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The Measurement of Stress and Burnout among University Students

**A thesis presented in partial fulfilment
of the requirement for the degree
of Master of Arts in Psychology
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**David Collins
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Abstract

This study examines stress and burnout in a university student population and focuses on the relationship between interpersonal and academic demands and perceived stress and burnout. The mediating roles of social support and life events on the demand-burnout relationship is also considered.

Four measures were used in this study. The Student Stress Inventory was used as a stress measure and the Maslach Burnout Inventory was used to measure student burnout. The Student Life Events Questionnaire was used for the measurement of concurrent stressors that the student had experienced and the Multi-Dimensional Support Scale was used to identify levels of social support and by what source the support was provided.

The results of this study suggest that a high level of social/academic problems in combination with low levels of support and interaction from lecturers leads to lower levels of personal accomplishment and higher levels of depersonalisation and emotional exhaustion. It was also concluded that high levels of social support from family and friends, and from other students leads to an increase in personal accomplishment and a decrease in depersonalisation and emotional exhaustion.

The manner in which counselling services and academic departments can use these findings identify students at risk before problems reach serious proportions is also discussed.

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