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A BURNING ISSUE: A QUANTITATIVE CORRELATION STUDY ON STUDENTS'
OVERINVOLVEMENT IN COCURRICULAR ACTIVITIES
CONTRIBUTING TO BURNOUT

A thesis

Presented to

The School of Social Sciences, Education & Business
Department of Higher Education and Student Development
Taylor University
Upland, Indiana

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in Higher Education and Student Development

by

Shelby Robbins

May 2022

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**Higher Education and Student Development
Taylor University
Upland, Indiana**

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

MASTER'S THESIS

This is to certify that the Thesis of

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Entitled:

A Burning Issue: A Quantitative Correlation Study on Students' Overinvolvement in
Cocurricular Activities Contributing to Burnout

has been approved by the Examining Committee for the thesis requirement for the

Master of Arts degree
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Abstract

Cocurricular involvement plays a large part in the holistic college experience. However, too much involvement in cocurricular activities may lead students to experience burnout over the course of their four years in college. The quantitative correlation study investigated students' overinvolvement in cocurricular activities through the Cocurricular Involvement and Burnout Survey. Participants were students who were involved in said activities at a private, faith-based, liberal arts institution located in the Midwest. The research question that guided the study was: To what extent, if any, does overinvolvement in cocurricular activities contribute to burnout for college students at a four-year institution? The results show that a positive correlation exists between the constructs of cocurricular involvement and burnout. The discussion unpacks the results and give implications for practices and future research as well as limitations of the present study. The research is impactful for higher education and student development professionals to be aware of students' overinvolvement and the effects it has on them.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Sarah was an eager freshman when she started college. She was passionate about getting involved in activities outside of the classroom and constantly looked for ways to grow and develop her skill set. In high school, she was involved in a volunteer club, National Honors Society, varsity soccer, Spanish Club, and choir, and she was treasurer of her class. She wanted to get involved on her college campus, but she did not know what opportunities were available to her.

Sarah decided to attend an organizational fair at her school that displayed all sorts of cocurricular opportunities available to students. She felt overwhelmed by how many opportunities her school offered, significantly more than were offered in high school. Sarah was eager to try many different activities and get involved as much as possible. She knew jobs would look at cocurricular involvement down the road, so Sarah felt the need to set herself up well. Sarah also knew how much personal growth and friendships could come from involvement in cocurricular activities.

By the time Sarah was a senior, however, she felt the busyness of her schedule catching up with her. She did not have the same energy, passion, or drive that she felt entering into her freshman year. She realized she put too much on her plate and stretched herself too thin from overinvolvement. She felt burnt out.

Statement of the Problem

Sarah's predicament is a common narrative for college students across the country. Student involvement in cocurricular activities on college campuses plays a large role in the holistic collegiate experience for students: "The experience of attending college, building a social network, and becoming actively engaged in the campus community is richly beneficial" (Bergen-Cico & Viscomi, 2012). Cocurricular experiences also provide multiple outlets for students to learn and gain skills they might not necessarily sharpen in the classroom.

But how much is too much involvement? What is the balance? How do schools promote healthy balance and boundaries when it comes to involvement so that students do not experience burnout? Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement deals with students' motivation and how they commit their time to the activities with which they are involved on a college campus. But what does a healthy amount of involvement for students look like?

Many factors outside of the classroom are adding to students' responsibilities and creating more stress in their lives (Cushman & West, 2006). These outside influences have the potential to cause the student to become burnt out. In addition, as stress is prolonged, motivation and interest in the role or job at hand decreases significantly (Smith et al., 2020). This study will examine if students' overinvolvement in cocurricular activities leads to burnout over their four years at an undergraduate institution.

Cocurricular

The term "cocurricular" refers to opportunities related to the institution that occur outside of the classroom and promote meaningful learning and development (Wienhausen

& Elias, 2017). These activities can be of any nature and coincide with or take part in the curricular side of higher education. If students use their time in college to focus on their holistic experience, self-exploration, and self-awareness, then they will encounter many outlets for them to look beyond the classroom and discover what they want to get involved in (Elias & Drea, 2013).

Upon entering college, students are at liberty to explore all of the opportunities before them in order to gauge their interest. They can try different activities and get involved in a variety of ways, all the while gaining valuable skills and experience for the future. This engagement and discovery of all the cocurricular opportunities available “yields a more robust and holistic academic experience, contributing to student satisfaction, retention, persistence, and experience” (Elias & Drea, 2013, p. 2).

Overinvolvement and Burnout

Burnout involves emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and lack of personal accomplishment or self-efficacy (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Burnout is often caused by prolonged seasons of stress and many other contributing factors such as family, friends, school, finances, and health (Cushman & West, 2006). Burnout for students specifically deals with weariness from a student’s course load, being cynical in demeanor, and overall feeling incompetent or incapable as a student (Schaufeli, Martinez, et al., 2002).

Today, many students become overly involved in cocurricular activities. It is often the case that the reason for this overinvolvement is that students are praised for their hard work and achievements and, in turn, may “learn to attribute their performance to effort, which can vary in amount, rather than to a stable ability” (Mueller & Dweck, 1998, p. 34). Success and involvement very generally go hand-in-hand. Research shows

student involvement on a college campus is typically associated with success (Kuh et al., 2000; Terenzini et al., 1999).

The often-called “over-achieving” students in higher education often have distinguishable traits. McGrath (2001) states:

over-involved students display personality traits and behaviors indicating that they determine self-identity and worth in terms of others (e.g., friends, family, mentors) who significantly impact their lives. Consequently, being a contributing community member and sharing oneself are clearly part of the reward system that drives overinvolvement.” (p. 6)

McGrath goes on to discuss some other factors and traits that propel overinvolvement including a perception of responsibility to their campus and peers, elevated perception of one’s self above others, the inability to say “no,” and the fear of missing out.

Conclusion

Student involvement on a college campus has an effect on the development and learning processes for students. However, the line between involvement and overinvolvement is not always clear to students, thus leading them to put too many commitments on their plate. Many professionals in student development and student affairs are having conversations with students about overcommitting themselves and discussing what “well-roundedness” means. These conversations also advise students not to feel pressured or obligated to join every cocurricular that is available (Heller, 2014). Many students want to do as much as possible, but in return are not fully experiencing each opportunity they are committing themselves to (Heller, 2014).

The purpose of this study is to explore if and to what extent cocurricular overinvolvement contributes to burnout for college students during their time in college. Therefore, the following research question will guide this study: To what extent, if any, does overinvolvement in cocurricular activities contribute to burnout for college students at a four-year institution? The following chapters will dive into previous literature and what experts have to say on the topic, the methodology used for the present study, the results, and then a further discussion and analysis of the results, as well as implications and limitations of the study.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Research has much to say about the concepts of cocurricular activities and burnout in regard to college students. There is little to be said in literature about how the two constructs overlap. This study will seek to find the overlap between these constructs and seek to find if students' overinvolvement in cocurricular activities can contribute to student burnout. The following section will review the literature that exists currently about the present study's constructs—cocurricular, overinvolvement, and burnout—as well as the intersectionality of the three.

Cocurricular

Cocurricular activities in higher education can provide great opportunities for students to learn and develop skills outside the classroom. Student development and growth does not stop with academia. Instead, students can acquire useful skills and experiences through cocurricular activities in order to achieve a more holistic, developmental approach.

The terms “extracurricular” and “cocurricular” are often used interchangeably when it comes to describing out-of-classroom activities. However, using the term cocurricular instead of extracurricular implies a shared learning process is at work. Just as one would use the word co-director or co-founder to describe a shared partnership or entity, the inside and outside of classroom learning opportunities are in partnership with one another to contribute holistically to the development of students. Even some higher

education institutions are starting to “use the term ‘cocurricular’ to acknowledge that it should be seen as part of, rather than outside, the curricular experience” (Wienhausen & Elias, 2017, p. 16).

To be able to equip students with a helpful resource to communicate their cocurricular experiences with potential employers, the Cocurricular Record (CCR) was established. The following explanation provides detail about what the CCR is and why it exists:

The Cocurricular Record (CCR) is a multi-faceted program, which in its broadest sense, both encourages and incentivizes engagement. At its core, the CCR is intended to enhance students’ learning and development, encourage the discovery and reflection of self-awareness, and foster an environment that encourages civic responsibility and engagement. (Elias & Drea, 2013, p. 2)

Essentially, the CCR acts as an official, validated record or transcript that lists the entirety of students’ cocurricular involvement, as well as the competencies and skills they have developed along the way (Wienhausen & Elias, 2017). This effort then provides a helpful resource for students to utilize when building their portfolios and participating in job interviews.

In a study conducted of the interest of employers on students’ cocurricular experiences, 77% of employers said they would be very likely or likely to review a CCR in the hiring process, and 71% of employers indicated they “would definitely want” or “prefer to have” one included in the job application (Elias, 2014). “Employers look for skills, and these records help employers directly see what skills students have developed, while knowing that these experiences have also been verified by the institution”

(Wienhausen & Elias, 2017, p. 16). Thus, cocurricular involvement is an important aspect of the hiring process, and professionals often wish to see their prospective employees' involvement in such activities.

Examples of Cocurricular Activities

Many institutions provide a plethora of opportunities for involvement for students to shape their college experience and allow students to build new skills. “Higher education institutions offer myriad rich and valuable experiences with which students can engage outside of the classroom. From athletics to leadership and mentorship opportunities, to community service and the arts—there is no shortage of opportunities” (Wienhausen & Elias, 2017, p. 15).

The list of what classifies as a cocurricular activity is seemingly endless. Thus, it can be challenging to nail down different categories for involvement. One study focused on dividing cocurricular opportunities into tangible groups to categorize them. This study captured four categories: research/academic life, student engagement/campus life, professional/career development, and community-based/global learning (Wienhausen & Elias, 2017).

Membership and integration have also been underlying themes when it comes to cocurricular involvement. Tinto focuses on integration through the importance of membership in cocurricular activities. “What is important is that students subscribe to one form of membership—whether it is through their program, department, faculty, student club, residence life, or other campus communities” (Tinto, 1987, as cited in Elias, 2014, p. 37).

Student Involvement

Astin's (1984) theory of student involvement deals greatly with students getting plugged into various experiences during their college years. His theory states:

Student involvement refers to the quantity and quality of the physical and psychological energy that students invest in the college experience. Such involvement takes many forms, such as absorption in academic work, participation in extracurricular activities, and interaction with faculty and other institutional personnel. (Astin, 1984, pp. 528–529)

Astin's theory explains the relationship between involvement and development, saying that the greater the student's involvement in college, the greater the amount of student learning and development.

The principle of success when it comes to attending college is grounded not just in a grade point average but in the robust college experience as a whole that can lead to great levels of achievement and satisfaction. “Whereby the current focus is academic success, institutions can broaden the meaning of success to include a more holistic definition of ‘involvement’” (Elias & Drea, 2013, p. 5). Together, student involvement in cocurricular activities leads to “‘meaningful participation’ in organized activities” (Tieu & Pancer, 2009, p. 45).

Learning about what factors contribute to students getting involved in cocurricular opportunities can help student development professionals to navigate how to support students and walk alongside them in their decisions to get involved. Focusing on student success through involvement and creating an atmosphere for success on an institutional

campus can ultimately lead to student retention (Tinto, 1987, as cited in as cited in Elias, 2014).

Holistic College Experience

Academia is not the only aspect of the college experience that is formative for students. “Because thriving describes social, emotional, and academic dimensions of student success, quality involvement experiences can be seen as contributing holistically to student well-being and success in college” (Vetter et al., 2019, p. 46). Large amounts of research detail how involvement in cocurricular activities in higher education brings higher levels of satisfaction with the overall college experience. The theory of retention also argues “the more integrated the student is with the fabric of the institution, the more likely they are to persist until degree completion” (Tinto, 1987, as cited in Elias, 2014, p. 36).

Efforts are happening across the world to promote students’ exposure and involvement in cocurricular programs during college. Some of these include the Comprehensive Student Record Project led by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers, the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators, and the Lumina Foundation (Wienhausen & Elias, 2017).

To promote student thriving from cocurricular experiences, “institutions should help students navigate and construct their unique experience and provide innovative ways to help students both reflect on and articulate the range of experiences, knowledge, and competencies that constitute their education” (Wienhausen & Elias, 2017). Ultimately, institutional attachment emerges from involvement. “Institutions that focus on quality,

diversity, and breadth of campus programming may reap benefits for both the students and the institution” (Bergen-Cico & Viscomi, 2012, p. 341).

In the end, promoting holistic development through cocurricular opportunities will benefit the students’ growth and development, and the growth and development of the university as a whole. If the students thrive, the institution thrives.

Burnout

College students are faced with many demands throughout their time at an institution:

Each day, students are confronted with experiences that can be physically, emotionally, and psychologically challenging. Whether related to one’s classroom performance, family, job, health, finances, or other people, all aspects of students’ lives can be negatively affected by events both within and outside of their control. (Cushman & West, 2006, p. 23)

These demands stemming from many aspects of student’s lives can build up and, in turn, cause their energy to run dry. This experience may lead to burnout.

Burnout is described as a state of emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion caused by high amounts of stress over a long period of time (Smith et al., 2020). It often takes place when an individual feels overwhelmed, drained, and incapable of fulfilling duties and responsibilities (Smith et al., 2020). Burnout is often described as a lonely and painful experience that can include a variety of symptoms. “Students with burnout symptoms report feelings of exhaustion, cynicism, and lack of professional efficacy in their studies” (Schaufeli, Martinez, et al., 2002). Exhaustion is described as a complete

loss of energy, as well as feeling weary and fatigued emotionally, physically, and mentally (Mostert & Pienaar, 2020).

The concept of burnout often seems to be more abstract than concrete. Epps (2021) states:

The term “burnout” is sometimes used loosely to describe feeling stressed and tired; however, it’s actually a bit more severe than that—and harder to recognize. Rather than reaching a breaking point or a full collapse, students who are experiencing burnout often continue pushing forward when they’re already in a state of exhaustion. (p. 1)

One should include many factors when deciphering if a student may be experiencing burnout or may experience burnout in the future. For example, if students receive little to no support from their family, faculty, friends, and significant others, they may be more prone to experiencing burnout (Bonafé et al., 2014; Dyrbye et al., 2009; Jacobs & Dodd, 2003).

Stress is a major component of burnout (Schaufeli, Martinez, et al., 2002) and something that most students experience throughout their college career. “Stress is a global term that refers to how stimuli negatively or positively affect an individual” (Cushman & West, 2006, p. 24). Student stress is often unavoidable, affecting many aspects of students’ lives at some point during each of their college careers (Cushman & West, 2006).

In addition, if a student has unclear or overly demanding job expectations, is working too much, is taking on too many responsibilities, is reluctant to delegate to others, or has a type A/high-achieving personality, they may be more prone to burnout

(Smith et al., 2020). Since students attend school and have many responsibilities related to their school work, students may come to believe schools are their “workplaces,” thus potentially creating work or job-related stressors (Chambel & Curral, 2005). Often several of these factors add up, thus making students even more susceptible to burnout. “Between part-time jobs, extracurriculars, and balancing several classes at once, the pressures of college life can be challenging” (Epps, 2021, p. 1).

There are many symptoms that can be signs of burnout in students including depersonalization, exhaustion, decreased effectiveness, loss of meaning, loss of connection, cognitive impairment, difficulty functioning, cynicism, drained energy, lack of efficacy, and hopelessness (Schaufeli, Martinez, et al., 2002; Schaufeli, Salanova, et al., 2022; Smith et al., 2020; Summers, 2020). In extreme cases, burnout can even put an individual at risk of experiencing depression, anxiety, substance use, and other psychiatric problems, as well as problems between family members and friends (Summers, 2020).

Self-efficacy is a major factor involved when dealing with student burnout. Self-efficacy looks at one’s own judgement of whether they feel capable to sort and complete tasks in order to achieve high performance levels (Bandura, 1986). It involves not only the skills one possesses, but also the ability and estimation of what the individual can achieve with those skills (Bandura, 1986). Changes in one’s self-efficacy go hand-in-hand with changes in well-being, which may involve experiencing burnout (Salanova et al., 2005). A theoretical framework is provided in Bandura’s (1982) Social Cognitive Theory that outlines self-efficacy affecting academic success by increasing students’

sense of well-being and persistence to complete tasks, which in turn leads to a more efficiency in the use of their skill set they have acquired.

In a study that dealt with self-efficacy-based intervention decreasing burnout, increasing engagement, and enhancing performance, researchers found:

Accordingly, the lower the levels of anxiety, stress, and fatigue are, the higher the levels of self-efficacy will be. When students experience negative thoughts and anxiety with regards their capabilities, these negative affective reactions can themselves further lower perceptions of capability and activate a stress-generating mechanism that reinforces the probability of the inadequate performance they fear. (Bresó et al., 2010, p. 339)

Positive attitudes, experiences, and engagements, in turn, lead to an increased level of self-efficacy and confidence in one's own abilities and skills.

Conclusion

Cocurricular activities are rewarding opportunities for students seeking personal and professional growth. Cocurriculars provide an outlet for gaining new skills, experiences, and relationships and thus for preparing students for the future. However, too much involvement in cocurricular activities, on top of all the other many challenging demands that college entails, can create a great deal of stress for students. Burnout may follow, which can affect students in all areas of life, including their emotional, physical, spiritual, intellectual, and spiritual health. Cushman and West (2006) state:

In college, students have more “free” time to fill and can choose from a myriad of activities that do not involve schoolwork (e.g., socializing, playing sports, and

work). Additionally, students feel many demands on their time and have to make choices. At times, these choices will cause school work to build up. (p. 27).

It is important for higher education professionals to advise students and guide them in balancing their time and involvement, in order to provide a holistic and healthy college experience.

Many students are advised to get involved upon arriving on a college campus for their first year. They are told that “involvement opportunities benefit their resume, social and professional network, leadership development, personal interests, or assist with financial and academic obligations” (Heller, 2014, p. 1). However, questions get raised about whether or not encouragement should be made for students getting involved, as this may lead them down a path towards overcommitment, overinvolvement, and being overwhelmed, as well as potentially leading to burnout (Heller, 2014).

Rather, many student development and student affairs professionals are encouraging students to find a few opportunities for involvement rather than committing to so many so quickly, so that they do not get in over their heads (Heller, 2014). It can prove beneficial for students to recognize their existing involvement and engagements in order to better help them time manage and prioritize. Maintaining an “ideal balance” as well as finding the line between dedication and over-dedication is important for college students in getting involved with cocurriculars and avoiding burnout (Freudenberger, 1980; Pines et al., 1981). The purpose of this study is to explore how overinvolvement in cocurricular activities can contribute to burnout in college students over the course of their four years at an institution.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The researcher of the present study sought to find the relationship between students' overinvolvement in cocurricular activities and their level of burnout. That effort included administering a survey to a population of students who are enrolled in a four-year institution and involved with activities outside of the classroom. The following chapter will review the methodology used by the researcher for the purpose of the study. The research design, context, participants, procedures, data analysis, and risks of the present study will all be described.

Research Design

No current survey existed to date that met the needs of the present study's research question. Therefore, the Cocurricular Involvement and Burnout Survey (CIBS) was created to measure and gauge the correlation between students' involvement in cocurricular activities and their experience of burnout. This survey (see Appendix A) seeks to quantify student involvement in a measure of how many activities the student is involved with as well as how many hours per week the student is committing to said activities. The survey contains statements regarding burnout and its relation to the student's involvement. The CIBS also contains a section for demographic questions at the beginning as well an open-ended question at the end of the survey.

The CIBS consists of 17 statements and asks participants to rate their agreement with each given statement on a 7-point Likert scale with answers including: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Slightly Agree, Agree, or Strongly Agree. A

preliminary administration of the instrument was given to a group of graduate student colleagues as a part of an advanced research course. Colleagues were then asked for feedback and asked to provide a critique of the validity of the survey as well as any presence of bias. Statements were then be revised based on the colleagues' feedback.

Context

The research for the present study was conducted at a small, private, four-year Christian liberal arts school located in the Midwest. This institution is a part of the Council of Christian Colleges & Universities, has just over 2,000 undergraduate students, and has hundreds of leadership opportunities, clubs and organizations, athletics, and cocurricular opportunities for students to get involved in.

Participants

A total of 91 participants took the CIBS survey, with 89 completing the survey in full. Participants range from freshmen to seniors, male and female. Survey participants were drawn from a range of cocurricular groups on campus for the chosen institution's career office, student activities, outreach organization, intercultural programs, and residence life.

Procedures

The researcher partnered with hall directors, supervisors, student development leaders, and other key cocurricular members on campus to administer the survey. The survey was distributed in November of the Fall 2021 semester to freshmen through seniors regarding their current semester's involvement. The survey remained open for two weeks.

Data Analysis

The data from the CIBS was run through SPSS and Excel software and put into a spreadsheet to analyze. Responses to the open-ended question were also themed and coded. Descriptive statistics were found and analyzed through the software and put into tables to display survey items. The data were also put into correlation matrices and scatter plots to analyze relationships between items on the survey. Survey items regarding the study's constructs (cocurricular, overinvolvement, and burnout) were paired in correlation matrices and scatter plots in SPSS order to analyze the significance of the correlations between these different variables.

Risks

There was minimal risk involved with taking part in this study. While participating in this study, there was a slight risk of discomfort or an emotional response associated in reflection of current or past experiences for participants. Through an informed consent form (Appendix B), participants were advised if they experienced any emotional discomfort from participating in this study, resources were available at the campus counseling center.

Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine to what extent, if any, does overinvolvement in cocurricular activities contribute to student burnout at a four-year institution. This chapter delineates the results of the CIBS, including both the quantitative survey questions and the final qualitative survey question. Descriptive statistics and tables from the survey results are presented first, followed by correlations matrices and scatter plots between various survey items in order to determine relationships. Results and themes presented from the single open-ended question at the end of the survey are also offered.

Time Commitments

The first survey item shows how many hours per week, on average, participants spent committed to their cocurricular activities (Table 1). A large majority of participants answered they spent between 10 to 15 hours ($n = 29$) or 15 or more hours ($n = 35$) committed to their cocurricular activities ($M = 3.01$, $SD = 0.95$).

Table 1

Hours per Week Committed to Cocurricular Activities

| Hours/Week | n | % |
|-------------------|----|-------|
| Less than 5 hours | 7 | 7.69 |
| 5-10 hours | 20 | 21.98 |
| 10-15 hours | 29 | 31.87 |
| 15+ hours | 35 | 38.46 |

Note. $N = 91$.

In addition to participants' time commitment toward cocurricular activities being measured, the survey also asked participants to identify time commitments in a variety of other areas of life. This inquiry was designed to gauge where students' biggest time commitments reside, as well as their dispersion of time spent toward each activity, in order to paint a bigger picture of everything they are involved in. Participants were asked to answer how long (in hours or days per week), on average, they spent committed to the following: studying; social media; interacting with family; interacting with friends; exercising; sleeping per night; and eating three meals a day. Table 2 shows the results.

Table 2*Survey Results Addressing Time Commitments*

| Commitment | Hours per Week | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------|----------|--------|
| | Less than 5 | 5–10 | 10–15 | 15+ |
| Studying | 8.79% | 31.87% | 36.26% | 23.08% |
| <i>n</i> | 8 | 29 | 33 | 21 |
| Social Media | 56.04% | 26.37% | 10.99% | 6.59% |
| <i>n</i> | 51 | 24 | 10 | 6 |
| Commitment | Days per Week | | | |
| | Less than 4 | 4–6 | 6–8 | 8+ |
| Interacting with Family | 86.81% | 10.99% | 2.20% | 0.00% |
| <i>n</i> | 79 | 10 | 2 | 0 |
| Interacting with Friends | 1.10% | 10.99% | 18.68% | 69.23% |
| <i>n</i> | 1 | 10 | 17 | 63 |
| Exercising | 64.84% | 19.78% | 9.89% | 5.49% |
| <i>n</i> | 59 | 18 | 9 | 5 |
| Sleeping per Night | 1.10% | 16.48% | 70.33% | 12.09% |
| <i>n</i> | 1 | 15 | 64 | 11 |
| Commitment | Days per Week | | | |
| | 0–2 days | 3–4 days | 5–6 days | 7 days |
| Eating 3 Meals | 52.75% | 10.99% | 18.68% | 17.58% |
| <i>n</i> | 48 | 10 | 17 | 16 |

Note. $N = 91$.

Effects of Involvement

The survey items in this section were taken from the “Cocurricular Involvement” section of the CIBS. In this section, a 7-point Likert scale was used, and answer options consisted of the following (1 being Strongly Disagree and 7 being Strongly Agree): Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Slightly Disagree; Neutral; Slightly Agree; Agree; or Strongly Agree. These survey items contain statements related to participants’ cocurricular involvement, how they perceived their involvement, and the effect that involvement has on them. Table 3 shows participants’ perception on how they view quality of involvement versus quantity of involvement in cocurricular, as well as statements regarding how they perceive their commitment capabilities toward said activities.

Table 3

Survey Results Addressing Quality vs. Quantity Involvement

| Survey Item | Range | Median | Mean | SD |
|---|-------|--------|------|------|
| 1. I tend to prioritize quality of involvement over quantity of involvement. | 7.00 | 6.00 | 5.21 | 1.45 |
| 2. I feel that I give my 100% to every activity I am involved in. | 7.00 | 5.00 | 4.53 | 1.75 |
| 3. I often feel that I am incapable of accomplishing everything I need to get done. | 7.00 | 5.00 | 4.24 | 1.80 |

Note. $N = 90$.

As seen in Table 3, a large portion of participants stated they agreed in some capacity that they prioritize the quality of their involvement over the quantity ($Mdn = 6.00$, $M = 5.21$, $SD = 1.45$). In addition, a large portion of participants stated they were either neutral or agree in some capacity that they feel they give 100% to every

activity ($Mdn = 5.00$, $M = 4.53$, $SD = 1.75$), while also stating they often feel incapable of accomplishing everything they need to get done ($Mdn = 5.00$, $M = 4.24$, $SD = 1.80$). The final two statements in Table 3 seem contradictory in nature, yet many participants agreed in some capacity with both.

Table 4 consists of statements regarding how participants' feel their cocurricular involvement hinders different areas of their lives, including their physical health, mental health, emotional health, spiritual health, and overall well-being. A large portion of participants disagreed in some capacity with each of these statements.

Table 4

Survey Results Addressing Involvement

| Survey Item | Range | Median | Mean | SD |
|---|-------|--------|------|------|
| 1. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my physical health. | 7.00 | 3.00 | 3.18 | 1.62 |
| 2. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my mental health. | 7.00 | 3.00 | 3.60 | 1.60 |
| 3. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my emotional health. | 7.00 | 3.00 | 3.56 | 1.63 |
| 4. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my spiritual health. | 7.00 | 2.00 | 2.69 | 1.53 |
| 5. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my overall well-being. | 7.00 | 3.00 | 3.12 | 1.59 |

Note. $N = 90$.

Although many disagreed with the statements shown in Table 4, a significant number of participants agreed in some capacity to the statements shown in Table 5, excluding the first statement. Table 5 consists of survey item statements regarding how students feel when thinking about everything they have on their plates. These feelings

include feeling energized, anxious, overwhelmed and exhausted. The final statement displayed in Table 5 regards overcommitment.

Table 5

Survey Results Addressing Commitments

| Survey Item | Range | Median | Mean | SD |
|---|-------|--------|------|------|
| 1. When thinking about all the things I have on my plate, I often feel energized. * | 7 | 3 | 3.04 | 1.43 |
| 2. When thinking about all the things I have on my plate, I often feel anxious. | 7 | 5 | 5.20 | 1.26 |
| 3. When thinking about all the things I have on my plate, I often feel overwhelmed. | 7 | 5 | 5.22 | 1.27 |
| 4. When thinking about all the things I have on my plate, I often feel exhausted. | 7 | 5 | 5.17 | 1.28 |
| 5. I often feel that I am overcommitted. | 7 | 5 | 4.58 | 1.58 |

Note. $N = 90$.

* $N = 89$ participants answered question 1

Table 6 shows the final statement presented in the “Cocurricular Involvement” section of the CIBS. This statements asked participants to rate how they experienced burnout in regards to their cocurricular involvement. A large majority of participants said they agree in some capacity with this statement ($Mdn = 6.00$, $M = 5.40$, $SD = 1.49$).

Table 6

Survey Results Addressing Burnout

| Survey Item | Range | Median | Mean | SD |
|---|-------|--------|------|------|
| At times throughout the semester I have experienced feeling burned out because of how involved I am in cocurricular activities. | 7.00 | 6.00 | 5.40 | 1.49 |

Note. $N = 90$.

Correlations

The statistical measure of Pearson's correlation coefficient shows the strength of a linear relationship between a paired data set of two quantitative variables (Moore et al., 2013). In a sample, the correlation coefficient is denoted by r and follows the formula $-1 \leq r \leq 1$. When $r > 0$, this indicates a positive association, while $r < 0$ indicates a negative association.

Figure 1 shows the correlation between two Likert Scale statements from the CIBS survey. The first states, "I often feel that I am overcommitted," and the second states, "My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my overall well-being." The scatter plot shows a low to moderate positive correlation exists between the two variables, with a statistically significant positive linear relationship ($r = 0.420$, $p < 0.001$). A relationship thus exists concerning when participants agreed in some capacity to feeling overcommitted to agreeing in some capacity that their overall well-being being is hindered by their involvement in cocurriculars.

Figure 2 shows the correlation between how students rated feeling overcommitted and how they perceived their experience with burnout in regard to cocurricular involvement. The scatter plot shows a moderate to high positive correlation exists between the two variables, with a statistically significant positive linear relationship ($r = 0.559$, $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates a fairly significant relationship between students stating that they are overcommitted to their cocurricular activities and also stating that they felt burnt out from their involvement in said activities.

Figure 1

Association Between Overcommitment and Hinderance of Overall Well-Being

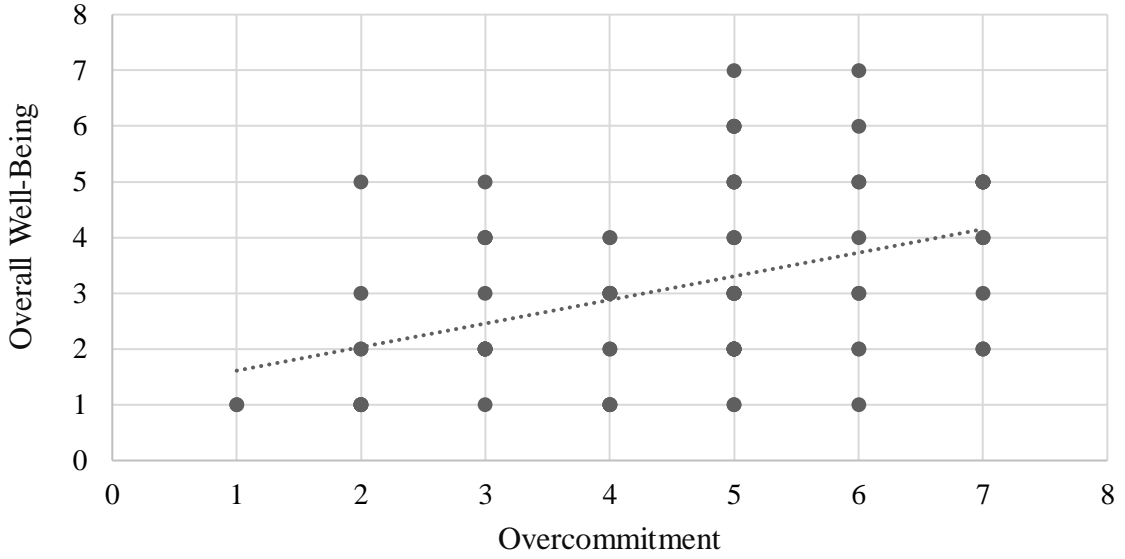
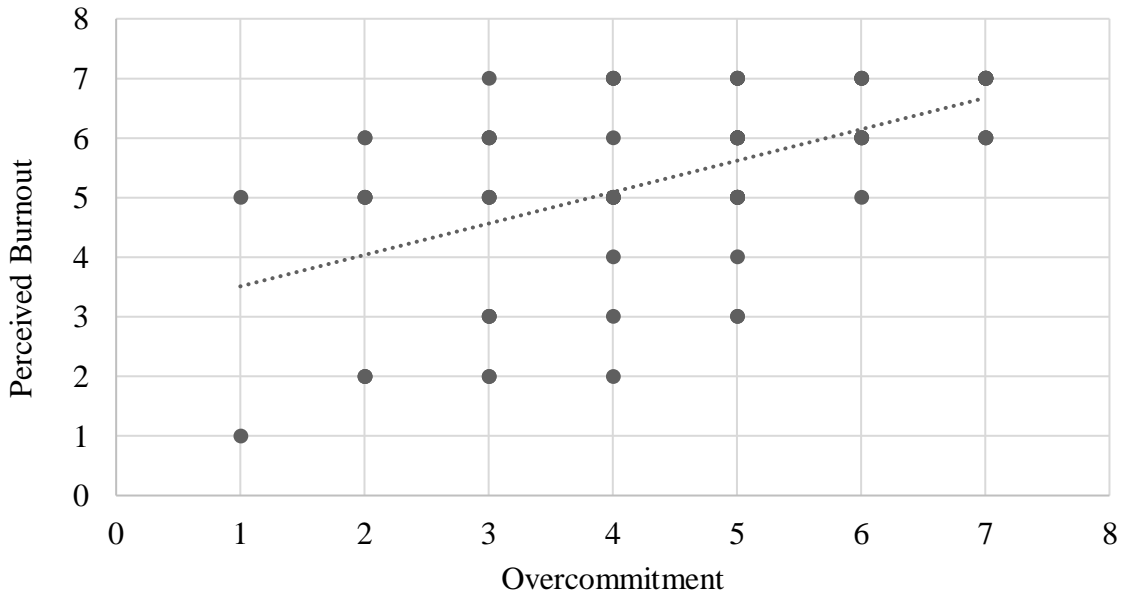


Figure 2

Association Between Overcommitment and Perceived Burnout



Qualitative Themes

The last item of the survey was an open-ended question. The question asked: What advice would you offer to future students to equip them to be involved without becoming burned out? The purpose of this question was to help in looking at implications for practice. Students who answered these questions were provided a chance to speak openly into their experience and wisdom in order to help future students in their positions. The researcher then coded and themed the results from this open response question, and three overarching themes emerged.

Self-Advocacy

Self-advocacy was an overarching theme participants articulated. Within this theme, many participants mentioned topics of learning to say no, setting boundaries for yourself, not giving into pressure or comparison, and also knowing what you need and seeking out help when needed. Out of 90 responses, 35 touched on the theme of self-advocacy.

Time Management

Time management was another umbrella theme which emerged, with 41 out of 90 participants speaking into this theme. This theme consisted of responses regarding starting slow and pacing yourself when getting involved, prioritizing and scheduling out your time, finding a balance for yourself and learning to manage time, only getting involved in a few activities, not overcommitting, and knowing you cannot do everything.

Personal Investment

The third and final overarching theme was personal investment. This theme dealt with topics of rest and Sabbath, involving yourself in activities for which one has a

passion or in which one finds meaning, investing in people and relationships, focusing on your faith and spiritual walk, and prioritizing yourself. Again, 41 out of 90 participant responses reflected this theme.

Conclusion

The CIBS provided results with insights into the research question. Quantitative and qualitative results were presented. Descriptive statistics and tables from the survey results are presented first, followed by correlations matrices and scatter plots between various survey items in order to determine relationships. In the following chapter, the results will be discussed in further details. Implications and limitations will also be presented and discussed.

Chapter 5

Discussion

The purpose of the study was to examine if a correlation exists between college students' overinvolvement in cocurricular activities and burnout. Data were collected and analyzed through the CIBS in order to best answer the guiding research question: To what extent, if any, does overinvolvement in cocurricular activities contribute to burnout for college students at a four-year institution? The following chapter reflects on the data collected and analyzed. In addition, it also presents implications for practice and future research, as well as notes some limitations of the study.

Time Investment

The data from the CIBS showed how students allocated their time during an average week. The majority of participants stated they spent a significant number of hours per week committed to their cocurricular activities, with 31.87% saying 10 to 15 hours and 38.46% saying 15 or more hours, for a total of 70.33% participants spending at least 10 hours. The survey also yielded results from a variety of other areas of life to which students commit their time. The survey showed students were spending a significant amount of time studying as well as interacting with friends (likely due to the residential nature of the university of study). However, significantly less time was dedicated to exercising and interacting with family, as well as few people eating three meals a day during an average week (see Table 2). Additionally, 16.48% of participants

reported only getting four to six hours of sleep a night, and 70.33% reported getting anywhere from six to eight hours a night.

With as many time commitments as students have on their plates, and by looking at these data, one could conclude some students may give more time to some activities, including cocurricular activities, thus taking away time from other important activities in their lives (e.g., sleeping, exercising, and eating three meals a day). “In trying to read all the books and chapters assigned, meet paper deadlines, and participate in extracurricular activities, college students may become overwhelmed with feelings that there is not enough time to complete all their work adequately” (Macan et al., 1990, p. 760). One participant responded to the open-ended question:

Know your limits, don't feel obligated to be involved but observe what's good for you to be involved in (also ask God about it), a healthy lifestyle (exercise, sleep, eating right, etc.) goes a long way in preventing burnout. Remember the principle of progressive overload—small amounts of stress on a system challenge and improve the system's capacity over time, but lots of stress on a system at once overwhelms it and causes shutdown.

The lack of time in students' lives spent toward healthy practices and activities may hinder students' overall well-being or even eventually lead to burnout.

In another survey item, most participants also agreed in some capacity to the statement: I tend to prioritize quality of involvement over quantity of involvement. The large number of students agreeing with this statement seems to show they are invested in their involvement, and that activity is not just something they add their resumes. One participant stated:

Commit to quality of activities instead of quantity. Experiences will happen again, and try to avoid FOMO [fear of missing out]. You can't be involved in everything, and if you burn out you won't get to do any of it, so make wise choices on the front end of things.

Perhaps these students carry an emotional weight toward their involvement, since many answered that they value the quality of the experience.

Additionally, many participants agreed in some capacity that they feel they give 100% to every activity in which they are involved, while also agreeing they often feel they are incapable of accomplishing everything they need to get done. These two statements, initially, sound contradictory in nature. One participant responded, "Pour 110% into a few things rather than a ton. Be closely and personally involved with those around you in order to foster vulnerability needed to voice when you are feeling drained and when you can't fully commit." Students feeling the need and pressure to give 100% to each activity, all the while feeling that it is impossible to get everything done, seems to reflect the burned out nature of overinvolved students in some capacity.

Hindrances

Students responded to statements in the survey about how their cocurricular involvement hinders their health, including physical health, mental health, emotional health, spiritual well-being, and overall well-being. "Each day, students are confronted with experiences that can be physically, emotionally, and psychologically challenging" (Cushman & West, 2006, p. 23).

Many participants disagreed with these statements regarding the implications on their health due to their involvement. However, a significant portion of participants

agreed in some capacity with the statements regarding how, when thinking about everything they have on their plates, they feel various negative emotions (see Table 5). Perhaps these findings insinuate students are not fully perceiving the effects of their overinvolvement on their health and emotions. A blind spot may exist for students who do not realize that their extensive involvement in cocurricular activities may not be as beneficial as they initially thought.

The survey contained two statements directly related to overcommitment and burnout, respectively. Most students agreed in some capacity that they often feel overcommitted, and a very significant number of participants also agreed in some capacity that they experienced feeling burned out because of their cocurricular involvement (see Tables 5 and 6). Participants agreeing with these statements seems to indicate a clear sign of burnout in relation to students' overinvolvement and overcommitment.

Correlations

There was little correlational significance between overcommitment and specific areas of health for students (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual). However, the survey item statements "My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my overall well-being" and "I often feel that I am overcommitted" show a low to moderate positive correlation exists between the two variables, with a statistically significant positive linear relationship ($r = 0.420$). This shows that there is a present relationship between students' overinvolvement and their perceived well-being. "Therefore, practically, increasing awareness of the impact of involvement on well-being may assist students in navigating

opportunities to enhance their own well-being” (Kilgo et al., 2016, p. 1047). This idea of well-being goes hand-in-hand with the construct of burnout.

The survey data indicate a clear and present relationship between overcommitment and burnout. When correlated, the two statements regarding perceived burnout and overcommitment showed a moderate to high relationship ($r = 0.559$). Research states that students have many things on their plate, and often times it is difficult for them to make decisions regarding their time (Cushman & West, 2006). This, in turn, is often what leads to burnout for college students; their time being spread thin and then leading them to become overcommitted or overinvolved. This relationship, as well as the many other supporting data, shows that the two constructs presented in the present study’s research question do, in fact, correlate.

Open Response Themes

The three overarching themes identified from the open response survey item (self-advocacy, time management, and personal investment) point to details that contribute to the study. As students experiencing involvement and burnout, they recognize wisdom regarding this topic.

First, participants, in their responses, promoted self-advocacy such as speaking up for oneself when help is needed or when boundaries need to be set. One participant stated, “Know your limits and your strengths and find a balance of the two! Do what you love and what you are good at but not to a point that it depletes you of your energy or focus.” Students who are experiencing burnout due to over-involvement develop a sense of standing up for yourself and knowing your limits, and thus, saying no when no is necessary.

They also promoted steering clear of the comparison game or feeling pressured to get involved. Another participant stated:

Don't feel the pressure to join cocurriculars just because other people have the time and energy and margin to do so. Everyone's college experience varies and just because you aren't in any clubs doesn't mean you're not tapping into the full potential of your education.

Therefore, self-advocacy seems to be an important component of avoiding becoming overcommitted or burned out.

Second, participants also seem to be promoting time management skills for students who may find themselves overinvolved. Many spoke into the ideas of pacing yourself or starting getting involved slowly in only a few activities, as well as prioritizing your time and schedule. A participant of the study stated, "Don't overcommit, because you will end up either dropping activities you previously committed or doing a poor job at what you are involved in. Choose a few things you care about and pour into them. Schedule your time well."

Students who spoke into this theme also seem to be in support of not overcommitting, finding a balance for yourself that works, and realizing you cannot do everything or please everyone. For example, one participant stated, "Be okay with saying yes to things so you can try different things out, but also be okay with saying no so that you can still function, be okay, and not get burned out. Find a good balance for yourself." Thus, time management seems to be a contributing factor to overinvolvement and burnout. "One potential coping strategy frequently offered by university counseling

services is time management” (Macan et al., 1990, p. 760). Time management should be a more taught and emphasized practice for college student sin involved in cocurriculars.

Finally, participants spoke into the theme of personal investment when it comes to being overcommitted. These responses, in particular, address the importance of rest and prioritizing time for yourself and your own well-being. Self-care practices have a positive effect on mental health (Moses et al., 2016). To this end, one participant stated:

I would give a future student the advice to learn how to say no to good things and that it is something okay to do. I would suggest learning what ways you recharge and take care of yourself and do those things. I would also advise to not glorify your busyness or other people’s but instead find out what is motivating and what is important for you.

These responses also promoted focusing on relationships with individuals around you, with God, and with committing your time to things you are most passionate about and that hold the most meaning for you. Sinek (2009) states when you work hard for something that you love, that is called passion. One participant noted, “Be involved in things you love. Make sure you have people who love the same things that can pour into you and better understand. Remind yourself why you do what you do.” The focus should be on the why you do what you do, not the “what” (Sinek, 2009). For these participants, time devoted to oneself can help create space, balance, and overall wellness for students in their busy schedules.

Implications for Practice

A few implications of the present study for future practice within higher education include supervisors’ understanding of students’ commitments, cocurricular coaching for

freshmen, encouraging counseling services and pastoral care as well as wellness checks, and putting on events discussing burnout and balance.

First, it is in supervisors' best interest to have a holistic understanding of students' commitments in and outside of the cocurricular activities that they oversee. It is helpful to understand this level of commitment because if it increases, it may increase the risk of the student burning out. The magnitude of commitment and how much one can handle varies from student to student. Supervisors need to understand students and their capabilities on a more personal level. Supervisors can then help students cut back on hours or tasks if need be.

From the survey data, it is clear students' time is spread thin, and they have many things being asked of them from different areas of their lives. Many of these students are also serving other students in their various cocurricular roles. As a result, supervisors need to ask themselves: How can we care well for students who are working or other students? The supervisor role setting an example of allowing themselves to say no to things, setting boundaries, and creating a healthy balance for their time can, thus, help students set an example for those they serve, as well.

Second, cocurricular coaching could be beneficial for higher education and student development professionals, especially for incoming freshman students. "Setting boundaries that promote self-care may be difficult for first-year students, but they are critical to maintaining development, health and well-being" (Adams et al., 2016, p. 339). These coaches could meet with students to specifically discuss their cocurricular involvement on campus. These coaches could help freshmen become aware of cocurricular opportunities, while also helping them plan what would work for their

schedules. These coaches could also meet with students of all ages who are involved and help them figure out how to achieve a healthy amount of involvement.

Ideally, these coaches would take a proactive approach, helping students find balance and a healthy level of involvement early on before students get to the point where they feel burned out. These coaches could potentially take on a mentorship role in students' lives. If budgeting for such positions is an issue, coaching could also take place in a supervisor or mentor role.

Third, promoting counseling services and pastoral care for students who are involved would also be of great benefit to students. Supervisors of these activities could partner with the counseling or the campus pastor to connect students with people they can talk to when they are experiencing burnout. Kilgo et al. (2016) stated in their research:

Making peer educators knowledgeable of these findings could support their work in wellness promotion. Campus leadership services, orientation programs, and counseling services would be additional sectors that could utilize these findings to support their work. As institutions work to support students with psychological distress, these findings suggest positive opportunities to proactively promote development of student well-being. (p. 1048)

Supervisors could also establish wellness check-ins for their supervisees to see how they are doing. That way, there is constant care being administered to students in efforts to be proactive and prevent burnout.

Finally, it would be beneficial for supervisors and other faculty on campus to put on events regarding topics of burnout and balance. Such programs would create a culture of awareness and conversations regarding the reality of burnout that exists in students'

lives and then will help continue the conversation to promote healthy involvement and balance in their lives. Students and faculty alike could benefit from these discussions.

Implications for Future Research

Items for future research include exploring overinvolvement and burnout by gender, race, and across years in school, the pressures and factors that contribute to students becoming involved, and how students across an institution view their involvement in relation to perceived burnout.

The first implication for future research is to explore the relationship between over-involvement and burnout for students by gender, race (especially for students of color at a predominantly White institution), and across years in school. For example, it would be interesting to see if there is a difference between men and women and how they experience burnout in relation to their involvement in cocurricular activities. Do women experience more than men? Or vice versa? How do students of color experience burnout and involvement at a predominantly White institution? Additionally, it would also be interesting to examine how students in each year of school perceive and experience burnout in relation to their involvement. What is the difference between the freshman and senior experience? Does burnout progress as they go through their four years in college?

The second implication for future research is exploring what factors and pressures lead students to become involved in cocurricular activities in the first place. Are there pressures from peers or faculty that exist? Does their experience prior to coming to college contribute to their desire to become involved? Does their involvement come from personal passions or future career aspirations? These are all questions that could be explored across a range of studies.

A final implication for future research is exploring how all students at a university view their level of involvement and its relationship to perceived burnout, as the present study only surveyed students who are currently involved in cocurriculars. Is there a perfect formula for “balance” in a student’s schedule? How do they navigate how much is a healthy amount of involvement for them? Are students who are less involved less burned out? It would also be beneficial to explore cocurricular involvement in relation to burnout at public schools versus private schools, as well as secular versus religious institutions.

Limitations

There were a few limitations to this study, including the study being conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic, being limited to one university, being limited to a Christian institution of higher learning, and only including a select group of students—specifically students presently involved in a select group of cocurricular activities.

The first limitation of the present study was the research being conducted during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic. This may have limited participation in the study. Additionally, this may have influenced answers in regards to survey items on involvement and burnout, as it is difficult to say how the pandemic may have impacted these areas of students’ lives in various ways.

The second limitation was the timeframe of the study. Only one institution was utilized to distribute the CIBS due to timeframe. The study could have benefited from a longer scope of time to conduct the research. More insight into student involvement and burnout could be gathered by looking at multiple universities and comparing the results. Therefore, the scope of the study was limited.

The third limitation was only studying a Christian institution. The one university where students were surveyed was a religiously-affiliated institution. It would be important to look at a variety of institution types in order to gain a more holistic perspective on the topic. Again, therefore, the scope of the study was limited.

Lastly, due to the construct of overinvolvement, only students who are presently involved in cocurriculars were surveyed. In addition, only a select group of activities in which a large portion of students are involved were surveyed for the purpose of the study. The scope of the study could have been widened by surveying not only involved students from all activities on campus, but also studying students who choose not to be involved.

Benefits

An anticipated benefit of the present study, however, was to be able to promote a healthy amount of involvement and balance for the students of the institution. Higher education professionals could use the results of the study to reevaluate how they go about promoting involvement at the university and encourage quality of involvement over quantity of involvement. One participant noted,

I think the culture celebrates doing the most. So we all seem to fall into this rat race trying to do the most and doing more than those around us. I guess I would advise future students to focus more on their overall purpose and have them consider how they can actually live this out.

This may also lead to a decrease in stress and burnout levels among overly involved students, and also help them find the “why” behind their choices to get involved.

Another benefit of the present study could be to create a culture of self-awareness and self-reflection among the students of the university to be able to look at their own

schedules and decide what is contributing to burnout in all of their lives. Blimling and Whitt (1998) state in their seven principles of good student affairs practice:

Good practice in student affairs not only engages students in active learning experiences, but does so in a manner that is cognizant of and responsive to the need for intricate balance between curriculum and co-curriculum. Students must be challenged to not only involve themselves in experiences targeted toward lifelong learning, but also in those experiences that allow for the maximum amount of growth and development within a realistic set of goal-oriented boundaries (p. 10).

Self-awareness of one's own capacities is important when it comes to quality over quantity involvement. This understanding helps students in "constructing their own thinking and judgement" (McGrath, 2001, p. 11). Just as it is important for higher education professionals to help students reach their potential, it is also important to help them recognize their limits.

Conclusion

The research question of the present study asked: To what extent, if any, does overinvolvement in cocurricular activities contribute to burnout for college students at a four-year institution? The data collected through the quantitative survey process indicated that a correlation exists between these two constructs. Whether students directly acknowledge it or not, it seems evident that burnout is present amongst involved students at this four-year institution.

College students have a lot on their plates. It is commonly the case that when students come to college, they take on more than they can handle. This can be from a

variety of reasons, but what is crucial is the guidance alongside these students to help them in preventing burning out. Coaching students in their cocurricular involvement and helping them make wise decisions regarding their time and commitments can positively impact their overall well-being. While it was not the purpose of this study to try and diagnose burnout or disregard cocurricular involvement as a negative thing, research shows that student involvement impacts development and learning for college students (Moore et al., 1998). Instead, the main implication of the present study was to promote involvement and wellness in a healthy co-relationship with one another to help students thrive during their time in college.

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Appendix A
Survey Questions

Demographics

1. What year in school are you?
 - a. Freshman
 - b. Sophomore
 - c. Junior
 - d. Senior

2. The term “cocurricular” (often also referred to as “extracurricular”) refers to opportunities that are offered to students to participate in, occur outside of the classroom (i.e. residence life, clubs/organizations, intramurals/athletics, music groups, study abroad experiences, on-campus jobs, etc.), and promote meaningful learning and development. How many cocurricular activities are you involved in on campus?

Number of activities (fill in the blank): _____

3. Please list the cocurricular activities you are involved in (fill in the blank):_____

4. How many hours/week, on average, would you say you spend committed to your cocurricular activities in total?
 - a. Less than 5 hours
 - b. 5-10 hours

- c. 10-15 hours
 - d. 15+ hours
5. How many hours/week, on average, do you spend studying?
- a. Less than 5 hours
 - b. 5-10 hours
 - c. 10-15 hours
 - d. 15+ hours
6. How many hours/week, on average, do you spend exercising?
- a. Less than 4 hours
 - b. 4-6 hours
 - c. 6-8 hours
 - d. 8+ hours
7. How many hours/week, on average, do you spend exercising?
- a. Less than 4 hours
 - b. 4-6 hours
 - c. 6-8 hours
 - d. 8+ hours
8. How many hours/week, on average, do you spend interacting with family (in person and/or over the phone)?
- a. Less than 4 hours
 - b. 4-6 hours
 - c. 6-8 hours
 - d. 8+ hours

9. How many hours/week, on average, do you spend interacting with friends (in person and/or over the phone)?
- Less than 4 hours
 - 4-6 hours
 - 6-8 hours
 - 8+ hours
10. How many hours/week, on average, do you spend on social media?
- Less than 5 hours
 - 5-10 hours
 - 10-15 hours
 - 15+ hours
11. How many days/week, on average, do you eat 3 meals?
- 0-2 days/week
 - 3-4 days/week
 - 5-6 days/week
 - 7 days/week
12. How many hours/week, on average, do you spend exercising?
- Less than 4 hours
 - 4-6 hours
 - 6-8 hours
 - 8+ hours

Cocurricular Involvement

Please rate the following statements.

1 = Strongly disagree

2 = Disagree

3 = Somewhat Disagree

4 = Neutral

5 = Somewhat Agree

6 = Agree

7 = Strongly agree

1. I tend to prioritize quantity of involvement over quality of involvement.
2. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my physical health.
3. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my mental health.
4. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my emotional health.
5. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my spiritual health.
6. My cocurricular involvement on campus hinders my overall well-being.
7. I feel that I give my 100% to every activity I am involved with.
8. When thinking about all the things I have on my plate, I often feel energized.
9. When thinking about all the things I have on my plate, I often feel anxious.
10. When thinking about all the things I have on my plate, I often feel overwhelmed.
11. When thinking about all the things I have on my plate, I often feel exhausted.
12. I often feel that I am overcommitted.
13. I often feel that I am incapable of accomplishing everything I need to get done.
14. I often end the day feeling tired and depleted.
15. I feel that I rarely have free time.
16. I tend to prioritize quality of involvement over quantity of involvement.

17. At times throughout the semester I have experienced feeling burned out because of how involved I am in cocurricular activities.

Conclusion

What advice would you offer to future students to equip them to be involved without becoming burned out? (open response)

Appendix B

Informed Consent

INFORMED CONSENT

You are invited to participate in a research study on student's involvement in cocurricular activities on campus. You were selected as a potential participant because of your involvement in cocurricular activities. Thank you for taking interest in this research. Your feedback is extremely valuable. The study is being conducted by student and researcher Shelby Robbins, and the study is being supervised by Dr. Todd Ream.

STUDY PURPOSE

The purpose of the study is to understand to what extent, if any, overinvolvement in cocurricular activities contributes to burnout for college students at a four-year institution. This short survey begins with demographic questions followed by the main survey section.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF STUDY

Your participation in this research is voluntary, and efforts will be made to keep your personal information confidential. Your decision whether or not to participate in this study will not affect your current or future relationship with the university or any of the researchers involved in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The survey that will be administered through Survey Monkey will be completely confidential. All responses will be anonymous. The survey will be created through a Survey Monkey account, but the data will not be sent to third parties or other vendors.

The only members who will access the data are the researcher. The only other members who may access the data are the thesis supervisor, the institution methodologist, and thesis committee members.

RISKS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY

There is minimal risk involved with taking part in this study. While participating in this study, there is the risk of discomfort or an emotional response associated in reflection of current/past experiences. If you feel any emotional discomfort from participating in this study, resources at the campus Counseling Center are available.

BENEFITS OF TAKING PART IN THE STUDY

The benefit to participation in this study is the opportunity to create a culture of self-reflection and self-awareness. In addition, this study has the potential to help the institution promote healthy involvement and balance, as well as decrease levels of stress and burnout among students.

ALTERNATIVES TO TAKING PART IN THE STUDY

There is no alternative to taking part in this study.

SUBJECT'S CONSENT

By advancing to the next page, you are agreeing to participate in the survey. There is no obligation to complete the entire survey. At any time you may choose to end participating.

