

Exploring the Relationship Between Academic Burnout and CET-4 Performance among Chinese Undergraduates

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ABSTRACT:

This study investigates the relationship between academic burnout and College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) performance among Chinese university students, addressing growing concerns regarding student mental health and its impact on academic outcomes. The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey (MBI-SS) was utilized to examine the correlation between three burnout dimensions (emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced academic efficacy) and mock CET-4 scores. A quantitative research design was employed with 168 sophomore students from a Chinese university. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent samples t-tests, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis. Results revealed that all three burnout dimensions were significantly and negatively correlated with mock CET-4 performance. The regression model explained 30.8% of the variance in mock CET-4 performance ($R^2 = .308$, $p < .001$), with reduced academic efficacy emerging as the strongest predictor ($\beta = -.500$, $p < .001$). No significant gender differences were found in burnout levels or English achievement. These findings suggest that students with lower self-perceived academic capability tend to achieve poorer results on standardized English tests. Universities should implement early burnout detection mechanisms and provide psychological support services to enhance both student well-being and language learning outcomes, thereby contributing to sustainable development in higher education.

Keywords: Academic Burnout, CET-4, MBI-SS, English Achievement, Chinese University Students, Higher Education.

1. Introduction

Academic burnout has emerged as a critical concern in higher education systems worldwide, particularly in competitive educational environments such as China [1][2]. As a psychological syndrome resulting from prolonged exposure to academic stressors, burnout manifests through emotional

exhaustion, cynicism toward academic activities, and diminished academic efficacy [2][3]. The prevalence of academic burnout among university students has increased substantially in recent years, particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic: a meta-analysis of 26,500 students found that more than half reported high emotional exhaustion (56.3%) and cynicism

(55.3%), and over 40% reported low personal accomplishment [3].

The College English Test Band 4 (CET-4) represents one of the most important standardized English proficiency examinations in Chinese higher education [4]. Administered to millions of non-English major undergraduates annually, the CET-4 serves multiple functions: it assesses students' English language competence, often constitutes a graduation requirement, and significantly influences employment prospects [4][5]. Given these high stakes, understanding factors that affect CET-4 performance has become increasingly important for educators, policymakers, and students themselves.

The relationship between psychological well-being and academic achievement has been extensively documented in educational research [6][7]. Specifically, studies have demonstrated that burnout negatively impacts cognitive functioning, learning motivation, and academic performance across various educational contexts [7][8]. Recent evidence from English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) settings reinforces this pattern, showing that English-learning burnout is negatively associated with English academic achievement, with the link partly mediated by learners' resilience [9]. However, the specific mechanisms through which burnout affects standardized language proficiency tests remain underexplored, particularly in the Chinese context where academic pressure is notably intense [10][11].

The Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey (MBI-SS) has been widely adopted as a reliable instrument for measuring academic burnout [1]. Developed by Schaufeli and colleagues [1], the MBI-SS assesses three core dimensions: emotional exhaustion (feeling overwhelmed by academic demands), cynicism (developing detachment from studies), and reduced academic efficacy (perceiving oneself as incompetent in academic work). The Chinese version of the MBI-SS has been validated and demonstrates acceptable psychometric properties among Chinese university students [12]. Although domain-specific instruments have also been

developed for Chinese learners, including a two-dimensional English learning burnout scale comprising exhaustion and demotivation [13], the MBI-SS was adopted in the present study because it retains the academic efficacy dimension, which is central to the present investigation.

This study aims to address the research gap by investigating: (1) the prevalence and levels of academic burnout among Chinese university students; (2) the correlations between burnout dimensions and mock CET-4 performance; (3) which burnout dimension most strongly predicts English language achievement; and (4) whether gender differences exist in burnout experiences and test performance. The findings are expected to contribute to sustainable educational practices by providing evidence-based insights for interventions targeting student mental health and academic success.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Academic Burnout

Academic burnout is conceptualized as a prolonged response to chronic academic stressors, characterized by exhaustion, cynicism, and inefficacy [1][2]. Unlike general stress, burnout represents a more severe and persistent condition that develops over time when students lack adequate resources to cope with academic demands [14]. Research indicates that burnout prevalence varies considerably across fields of study, countries, and world regions, with reported rates ranging from below 10% to over 70% depending on measurement criteria and population characteristics [3].

In the Chinese higher education context, several factors contribute to elevated burnout risk. These include intense academic competition, high parental expectations, rigid examination systems, and limited opportunities for leisure and social activities [10][11]. Studies have found that Chinese university students report higher levels of academic stress and burnout compared to their Western counterparts [10][15].

2.2 Burnout and Academic Performance

The negative relationship between burnout and academic performance has been consistently documented across various educational settings [7][8]. A comprehensive meta-analysis by Madigan and Curran [8] examining over 100,000 students found significant negative correlations between burnout dimensions and academic achievement, with effect sizes ranging from small to moderate.

Several mechanisms may explain this relationship. First, emotional exhaustion depletes cognitive resources necessary for effective learning and test performance [14]. Second, cynicism reduces engagement with academic content, leading to superficial processing and poor retention [7]. Third, reduced academic efficacy undermines confidence and may trigger avoidance behaviors that further impair performance [16][17].

2.3 Language Learning and Psychological Factors

Second language acquisition research has long recognized the importance of affective variables in language learning outcomes [5][15]. Factors such as anxiety, motivation, and self-efficacy significantly influence learners' willingness to communicate, practice opportunities, and ultimate attainment [18]. Foreign language anxiety, in particular, has been extensively studied and shown to negatively impact both learning processes and assessment performance [5][18].

However, research specifically examining the relationship between academic burnout and standardized language test performance remains limited. While existing research on burnout in EFL settings has concentrated largely on its antecedents, such as school climate and growth mindset [19], fewer investigations have focused on how student burnout affects language achievement, particularly in high-stakes testing contexts like the CET-4 examination. Recent work in Chinese EFL settings has begun to address this gap. For instance, English academic stress has been linked to academic burnout through rumination [20]. Similarly, English-

learning burnout has been shown to undermine academic achievement via reduced learning resilience [9] and to mediate the relationship between learner buoyancy and English achievement [21]. Collectively, these studies confirm the relevance of burnout to language outcomes. However, they rely primarily on self-reported or course-based achievement. The present study addresses this empirical gap by utilizing a standardized, high-stakes proficiency test, the CET-4.

2.4 Theoretical Framework

The present study is anchored in Bandura's social cognitive theory, which conceptualizes human functioning as a dynamic interplay among personal factors, behavior, and the environment, a process termed reciprocal determinism [16]. Within this framework, self-efficacy occupies a central position. It refers to individuals' beliefs in their capability to organize and execute the actions required to attain designated outcomes [16]. Such beliefs are not mere reflections of ability. Instead, they actively shape the goals people set, the effort they invest, their persistence in the face of difficulty, and their emotional reactions to challenge [17].

These mechanisms map directly onto language learning. Learners with robust self-efficacy tend to attempt demanding tasks, sustain effort through setbacks, and regulate the anxiety that often accompanies foreign-language performance. Conversely, learners with fragile efficacy are prone to disengage, avoid challenges, and underperform relative to their actual ability [17][18]. Therefore, the reduced-academic-efficacy dimension of burnout can be understood as the motivational core of the syndrome. As exhaustion and cynicism accumulate, they erode learners' confidence in their own competence. It is this decline in perceived efficacy that most proximally depresses performance. This reasoning provides a conceptual bridge between the burnout construct captured by the MBI-SS and the cognitive-motivational pathway emphasized by social cognitive theory. Furthermore, it grounds a specific prediction: reduced academic efficacy, rather than

exhaustion or cynicism, will emerge as the strongest predictor of mock CET-4 performance.

2.5 Research Hypotheses

Based on the literature review, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

H1: Academic burnout (total score and all three dimensions) will be significantly negatively correlated with mock CET-4 performance.

H2: Among the three burnout dimensions, reduced academic efficacy will be the strongest negative predictor of mock CET-4 scores.

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

The study was conducted at a university in China. The target population consisted of all second-year (sophomore) undergraduates at the institution who had no prior exposure to CET-4 in either its official or mock format. Based on these criteria, 282 eligible students were identified. All 282 were invited to participate.

Participation was voluntary, and all participants provided informed consent prior to data collection. Each student was asked to complete a mock CET-4 examination and an online questionnaire measuring academic burnout. The required sample size was established using Green's [22] rule of $N \geq 104 + m$ for testing individual predictors, which yields a minimum of 107 participants for the three-predictor model. In total, 168 students completed both instruments, exceeding the minimum threshold and representing a participation rate of 59.6%. The final sample comprised 83 male students (49.4%) and 85 female students (50.6%). The sample included students from humanities and social sciences disciplines ($n = 88$, 52.4%) and science and technology disciplines ($n = 80$, 47.6%).

Because participation was voluntary, the potential for non-response and self-selection bias must be acknowledged. Students who agreed to take a mock examination and complete a burnout questionnaire may differ systematically from non-participants in traits such as motivation, conscientiousness, baseline burnout levels, or

English proficiency. However, features of the achieved sample partially mitigate this concern. First, the sample size exceeded the minimum required for the planned analyses. Second, the gender and disciplinary distributions were both balanced, indicating that participation was not heavily skewed toward any specific subgroup. Nonetheless, given the single-institution frame and the voluntary nature of the sample, the findings should be generalized with appropriate caution.

3.2 Instruments

Academic burnout was measured using the Chinese version of the Maslach Burnout Inventory-Student Survey (MBI-SS), validated by Hu and Schaufeli [12]. The scale consists of 15 items measuring three dimensions: emotional exhaustion (5 items, e.g., "I feel emotionally drained by my studies"), cynicism (4 items, e.g., "I have become less interested in my studies"), and academic efficacy (6 items, e.g., "I can effectively solve the problems that arise in my studies"). Academic efficacy items were reverse-scored so that higher scores indicate greater burnout. Responses were recorded on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (never) to 6 (always).

English achievement was operationalized as performance on a mock CET-4 examination administered specifically for this study, because the participants had not previously taken the official CET-4. The mock examination consisted of authentic CET-4 papers drawn from previous official administrations, so that its content, format, and difficulty matched those of the operational test. In line with the official examination, the mock CET-4 comprises four sections: listening comprehension (35%), reading comprehension (35%), writing (15%), and translation (15%), with a total score of 710 points. A score of 425 or above is generally considered passing.

Demographic information collected included gender (1=male, 2=female) and academic discipline (1 = humanities/social sciences, 2 = science/technology).

3.3 Procedure

Data were collected through an online questionnaire administered approximately two weeks after participants completed the mock CET-4 examination and received their scores. This timing ensured that students had recent and accurate recall of their test experience while having sufficient time to process their results. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, with responses matched to mock CET-4 scores through a unique identifier system. This study was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of Yunnan Business and Technology University (Approval No.: 2025J0201; Approval Date: May 8, 2025).

3.4 Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS 26.0. The following analyses were conducted: (1) Cronbach's alpha coefficients to assess internal consistency reliability of the MBI-SS subscales; (2) descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, and ranges for all study variables; (3) independent samples t-tests to examine gender differences in burnout and mock CET-4 performance; (4) Pearson correlation analysis to assess bivariate relationships among variables; and (5) multiple linear regression analysis with mock CET-4 scores as the dependent variable and the three burnout dimensions as predictor variables. Effect sizes were reported alongside the significance tests, namely Cohen's d for the t-tests, the correlation coefficient r and its square (r^2) for the correlations, and Cohen's f^2 for the regression model. Collinearity diagnostics were examined to ensure the validity of regression results.

Common method bias was also considered in the design of this study. Because the predictor and outcome variables were drawn from different sources, the risk of common method bias was substantially reduced. The three burnout dimensions were measured through self-report using the MBI-SS, whereas mock CET-4 performance was an objective test score rather than a self-reported outcome. This separation of measurement methods limits the extent to which

shared method variance could inflate the observed relationships [23]. As a procedural remedy for the self-reported burnout measure, participation was anonymous and respondents were assured that there were no right or wrong answers, which helps reduce social desirability and consistency-motif effects.

4. Results

4.1 Reliability Analysis

The internal consistency reliability of the MBI-SS subscales ranged from acceptable to good. As shown in Table 1, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were .821 for emotional exhaustion, .826 for cynicism, and .764 for academic efficacy. These values are consistent with the previous validation study of the Chinese MBI-SS [12] and exceed the commonly accepted threshold of .70 for research purposes [24].

Table 1. Reliability Analysis of MBI-SS Subscales

Subscale	Items	Cronbach's α	Evaluation
Emotional Exhaustion	5	.821	Good
Cynicism	4	.826	Good
Academic Efficacy	6	.764	Acceptable

Note: $\alpha > .70$ is considered acceptable; $\alpha > .80$ is considered good [24].

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for all study variables. The mean mock CET-4 score was 281.00 (SD = 74.00), with scores ranging from 106.50 to 504.10, indicating substantial variability in English proficiency among participants. Regarding burnout dimensions, emotional exhaustion showed the highest mean score ($M = 17.21$, $SD = 4.12$), followed by academic efficacy ($M = 13.98$, $SD = 3.90$) and cynicism ($M = 13.73$, $SD = 3.20$). The total burnout score averaged 44.91 (SD = 9.15).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables (N = 168)

Variable	Min	Max	M	SD
Emotional Exhaustion	8.00	26.00	17.21	4.12
Cynicism	6.00	21.00	13.73	3.20
Academic Efficacy (R)	4.00	24.00	13.98	3.90
Total Burnout	20.00	62.00	44.91	9.15
Mock CET-4 Score	106.50	504.10	281.00	74.00

Note: R = reverse-scored; M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

4.3 Gender Differences

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to examine gender differences in burnout dimensions and mock CET-4 performance. Results revealed no significant gender differences in any of the study variables (all $p > .05$). Male students reported slightly higher total burnout levels ($M = 45.75$, $SD = 8.72$) compared to female students ($M = 44.09$, $SD = 9.53$), but this difference did not reach statistical significance ($t(166) = 1.17$, $p = .243$, Cohen's $d = 0.18$). Similarly, mock CET-4 scores did not differ significantly between males ($M = 281.61$, $SD = 77.91$) and females ($M = 280.41$, $SD = 70.45$), $t(166) = 0.10$, $p = .917$, Cohen's $d = 0.02$. Both effect sizes are negligible to small by Cohen's conventions, indicating that the practical magnitude of any gender difference in burnout or English achievement was trivial. These findings suggest that academic burnout and English achievement patterns are comparable across genders in this sample.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the bivariate relationships among study variables. As shown in Table 3, all three burnout dimensions were significantly negatively correlated with mock CET-4 scores, supporting H1. Academic efficacy demonstrated the strongest negative correlation with mock CET-4 performance ($r = -.540$, $p < .001$), followed by cynicism ($r = -.314$, $p < .001$) and emotional exhaustion ($r = -.263$, $p < .01$). Total burnout was also significantly negatively correlated with mock CET-4 scores ($r = -.459$, $p < .001$). Interpreted

against Cohen's benchmarks ($r = .10$, $.30$, and $.50$ for small, medium, and large effects), the association for academic efficacy represents a large effect, accounting for roughly 29% of the shared variance with mock CET-4 performance ($r^2 = .29$). Cynicism corresponds to a medium effect ($r^2 = .10$), emotional exhaustion to a small-to-medium effect ($r^2 = .07$), and total burnout to a medium-to-large effect ($r^2 = .21$).

Additionally, the three burnout dimensions were positively intercorrelated. Emotional exhaustion showed strong correlations with cynicism ($r = .726$, $p < .001$) and moderate correlation with academic efficacy ($r = .400$, $p < .001$). Cynicism and academic efficacy were also moderately correlated ($r = .372$, $p < .001$).

Table 3. Correlation Matrix of Study Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. EX	1				
2. CY	.726***	1			
3. AE	.400***	.372***	1		
4. Total	.875***	.835***	.737***	1	
5. Mock CET-4	-.263**	-.314***	-.540***	-.459***	1

Note: EX = Emotional Exhaustion; CY = Cynicism; AE = Academic Efficacy (reverse-scored); ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

4.5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the unique predictive effects of each burnout dimension on mock CET-4 performance while controlling for the other dimensions. Prior to interpreting the model, the assumptions of multiple linear regression were examined. The independence of residuals was supported by a Durbin-Watson statistic of 2.097, which falls within the acceptable range of approximately 1.5 to 2.5. Normality of the residuals was assessed through visual inspection of the histogram and the normal probability-probability (P-P) plot of standardized residuals. The histogram approximated a normal distribution and the P-P plot points fell close to the diagonal, indicating no marked departure from normality. Homoscedasticity was evaluated

using the scatterplot of standardized residuals against standardized predicted values, which displayed a random scatter with no discernible pattern, supporting the assumption of constant error variance. Residual and influence diagnostics indicated no problematic cases, with the maximum Cook's distance reaching .082, well below the threshold of 1. Collinearity diagnostics indicated acceptable levels of multicollinearity, with Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranging from 1.21 to 2.20, all well below the commonly used threshold of 10 [25]. Tolerance values ranged from .45 to .83, indicating no serious collinearity concerns.

As presented in Table 4, the overall regression model was statistically significant ($F(3, 164) = 24.36, p < .001$), accounting for 30.8% of the variance in mock CET-4 scores ($R^2 = .308$, Adjusted $R^2 = .296$), a large overall effect (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.45$).

Examination of individual predictors revealed that only academic efficacy emerged as a significant unique predictor of mock CET-4 performance ($\beta = -.500, t = -7.00, p < .001$). Neither emotional exhaustion ($\beta = .064, t = 0.67, p = .506$) nor cynicism ($\beta = -.175, t = -1.84, p = .068$) significantly predicted mock CET-4 scores when controlling for the other burnout dimensions. These results support H2, confirming that academic efficacy is the strongest and only significant predictor of English achievement among the burnout dimensions.

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Mock CET-4 Scores

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
(Constant)	449.26	24.16		18.60	<.001
Emotional Exhaustion	1.16	1.73	.064	0.67	.506
Cynicism	-4.05	2.20	-.175	-1.84	.068
Academic Efficacy	-9.49	1.36	-.500	-7.00	<.001

Note: $R^2 = .308$, Adjusted $R^2 = .296$, $F(3, 164) = 24.36, p < .001$; B = unstandardized coefficient;

SE = standard error; β = standardized coefficient.

5. Discussion

This study investigated the relationship between academic burnout and mock CET-4 performance among Chinese university students. The findings provide empirical support for the negative impact of burnout on standardized English achievement and highlight the critical role of academic efficacy in language learning outcomes.

5.1 Academic Burnout and English Achievement

The significant negative correlations between all three burnout dimensions and mock CET-4 scores are consistent with the broader literature on burnout and academic performance [7][8]. These findings extend previous research by demonstrating that the burnout-achievement relationship holds specifically for standardized language proficiency tests in the Chinese context. The moderate to strong correlations observed ($r = -.263$ to $-.540$) suggest that burnout represents a meaningful factor in understanding individual differences in English achievement.

5.2 The Critical Role of Academic Efficacy

The regression analysis revealed that academic efficacy was the only significant predictor of mock CET-4 performance when all three burnout dimensions were considered simultaneously. This finding aligns with social cognitive theory [16] and self-efficacy theory [17], which posit that individuals' beliefs about their capabilities significantly influence their performance outcomes.

Several mechanisms may explain why academic efficacy emerged as the strongest predictor. In the preparation phase, students with low academic efficacy may adopt less effective learning strategies and invest less effort in studying for the examination [16][17]. During the test itself, low efficacy beliefs may trigger performance anxiety, impairing cognitive functioning and thus test performance [18]. Over the longer term, students who doubt their capabilities may also lose motivation and

persistence when confronting challenging language learning tasks [5][15].

The non-significant effects of emotional exhaustion and cynicism in the regression model suggest that while these dimensions correlate with achievement, their influence may be largely mediated through academic efficacy. Future research should examine these potential mediating mechanisms.

5.3 Gender Differences

The absence of significant gender differences in burnout and mock CET-4 scores contrasts with some previous studies in which females reported higher levels of burnout, particularly exhaustion, in both occupational [26] and school settings [27]. It is, however, consistent with a recent meta-analysis of university students, which found that the prevalence of burnout did not differ significantly by sex [3]. This finding suggests that in the Chinese university context, where both male and female students face similar academic pressures and expectations, gender may not be a determining factor in burnout experiences or English achievement. However, this null finding should be interpreted cautiously, as the sample may have been underpowered to detect small gender effects.

5.4 Theoretical and Practical Implications

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to understanding the specific mechanisms through which burnout affects language learning outcomes. The prominent role of academic efficacy suggests that cognitive-motivational factors may be more directly linked to test performance than affective factors such as exhaustion and cynicism.

Several practical implications emerge from these findings. First, universities should implement early warning systems to identify students experiencing academic burnout before it significantly impairs their academic performance [28]. Second, interventions targeting academic self-efficacy may be particularly effective in improving both student well-being and English achievement. Such interventions could include providing positive feedback, setting achievable

goals, offering peer mentoring programs, and teaching effective learning strategies [17][29].

Third, English language instructors should be trained to recognize signs of burnout and create supportive learning environments that foster students' confidence in their language learning abilities. Emphasizing mastery goals over performance goals and providing constructive feedback may help maintain students' academic efficacy [30]. Fourth, institutional policies should promote balanced academic demands that allow students adequate time for rest, social activities, and self-care, contributing to sustainable educational practices [28].

5.5 Limitations and Future Directions

This study has several limitations that warrant consideration. The most fundamental is the cross-sectional design, which prevents causal inferences about the relationship between burnout and English achievement. Longitudinal research is needed to examine how changes in burnout over time affect language learning outcomes and whether the relationship is bidirectional [8].

A further constraint, and one that deserves particular emphasis, is that the sample was drawn from a single university. Academic stress and burnout among Chinese students vary with family, school, and regional context [11], and institutions themselves differ in selectivity and in how intensively they prepare students for the CET-4. The participants were also sophomores who had not yet taken the official CET-4, so their burnout-achievement profile may differ from that of students sitting the official examination under higher stakes. Seen in this light, the associations reported here, including the dominant role of academic efficacy, may partly reflect the instructional and assessment culture of this particular setting rather than a fixed pattern, and whether the same pattern holds elsewhere remains an open empirical question. Future studies should therefore recruit multiple universities of varying tier and region. Where the data structure allows, multilevel modelling that treats students as nested within institutions would

both improve generalizability and reveal how much of the variance in achievement lies between institutions.

The measurement of burnout is a further consideration. The MBI-SS is well validated, but self-report measures are subject to response biases. Although the use of an objective outcome measure reduced the likelihood of common method bias, the burnout data themselves remained self-reported, and future research could incorporate objective indicators such as cortisol levels or behavioral observations to strengthen the design [2].

A final limitation concerns the outcome measure. The study focused on mock CET-4 total scores without examining performance across the individual test sections. Future research could investigate whether burnout differentially affects listening, reading, writing, and translation skills, and could also include additional variables such as English learning motivation, language learning strategies, and prior English proficiency to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing CET-4 performance [15].

6. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that academic burnout, particularly reduced academic efficacy, is significantly associated with lower mock CET-4 performance among Chinese university students. The findings underscore the importance of addressing student mental health as part of efforts to improve English language learning outcomes in higher education.

The regression model explained 30.8% of the variance in mock CET-4 scores, with academic efficacy emerging as the sole significant predictor. This suggests that students' beliefs about their academic capabilities play a crucial role in their English test performance. No significant gender

differences were observed in burnout levels or English achievement.

These findings have important implications for promoting sustainable educational practices in Chinese higher education. By implementing early burnout detection mechanisms, providing targeted efficacy-building interventions, and creating supportive learning environments, universities can enhance both student well-being and language learning outcomes. Future research should employ longitudinal designs and examine potential mediating mechanisms to further elucidate the burnout-achievement relationship in language learning contexts.

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9. Data Availability:

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The dataset comprises de-identified MBI-SS item responses, mock CET-4 scores, and demographic variables for the 168 participants. To protect participant confidentiality and in line with the conditions of ethical approval granted by the Institutional Review Board, the data are not publicly archived. The SPSS analysis syntax used to generate the reported results is available from the corresponding author on request.

10. Conflict of interest:

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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