underlying procrastination behavior. In further research, it may be advisable to conduct more extensive interviews with practicing

sport administrators to better identify the many facets of such behavior. For example, more probing is required to understand what the consequences of procrastinating are for sport administrators.



**Appendix I**

Pilot study conducted on the original version of the  
research instrument

Causes, Manifestations and Effects of Procrastination  
Among Sport Administrators.

Instructions

You have been asked to assist in a research project designed to identify the causes and effects of procrastination as perceived by sport administrators. Your cooperation in completing the attached questionnaire would be very helpful. Since your answers will be treated with the strictest confidence, please answer all questions frankly.

Mark your answers by circling the desired response after each question. There are forty-nine (49) statements. For each statement a five point scale is provided. Indicate whether you: (1) strongly disagree, (2) disagree, (3) are undecided, (4) agree, or (5) strongly agree, with what the statement suggests.

There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to these statements. Work as rapidly as you can and do not spend too much time on any one statement. Please do not omit any of the statements.

Please return this questionnaire (completed), on the same day you receive it, to the box provided in the secretary's office on the second floor.

Thank you for your time and cooperation !

## Background Information

1. Sex:    Male       Female

2. Years of work experience with NSRC: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

## Questionnaire

Please circle the number that best indicates how you feel about the following statements.

---

---

1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 undecided, 4 agree, 5 strongly agree.

---

1. People would rather not do something that requires too much effort.

1 2 3 4 5

2. People often become uneasy when they are a success at something.

1 2 3 4 5

3. People have difficulty setting priorities and sticking to them.

1 2 3 4 5

4. People find it difficult to say no to the requests of friends and co-workers, even when they already have enough to do.

1 2 3 4 5

5. People have a tendency to give up when confronted with difficult tasks.

1 2 3 4 5

6. People become frustrated when others seem to be creating red tape to slow their work down.

1 2 3 4 5

7. People prefer to avoid general meetings, because nothing important is accomplished there.

1 2 3 4 5

8. Sometimes it is just too difficult for an individual to make decisions because there are too many options to consider.

1 2 3 4 5

9. People sometimes wonder if they are the only ones in the office the top management can delegate to.

1 2 3 4 5

10. If a person wants to prevent or stop procrastinating on tasks he needs to have a deadline for completion of that task.

1 2 3 4 5

11. Even though a person tries his best at something he may not feel it is quite as good as what someone else has done.

1 2 3 4 5

12. An individual sometimes finds that he has scheduled more than one appointment for the same time.

1 2 3 4 5

13. People take on more than they should because they cannot seem to say no.

1 2 3 4 5

14. Especially when they are new to the job, many administrators find it very difficult to say no to requests for their time.

1 2 3 4 5

15. As one person told me; his job would be fine if he didn't feel like his hands were tied behind his back.

1 2 3 4 5

16. The routine paperwork in a person's job usually sits in his basket until someone demands a reply.

1 2 3 4 5

17. People should make a point of doing at least one unpleasant but necessary task first thing each day.

1 2 3 4 5

18. People tend to stall when they are faced with unpleasant chores.

1 2 3 4 5

19. When working on a new and important task or project a person will delay if there is no existing related policy.

1 2 3 4 5

20. People avoid decisions which have too many options because they are frustrating.

1 2 3 4 5

21. Everyone wishes they had someone they could delegate some of their work to.

1 2 3 4 5

22. A common cause of procrastination is, one person being given too much work to do.

1 2 3 4 5

23. A person needs to know when something is due because it helps them decide how important it is.

1 2 3 4 5

24. One reason a person won't volunteer to give a recommendation towards the resolution of a problem is because their peers might not like their recommendations.

1 2 3 4 5

25. When people delegate work to an individual they often have unrealistic expectations about the complexity of the task and the time necessary for completion.

1 2 3 4 5

26. People postpone working at important tasks until it's too late to do them.

1 2 3 4 5

27. Even if a person keeps a daily journal of target dates and appointments, these often need to be changed and revised to a later date.

1 2 3 4 5

28. If an individual doesn't have enough time to complete a task right now, there is no point in starting it.

1 2 3 4 5

29. When faced with a large important project, people usually occupy their time with less important tasks.

1 2 3 4 5

30. Unless people learn to say no, they will wind up with far more work than they can reasonably handle.

1 2 3 4 5

31. People feel that if they stall long enough on a task, other people will forget all about it.

1 2 3 4 5

32. People ask themselves "two hundred years from now will this really matter"?

1 2 3 4 5

33. People would rather avoid tasks such as: putting files in order, rearranging books.

1 2 3 4 5

34. People spend a great deal of their time listing and then considering the numerous options, instead of just making a decision.

1 2 3 4 5

35. People need guidelines to measure the various alternatives against.

1 2 3 4 5

36. People don't procrastinate, they have just been given too much work to do, and not enough time to complete it.

1 2 3 4 5

37. If someone is really good at a specific task or project in their job, everyone wants them to do that task/project for them.

1 2 3 4 5

38. People say it isn't really procrastination if a task doesn't have an established time limit or deadline.

1 2 3 4 5

39. If the boss doesn't tell the individual when he wants a task/project completed by, it probably isn't that important.

1 2 3 4 5

40. People seldom do extra work around the office unless they are pushed.

1 2 3 4 5

41. People prefer to avoid responsibilities and obligations at work.

1 2 3 4 5

42. Although most people would like to be successful in their work, they doubt they will make it to the top.

1 2 3 4 5

43. People would not delay on the completion of certain tasks if they were given the right amount of authority.

1 2 3 4 5

44. People feel that some required tasks are so insignificant that there is no point in doing them.

1 2 3 4 5

45. An individual said; I don't know why people ask for my input on problems, they know more about it than I do.

1 2 3 4 5

46. When a person is assigned a task he does not like, he delays with the hope that someone else will take it off his hands.

1 2 3 4 5

47. People delay action when faced with a decision and a large number of alternatives.

1 2 3 4 5

48. Large projects do not bother people at all; they are just as capable of successfully completing large medium or small tasks.

1 2 3 4 5

49. People would be quite happy if they only had to work on small and medium size tasks.

1 2 3 4 5

Thank You!



Post 7	10	3.60	1.26	4.00	1.00	5.00	
Test 8	10	3.10	1.10	3.50	1.00	4.00	.83
Post 8	10	3.10	.99	3.50	2.00	4.00	
Test 9	10	3.50	.71	4.00	2.00	4.00	1.00
Post 9	10	3.50	.71	4.00	2.00	4.00	
Test 10	10	4.00	.47	4.00	3.00	5.00	.56
Post 10	10	3.80	.42	4.00	3.00	4.00	
Test 11	10	3.30	1.06	3.50	2.00	5.00	.42
Post 11	10	3.20	.78	3.00	2.00	4.00	
Test 12	10	3.10	1.10	3.50	1.00	4.00	.31
Post 12	10	3.00	1.05	3.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 13	10	3.00	1.15	3.50	1.00	4.00	.65
Post 13	10	3.80	.78	4.00	2.00	5.00	
Test 14	10	4.10	.74	4.00	3.00	5.00	.31
Post 14	10	3.50	.85	3.50	2.00	5.00	
Test 15	10	3.50	1.35	3.50	1.00	5.00	.47
Post 15	10	3.50	.85	3.50	2.00	5.00	
Test 16	10	3.20	1.47	3.50	1.00	5.00	.64

Post 16	10	3.10	1.19	3.00	1.00	5.00	
Test 17	10	3.80	.79	4.00	2.00	5.00	.65
Post 17	10	3.30	1.06	4.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 18	10	3.70	.67	4.00	2.00	4.00	.69
Post 18	10	3.50	1.08	4.00	2.00	5.00	
Test 19	10	2.30	1.06	2.50	1.00	4.00	.65
Post 19	10	2.80	1.03	3.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 20	10	2.60	.97	2.50	1.00	4.00	.66
Post 20	10	3.00	1.05	3.00	2.00	4.00	
Test 21	10	3.60	.82	3.50	2.00	4.00	.55
Post 21	10	3.60	.70	4.00	2.00	4.00	
Test 22	10	2.50	1.08	2.00	2.00	5.00	.47
Post 22	10	3.20	1.03	3.50	1.00	4.00	
Test 23	10	3.20	1.14	4.00	1.00	4.00	-.01
Post 23	10	2.90	1.10	3.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 24	10	3.50	.97	4.00	2.00	5.00	.47
Post 24	10	3.20	1.14	3.50	2.00	5.00	
Test 25	10	3.00	1.15	3.00	1.00	5.00	.15

Post 25	10	3.50	.97	4.00	2.00	5.00	
Test 26	10	1.90	.99	1.50	1.00	3.00	.45
Post 26	10	2.60	1.07	3.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 27	10	3.10	.99	3.50	2.00	4.00	.79
Post 27	10	3.30	.95	4.00	2.00	4.00	
Test 28	10	1.80	.92	2.00	1.00	4.00	.33
Post 28	10	2.30	1.06	2.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 29	10	2.60	1.17	2.50	1.00	4.00	.59
Post 29	10	3.40	1.17	4.00	1.00	5.00	
Test 30	10	3.70	.95	4.00	2.00	5.00	.76
Post 30	10	3.30	1.34	3.50	1.00	5.00	
Test 31	10	2.30	1.25	2.50	1.00	4.00	.76
Post 31	10	2.90	.99	2.50	2.00	4.00	
Test 32	10	2.70	1.41	3.00	1.00	5.00	.60
Post 32	10	3.20	1.23	3.50	1.00	5.00	
Test 33	10	2.90	1.19	3.00	1.00	4.00	.46
Post 33	10	3.10	.87	3.00	2.00	4.00	
Test 34	10	3.20	1.03	4.00	2.00	4.00	.47

Post 34	10	3.40	.69	3.50	2.00	4.00	
Test 35	10	3.30	.95	4.00	2.00	4.00	
							.71
Post 35	10	3.10	.99	3.50	2.00	4.00	
Test 36	10	2.40	.52	2.00	2.00	3.00	
							.65
Post 36	10	2.60	.84	2.00	2.00	4.00	
Test 37	10	3.90	.99	4.00	2.00	5.00	
							.094
Post 37	10	3.60	.70	4.00	2.00	4.00	
Test 38	10	3.30	.67	3.00	2.00	4.00	
							.56
Post 38	10	3.50	.97	4.00	2.00	4.00	
Test 39	10	2.30	.82	2.00	1.00	4.00	
							.51
Post 39	10	2.20	.92	2.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 40	10	2.50	.85	2.00	2.00	4.00	
							.81
Post 40	10	2.40	1.07	2.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 41	10	2.30	.95	2.00	1.00	4.00	
							.44
Post 41	10	2.60	1.07	2.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 42	10	2.70	.82	2.50	2.00	4.00	
							.44
Post 42	10	2.70	1.06	2.50	1.00	4.00	
Test 43	10	3.40	.97	3.50	2.00	5.00	

Post 43	10	3.20	1.03	3.00	2.00	5.00	
Test 44	10	3.70	.82	4.00	2.00	5.00	.53
Post 44	10	3.60	1.07	4.00	1.00	5.00	
Test 45	10	2.90	.88	3.00	2.00	4.00	.195
Post 45	10	2.70	.95	3.00	1.00	4.00	
Test 46	10	2.70	.95	2.00	2.00	4.00	.89
Post 46	10	2.70	1.06	2.50	1.00	4.00	
Test 47	10	3.00	.94	3.00	2.00	4.00	.61
Post 47	10	3.10	1.10	3.50	1.00	4.00	
Test 48	10	2.80	.92	2.50	2.00	4.00	.69
Post 48	10	3.50	1.08	4.00	2.00	5.00	
Test 49	10	2.30	.82	2.00	1.00	4.00	.62
Post 49	10	2.50	1.19	2.00	1.00	4.00	

**Appendix II**

**Final Research Instrument**

## Instructions

You have been asked to assist in a research project designed to identify the causes and effects of procrastination as perceived by sport administrators. PROCRASTINATION IS THE DELAYING OR AVOIDING OF DECISIONS OR ACTIONS ( FOR A SHORT OR LONG PERIOD OF TIME) FOR WHICH YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE. Your answers will be treated with the strictest confidence, so please answer all questions freely.

Mark your answers by circling the desired response after each question. There are twenty-five (25) statements, and for each statement a five point scale is provided. Indicate whether you: 1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 are undecided, 4 agree, or 5 strongly agree, with what the statement suggests.

There are no "right" or "wrong" answers to these statements. Work as fast as you can and do not spend too much time on any one statement. Please do not omit any of the statements. There are also seven open-ended questions to be completed, use short point form answers.

Please return this questionnaire by the twenty-first of August 1984. All questionnaires must be returned to CAPHER in the envelope provided care of Tom Bedecki.

**Background Information.**

1. Sex:    male    female

2. Years of work experience with NSRC: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Age: \_\_\_\_\_

## Questionnaire

Please circle the number that best indicates how you feel about the following statements.

---

---

1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 undecided, 4 agree,  
5 strongly agree

---

1. People would rather not do something that requires too much effort.

1 2 3 4 5

2. People often become uneasy when they are a success at something.

1 2 3 4 5

3. People prefer to avoid general information meetings, because nothing important is accomplished there.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Sometimes it is just too difficult for an individual to make a decision because there are too many options to consider.

1 2 3 4 5

5. People sometimes wonder if they are the only ones in the office the top management can delegate to.

1 2 3 4 5

6. If a person wants to prevent or stop procrastinating on tasks he needs to have a deadline for completion of that task.

1 2 3 4 5

7. People take on more than they should because they cannot seem to say no.

1 2 3 4 5

8. As one person told me; his job would be fine if he didn't feel like his hands were tied behind his back.

1 2 3 4 5

9. The routine paperwork in a person's job usually sits in his basket until someone demands a reply.

1 2 3 4 5

10. People tend to stall when they are faced with unpleasant chores.

1 2 3 4 5

11. People avoid decisions which have too many options because they are frustrating.

1 2 3 4 5

12. People postpone working at important things until it's too late to do them.

1 2 3 4 5

13. When faced with a large important project, people usually occupy their time with less important tasks.

1 2 3 4 5

14. Unless people learn to say no, they will wind up with far more work than they can reasonable handle.

1 2 3 4 5

15. Even if a person keeps a daily journal of target dates and appointments these often need to be changed and revised to a later date.

1 2 3 4 5

16. People need guidelines to measure the various alternatives against.

1 2 3 4 5

17. People say it isn't really procrastination if a task doesn't have an established time limit or deadline.

1 2 3 4 5

18. If the boss doesn't tell the individual when he wants a task/project completed by, it probably isn't that important.

1 2 3 4 5

19. People seldom do extra work around the office unless they are pushed.

1 2 3 4 5

20. Although most people would like to be successful in their work, they doubt they will make it to the top.

1 2 3 4 5

21. People feel that some required tasks are so insignificant that there is no point in doing them.

1 2 3 4 5

22. An individual said; I don;t know why people ask for my input on problems, they know more about it than I do.

1 2 3 4 5

23. When a person is assigned a task he does not like, he delays with the hope that someone else will take it off his hands.

1 2 3 4 5

24. Large projects do not bother people at all; they are just as capable of successfully completing large medium, or small tasks.

1 2 3 4 5

25. People would be quite happy if they only had to work on small and medium size tasks.

1 2 3 4 5

**Open-Ended Questions**

Please answer all the questions listed below, in the spaces provided.

1. Why do you think you sometimes procrastinate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. When you put off doing something that you need to be working on, how do you feel about it? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Do you try to make changes to your work habits to avoid procrastinating? \_\_\_\_\_ If so what are they? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What do you think you could change within yourself to help avoid procrastinating? \_\_\_\_\_
5. What types of job-related decisions or tasks do you procrastinate about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. What job-related setbacks or consequences has your procrastination caused you in the past? \_\_\_\_\_
7. What changes do you think could be made at your office that would help people control their tendency to procrastinate? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix III**

Covering Letter

MEMORANDUM

TO: Sport administrators in NSRC  
FROM: Dr. Daniel Soucie, Associate Professor  
OBJECT: Graduate research project on procrastination  
DATE: June 4, 1984.

---

Carol Parsons has decided to write her master's thesis on the causes, manifestations and effects of procrastination in sport administration. The members of her thesis committee are Drs. Terry Orlick and Charles Cotton, and myself as major advisor.

More than simply allowing Carol to fulfill the requirements for her master's degree in sport administration, the completion of this study will shed more light on this complex, and quite normal human behavior that we're all engaged in, now and then, whether we admit it or not! We need your participation (and approximately 15-20 minutes of your time). I therefore urge you to complete and return the enclosed questionnaire at your earliest convenience. Towards the end of the Summer, Carol will provide all the individual respondents with a summary of the major findings of her study.

I can assure you that all the data collected within this survey, as well as all pertinent personal information which you provide, will remain absolutely anonymous.

Thank you for your kind assistance and cooperation.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Bibliography

- Amos, J.R., Brown, F.L., Mink, O.G. Statistical Concepts: A basic program New York: Harper & Row, 1965.
- Bischof, L.J. Interpreting personality theories (2nd ed.) Evanston, Ill.: Harper & Row, 1970.
- Braid, R.W. Effective use of time. Supervisory Management 1983, 28 (7) 9-14.
- Briody, R. An exploratory study of procrastination (Doctoral dissertation, University of Southern Illinois, 1979). Dissertation Abstracts International 1980, 41, 590A (University Microfilms No.8017412)
- Burka, J.B., & Yuen, L.M. Mind games procrastinators play Psychology Today 1982, 16 (1) 32-44.
- Burka, J.B. and Yuen, L.M. Procrastination: Why you do it, What to do about it Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley, 1983.
- Danbrot, M. Why you put things off. Time Magazine 1974, 63, 32-36.
- Demarest, M. The fine art of putting things off. Time Magazine 1974, 63, 32-36.
- Douglass, M.E. & Goodwin, P.H. Successful time management for hospital administrators New York, Amacom, 1980.

Ellis, A. Humanistic psychotherapy: The rational-emotive approach, New York: The institute for rational living, 1973.

Ellis, A. Rational-emotive theory: Albert Ellis. In A. Burton (ed.), Operational theorums of personality New York Brenner & Mozel, 1974.

Ellis, A., & Knaus, W.J. Overcoming procrastination New York: New American Library, 1977.

Fader, S.S. How to kick the procrastinating habit. Family Weekly, February 25, 1979, p.17.

Fein, E. Stop procrastinating. Seventeen, January 1979, p.37.

Glasser, W. Positive addiction New York: Harper & Row, 1976.

Green, G.D. Dissertation procrastination (Doctoral dissertation, University of Washington, 1981). Dissertation Abstracts International, 1981, 42, 1548A-1549A. (University Microfilms No.8121201).

Hays, W.L. Statistics for the social sciences New York: Holt, 1973, 353-375.

Hinkle, D.E., Wiersma, W. and Jurs, S.G. Basic behavioral statistics Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1982.

- Klein, E. A comprehensive etymological dictionary of the English language (Vol. 2). New York: Elsever Publishing, 1967.
- Knaus, W.J. Overcoming procrastination. Rational Living 1973, 8, 2-7.
- Kusyszyn, I. Comparison of judgemental methods with endorsements in the assessment of personality traits, Journal of Applied Psychology 1968, Vol. 52, pp. 227-233.
- Lindzey, H. et. al., Psychology Mcgraw Hill, New York, 1975.
- Magnusson, Test theory Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1967, p.115-118.
- Mathews, D.K., Measurement in physical education Toronto: W.B. Saunder Co., 1969.
- McKay, J. The management of time Englewood Cliffs. N.J. Prentice Hall, 1958.
- Montgomery, R. Managing interruptions. Manage, 1978, 30 (4), 24-25.
- Montgomery, R. Procrastination, Manage July 1982, 13-14.
- Mortimer, R. Introduction. In William Morrow and Company (ed.), The seven deadly sins New York: William Morrow, 1962.

Oppenheim, A.N. Questionnaire design and attitude measurement  
New York: Basic Books, 1966.

Partidge, E. A short etymological dictionary of modern English (3rd.ed.), New York, Macmillian, 1966.

Passman, R.H. The reduction of procrastinative behaviors in a college student despite the contingency-fulfillment problem: The use of external control in self-management techniques, Behavior Therapy, 1977, 8, 95-97.

Rottenbury, H.C. Time management and communication Part 1. Management World September 1978, 28-30.

Seltiz, C. et.al., Research methods in social relations New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1959.

Silver, M. & Sabini, J. When it's not really procrastination Psychology Today, 16 (1), 39-42.

Silver, M. Procrastination. Centerpoint Spring 1974. 49-54.

Skiffington, S.T. The development and validation of a self-report measure of general procrastination: The time utilization inventory (Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, 1982), Dissertation Abstracts International, 1982, 43, 2003B-2004B. (University Microfilms No.8225231).

Skinner, B.F. Science and human behavior New York: Macmillian, 1964.

Taylor, R.R. Procrastination: The personality and situational correlates of procrastination behavior for achievement tasks (Doctoral dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1979). Dissertation Abstracts International, 1982, 43, 1967B (University Microfilms No.7921986).

Watson, J.B. Behaviorism Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 1959.

Wenzel, S. The sin of sloth: Acedia in medieval thought and literature Chapel Hill, N.C.: University of North Carolina Press, 1967.

Young, J.R. A paradoxical treatment technique versus a behavioral approach in treatment of procrastination of studying (Doctoral dissertation, North Texas State University, 1982). Dissertation Abstracts International, 1983, 43, 3749B. (University Microfilms No.837956).