

Time Management and Burnout among Female University Students: Exploring the Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy

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ABSTRACT

With the increasing academic workload and poor time management, burnout has become a common psychological problem among university students. This study aimed to explore the link between time management and burnout, while also assessing self-efficacy's mediating effect among female university students. The research design employed a quantitative correlational method. The present study, therefore, was involved with Banasthali Vidyapith where a total of N = 114 female students participated. They were collected using the Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ; Britton and Tesser, 1991), OLBI-S (the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory - Student Version; Evangelia Demerouti, Arnold B. Bakker, Friedhelm Nachreiner and Wilmar B. Schwarzer, 2001) and the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE; Ralf Schwarzer & Matthias Jerusalem, 1995). Descriptive statistics, Pearson Correlation, and regression analysis was done while mediation analysis in SPSS was conducted using a regression-based mediation approach. Results indicated that there was a significant, negative correlation between time management and burnout ($r = -.199, p = .034$). That means students who managed their time better experienced decreased burnout levels. Moreover, time management was positively associated with self-efficacy ($r = .251, p = .007$), and self-efficacy was negatively associated with emotional exhaustion ($r = -.189, p = .044$). The regression analysis showed that time management is a significant predictor of burnout in female college students. Self-efficacy played significant mediation between time management and burnout in the mediation analysis. It shows us that effective time management and stronger beliefs of self-efficacy are beneficial in alleviating burnout among university students. The study stresses the importance of colleges and counselors working with students on time management skills and instilling self-efficacy among students to help their overall psychological health, as well as academic adjustment.

Keywords: *Time Management, Burnout, Self-Efficacy, Female University Students*

Academic burnout is becoming a bigger mental health issue for college students because of higher academic demands, performance expectations, and competitive learning environments. Students in higher education must handle a lot of academic tasks, such as going to lectures, doing homework, studying for tests, and balancing their extracurricular activities. When these demands surpass students' coping mechanisms,

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Received: March 19, 2026; Revision Received: March 22, 2026; Accepted: March 25, 2026

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sustained academic stress culminates in burnout, manifested by emotional fatigue, diminished academic motivation, and withdrawal from learning activities. Research in various educational settings has consistently indicated that academic burnout adversely affects students' well-being, engagement, and performance. (Thi & Duong, 2024).

In recent years, researchers have put more emphasis on the role of psychological resources in protecting students from burnout. Self-efficacy has received special attention among such resources. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their capabilities to successfully perform tasks and overcome challenges (Bandura, 1977). Such students take on academic demands with confidence, persistence, and coping strategies. There is empirical research evidence for this relationship. For instance, Akter (2021) found that students with higher self-efficacy experience significantly lower levels of emotional exhaustion and academic disengagement. Morando et al. (2023) similarly reported self-efficacy to be a protective psychological mechanism that buffers the negative effect of stress on students' academic engagement and motivation.

Recent studies also further show that self-efficacy has a central mediating role in various academic stress models. Regarding undergraduates, "self-efficacy reduces burnout through behavioral self-control (Wei et al., 2025). Likewise, Huang et al. (2026) established that students with stronger self-efficacy were better able to cope with a demanding digital learning environment, resulting in low burnout symptoms despite being under the same academic stressors. These findings suggest that self-efficacy acts as an important psychological mechanism that regulates the learning behavior of students, thereby maintaining resilience in stressful academic situations (Bandura, 1977).

Beyond psychological resources, researchers have also highlighted the importance of self-regulatory behaviors in managing academic stress. One key behavior in this area is effective time management. Time management is the ability to plan, prioritize, and use time efficiently to complete academic tasks. Students who organize their time well are more likely to stick to structured study routines and avoid last-minute pressure. Research shows that time management skills play a significant role in a student's psychological well-being and academic success. For example, Hou and Yuan (2019) found that having good time management reduces academic burnout directly and also influences it indirectly through self-efficacy.

Recent studies further support the link between time management and self-efficacy in students' experiences. Kordzanganeh et al. (2021) reported that effective time management helps predict self-efficacy and reduces academic burnout through factors like lower test anxiety. Similarly, Galindo-Domínguez and Bezanilla (2021) found that students with better digital skills had improved time management and higher self-efficacy, which helped lower academic stress. These results suggest that time management is not only an important organizational skill but also a way to boost students' confidence in handling academic tasks.

While past research has offered valuable insights into time management and self-efficacy in relation to academic burnout, fewer studies have explored how these two factors work together within a single framework. Additionally, many existing studies have used mixed-gender samples or focused on specific academic fields, which limits our understanding of how these relationships may differ for female students. Evidence indicates that female

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students often face higher academic expectations and self-judgment, which may increase their risk (Peng et al., 2025).

Therefore, this study aims to explore the relationship between time management and academic burnout among female university students and to see if self-efficacy plays a mediating role. By concentrating on female students and combining psychological resources with behavioural self-regulation strategies, this research seeks to enhance our understanding of the factors that influence academic burnout in higher education.

While prior studies have investigated burnout and academic stress among university students, although some research has examined burnout and the related psychological factors among students, limited research has explored the relationship between time management, self-efficacy, and burnout among university students in the Indian higher education context. Moreover, the possible mediating role of self-efficacy on the relationship between time management and burnout has not been examined adequately. Consequently, this study seeks to fill this gap by examining whether self-efficacy mediates the relationship between time management and burnout among female university students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic burnout has become a growing concern for university students due to increased academic demands, a competitive learning environment, and ongoing pressure to perform. In academic settings, burnout often shows up as emotional exhaustion, decreased motivation, and a feeling of inefficacy.

One important self-regulation skill is self-efficacy, which has received a lot of attention in research. According to Bandura's social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to succeed in academic tasks and reach their learning goals. Research consistently shows that students with higher self-efficacy find it easier to cope with academic challenges and are less likely to experience burnout (Huang et al., 2026). For example, Akter (2021) found a negative strong negative relationship between self-efficacy and burnout, suggesting that students with greater confidence in their academic skills face less emotional exhaustion and disengagement. Andargeery et al. (2025) reported similar results, noting that nursing students with higher self-efficacy experienced lower levels of burnout and better coping with academic stress.

Further research highlights how self-efficacy acts as a mediator in the link between various academic stressors and burnout. Cengiz and Peker (2024) conducted a longitudinal study and found that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between perfectionism, parental expectations, and school burnout. This indicates that students with stronger beliefs in their abilities can maintain their motivation and resilience in demanding academic situations. Likewise, Thi and Duong (2024) showed that self-efficacy lessens the negative effects of burnout on academic performance. Students with a stronger belief in their abilities stay engaged even under academic pressure.

Beyond psychological resources, behavioral strategies like time management also play a crucial role in influencing students' academic well-being. Time management is about effectively planning organizing and using time for academic tasks and responsibilities. Students who manage their time well can better handle their workload, meet deadlines, and find a balance between school and personal life. Hou and Yuan (2019) found that time

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management skills significantly lower academic burnout both directly and indirectly by improving self-efficacy. Similarly, Kordzanganeh et al. (2021) indicated that effective time management positively predicts self-efficacy and reduces test anxiety, leading to lower burnout levels.

Recent studies also highlight the connection between behavioral and psychological factors in relation to academic outcomes. Dong et al. (2023) demonstrated that time management mediates the link between achievement motivation, self-efficacy and student well-being. This shows that students with stronger motivation and psychological resources can better regulate their academic behavior. Galindo-Domínguez and Bezanilla (2021) found that the combined effects of time management and self-efficacy help students turn academic stress into positive engagement rather than burnout.

Other forms of self-regulation also impact burnout by building self-efficacy. For instance, Chen et al. (2022) found that physical exercise lowers academic burnout by improving both self-efficacy and resilience. Fu et al. (2023) showed that exercise boosts students' self-efficacy beliefs, which leads to fewer burnout symptoms.

Despite the growing research on academic burnout and its causes, several gaps remain. First, many studies have reported that self-efficacy helps in reducing burnout, there has been limited research on how time management influences burnout through self-efficacy. Second, most existing studies focus on the general student population in specific academic fields, which limits the understanding of burnout dynamics among female university students. Third, there is limited research on how behavioral and psychological self-regulation mechanisms interact to influence burnout.

Thus, the study aims to examine how time management relates to academic burnout among female university students, while also investigating the mediating role of self-efficacy. By concentrating on female students in higher education, this study seeks to provide a deeper understanding of how behavioral strategies and psychological resources affect academic well-being and reduce burnout.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The current study suggests that time management affects academic burnout directly and indirectly through self-efficacy. Students who can manage their time properly are more likely to deal with challenges in academics with more confidence. This increased confidence may lower their chances of experiencing academic burnout. Therefore, self-efficacy is expected to act as a middle factor that explains how time management impacts burnout in female university students.

Objectives of the Study

1. To examine the relationship between Time Management and Burnout among female university students.
2. To examine the relationship between Time Management and Self-Efficacy among female university students.
3. To examine the relationship between Self-Efficacy and Burnout among female university students.
4. To examine whether Self-Efficacy mediates the relationship between Time Management and Burnout among female university students.

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Hypotheses of the Study

- **H1:** There will be a significant negative relationship between Time Management and Burnout among female university students.
- **H2:** There will be a significant positive relationship between Time Management and Self-Efficacy among female university students.
- **H3:** There will be a significant negative relationship between Self-Efficacy and Burnout among female university students.
- **H4:** Self-Efficacy will significantly mediate the relationship between Time Management and Burnout among female university students.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In conducting the study, the researcher employs a quantitative research methodology to determine the relationship of time management, self-efficacy and burnout on female university students. This research uses a correlational design to explore the relationship between time management and burnout, as well as the role of self-efficacy in influencing that relationship. Moreover, the research will explore the possibility of time management and burnout as having a mediating variable of self-efficacy and whether time management and self-efficacy play a significant part in predicting burnout in female university students.

Participants

The sample size of the study is 114 female students, that is $N = 114$, and they are aged between 18-24. The participants will be chosen among Banasthali Vidyapith, it is an only female residential university, which offers a structured academic setting and has access to a homogenous group of female students and purposive sampling will be adopted to choose the respondents.

Psychological Tests

- **Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ):** Time management was assessed using the Time Management Questionnaire (TMQ) developed by Britton and Tesser. The instrument measures students' ability to plan and organize academic activities. It evaluates how individuals schedule tasks, set priorities, and manage study time in order to complete academic responsibilities effectively. The questionnaire includes multiple items rated on a Likert-type scale, and higher scores indicate stronger time management abilities (Britton & Tesser, 1991).
- **Oldenburg Burnout Inventory-Student Version (OLBI-S):** Academic burnout was measured using the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory - Student Version (OLBI-S) developed by Reis et al. (2015). This scale evaluates two central components of burnout: exhaustion and disengagement. Participants respond to the statements using a Likert-type scale, and higher scores represent higher levels of burnout.
- **General Self-efficacy Scale (GSE):** Self-efficacy was assessed using the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE) developed by Ralf Schwarzer and Matthias Jerusalem. The scale measures individuals' confidence in their ability to manage challenging situations and achieve desired outcomes. Participants indicate their agreement with each statement using a Likert-type response format. Higher scores reflect stronger beliefs in one's capability to cope effectively with difficulties (Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 1995).

RESULTS

The data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive statistics were calculated to summarize the characteristics of the study variables. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine relationships among time management, self-efficacy, and academic burnout. Regression analysis was further performed to assess predictive relationships and to evaluate the proposed mediation model.

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Time_management	114	33	75	57.11	7.944
Burnout	114	22	58	39.75	4.983
Self_efficacy	114	13	40	29.71	5.688

The results from Table 4.1 indicates moderate levels of time management, self-efficacy, and academic burnout among the participants.

Table 4.2 Correlation between Time Management, Self-Efficacy, and Burnout

		Time management	Self efficacy	Burnout
Time management	Pearson Correlation	1	.251**	-.199*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.007	.034
	N	114	114	114
Self_efficacy	Pearson Correlation	.251**	1	-.189*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.007		.044
	N	114	114	114
Burnout	Pearson Correlation	-.199*	-.189*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.034	.044	
	N	114	114	114

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).*

Table 4.2 indicates that Pearson two tailed correlational analysis between time management and burnout and self efficacy to ascertain the relationship between them. The findings imply that time management is positively related with self- efficacy ($r = .251$, $p = .007$). Burnout and time management have shown a statistically significant, but a negative correlation of ($r = -.199$, $p = .034$). Burnout had a negative correlation with self-efficacy ($r = -.189$, $p = .044$). Such results suggest that students who have higher managerial skills with time are likely to exhibit greater self -efficacy and marginally lower burnout.

Table 4.3 Regression Analysis of Self-Efficacy as a Mediator Between Time Management and Academic Burnout

Predictor	Outcome	β	t	p-value
Time Management	Self-Efficacy	0.251	2.76	0.007
Self-Efficacy	Burnout	-0.148	1.55	0.122
Time Management	Burnout	-0.162	1.72	0.092
Time Management	Burnout	-0.199	2.15	0.034

Indirect Effect (Time Management \rightarrow Self-Efficacy \rightarrow Burnout) = -0.037

Note. β = standardized regression coefficient; t = t statistic; p = significance level.

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Table 4.3 presents the regression analysis conducted to examine whether self-efficacy mediates the relationship between time management and academic burnout. The results indicated that time management significantly predicted self-efficacy ($\beta = 0.251, p = 0.007$), suggesting that students with stronger time management skills reported higher levels of self-efficacy. Time management also significantly predicted burnout ($\beta = -0.199, p = 0.034$), indicating that higher time management was associated with lower burnout.

However, after including time management in the model, self-efficacy did not significantly predict the burnout ($\beta = -0.148, p = 0.122$). When both variables were entered simultaneously, the direct effect of time management on burnout decreased slightly ($\beta = -0.162, p = 0.092$). The indirect effect of time management on burnout through self-efficacy was -0.037 , indicating a small indirect relationship. However, because the relationship between self-efficacy and burnout was not statistically significant, the mediating role of self-efficacy was not supported.

DISCUSSION

This study explored how time management, self-efficacy, and academic burnout are related among female university students. The findings showed that time management was significantly related to both self-efficacy and academic burnout. However, the analysis did not support the mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between time management and burnout.

A significant positive relationship was observed between time management and self-efficacy. Students who effectively organize their schedules, prioritize academic tasks, and allocate sufficient time for studying tend to report greater confidence in their ability to manage academic responsibilities. Effective planning and organization may enhance students' sense of control over academic demands, which can strengthen their belief in their own capabilities. A similar pattern has been reported in earlier work by Britton and Tesser (1991), which demonstrated that effective time management skills are associated with stronger academic confidence and improved academic functioning. Related findings have also been reported by Saeed Kordzanganeh and colleagues, who highlighted the role of time management in improving self-regulation and students' belief in their academic abilities.

The results also indicated a significant negative relationship between time management and academic burnout. Students with stronger time management skills tended to report lower levels of emotional exhaustion and academic fatigue. A possible explanation is that effective time management allows students to distribute academic tasks more evenly across available time, reducing the stress associated with heavy workloads and approaching deadlines. When academic responsibilities are organized efficiently, students may experience less pressure and greater control over their studies. These findings correspond with research conducted by Hou Yuanshan, which showed that students who demonstrate effective time management strategies experience lower levels of academic stress and burnout.

Although time management was positively associated with self-efficacy, the mediation analysis did not support the hypothesis that self-efficacy mediates the relationship between time management and academic burnout. Self-efficacy did not significantly predict burnout when time management was included in the regression model. These findings suggest that time management may influence academic burnout more directly rather than indirectly through students' beliefs about their capabilities.

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Several factors may explain the absence of a significant mediating effect. Academic burnout is a multidimensional phenomenon influenced by various psychological and environmental factors. Variables such as academic workload, stress levels, coping strategies, and social support may also contribute to students' experiences of burnout. Although self-efficacy plays an important role in academic functioning, it may not fully explain how behavioral strategies like time management influence burnout within the present sample.

The findings also have practical implications for educational institutions and student support services. Training programs designed to improve time management skills may help students organize academic tasks more effectively and manage academic demands more efficiently. Workshops focusing on goal setting, planning, and task prioritization may support students in reducing academic stress and maintaining better psychological well-being during their university studies.

Several methodological limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings. The study included only female university students from one institution, which means the findings may not apply to students from other universities or to male students. Future research could include students from multiple universities and different academic disciplines to obtain a broader understanding of these relationships. The study also used self-report questionnaires, which means the responses may have been influenced by participants' personal biases or the way they chose to report their experiences. Longitudinal studies may provide a clearer understanding of how time management and psychological factors influence academic burnout over time.

Overall, the results highlight the importance of time management as a factor associated with both self-efficacy and academic burnout among female university students. While time management showed significant relationships with both variables, the mediating role of self-efficacy was not supported. Strengthening students' time management skills may therefore play an important role in reducing academic burnout and promoting healthier academic experiences.

Limitations

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings of this study. First, the sample of this study included only 114 female university students from one university, so the results cannot be generalized to all students. In the future, studies should include a larger and more diverse sample, with students from different universities and both males and females, so that the findings can represent the student population better. Second, the research was conducted within a specific institutional and geographic context, which may limit the applicability of the results to students from different cultural, educational, or socioeconomic backgrounds. Third, the study relied on self-report questionnaires to measure time management, self-efficacy, and academic burnout. The responses may be influenced by common response biases. Another limitation is that the study used a measure of general self-efficacy rather than academic self-efficacy, which may have influenced the strength of the relationships observed between the variables. The study also did not include some other factors that can affect academic burnout, such as academic workload, social support, personality traits, coping styles, and mental health conditions. These factors might also influence how much burnout students experience, but they were not examined in this study. Another limitation is that this research used a cross-sectional design, which means all the data were collected at one time only. Because of this, it is difficult to say whether time

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management actually causes changes in self-efficacy or academic burnout. Future research could use longitudinal or experimental studies to better understand how these variables affect each other over time.

Implications and Future Research

Irrespective of these limitations, the results of the study have multiple major implications on learning institutions and future studies.

The results denote that time management skills among students can be improved to reduce academic burnout. Workshops, training sessions, and academic counseling sessions can allow colleges and universities to make students learn how to plan and organize their time better.

Moreover, it might be an important role of ensuring that the students will not burn out by making them believe in themselves. Goal-setting, problem-solving skills, and self-efficacy can be reinforced by educational interventions that can support student capacity to overcome the academic difficulties.

Future studies can build upon the present one by adding a big or a more diverse sample, consisting of males and females represented in different fields of study and institutions. The longitudinal studies may be conducted to clarify the causal associations of these variables in the long run.

Additionally, future studies can explore other variables, such as other academic stress, motivation, resilience, or social support, for deeper understanding of the variables that cause academic burnout.

CONCLUSION

This study looked at the relationship between time management, self-efficacy, and academic burnout among female university students. The findings indicated that time management was positively related to self-efficacy and negatively related to academic burnout. Students who demonstrated better planning, organization, and prioritization of academic tasks reported greater confidence in their academic abilities and showed lower levels of burnout.

The results from regression analysis showed that both self-efficacy and academic burnout can be significantly predicted by time management. However, when time management was included in the model, self-efficacy did not significantly predict burnout. Therefore, the results did not support the mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationship between time management and academic burnout. These findings suggest that time management may influence academic burnout more directly rather than indirectly through students' beliefs about their capabilities.

The results highlight the importance of developing effective time management skills among university students. When students are able to organize their academic responsibilities and manage their time efficiently, they may experience reduced academic stress and emotional exhaustion. Educational institutions may therefore benefit from providing workshops or training programs that help students improve planning, goal-setting, and task prioritization skills.

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Future research may further explore additional psychological and environmental factors that could influence academic burnout, for example coping strategies, perceived stress, or social support. Including more diverse samples may also provide a broader understanding of the factors that contribute to students' academic well-being.

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Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Bhardwaj, L. & Singh, R. (2026). Time Management and Burnout among Female University Students: Exploring the Mediating Role of Self-Efficacy. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 14(1), 035-045. DIP:18.01.504.20261401, DOI:10.25215/1401.504