

The Impact of Part-time Jobs on Academic Performance for High School and College Students

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Abstract

This paper examines the impact of high school and college students on their academic success. It has been found that students' part-time jobs have become increasingly common, primarily due to economic reasons. Students' part-time jobs will have a complex and dual impact on their academic performance. Based on the role conflict theory, time allocation theory, self-determination theory and other related theories, the author discusses that the types of work (related work and unrelated work, long-term work with work intensity (working hours), off-campus work) and employment in unrelated work will be more unfavorable to the decline of academic engagement; Moderate working hours, related work and on-campus employment are beneficial to academic performance. Certain socio-economic factors, including the development of the family and the country, can impact students' academic performance. Due to financial constraints, students from less developed countries or low-income families are more susceptible to academic performance issues. To summarize the above points, the influence primarily depends on the type of work you do, what you want to achieve, and your current location.

Keywords

Students' Part-time Job; Academic Performance; Theory; Work Type; Work Intensity; Socio-economic Factors.

1. Introduction

It is common for high school students and college students to work while attending school. Based on the data from 1980-84, Carroll and Chan-kopka [1] found that one in twelve full-time university students held a part-time job in addition to their full-time studies while attending college. Additionally, around 80% of undergraduates in America were employed while attending college [2]. Currently, many students are working in society.

Several factors contribute to students' involvement in part-time jobs. Such as alleviating the economic pressure on parents, gaining work experience, or acquiring skills [3]. In short, it is related to money, which is an indicator of social development [4]. Therefore, employment is a means to address students' economic concerns. Countries such as the United States and the United Kingdom have conducted in-depth research on student employment. Is there a relationship between students' employment and academic performance? Generally speaking, it is due to the achievements of students' work. The results are vague, and the researchers say that there are two effects [5][6]. On the one hand, it will bring positive effects. For example, it may cultivate their sense of responsibility, the skill of time management, and promote their GPA if they are working in some related fields to their studies. On the other hand, it will also cause negative effects. Part-time job may occupy their time for study, potentially leading to a decline in academic performance.

This paper focuses on high school and college students because they represent a significant proportion of individuals who hold part-time jobs. In 2023, the employment-to-population ratio for high school students was 22.5%, and for university students, it was 44.3% in the United States [7]. Globally, a large percentage of university students hold part-time jobs during their studies, with the estimated figure ranging from 43% to 59%.[8]

The purpose of this paper is to give a detailed result of student work on academic achievements, mainly to summarize the achievements that have been completed in this field, and analyze the existing problems and possible main trends in the future.

2. Level of Theory

2.1. General View

Although this phenomenon (student employment) exists in most countries and is of great significance to students, universities, and society, there is a lack of research on certain aspects of this problem, such as the relationship between employment and academic performance.

To some extent, the debate about whether employing college students is positive or negative continues. According to the zero-sum model, this is a negative result, because the time spent on work is the time not spent on study. On the contrary, this positive effect is supported by a primary-oriented model, which posits that the most motivated and intelligent students are most likely to balance paid labor and study [9].

2.2. Role Conflict Theory

Role Conflict Theory focuses on students' lives, where they play different roles and what roles these students play in their lives. Role conflict is measured by two LAPC scales ("My graduate project needs interfere with my family life"); $\alpha = .92$), and APLC ("Because I have a demand for time at home, I have to postpone my work in the graduate program"); $\alpha = .90$). At this time, the students found a job, so they had role conflicts. From the data, we can see that the results show that at the beginning of this semester, the academic conflict in my life had a negative impact on my grades by the end of the semester. Generally speaking, the study's results indicate that LAPC is negatively correlated with year-end performance [10].

2.3. Theory of Time Allocation

The theory of time allocation was put forward by Becker [11]. He found that personal time is limited, and people should allocate their time to various activities to get the maximum effect.

Kalenkoski and Pabilonia [12] found that employment during school can occupy the time allocated for human capital construction activities, and homework is one of them. Otherwise, it refers to students who work more than 15 hours a week, and they spend less time on their homework.

Ballard and Eff [13] pointed out that students' time is influenced by various factors, such as salary, expected grades, and total available time, among others. Therefore, there will be differences between work/leisure activities and academics, and these two should be chosen.

In short, for students, there is a negative correlation between working time and study time, and a significant possibility of employment, which may lead to reduced study time.

2.4. Self-Determination Theory

To understand the relationship between employment and educational achievement more deeply, the theory of self-determination offers a different perspective.

According to the theory of self-determination, we can categorize individual learning and behavior motivation into two distinct parts. Part of it is internal motivation, and the other part is external motivation. Studies have shown that if the target content is growth, self-

achievement, etc. (intrinsic motivation), then it will increase participation and help to understand this concept and its long-term impact in school. On the contrary, if we set the learning goal as an external goal, such as economic return or public recognition, we are sacrificing our interest in learning and sustainable academic performance in exchange for short-term efforts[14]

According to this theory, the impact of students' employment mainly depends on their motivation. If students are employed for external motives, their academic performance will likely decline over time; however, if they have some internal motivation to work, it may also improve their academic performance.

3. The Employment Type Impact

3.1. Related Work or Not Related Work

The content of work is also an important factor that affects students' academic performance.

According to research conducted by Zsófia Kocsis and Gabriella Pusztai[15] at a regional university in Hungary, students' employment status depends on the type of job: those with jobs related to their studies exhibit better academic performance. Students who are engaged in learning-related work are more willing to develop their own skills and motivation, whereas those who are not engaged tend to exhibit lower academic participation and poorer academic performance.

Another study examines the achievement of nursing students during their first academic year [16]. It points out that both the type and quantity of work are factors in academic achievement in the first year. Students engaged in nursing work have a significantly better learning effect than those engaged in other jobs.

There are also studies in Spain [17], The influence of working hours and types of work on students' academic performance. This means that students who work 15 hours a week perform better (achieve a higher GPA) in their field than those who hold jobs.

3.2. Working Location (on Campus or off Campus)

Working locations are always thought of as one of the factors that influence a person's grades. We conducted a direct comparison to examine the impact of the workplace on the school's work. Walerius [18] has a hypothesis about on-campus and off-campus work. It is necessary to determine whether there is a positive or negative relationship between the two, which serves as a criterion for judging a university's success. As a result, off-campus work is negatively related to school hours efficiency, while on-campus work is positively related to school hours efficiency.

3.3. Working Intensity (Working Hours)

Working hours are very important for academic performance. Using the two-stage regression tool, if you work one more hour per week, your GPA will decrease by about 0.011 [19]. Tyler [20] utilized the state child labor law as a tool and found that extra working hours had a significantly negative impact on standardized test scores in the longitudinal research data of national education for senior high school students in 1992.

Working hours are not necessarily bad, especially when students work moderate hours.[21] According to the conclusions drawn by Ehrenberg and Sherman, as long as working hours are within a specific range, for example, less than 25 hours per week (as mentioned in the study), it will not affect their GPA.

Logan [22] discovered the adverse consequences of overwork and found that work beyond 20 hours in the first two years should not be increased, because students' grades decline with the increase in workload. Students don't have enough time to study

3.4. Working hours and working location combined

According to the research by Pike et al. [23], as far as working hours are concerned, working more than 20 hours a week is negatively correlated with students' grades. Finding a job on campus is positive for your grades when the total working hours in a week are the same.

All these influences are related to the theory of time allocation, because all these factors directly or indirectly affect a person's study time.

4. Socioeconomic Impact

4.1. National Development Status

National development will have a significant impact on the educational situation and the structure of the labor market. The key factor in development between different countries is the system. Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson [24] put forward the quality of the system, including rule of law, economic stability, etc. They have a positive impact on financial performance, and these factors will affect the long-term development results, thereby forming an environment in which students choose to study or work. In such an underdeveloped country, students may need to work longer hours or engage in some less desirable jobs. This has nothing to do with what they have learned (lack of support). In this case, it will lead to greater role conflict and lower participation in learning, because students must spend more time completing their studies and work.

4.2. Family Socio-economic Status.

In the research conducted by Duad and Iqbal [25], socio-economic status (SES) is usually defined by parents' education, work, and family income. This will enable students to have resources and opportunities throughout their academic career.

The survey results show that students with high socioeconomic status perform better in the exam than those with low socioeconomic status, because they have access to learning materials, and they have no' money to support their studies. Therefore, their academic performance will be greatly affected.

This research can also be related to students' employment. According to role conflict theory, students from low-income family backgrounds are under more pressure to balance their studies and work because they need to support themselves financially. Therefore, these students will have more time to address these problems. That is to say, they won't have too many adverse effects. According to self-determinism, most children in low-income families work for money (external motivation). Then in the long run, their grades will decline. On the contrary, rich children are more likely to realize their sense of accomplishment through employment as students (intrinsic motivation), which helps them learn.

5. Research Gaps & Future Directions

5.1. Research Gaps

The existing research on the influence of employment on students' academic performance has quite complete answers, but there are still some gaps. First of all, most of the research is carried out in Western countries; No worldwide research has reached a convincing general conclusion. Secondly, most studies conclude by using result data and self-reported data. In this case, it is challenging to accurately record and analyze changes in academic performance and establish the causal relationship. Finally, they are all considering the factors that affect the learning effect, such as whether it is related to work, working time and working place. There is a lack of research on the comprehensive effect of these factors.

5.2. Future Directions

Future research should be expanded to more different countries and gradually become global research. Look at how different countries and regions in different parts of the world have different levels of growth, and under what circumstances national policies have affected this matter.

In future research, it should be intended to put everything in a multidimensional way, such as work intensity, relationships with work and the workplace, not just focusing on a single factor. And if you want to know why they happen, you have to re-encode them regularly.

Finally, future research must be closer to reality. It can formulate rules and policies at the government and school levels, provide help for students in the job market, and plan campus employment, which will increase the potential benefits of employment for students to achieve academic results.

6. Conclusion

In this article, it can be seen that there are various factors that affect students' academic performance, including type of work, working hours, and socio-economic conditions. Over-time working and unrelated work will cause negative effects on academic performance, which is consistent with the Time Allocation Theory and Role Conflict Theory. When work demands compete with study time and academic roles, students are more likely to experience reduced learning engagement and poorer academic outcomes.

However, Part-time job can also have positive effects under certain conditions for students' academic performance. Academic-related employment and campus-based work can reduce the conflict between study and work responsibilities and may even enhance students' intrinsic motivation. From the perspective of self-determination theory, such employment opportunities can promote autonomy, competence, and personal development, thereby supporting academic performance when work and study are well balanced.

Socio-economic factors further shape the relationship between employment and academic outcomes. Students from low-income families or underdeveloped countries are more likely to engage in low-quality or time-intensive jobs, which may negatively affect their academic performance. On the contrary, students with a better family and national economic backgrounds often benefit more from employment, because they usually have access to better working conditions and greater institutional support.

Overall, the relationship between student employment and academic performance is complex. Time Allocation Theory, Role Conflict Theory, and Self-determination Theory together provide a useful framework to gain a better understanding about this interaction. Appropriate working hours and academically relevant employment are more likely to benefit students' learning, while excessive or irrelevant work may bring more academic risks. In the future, educational institutions and governments should consider developing more flexible and supportive employment policies to help students balance work and study and maximizing the potential benefits of employment for academic success.

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