

How did you begin your research? Explain how you came up with your research query/topic.

It is inevitable for students not to feel burnt out at some point in their undergraduate careers. Along with the academic requirements that must be met, many students also take part in extracurricular activities which also necessitates a great deal of time and energy. Unfortunately, when students are chronically faced with multiple stressors, the chance that they will become burned out intensifies. Having been familiarized with this concept, I became interested in exploring the specific behavioral changes that occur due to burnout. Having become more vigilant of this condition in myself and others, I realized that students suffering from burnout seem to have a higher tendency to display aggressive reactions/behaviors. This caused me to become interested in finding the relationship between these two variables.

Did you seek assistance from a librarian, a professor, or someone else? If so, how this interaction impacted your research process? Was there anyone in particular who gave you the inspiration to turn your research into a different direction?

Having been intrigued by this topic, I decided to further explore these relationships for my Social Psychology final project. Once I gained some background information, I realized that the relationships between these two variables had not been previously studied within the literature. Seeing this motivated me to speak with my mentor, Dr. Tomlinson who guided me with regards to the different steps that I could take to conduct a survey of the students within the psychology department in order to gain a better understanding of the potential relationships that existed. She guided me through the different steps involved in conducting research on human subjects, helping me to complete my CITI training (Human Subjects Research; Social-Behavioral-Educational Modules) and IRB application. Once this was complete she assisted me in formulating a well-defined study design. She taught me how to create a consent form, put together the needed measures, and finally post the survey on SONA where it could be accessed and completed by other psychology students in exchange for study credits. If it were not for her support and guidance, this research project would have been impossible. Not only was she so integral to my evolution as a scientist, she also inspired me to ensure that my work is ethical and that I followed the principles set forth by the field of psychology.

How did you discover your sources? Which Library or other information sources did you use? Explain particular techniques or strategies that you used while searching and discovering information.

How did you select and evaluate the sources you found? Explain which criteria you used for selecting sources.

In order to be able to come up with a solid investigative design as well as gain a better understanding of the different mechanisms that are involved in the development of burnout and aggression, I had to find legitimate sources on which to base the logical progression of my reasoning. To do that, I began to find peer-reviewed articles utilizing the UMD library homepage and the many databases to which we have access. I also took advantage of several

books which pertained to the topic. Many of the books could be found in McKeldin Library while some were conveniently available as e-books online.

Because I wanted to gain a full understanding of the research that was relevant to the constructs of burnout and aggression, I utilized almost any sources which I deemed to be legitimate, making that determination on the basis of whether it was peer-reviewed, had been previously replicated and had been cited by other articles. I used older articles in order to gain an understanding of the constructs and newer findings to help formulate and support my hypotheses and reasoning. I utilized sources primarily offered by research that had been conducted within the behavioral sciences by narrowing my search to databases such as PROLA, PsycARTICLES, and PsycINFO (EBSCO).

Once I had perused the many relevant articles and books, I had to compile a list of the different questionnaires that I would be using to measure the constructs of burnout and aggression. I also had to ensure that my selected measures had high validity and reliability across most samples. After consultation with my professor, I realized that measures which had been previously replicated and verified by other studies would allow us to have a higher confidence in our findings. Using this as a guideline, I searched for measures that had been established in the literature by analyzing the number of studies in which they had been utilized and seeing whether there had been previous cross validation or factor analysis conducted. I took advantage of Google Scholar when finding the specific questionnaires which I had planned to use in assessing burnout and aggression. This search engine allowed me to search a wider scope of relevant articles thus making it easier to find the specific scales that I was seeking.

In addition, throughout my experience, I realized that a large part of the research process requires that one be able to accurately and efficiently utilize the multiple resources that have been put at our disposal. However, it can be difficult to keep track of all the information that is available. As a result, I decided to utilize Zotero, an application which allowed me to save the articles that had been interesting, add annotations, as well as cite them. This computer program proved to be very useful in allowing me to organize the plethora of information that I had retrieved during my literature review.

What did you learn during the research process that will help further your academic or professional career?

My goal, one day, is to become involved in medical research pertaining to neuroscience and psychiatry. This research experience was priceless in that it allowed me to gain a hands-on experience in conducting relevant and important research in the field of psychology. First of all, it allowed me to apply the knowledge that I had acquired in my classes and gave me an understanding of the intricate processes that are involved in doing research that goes beyond what I experienced within the classroom. I learned how to be flexible when it came to dealing with unexpected problems that arose and to use creativity in order to ensure that the study would allow us to better understand the relationship between burnout and aggression. In addition, with the help of Dr. Tomlinson, I was able to learn about and utilize multiple statistical

analyses to determine whether the results of the study showed a meaningful relationship or not. Furthermore, this experience also exposed me to the many different opportunities that are available for researchers to present and share their findings. In particular, I am very excited to explore potential options for publishing the results in undergraduate research journals such as the Undergraduate Journal of Psychology and the Psi Chi Journal of Psychological Research while also sharing these findings with the UMD community during the Undergraduate Research Day Poster Presentation. Most importantly, however, I got to experience the excitement of discovering relevant and interesting relationships in human thinking and behavior. The feeling of having been able to contribute (however minimal) to the pool of scientific knowledge is truly indescribable. This experience has been invaluable in that it allowed me to refine my understanding of the scientific process as well as helping me to gain a practical appreciation for the different steps that are involved.

Reflecting back on your research experience, what would you change? How could the library be a better place for your research needs?

This research experience allowed me not only to learn about the many aspects of psychological research but also helped me refine my approach to conducting research, in general. For one, I learned that staying organized is extremely important given the vast amount of information that one must analyze. In addition, although gaining background information regarding the different constructs of interest, it is also not efficient to spend too much time on literature reviews. Furthermore, I have discovered that although one's hypothesis might be restricted to a couple of measures, it might also be a good idea to gather information about other similar variables, as that could allow for a more holistic understanding of the interaction that might occur between variables. Therefore, in future projects, I plan to use a larger variety of measures when putting together my survey. Finally, I learned that the research process is not necessarily always exciting. It takes a lot of tedious and hard work to be able to reach a point where one can feel accomplished. I doubted myself and my hypotheses many times during this time period, however, I realized that one must push through because it really is all worth it at the end.