

Article

JELITA: Journal of English Language Teaching and Literature
Volume 5, Number 2, August 2024, pages 663-674

**Investigating Academic Burnout
among Final-Year English
Education Students: A Case
Study Research at IAIN
Parepare**

P-ISSN 2721-1096

E-ISSN 2721-1916

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the academic burnout among final-year students of the English education department in the 2023-2024 academic year at IAIN Parepare. Data collection applied survey methods using Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) with Likert Scale to 93 final year students who are working on their thesis. Statistical analysis methods used include Kolmogorov-Smirnov for normality testing and Spearman Correlation to measure the relationship between variables. The result shows that the final year students experienced medium level of academic burnout. 57% of them felt emotional exhaustion, 51% realized they were experiencing depersonalization, 52% were exposed to personal achievements. Overall, the data indicates the final year English education students experienced moderate burnout across all dimensions, which significantly impacted their emotional well-being, engagement in academic roles, and personal accomplishment perception. These results suggest that institution should consider implementing more intensive emotional and academic mentoring programs for final year students. This could include counseling, stress management sessions, and psychological support that can help reduce emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. In addition, the supervisors are expected to provide adaptive mentoring, understand individual needs, and help students develop realistic strategies to complete their thesis. These efforts are expected to improve academic well-being, so that students can complete their studies optimally and confidently.

Keywords

Academic Burnout, Emotional Exhaustion, English Education, Final-Year Student

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INTRODUCTION

Burnout has become an interesting aspect to identify in many aspects of human life for a few decades. Burnout is a cynical and emotional syndrome that frequently affects people who perform some 'people's work' of several types Maslach and Jackson (1981). Burnout is characterized as a state of physical, mental, and emotional tiredness brought on by a sustained exposure to emotionally taxing and demanding situations (Jahedizadeh et al., 2015). The study related to burnout has been carried out in various countries especially in the workplace for professional workers to find out the problem and manage the solution.

In higher education, student burnout is a serious issue that can have negative effects like lower motivation, performance, and engagement, all of which can result in dropout. Researchers have used a variety of models, including the demand-resource model, to investigate the factors leading to student burnout. In contexts of higher education, this model—which is frequently utilized to explain burnout in professional environments—is being used to comprehend student burnout. The purpose of the University Demand-Resource Questionnaire (UDRQ) is to examine the reliability and structure of the variables that lead to student burnout. The research of student burnout highlights the negative impacts on students' well-being and academic performance by linking it to decreased study engagement, lower academic motivation, and changes in motivation (Jagodics & Szabó, 2022).

Studies have been done to investigate the effects of burnout on the move from college to the workplace. It's important to address and comprehend burnout throughout the university years because research suggests that burnout among students may be a predictor of burnout in the workplace later on. Considering the negative effect of burnout towards university students, it is important to examine final-year student burnout of English Education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic burnout is described as a specific symptom that develops as a result of school-related stress and learning demands among students and college students. Student burnout is described as having three main symptoms, namely fatigue due to learning demands, lack of motivation to study and achieve learning goals, and feelings of incompetence (Jagodics & Szabó, 2022). Burnout is characterized as a state of physical, mental, and emotional tiredness brought on by a sustained exposure to emotionally taxing and demanding situations (Jahedizadeh et al., 2015).

Maslach and Jackson (Edú-valsania et al., 2022) formulated the concept of burnout as a psychological syndrome characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of motivation. When students experience burnout syndrome, students will experience difficulty in carrying out all lecture activities. Therefore, it is important to overcome and prevent the emergence of academic burnout.

Academic burnout is a condition that can be manifested through three aspects found in the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey (MBI-SS) in (Widhianingtanti & van Luijtelaar, 2022), namely

- 1) Emotional exhaustion (EE) that can be felt by students. This is indicated by symptoms such as loss of enthusiasm, giving up easily, feeling bored, feeling like you have failed in learning, and anxiety that easily arises. Students often feel emotionally burdened by high academic demands.
- 2) Depersonalization (DP), which refers to the cynical attitude that appears in the face of education. Students who experience depersonalization may avoid school assignments, even skip classes, and lose interest in subjects. They also tend to have negative thoughts towards teachers and the learning process as a whole.
- 3) Personal Accomplishment (PA). This is characterized by feelings of low self-esteem, feeling incompetent, feeling like you have not achieved the expected achievements, and low motivation in learning. Students who experience a decline in academic confidence may feel overwhelmed by the burden of academic assignments and feel less able to deal with them.

These three dimensions are important indicators of academic burnout, which can disrupt students' well-being and their academic performance.

Study of English learning burnout by Liu and Zhong (Liu & Zhong, 2022) found that English learning burnout (ELB) is felt by students because of the demotivation, loss of interest or enthusiasm and less confidence. To overcome the burnout teachers introduced an effective approach to organize self-regulated strategy training to enhance students' emotional capacity in learning English. By introducing the self-regulated strategy to students, they are able to handle their emotions, thoughts and behavior when facing difficulty in the EFL learning process.

Study by Xu et.al (Xu et al., 2022) proved that the positive relationship between English learning stress and English learning burnout in both men and women was mediated by self-efficacy in the language. Furthermore, the results showed that among male college students, mindfulness mediated the indirect relationship. But among the women in this study, the moderating impact of mindfulness was not statistically significant.

Final year students have unique characteristics, especially related to increasing academic demands and personal responsibilities. At this stage, students have usually completed most of their lectures and are entering the final phase of their studies, which requires them to focus on completing their final assignments or theses. Brown in Puspita (Puspita, 2019) mentions three factors may affect the ability of final year students in writing their thesis namely personality factors, sociocultural factors, and linguistics factors.

In addition to facing pressure to graduate quickly, they are also often faced with strict time management demands, as many of them have to divide their time between lectures, research, and sometimes side jobs (Asni et al., 2023). The increasingly complex academic load, coupled with expectations from themselves and their surroundings, makes

final year students vulnerable to stress and burnout (Lestari et al., 2023). These characteristics make them interesting subjects to study in the context of academic burnout, especially regarding how they manage study pressure and maintain motivation until the end of their studies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This case study research employed a qualitative method to identify and analyze the dimensions of burnout experienced by final-year English Education students at IAIN Parepare. A total of 93 final-year students from the 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 cohorts participated in this study. These students had completed at least 80% of their coursework and were actively working on their theses.

The instrument used in this study was the Indonesian version of Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and used a Likert Scale to measure the dimensions of academic burnout, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Statistical analysis methods used include Kolmogorov-Smirnov for normality testing and Spearman Correlation to measure the relationship between variables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Emotional Exhaustion (EE)

Emotional Exhaustion in the context of academic burnout related to students may feel mentally fatigued, struggle with motivation, and have difficulty concentrating on their studies. They may also experience being disconnected from their work, leading to decreased achievement and a sense of helplessness.

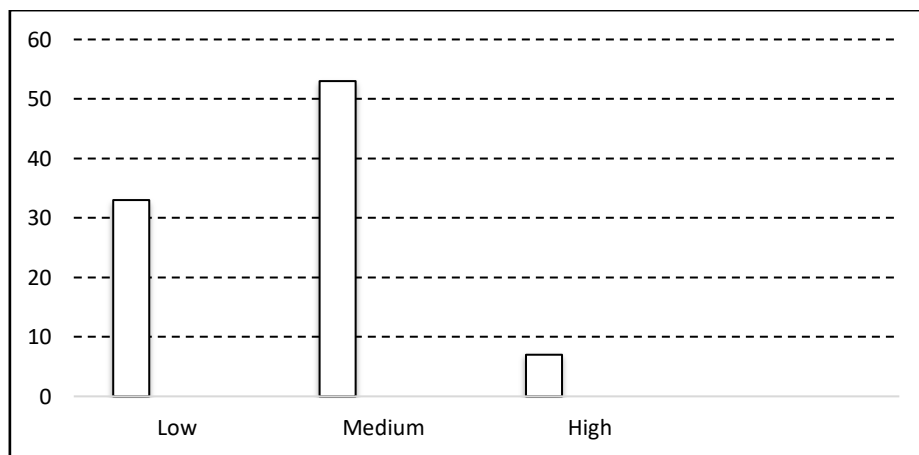


Figure 1. Diagram of the Emotional Exhaustion Distribution Score

The diagram above explains from 93 respondents, 53 of them (57%) experienced emotional exhaustion at a moderate level, indicating that they felt quite tired and stressed at work, but not serious yet. 33 of the respondents (35%) had a low level of emotional exhaustion, indicating they felt relatively untired in their work. 7 respondents (8%) got high emotional exhaustion which indicates severe burnout in this dimension.

Table 1. Mean score and standard deviation result of EE

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Emotional Exhaustion (EE)	20.01	2.88

The table above shows the analysis results of Emotional Exhaustion. The average score (mean) for Emotional Exhaustion of 93 respondents was 20.01, with a standard deviation of 2.88. The mean score of 20.01 indicates that generally the level of emotional exhaustion among respondents is in the moderate category. According to the MBI classification, an EE score in the range of 19-26 is considered a moderate level of emotional exhaustion. This means that the majority of respondents experience emotional exhaustion at a significant level, but have not yet reached severe emotional exhaustion.

The standard deviation of 2.88 indicates that the variation or distribution of emotional exhaustion scores among respondents is quite homogeneous. With a relatively small standard deviation, this indicates that most respondents have scores that are not too far from the average (20.01). This means that although some respondents may have higher or lower EE scores, most are close to the average value indicating a moderate level of emotional exhaustion.

The results indicate that emotional exhaustion levels are fairly even among respondents, without much extreme variation. Thus, stress management interventions or programs can be targeted at higher-risk groups, namely those at the upper end of the moderate category or those approaching higher levels of emotional exhaustion.

To better understand the distribution of this data, the diagram below shows how EE scores are distributed across respondents.

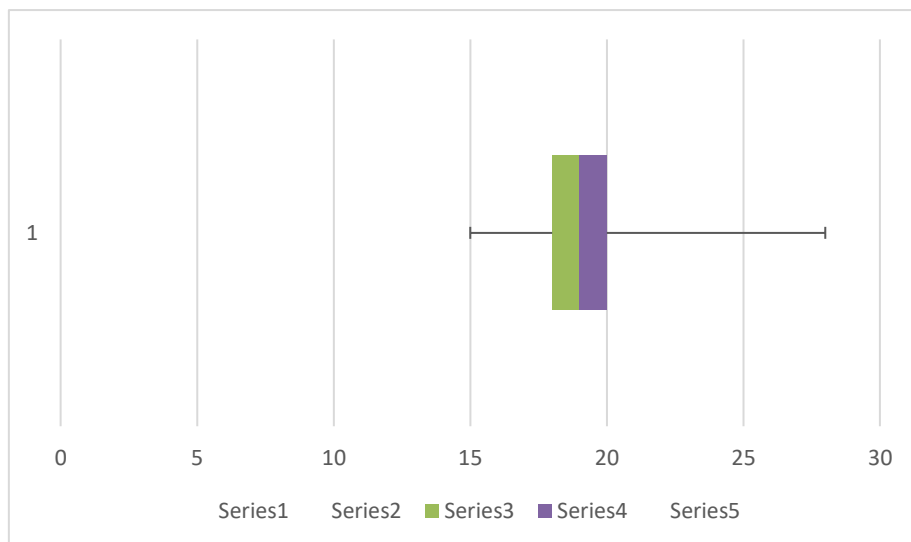


Figure 2. Emotional Exhaustion Boxplot Score

2. Depersonalization (DP)

Depersonalization in the context of academic burnout refers to feeling cynical or indifferent about their studies, professors, or peers such as seeing academic tasks as unimportant, feeling emotionally numb and decreasing the sense of empathy toward people in the environment.

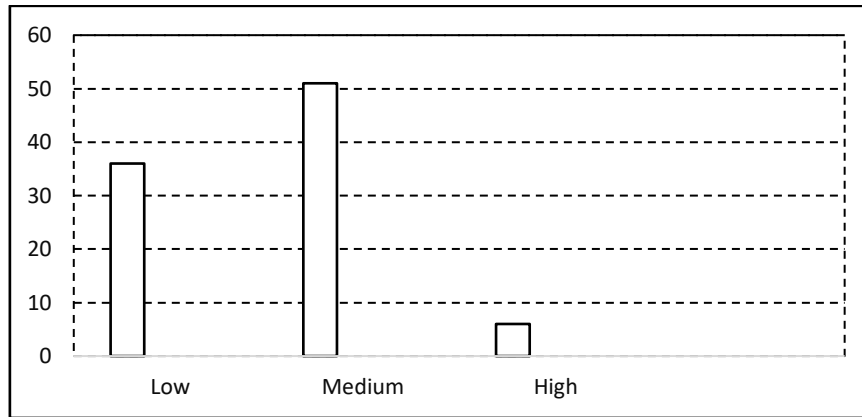


Figure 3. Diagram of the Depersonalization Distribution Score

The diagram above shows 51 respondents (55%) reported moderate levels of depersonalization; it means they may be starting to feel less engaged or somewhat cynical about their work or coworkers, but not to an extreme degree. 36 of respondents (39%) were in the low category, indicating that they still had a positive attitude toward their work and were not experiencing significant depersonalization. There are 6 respondents (6%) experienced high depersonalization, which means they were starting to feel cynical and indifferent about their work or coworkers, a more serious sign of burnout.

The majority of respondents experienced moderate levels of depersonalization, indicating a tendency toward burnout on this dimension, but most were not too severe. Only a few showed signs of severe burnout related to depersonalization.

Table 2. Mean score and standard deviation result of DP

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Depersonalization (DP)	6.45	2.49

The table above shows the analysis results of Depersonalization. The average score (mean) for Depersonalization of 93 respondents was 6.45 indicates that the level of depersonalization among respondents is in the moderate category. According to the MBI classification, a DP score in the range of 6-9 is considered a moderate level of depersonalization. Depersonalization refers to feelings of detachment or disconnection from work or coworkers, as well as increased cynicism. This indicates that most respondents are beginning to feel indifference or loss of connection with work, although not to an extreme degree.

The standard deviation of 2.49 indicates that there is a fairly moderate variation or spread among the respondents' depersonalization scores. This not-too-large spread of scores indicates that most respondents have scores that are relatively close to the average (6.45). This standard deviation indicates that some respondents may have higher depersonalization scores (closer to the high category), while others have lower scores (closer to the low category), but the majority are around the medium category.

In general, the level of depersonalization experienced by respondents is in the moderate category, with an average of 6.45. Most respondents may experience feelings of alienation from work, but have not reached a severe stage or are too cynical about their work. The variation in scores indicated by the standard deviation 2.49 indicates that there are differences in the level of depersonalization experienced, but these differences are relatively reasonable and do not show extreme variations.

To better understand the distribution of this data, the diagram below shows how DP scores are distributed across respondents.

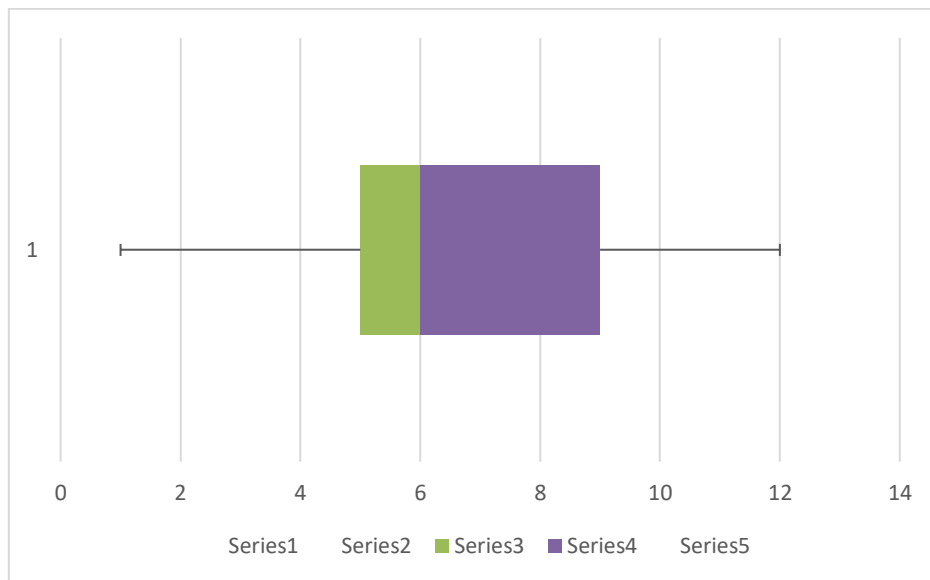


Figure 4. Depersonalization Boxplot Score

3. Personal Accomplishment (PA)

Depersonalization in the context of academic burnout refers to feeling cynical or indifferent about their studies, professors, or peers such as seeing academic tasks as unimportant, feeling emotionally numb and decreasing the sense of empathy toward people in the environment.

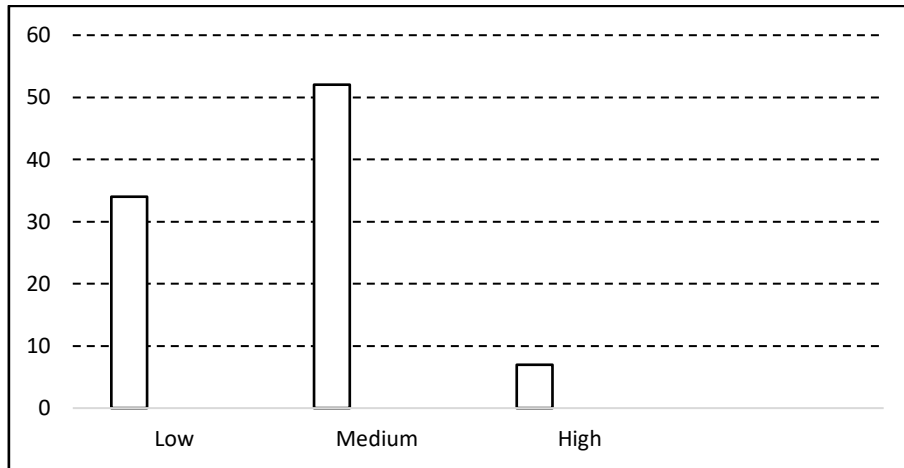


Figure 5. The Personal Accomplishment Distribution Score

The diagram above explains 52 respondents (56%) felt their personal accomplishment was at a moderate level, meaning they were fairly satisfied with their accomplishments at work, but perhaps not very satisfied. 34 of the respondents (36.5%) felt their personal accomplishment was high, meaning they felt successful at work and showed no signs of burnout in this dimension. While there were 7 of the respondents (7.5%) experienced low personal accomplishment which indicates that they felt incompetent or dissatisfied with their jobs. This could be a strong indicator of burnout in this dimension.

Most respondents had a moderate level of personal achievement, but there were some who got their personal achievement was low, which is an indication of fatigue in terms of self-efficacy or job satisfaction.

Table 3. Mean score and standard deviation results of PA

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Personal Accomplishment (PA)	37.94	3.29

The table above shows the analysis results of Personal Accomplishment. The average score (mean) for Personal Accomplishment of 93 respondents was 37.94 indicates that the level of Personal Accomplishment (PA) among respondents is in the moderate category. According to the MBI classification, PA values in the range of 34–39 are considered as a moderate level of personal achievement. Personal Accomplishment measures the extent to which individuals feel competent and successful in their jobs. This mean value indicates that in general, respondents feel quite satisfied with their achievements and performance at work, although there may be some who feel they could do better.

The standard deviation of 3.29 indicates a fairly moderate variation or spread of PA scores among respondents. With this standard deviation, there is a relatively reasonable

difference in how respondents view their personal accomplishments. Although the average is in the moderate category, some respondents may have higher scores (feeling more satisfied and competent), while others may be in the low category (feeling less satisfied with their accomplishments).

Overall, most respondents have a quite satisfactory level of personal achievement (medium category), with an average of 37.94. This indicates that they feel quite competent and successful in their jobs, although there may be room for improvement. The variation indicated by the standard deviation of 3.29 shows that although the majority are in the medium category, there is a small group who feel lower (feel dissatisfied) or higher (feel very satisfied) with their personal achievement.

The mean score of 37.94 and standard deviation of 3.29 indicate that most respondents felt quite satisfied with their personal accomplishment at work. This moderate level of personal accomplishment suggests that they generally feel competent and productive, although some may feel less successful or less satisfied with their contributions.

To better understand the distribution of this data, the diagram below shows how DP scores are distributed across respondents.

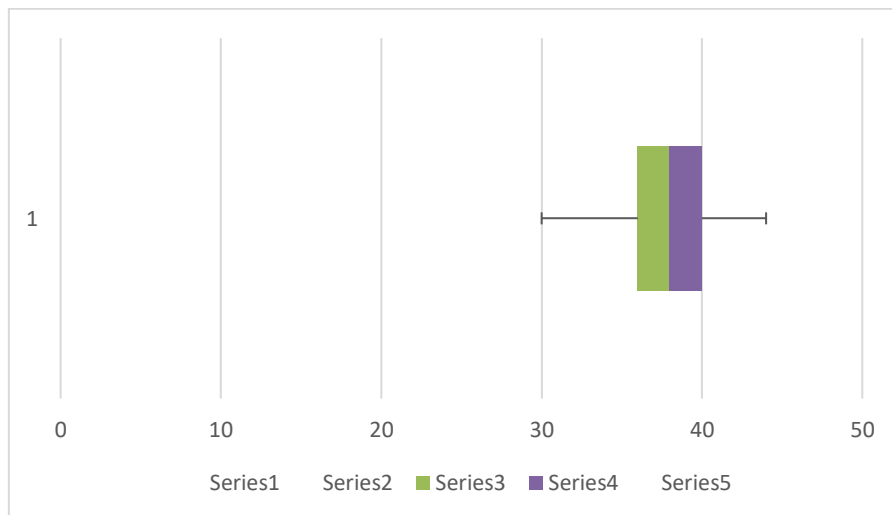


Figure 6. The Personal Accomplishment Boxplot Score

From the data provided, several conclusions can be drawn about the level of burnout among the 93 respondents:

General Burnout Level: The majority of respondents show moderate levels of burnout across all three dimensions, namely Emotional Exhaustion (EE), Depersonalization (DP), and Personal Accomplishment (PA). This indicates that while they are not experiencing severe burnout, there are signs of fatigue and dissatisfaction that could potentially impact their performance and well-being in the long term.

Emotional Exhaustion (EE): The majority of respondents experience moderate emotional exhaustion, with 8% experiencing high exhaustion. This is the most critical

dimension of burnout, as emotional exhaustion often serves as an early indicator of more severe burnout.

Depersonalization (DP): Although the majority of respondents are at a moderate level, 6% experience high depersonalization. This indicates that some respondents are beginning to feel cynical or indifferent towards their work or others in the workplace, which is a serious symptom of burnout.

Personal Accomplishment (PA): About 7.5% of respondents feel their personal accomplishment is low, meaning they feel unsatisfied or less successful in their work. This is another sign of burnout, particularly related to feelings of inadequacy or incompetence.

Final-year students of the English education department experienced burnout in the medium category. This result is in line with the study at Airlangga University that students who are working on their research thesis get academic burnout in the moderate level (Sarwono & Ariana, 2022). The study of psychology students indicates the same result that Padang State University psychology students have academic burnout in the middle category (Ramadhan et al., 2022). Students experienced emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment in the medium category.

There are several problems supporting the level of burnout in university students such as students' self-efficacy. Students with high self-efficacy tend to have lower academic burnout (Anggraini & Chusairi, 2022). Level of resilience also contributes to academic burnout, higher level of resilience turns into high level of academic burnout (Redityani & Susilawati, 2021). Self-regulation, student relationships in academic and family environments also support the academic burnout level and their academic performance (Özhan & Yüksel, 2021). Problematic smartphone routines also take part in burnout toward university students (Christy et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the final year English education students in the 2023-2024 academic year at IAIN Parepare experienced moderate burnout across all dimensions, 57% of them felt emotional exhaustion, 51% realized they were experiencing depersonalization, 52% were exposed to personal achievements. These indicate burnout is a common issue among final semester students. Even though it is a common issue, it significantly impacts on students' emotional well-being, engagement in academic roles, and personal accomplishment perception. These results suggest that institutions should consider implementing more intensive emotional and academic mentoring programs for final year students. This could include counseling, stress management sessions, and psychological support that can help reduce emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. In addition, the supervisors are expected to provide adaptive mentoring, understand individual needs, and help students develop realistic strategies to complete their thesis. These efforts are expected to improve academic well-being, so that students can complete their studies optimally and confidently.

This study has several limitations. First, the results of this study cannot be generalized because the results may be different in the context of other institutions or different student populations. Second, the design of this study is cross-sectional, so the results only describe the condition of burnout at a certain point in time and cannot show changes or developments in burnout in the long term.

For further research, it is recommended to use a longitudinal design to track changes in burnout levels over time, and involve a wider and more diverse sample from various study programs or other institutions so that the results are more generalizable.

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