

Amidst the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Relationship of Burnout and Depression Among College Students

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Abstract

In recent years, online classes have become popular because of the Philippines' high number of COVID-19 cases. Furthermore, given the pandemic, it forces students to study at home. Thus, students in the Philippines have been exposed to online learning for two years; despite its slow progress, many students have received awards for their hard work and motivation. However, their mental health and depression remain their primary concerns amid the current pandemic. Burnout is one of the difficulties students face during this period, as being alone can impact students' mental health and academic performance. Thus, this study aims to discover and investigate the relationship between academic burnout and depression among college students. According to the statistical findings, there is a significant relationship between academic burnout and depression ($r=0.135$).

Keywords: Burnout, Depression, College Students, COVID-19 Pandemic, Online Learning Modality

Introduction

In today's world, where the COVID-19 continuously exists, it is evident that students, especially at the college level, face a lot of struggles in online learning amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The sudden change from face-to-face classes to online learning hugely impacted students' academic burnout and depression. Thus, this situation has a negative impact on learners' mental health and academic performance (Husky et al., 2020; Yang et al., 2021; Ye et al., 2020). It also contributes to school burnout (Vu & Bossmans, 2021) and depression (Rehman et al., 2021).

Furthermore, the education sector is one of the most highly affected and makes the students struggle in their everyday schooling amid this pandemic. Thus, online learning was the best solution to our situation. It is associated with many challenges we are facing, like Internet connection, Wi-Fi, gadgets, home environment, communication, and financial issues. In fact, according to Mahyoob (2020), there are a lot of challenges faced by the students, and some of those are related to technical, academic, and communication challenges that are also the same as the problems that the researchers see in this research about academic burnout and depression of the students.

The history of student burnout and depression over the past decades states that "burnout" was coined to describe students' out-of-control behavior in school. Hence, it has been shown to have an impact on a variety of aspects of schoolwork as well as a student's eventual health as an adult. (Schaufeli et al., 2002;

Fiorilli et al., 2017). Furthermore, student burnout is linked to depressive symptoms (Gerber et al., 2002). Long-term educational attainment is predicted by school burnout and depressive symptoms (Neild, Stoner-Eby, & Furstenberg, 2008; Rumberger & Rotermund, 2012).

Academic burnout is positively related to academic performance with depressive disorders. The current study looked into whether two psychosocial resources, resilience, and adaptability, may help people cope with stress in the process of academic burnout and social support function as moderating elements. Depression in college students and depression-related issues have the same result; it also states that depression was significantly related to burnout. The study was conducted in all 43 medical schools in Spain in 2020 to look at the prevalence of depression and burnout among medical students. Thus, these two studies show that academic burnout and depression were positively correlated (Cheng et al., 2019; Capdevila et al., 2021).

However, it stated that the connection between academic burnout and depression was not found to be significantly related. The students' education and psychological learning disorders have a negative impact on academic performance. In addition, academic burnout is one of the most severe issues affecting students' motivation and academic performance. Thus, these two studies show that academic burnout and depression were not related (Aghani-Liasi et al., 2021; Fischer et al., 2020).

Moreover, this study investigates the relationship between academic burnout and depression among

college students. Thus, to assess how academic burnout affects students' experiences as they attain success in their academic performance amidst the challenges of the online learning modality, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Research Question

This study investigates the relationship between academic burnout and depression among college students who use online learning. Its specific goal was to answer the question:

1. Is there a significant relationship between academic burnout and depression among college students?

Literature Review

Burnout

College life is remunerating, yet testing and understudies might encounter numerous troublesome periods and blended feelings. Particularly concerning scholastic difficulties, analysts have repeatedly found that learning burnout has turned into a typical issue among college understudies during their instructive experience (Lin & Huang, 2012; Chunming et al., 2017; Xu, 2017).

Learning burnout can be viewed as an augmentation of burnout and alludes to a pessimistic learning mentality, perspectives, and ways of behaving toward concentration because of tension or an absence of learning inspiration, making individuals tired (Schaufeli & Zhang et al., 2007). Like the idea of burnout, the importance of learning burnout, which alludes all the more explicitly to burnout in scholastics, has been considered to incorporate enthusiastic depletion, criticism, and low adequacy (Maslach & Jackson, 2020; Lin & Huang, 2014; Ling et al., 2014)

Rest is an occasional resting state of the body and the sensory system that is vital for college understudies' learning, execution, and wellbeing (Suen et al., 2008; Simon et al., 2020). Specifically, unfortunate rest quality, which is a repetitive element of understudy life that might influence mental cycles and recuperation from stress and the disposal of weakness, has been viewed as related to numerous cognitive variables (Lin & Huang, 2012). A past report additionally showed that sluggishness expanded the chance of unfortunate school execution (Dewald-

Kaufmann et al., 2010; Lin & Huang, 2014), which might cause learning burnout.

Depression

Depression and social tension are set apart by high attribute pessimistic effect (i.e., the affinity to encounter troubling feelings) and low characteristic good effect (Hettemae et al., 2006)

Depressive symptoms are generally conveyed in the populace and upset individuals' ordinary life. College students are an extraordinary group who are going through a fundamental transition period in which they are transitioning from childhood to adulthood and making numerous important life choices. Past examinations revealed that burdensome side effects in college understudies are noted all over the planet, and the pervasiveness is, by all accounts expanding (Kessler et al., 2013).

This phenomenal experience of 'home quarantine' under lockdown with the vulnerability of scholarly and proficient professions complexly affects understudies' emotional wellness. The continuous COVID-19 pandemic is making a psycho-passionate turbulent circumstance as nations have been announcing a sharp ascent of psychological well-being issues, including tension, gloom, stress, rest jumble as well as dread, among its residents, that at last expanded the substance use and at times self-destructive behavior (Gritsenko et al., 2020; Xiao, Zhang, Kong, Li & Yan, 2020).

Depression is a significant mental problem with side effects including overstated and tenacious bitterness, anhedonia, cognitive disabilities, a negative parade predisposition, and substantial side effects (a sleeping disorder and weakness). Above 322 million individuals are presently encountering clinically pertinent depression, and it will become one of the primary sources of inability worldwide by 2030 (Malhi & Mann 2018).

Burnout and Depression

Corroborative variable investigations show that burnout can be genuinely separated from depression. Results substantiate the three-factor construction of the MBI and, part of the way, affirm the four-factor design of the CES-D. Moreover, aftereffects of primary condition displaying examinations show that an absence of correspondence in the relationship with one's accomplice predicts despondency (and not burnout). A lack of equality in the relationship with understudies predicts burnout and only indirectly depression (Bakker et al., 2019).

However, there is a considerable conversation and discussion about the affiliations and peculiarity of burnout with other psychological wellness issues, including melancholy and tension. (Bianchi et al. 2015; Oquendo et al. 2019), A 2018 systematic review (Rotenstein et al. 2018) demonstrated that the heterogeneity of distributed research doesn't permit a dependable assessment of comorbidities, bringing up issues about whether it is feasible to recognize burnout as a word-related condition from possibly basic comorbidities.

Njim et al. (2019) laid out that the indicators of burnout in a gathering of clinical understudies were: total grade point average of results, lamenting decision of clinical examinations, conjugal status, hardships in relational connections sporting medication use. Furthermore, burnout has been related to depression (Kumar, 2016).

Methodology

This study employed a descriptive-correlational design to evaluate the relationship between burnout and depression among college students during the online learning modality.

Respondents

The respondents of this study were 204 college students who are currently enrolled in any private schools in the Philippines; thus, it employed a convenience sampling technique.

Instruments of the Study

The study utilized two instruments to investigate burnout and depression among the respondents. First, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) is a psychological assessment tool that includes 22 symptom questions about workplace burnout. Christina Maslach and Susan E. Jackson constructed the first version of the MBI to analyze an individual's burnout experience. "The MBI is neither established in strong clinical observation nor based on sound theorizing," writes Schaufeli (2003), a major player in burnout research, "rather, it has been generated inductively by factor-analyzing a somewhat arbitrary group of items." Accomplishing the instrument takes about 10 minutes. The MBI measures three aspects of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment. Second, the DASS-21 is a quantitative measure of distress that Syd Lovibond and Peter Lovibond developed. The researchers just

utilized the depression subscale to measure the depression among the respondents.

Procedure

The respondents were given informed consent and sufficient time to finish the questions via Google Form. They were asked to fill in the questionnaires, follow the stated instructions, and answer statements honestly. Their responses will be kept with strict confidentiality and will be protected.

Ethical Considerations

The study's aims were explained to the participants before answering the questionnaires. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an online survey is necessary. For that reason, an online survey has been distributed by Google form. For secrecy, respondents were not required to fill out their names in the questionnaire.

Result

This section reveals the study's statistical findings through research questions. The Pearson correlation coefficient was also calculated using SPSS. This resulted in a factual conclusion about determining and comparing the mean and the relationship between variables.

Relationship between Burnout and Depression

The research focuses primarily on the relationship between self-efficacy and academic burnout. The statistical analysis results in Table 1 reveal that burnout and depression have a significant relationship. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

According to Rosen et al. (2020), chronic sleep deprivation, stressful personal incidents, and burnout have all been linked to depression (Talih et al., 2016). Burnout and depressive symptoms were identified as factors of severe thoughts of dropping out of medical school (Dyrbye et al., 2020). Surprisingly, burnout has been described as a form of depression (Schonfeld & Bianchi, 2016). In addition, as the study by Tennant (2020), the etiology of burnout and depression is linked to repeated and unaddressed stress. Unaddressed stress has been linked to depression as well.

Table 1
Relationship between Burnout and Depression

CORRELATION		
	Burnout	Depression
Burnout	-	.135*
Depression	.135*	-

Discussion

The various studies' findings indicate a relationship between academic burnout and depression. As a result, it can be deduced that the current COVID-19 pandemic has become one of the primary causes of depression, influencing how students cope with and deal with their studies. It has been discovered that as burnout levels rise, so do the chances of depression. On the other hand, this study indicated that these students can still handle difficulties in their online education. Furthermore, the parents play an essential role in the students' lives. Thus, parenting support can provide healthy relationships to their children and make them feel not alone, especially when suffering from depression.

Conclusion

This pandemic made the students experience struggles in their everyday schooling. Thus, increasing their academic burnout can lead to depression. Therefore, academic burnout is associated with depression, indicating that doing many tasks alone negatively impacts students' mental health and ability to perform specific tasks efficiently. As a result, it is highly urged that parents keep a very close eye on their children's behavior, emotions, and health. Likewise, schools and universities should recognize the importance of adjusting group and individual activities to minimize the prevalence of depressive symptoms. Moreover, the findings suggest strategies for avoiding academic burnout and depression, such as having good study habits, limiting study hours per day, taking a break, developing a support system, making time for fun, eating nutritious food, minimizing distractions, getting enough sleep, studying with others, identifying suitable study space, and limitations.

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