



Indecision at the Office: Does Education Play a Role?

Martha L. Szekely, Madeline R. Mazanek, & Joseph R. Ferrari
DePaul University, Chicago IL



Introduction

- The more indecisive a person is, the more likely they are to report having too much clutter in the office (Roster & Ferrari, 2019). The person may be unsure of what to do with their clutter.
- College educated professionals report higher levels of decisional procrastination than high school educated working-class employees (Hammer & Ferrari, 2002). Job insecurity may play a role in promoting productivity in an attempt to avoid job termination for “blue-collar” workers.

Study Aims

We investigated how education affects the relationship between indecision and self-reported clutter rating in the office.

Hypotheses

- Education would moderate the relationship between decisional procrastination and clutter rating
- Higher education levels would lead to higher decisional procrastination and in turn higher clutter ratings

Presented at virtual Eastern Psychological Association Conference 2020
Contact first author at mszekel1@depaul.edu

Materials

Mann’s (1982) *Decisional Procrastination Scale*: 5-item ($\alpha = .85$), (DP; printed in Ferrari, Johnson, & McCown, 1995).

- Measures the degree (5-point scale) that participants engaged in various strategies when making decisions
- Sample items include: *I put off making decisions* or *I delay making decisions until it is too late*

Response to question that asked for rating of extent of clutter in personal workspace

- Question asked, “How cluttered is your primary workspace? By ‘cluttered’, we mean untidy or disorganized due to an overabundance of physical (not digital) objects in your workspace?”
- Item was measured on an 11-point scale, where 0 = “not at all cluttered” and 10 = “extremely cluttered”

Participants

286 adults

- 51.4% aged 25-35 years
- 62% male ($n = 177$)
- 38% female ($n = 109$)
- 77.9% White/Caucasian ($n = 226$)
- 40% had a Bachelor’s degree ($n = 116$)

Results

- Results of a simple linear regression indicated that the model explained 19% of the variance and that the model was significant, $F(5, 283) = 13.31, p = .000$.
- Indecision significantly predicted self-reported clutter rating the office ($\beta = .1984, p = .0002$).
- We did not find an interaction effect for our multi-categorical moderator ($\beta = .0608, p = .3785; \beta = .0440, p = .5808$).

Education	Clutter Rating		Decisional Procrastination	
	Group Mean	Standard Error	Group Mean	Standard Error
No college degree	4.30	0.28	10.58	0.50
Bachelor’s	3.92	0.24	11.95	0.44
More than Bachelor’s	4.50	0.28	12.31	0.51

Limitations

The original data set was not intended for these analyses. There was also only one question pertaining to clutter.

Discussion

Higher indecision leads to higher clutter rating, but education level does not have an effect on this relationship. Indecision is not reflective of education level and indecision and clutter occur across work environment and education level.