

Original Article

The Relationship Between Academic Burnout and Academic Procrastination Among Student-Athletes: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract: *Academic burnout and academic procrastination are prevalent psychological challenges among student-athletes who must balance academic and athletic demands. Although both constructs have been widely studied, their association within dual-career contexts remains insufficiently examined. This study aimed to investigate the relationship between academic burnout and academic procrastination among student-athletes at the State University of Surabaya. A quantitative, non-experimental cross-sectional design was employed using total sampling. The participants consisted of 168 active student-athletes who completed the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Student Survey (MBI-SS) and the Academic Procrastination Scale-Short Form (APS-S). Data were analyzed using Spearman’s rank-order correlation and Mann-Whitney U tests. The findings revealed a significant moderate positive correlation between academic burnout and academic procrastination ($\rho = .349, p < .001$). At the dimensional level, emotional exhaustion showed the strongest association with procrastination. No significant gender differences were found in burnout or academic procrastination. These results suggest that burnout—particularly emotional exhaustion—functions as a meaningful psychological risk factor for academic procrastination in dual-career populations, contributing to theoretical understanding of academic disengagement among student-athletes.*

Keywords: burnout; academic procrastination; university students; psychology; student athletes

Abstrak: Burnout akademik dan prokrastinasi akademik merupakan tantangan psikologis yang umum dialami oleh mahasiswa-atlet yang harus menyeimbangkan tuntutan akademik dan olahraga. Meskipun kedua konstruk ini telah banyak diteliti, hubungan keduanya dalam konteks dual-career masih belum banyak dikaji. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji hubungan antara burnout akademik dan prokrastinasi akademik pada mahasiswa-atlet di Universitas Negeri Surabaya. Penelitian menggunakan desain kuantitatif non-eksperimental dengan teknik total sampling. Sebanyak 168 mahasiswa-atlet aktif berpartisipasi dengan mengisi Maslach Burnout Inventory–Student Survey (MBI-SS) dan Academic Procrastination Scale–Short Form (APS-S). Analisis data dilakukan menggunakan korelasi Spearman dan uji Mann–Whitney U. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya korelasi positif yang signifikan dengan kekuatan sedang antara burnout akademik dan prokrastinasi akademik ($\rho = .349, p < .001$). Dimensi emotional exhaustion memiliki hubungan paling kuat dengan prokrastinasi. Tidak ditemukan perbedaan signifikan berdasarkan jenis kelamin. Burnout, khususnya emotional exhaustion, berperan sebagai faktor risiko psikologis yang bermakna terhadap prokrastinasi akademik dalam konteks mahasiswa-atlet, serta memperkaya pemahaman teoretis mengenai disengagement akademik dalam populasi dual-career.

Kata Kunci: Burnout; Academic Procrastination; University Students; Psychology; Student Athletes

Introductions

University students are increasingly exposed to high academic demands that may compromise their psychological well-being. Sustained pressure from coursework, examinations, and performance evaluations may lead to psychological strain, particularly academic burnout (Edú-

valsania et al., 2022; Kaggwa et al., 2021). Academic burnout is conceptualized as a multidimensional syndrome consisting of emotional exhaustion, cynicism toward academic tasks, and reduced academic efficacy (Schaufeli et al., 2002). Emotional exhaustion reflects the depletion of psychological energy, cynicism represents detachment from academic meaning, and reduced efficacy indicates diminished confidence in one's academic competence. When these dimensions co-occur, students may experience motivational decline and behavioral disengagement.

Recent evidence suggests that burnout prevalence among university students remains substantial, particularly in contexts characterized by high achievement expectations (Kaggwa et al., 2021). Beyond general student populations, burnout has become a growing concern within dual-career contexts. Student-athletes, in particular, must simultaneously fulfill academic responsibilities and competitive athletic commitments, often under rigid time constraints and evaluative environments (O'Neil et al., 2021). The dual-career model inherently increases psychological load due to overlapping academic and sport-related demands. Consequently, student-athletes may face a heightened vulnerability to emotional exhaustion and disengagement.

Empirical research has consistently documented burnout risk in athletic populations. A systematic review by Lin et al (2022) demonstrated that stress is strongly associated with burnout among athletes, with emotional exhaustion emerging as the most prominent component. Similarly, Kegelaers et al (2024), in their scoping review on student-athlete mental health, identified burnout as one of the most critical psychological challenges in dual-career settings. Longitudinal findings further indicate that burnout trajectories among student-athletes are influenced by gender, success expectations, parental pressure, and sport characteristics (Phipps et al., 2025; Saarinen et al., 2025). These findings suggest that burnout in student-athletes is dynamic and shaped by contextual as well as interpersonal factors.

Additional studies have explored protective and risk factors associated with burnout in this population. Social support and coaching climates significantly predict burnout levels in student-athletes (Kuokkanen et al., 2024; Rusbasan et al., 2021). Psychological attributes such as grit and coping strategies also demonstrate meaningful associations with burnout severity (Barcza-Renner et al., 2024; Gray et al., 2023; Tatyana et al., 2023). Moreover, stress mindset and cognitive flexibility have been shown to influence how athletes experience and regulate stress, thereby affecting burnout outcomes (Ari & Korkmaz, 2025; Shepherd et al., 2024). Although these studies illuminate antecedents and moderators of burnout, they have rarely examined its direct academic behavioral consequences.

One potential behavioral consequence of academic burnout is academic procrastination. Academic procrastination refers to the voluntary delay of intended academic tasks despite anticipating negative consequences (Purnomo et al., 2024). In general student populations, burnout has been positively associated with procrastination tendencies (Çakır et al., 2014; Gunawan & Pandjaitan, 2023). Emotional exhaustion reduces self-regulatory capacity and intrinsic motivation, increasing avoidance behaviors and task delay. Thus, procrastination may function as a maladaptive coping response to chronic academic strain.

Beyond general samples, emerging literature highlights factors related to procrastination in student-athletes, although often outside a burnout framework. Time management difficulties have been shown to negatively impact student-athletes' academic functioning (Ator & Ortizo, 2024; Karaç Öcal et al., 2025). Sleep-related procrastination and bedtime delay are associated with poorer academic outcomes and psychological distress (Flores et al., 2023; Ma et al., 2022). Additionally, digital distractions and social media engagement have been linked to compromised mental health and academic disengagement in student-athletes (Barry et al., 2023). However, these studies seldom position procrastination as a direct consequence of academic burnout.

Importantly, the psychological mechanism linking burnout and procrastination may operate differently in dual-career populations. Dual-role conflict has been shown to intensify emotional strain and reduce academic engagement among student-athletes (O'Neil et al., 2021). Longitudinal evidence suggests that school and sport burnout jointly predict adverse dual-career outcomes (Saarinen et al., 2025). Nevertheless, empirical research explicitly examining the association between academic burnout and academic procrastination among student-athletes remains limited. Furthermore, prior studies rarely investigate how specific burnout dimensions—emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and academic efficacy—differentially relate to procrastination behaviors.

Given the growing concern regarding student-athlete mental health and academic sustainability, understanding the behavioral implications of burnout is essential. While existing literature has extensively documented antecedents and trajectories of burnout, its role as a predictor of academic procrastination within dual-career contexts has not been sufficiently clarified. Addressing this gap may provide a more comprehensive understanding of how psychological strain translates into academic disengagement among student-athletes. Therefore, this study aims to examine the relationship between academic burnout and academic procrastination among student-athletes at the State University of Surabaya, with particular attention to the dimensional components of burnout. Based on theoretical and empirical foundations, it is hypothesized that academic burnout is positively associated with academic procrastination among student-athletes.

Method

This study employed a quantitative, non-experimental cross-sectional design to examine the relationship between academic burnout and academic procrastination among student-athletes. As a correlational study, the design did not involve manipulation of variables or experimental control, and causal inferences were not intended.

The population consisted of student-athletes enrolled in the Faculty of Psychology at Surabaya State University who were actively engaged in both academic coursework and competitive athletic activities. A total sampling technique was applied, whereby all eligible members of the population were invited to participate. The final sample comprised 168 student-athletes (38 males and 130 females). Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained prior to data collection. All responses were anonymized to ensure confidentiality.

Instruments

Academic Burnout

Academic burnout was measured using the Maslach Burnout Inventory–Student Survey (MBI-SS) developed by Schaufeli et al. (2002). The instrument consists of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and academic efficacy. Responses were rated on a Likert-type scale. Previous studies have demonstrated satisfactory construct validity across international student populations, with reported Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from .74 to .90. In the present study, the overall internal consistency of the burnout scale was good ($\alpha = .858$, 95% CI [.811, .889]).

Academic Procrastination

Academic procrastination was assessed using the Academic Procrastination Scale–Short Form (APS-S), which consists of five items measuring intentional delay in academic task completion. Prior validation studies have reported good model fit indices (RMSEA = .05, CFI = .99, SRMR = .01) and satisfactory reliability ($\alpha = .86$). In the current study, the scale demonstrated strong internal consistency ($\alpha = .874$, 95% CI [.841, .907]).

Procedure

Data were collected through an online survey administered via Google Forms. The survey link was distributed through official communication channels and WhatsApp groups associated with student-athletes. Participants were informed about the study objectives, voluntary participation, and confidentiality before completing the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using JASP statistical software. Descriptive statistics were computed for all variables. Assumption testing was performed using the Shapiro–Wilk test to assess normality. The results indicated significant deviations from normality for both burnout and academic procrastination ($p < .05$), indicating that the normality assumption was not satisfied.

Given this violation, non-parametric statistical procedures were employed. Spearman's rank-order correlation (two-tailed) was used to examine the association between burnout and academic procrastination. Mann–Whitney U tests were conducted to assess potential gender differences. Effect sizes were interpreted following conventional guidelines for correlation coefficients.

Table 1. Normality test

<i>Test of Normality (Shapiro-Wilk)</i>		
Residuals	W	p
Academic Procrastination	0.972	.002
Burnout	0.961	< .001

Note. Significant results suggest a deviation from normality.

Normality assumptions were assessed using the Shapiro–Wilk test. The results indicated that both academic procrastination ($W = 0.972, p = .002$) and burnout ($W = 0.961, p < .001$) significantly deviated from normal distribution. Although the Shapiro–Wilk statistics were relatively close to 1, suggesting approximate symmetry in distribution, the significant p-values indicate that the assumption of normality was not met. Therefore, the data were considered non-normally distributed. In light of this violation, non-parametric statistical procedures were employed for subsequent analyses.

Result and Discussions

a. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Burnout and Academic Procrastination by Gender

<i>Descriptive Statistics</i>	Exhaustion		Cynisme		Efficacy		Academic Procrastination		Burnout	
	Laki-laki	Perempuan	Laki-laki	Perempuan	Laki-laki	Perempuan	Laki-laki	Perempuan	Laki-laki	Perempuan
Valid	38	130	38	130	38	130	38	130	38	130
Mean	14.16	14.47	11.74	11.06	19.74	20.75	14.89	13.05	45.63	46.28
Std. Deviation	4.303	3.715	3.125	3.102	3.874	2.636	5.821	4.796	7.302	5.489
Maximum	22.00	25.00	18.00	20.00	25.00	25.00	25.00	24.00	55.00	62.00

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation.

A total of 168 student-athletes participated in this study, consisting of 38 males and 130 females. Descriptive analyses indicated that male participants reported slightly higher levels of academic procrastination ($M = 14.89, SD = 5.82$) compared to female participants ($M = 13.05, SD = 4.80$). However, mean burnout scores were relatively comparable between males ($M = 45.63, SD = 7.30$) and females ($M = 46.28, SD = 5.49$). At the dimensional level, female students reported marginally higher emotional exhaustion ($M = 14.47, SD = 3.72$) compared to males ($M = 14.16, SD = 4.30$). Conversely, male participants demonstrated slightly higher cynicism ($M = 11.74, SD = 3.13$) than females ($M = 11.06, SD = 3.10$). Female student-athletes showed higher academic efficacy ($M = 20.75, SD = 2.64$) relative to males ($M = 19.74, SD = 3.87$). Overall, the descriptive findings suggest modest gender-based variations across variables; however, mean differences appear relatively small.

b. Independent Samples T-Test

Table 4. Mann–Whitney U Test for Burnout and Academic Procrastination by Gender

<i>Independent Samples T-Test</i>			
	U	df	p
Burnout	2509		.885
Exhaustion	2520		.852

Cynisme	2841	.158
Efficacy	2030	.093
Academic Procrastination	2970	.058

Note. Mann-Whitney U test.

Given the non-normal distribution of the data, gender differences were examined using the Mann–Whitney U test. The results indicated no statistically significant differences between male and female participants in emotional exhaustion ($U = 2520$, $p = .852$), cynicism ($U = 2841$, $p = .158$), academic efficacy ($U = 2030$, $p = .093$), total burnout ($U = 2509$, $p = .885$), or academic procrastination ($U = 2970$, $p = .058$). Although male student-athletes demonstrated slightly higher mean ranks for procrastination, the difference did not reach statistical significance, suggesting that burnout and procrastination levels were generally comparable across gender.

c. Reliability Analysis

Frequentist Scale Reliability Statistics

Coefficient	Estimate	Std. Error	95% CI	
			Lower	Upper
Coefficient α	0.858	0.021	0.811	0.889

Internal consistency reliability analyses demonstrated satisfactory psychometric properties for both instruments. The Maslach Burnout Inventory–Student Survey showed good internal consistency ($\alpha = .858$, 95% CI [.811, .889]), with stable alpha coefficients across item-deletion analyses. Similarly, the Academic Procrastination Scale–Short Form demonstrated strong reliability ($\alpha = .874$, 95% CI [.841, .907]), with item-level analyses indicating consistent contributions to the overall scale. These findings confirm that the measures were reliable within the present sample.

d. Correlation Among Burnout Dimensions and Academic Procrastination

Spearman's Correlations

Variable		Exhaustion	Cynisme	Efficacy	Academic Procrastination	Burnout
1. Exhaustion	Spearman's rho	—				
	p-value	—				
2. Cynisme	Spearman's rho	0.562***	—			
	p-value	< .001	—			
3. Efficacy	Spearman's rho	-0.309***		—		
	p-value	< .001	0.375***	—		
4. Academic Procrastination	Spearman's rho	0.426***	0.352***		—	
	p-value	< .001	< .001	0.282***	—	
5. Burnout	Spearman's rho	0.845***	0.714***	0.019	0.349***	—
	p-value	< .001	< .001	.808	< .001	—

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

Spearman's rank-order correlations were conducted to examine the associations among burnout dimensions and academic procrastination. Emotional exhaustion was positively correlated with academic procrastination ($\rho = .426$, $p < .001$), indicating a moderate association. Cynicism also showed a positive correlation with procrastination ($\rho = .352$, $p < .001$), reflecting a moderate relationship. In contrast, academic efficacy was negatively correlated with procrastination ($\rho = -.282$, $p < .001$), suggesting that higher perceived efficacy was associated with lower levels of procrastination. Additionally, strong intercorrelations were observed among burnout dimensions, with emotional exhaustion positively associated with cynicism ($\rho = .562$, $p < .001$), and academic efficacy negatively correlated with both exhaustion ($\rho = -.309$, $p < .001$) and cynicism ($\rho = -.375$, $p < .001$).

Discussion

The present study examined the relationship between academic burnout and academic procrastination among student-athletes and found a significant positive association between the two constructs ($\rho = .349$, $p < .001$). This indicates that higher levels of burnout are moderately associated with greater tendencies toward academic procrastination. Although the magnitude of the correlation was not large, it suggests a meaningful behavioral implication of burnout within the dual-career context. These findings are consistent with previous research demonstrating that burnout is positively related to academic procrastination in student populations (Çakır et al., 2014; Gunawan & Pandjaitan, 2023). Extending prior work, the present findings confirm that this association also applies to student-athletes, a population exposed to overlapping academic and athletic pressures.

At the dimensional level, emotional exhaustion emerged as the strongest correlate of academic procrastination ($\rho = .426$, $p < .001$). This finding suggests that the depletion of psychological energy plays a central role in the development of procrastinative behavior. Student-athletes experiencing emotional exhaustion may lack the cognitive and motivational resources necessary to initiate or complete academic tasks, leading to increased avoidance behavior. Recent research highlights emotional exhaustion as the most prominent component of burnout in athletic populations (Kegelaers et al., 2024; Lin et al., 2022). Given that dual-career athletes must balance academic obligations with intensive training and competition schedules, accumulated fatigue may significantly impair their self-regulatory capacity, thereby increasing procrastination tendencies.

Cynicism also demonstrated a moderate positive association with academic procrastination ($\rho = .352$, $p < .001$). This suggests that psychological detachment and disengagement from academic responsibilities contribute to intentional task delay. When student-athletes perceive academic tasks as burdensome or meaningless, procrastination may function as a form of psychological withdrawal. Longitudinal findings indicate that burnout trajectories in student-athletes are influenced by performance expectations and dual-role conflict (Saarinen et al., 2025), which may foster disengagement toward academic demands. Thus, cynicism may represent a cognitive mechanism through which sustained strain translates into academic avoidance.

Conversely, academic efficacy showed a significant negative correlation with academic procrastination ($\rho = -.282$, $p < .001$), indicating that higher perceived competence is associated with lower procrastination tendencies. This finding aligns with contemporary research suggesting that psychological strengths such as grit, adaptive coping, and perceived competence buffer against burnout-related impairment (Barcza-Renner et al., 2024; Gray et al., 2023; Tatyana et al., 2023). In the dual-career context, student-athletes with stronger academic efficacy may maintain greater task engagement despite experiencing stress. Therefore, efficacy appears to function as a protective factor mitigating the behavioral consequences of burnout.

Importantly, the present findings should be interpreted within the broader context of dual-career demands. Student-athletes frequently encounter time management challenges, sleep disruption, and digital distractions, all of which may exacerbate academic disengagement (Ator & Ortizo, 2024; Barry et al., 2023; Flores et al., 2023; Karaç Öcal et al., 2025; Ma et al., 2022). While these factors were not directly examined in the current study, they may interact with burnout symptoms in shaping procrastination behavior. The moderate strength of the correlations observed suggests that burnout is a meaningful, yet not exclusive, contributor to academic procrastination among student-athletes.

Interestingly, no significant gender differences were observed in burnout or academic procrastination levels. This finding suggests that dual-career strain may operate similarly across male and female student-athletes within this context. Previous research has indicated that burnout trajectories may vary based on contextual rather than purely demographic factors (Saarinen et al., 2025). Thus, the absence of gender differences in the present study underscores the importance of examining structural and environmental demands rather than attributing burnout solely to individual characteristics.

Overall, the findings reinforce the conceptualization of burnout as a psychological risk factor for academic disengagement in dual-career populations. Emotional exhaustion appears to be the primary driver linking burnout to procrastination, while academic efficacy serves as a

protective factor. These results contribute to the growing literature on student-athlete mental health by clarifying the behavioral implications of burnout within academic settings.

Conclusions

This study demonstrates that academic burnout is significantly and positively associated with academic procrastination among student-athletes, with emotional exhaustion emerging as the strongest contributing dimension. Cynicism also showed a meaningful positive association, whereas academic efficacy functioned as a protective factor. These findings contribute to the theoretical understanding of burnout by clarifying its behavioral implications within dual-career contexts. Specifically, the results support the view that the depletion of psychological resources and academic disengagement may translate into avoidance behaviors, thereby positioning burnout not only as an emotional condition but also as a predictor of maladaptive academic outcomes in student-athletes.

Theoretically, this study extends burnout literature by situating academic procrastination as a consequential behavioral manifestation within the dual-role academic–athletic framework. The moderate magnitude of the associations suggests that burnout is a meaningful, though not exclusive, explanatory factor in procrastination tendencies, highlighting the need for integrative models incorporating additional psychological and contextual variables. Given the cross-sectional and self-report nature of the data, future longitudinal and multi-method research is necessary to examine directional pathways and underlying mechanisms more comprehensively. Overall, the findings underscore emotional exhaustion as a central mechanism linking dual-career strain to academic disengagement, thereby advancing conceptual clarity in student-athlete mental health research.

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Competing interests:

The authors declare that they have no significant competing financial, professional or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript.
