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Effect of Part-Time Jobs on the Academic Performance of College Students

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ABSTRACT :

The growing trend of college students engaging in part-time employment has raised important questions about its impact on their academic performance. This study aims to explore the relationship between part-time work and academic outcomes among college students. It investigates how factors such as the number of working hours, nature of the job, time management skills, and motivation levels influence students' academic achievements.

Through a mix of surveys and in-depth interviews, we uncovered a nuanced picture: while working part-time in moderation can actually boost time management, responsibility, and financial independence, overdoing it can take a toll on academic performance due to exhaustion, stress, and less time for studying.

Our findings offer valuable insights for students, educators, and policymakers looking to strike a balance between work and study. We provide practical recommendations to help students juggle their job schedules without sacrificing their academic goals. By shedding light on this complex issue, we hope to inform decisions that support students' success both in and out of the classroom."

Keywords: Part-time jobs, academic performance, college students, time management, student employment, work-study balance.

Introduction

"As college life becomes increasingly demanding, many students are finding themselves torn between academics and the need to earn a living. With tuition fees skyrocketing and living expenses adding up, it's no wonder that more and more students are taking on part-time jobs to make ends meet. But what's the real impact of juggling work and study on their academic performance?"

On the one hand, having a part-time job can be a great way to learn valuable life skills like time management, discipline, and responsibility. Many students thrive in this environment, using their job as a way to structure their day and stay motivated. On the other hand, working long hours can take a toll on students' physical and mental health, leaving them with little time or energy for studying.

This study aims to explore the complex relationship between part-time work and academic success. By examining the correlation between working hours and academic results, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of how students balance their responsibilities and what types of jobs or schedules are most conducive to academic achievement.

The findings of this research have important implications for students, educators, and policymakers alike. By shedding light on the challenges and opportunities of part-time work, we can help students make informed choices about their employment and academic pursuits. We can also inform the development of support systems that cater to the unique needs of working students, ultimately helping them achieve their full potential.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objective of this research is to analyze the impact of part-time employment on the academic performance of college students through primary data collection. The study aims to understand the various dimensions of student life affected by part-time work and how these, in turn, influence academic outcomes.

Specific Objectives:

1. To examine the number of hours students work per week and its correlation with their academic performance.
2. To identify the types of part-time jobs commonly undertaken by college students.
3. To assess how students manage their time between work, academics, and personal life.

Literature Review

A significant body of research suggests that part-time employment can have both beneficial and detrimental effects on academic performance. *Krahn and Lowe (2009)* argue that while part-time work helps students develop time management skills and increases work experience, it can also lead to stress and decreased academic performance due to the competing demands on students' time. Their study found that students who worked more than 20 hours per week were more likely to experience a drop in academic performance.

Similarly, *O'Neill and Campbell (2015)* reviewed several studies on the relationship between part-time work and academic success, concluding that excessive work hours often lead to poor academic outcomes, especially when students fail to manage their time effectively. However, they noted that students working part-time jobs for less than 15 hours per week reported no significant negative impact on their grades.

A key theme in the literature is the role of time management in mitigating the negative effects of part-time work. According to *Robinson and Judge (2017)*, students who develop strong time management skills are able to balance part-time work with academic commitments. However, for students without these skills, the added stress of a part-time job can negatively affect their studies and personal life. *Berg and Ferris (2011)* also highlight the challenge of balancing work, academic responsibilities, and personal life, noting that students who struggle with this balance tend to experience higher levels of stress and burnout.

On the other hand, *Brown and Green (2013)* emphasize the importance of time management strategies. They found that students who used planners, scheduled their study sessions, and set clear boundaries between work and study time had better academic outcomes. This suggests that part-time work does not necessarily need to hinder academic performance if students are able to manage their time effectively.

The reasons students take up part-time jobs are also a critical factor in understanding the impact on their academic performance. According to *Gault et al. (2000)*, many students seek part-time employment to gain work experience, which they believe will help them in their future careers. Their research showed that students who worked in fields related to their academic studies often performed better academically due to the alignment between their work and academic interests. Furthermore, *Keller and Choi (2017)* found that students who took part-time jobs out of financial necessity were more likely to report lower academic satisfaction due to the stress of juggling work and studies.

While much of the literature points to the potential drawbacks of part-time work, particularly when hours exceed 20 per week, there is also evidence of positive outcomes. *Pascarella and Terenzini (2005)* suggest that part-time work can foster valuable life skills such as communication, problem-solving, and financial management, which can enhance a student's academic and social development. Similarly, *Cohen and Wills (1985)* argue that the social support gained through part-time work, such as peer interactions in the workplace, can provide emotional benefits and reduce academic stress.

However, *Krahn and Lowe (2009)* caution that the potential for negative effects increases when part-time jobs interfere with academic responsibilities, particularly when students do not have adequate support or time management skills. Their study emphasizes that part-time work should be considered an extension of learning, not a distraction.

In addition to academic outcomes, part-time employment can have significant effects on students' personal and social development. *Brown and Green (2013)* found that students who worked part-time often experienced greater independence and self-confidence. This was particularly true for those who worked in customer service or leadership roles. *Gault et al. (2000)* also concluded that part-time jobs offer students valuable networking opportunities and provide them with a sense of financial independence.

However, the social implications are mixed. While some students report feeling more connected and responsible due to their part-time jobs, others experience feelings of isolation, particularly those who work long hours or during weekends, which limits their ability to participate in social activities and campus events.

Research Methodology

The research methodology outlines the approach and tools used in the study to investigate the effect of part-time jobs on the academic performance of college students. The methodology focuses on the design, data collection process, and analytical techniques employed to draw meaningful conclusions from the gathered data.

Research Design

This study follows a *descriptive research design* to explore the relationship between part-time employment and academic performance among college students. The descriptive approach is suitable for understanding the current state of part-time work and its effects on students' academic performance. The study does not manipulate variables but rather collects data from the respondents and interprets their views and experiences.

Sampling Method

The sample for this research was selected using a *convenience sampling* technique. A total of 50 college students were chosen from various academic disciplines, ensuring a diverse representation of students engaged in part-time jobs. The sample includes students from both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, ensuring that the findings are reflective of the broader student population. The sample size of 50 students is sufficient to obtain a reliable insight into the impact of part-time jobs on academic performance.

Data Collection

Primary data was collected through a *structured questionnaire* consisting of both close-ended and multiple-choice questions. The questionnaire was designed to collect information on various aspects, including:

- Demographic details
- Types of part-time jobs students are engaged in
- The number of hours worked per week
- Reasons for working part-time
- Academic performance (CGPA/Percentage)
- Impact of part-time jobs on academic responsibilities
- Time management skills and their effectiveness

The questionnaire was distributed to the sample population, and responses were collected over a period of two weeks. The data collected was then coded and input into an Excel spreadsheet for analysis.

Tools Used for Data Analysis

The data collected from the survey was analyzed using the following tools:

1. *Microsoft Excel*: Excel was used to organize the collected data into tables for easier analysis. The data was presented in tabular format, with columns representing different variables (such as the number of hours worked, academic performance, etc.). Excel was also used to calculate percentages and to visually represent the data using charts and graphs.
2. *Tables*: The findings from the survey were summarized and presented in tables. Each table included columns for the particulars (the specific question or variable), the number of respondents, and the percentage of respondents who selected each option. This presentation allowed for a clear, concise representation of the data.
3. *Percentage Calculation*: The data was analyzed and presented in percentages to show the proportion of respondents who selected each option. Percentage calculation was crucial to provide a clear understanding of the distribution of responses and to quantify the relationship between part-time work and academic performance.

Data Interpretation

The data obtained through the questionnaire was interpreted based on the objectives of the study. The interpretation of the results involved analyzing the frequency of responses and understanding the patterns or trends that emerged. Key questions included:

- The average number of hours students work per week and its correlation with academic performance.
- The types of part-time jobs commonly undertaken by students.
- How students manage their time between work, academics, and personal life.

Limitations of the Study

While this study provides valuable insights into the effects of part-time jobs on academic performance, there are a few limitations:

- *Sample Size*: The sample size of 50 students may not fully represent the entire college student population, especially across different regions or educational institutions.
- *Self-Reported Data*: The data is based on self-reported responses, which may be subject to bias, as students may not always accurately report their academic performance or work hours.
- *Generalizability*: The findings of this study may not be generalizable to all students globally, as the work culture and academic systems vary across different countries.

Ethical Considerations

The research adhered to ethical guidelines by ensuring the confidentiality of participants' responses. All participants were informed of the purpose of the study and consented to their involvement. The survey was anonymous, and respondents were assured that their personal information would not be disclosed.

Data Analysis & Interpretation

1. Are you currently engaged in a part-time job?

| Particular | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|------------|--------------------|------------|
| Yes | 30 | 60.0% |
| No | 20 | 40.0% |

Interpretation:

Out of 50 students surveyed, 60% are currently engaged in part-time jobs while 40% are not. This indicates that a significant portion of college students balance academics with part-time work.

2. What type of part-time job are you currently doing? (Only answered by 30 students)

| Particular | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Retail | 6 | 12.0% |
| Food/Delivery Services | 8 | 16.0% |

| | | |
|-------------------------|---|-------|
| Tutoring/Teaching | 5 | 10.0% |
| Freelancing/Online Work | 4 | 8.0% |
| Internships | 3 | 6.0% |
| Others | 4 | 8.0% |

Interpretation:

Among those who work part-time, the most common job type is in food or delivery services (16%), followed by retail (12%). Fewer students are involved in internships or online freelance work.

3. How many hours do you work per week on average? (Answered by 30 working students)

| Particular | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|--------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Less than 10 hours | 7 | 14.0% |
| 10–20 hours | 12 | 24.0% |
| 21–30 hours | 6 | 12.0% |
| More than 30 hours | 5 | 10.0% |

Interpretation:

Most students work 10–20 hours per week (24%), which appears to be a manageable schedule alongside their studies. Only a small proportion (10%) work more than 30 hours, which may pose academic challenges.

4. Why did you take up a part-time job? (Multiple responses allowed, based on 30 working students)

| Particular | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Financial support | 18 | 36.0% |
| Gain work experience | 20 | 40.0% |
| Personal interest | 8 | 16.0% |
| Build resume | 12 | 24.0% |
| Peer influence | 5 | 10.0% |
| Other | 2 | 4.0% |

Interpretation:

The primary reasons students pursue part-time jobs are to gain work experience (40%) and financial support (36%). Resume-building and personal interest also play notable roles.

5. What is your current average academic performance (CGPA or %)?

| Particular | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|----------------------|--------------------|------------|
| Below 50% / 5.0 CGPA | 4 | 8.0% |
| 50–60% / 5.1–6.0 | 8 | 16.0% |
| 61–70% / 6.1–7.0 | 14 | 28.0% |
| 71–80% / 7.1–8.0 | 15 | 30.0% |
| Above 80% / 8.1+ | 9 | 18.0% |

Interpretation:

Most students fall in the 61–80% range (58%), showing that moderate to good academic performance is common even among those who work part-time. Only 8% are below 50%.

6. Have you ever missed classes or assignment deadlines due to your job?

| Particular | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|------------|--------------------|------------|
| Frequently | 6 | 12.0% |
| Sometimes | 14 | 28.0% |
| Rarely | 7 | 14.0% |
| Never | 3 | 6.0% |

Interpretation:

28% of students sometimes miss academic responsibilities due to their job, while 12% frequently do. This suggests part-time work can occasionally interfere with academic commitments.

7. How well do you manage your time between work, academics, and personal life?

| Particular | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|------------|--------------------|------------|
| Very well | 6 | 12.0% |
| Well | 10 | 20.0% |
| Average | 10 | 20.0% |
| Poorly | 4 | 8.0% |

Interpretation:

A majority (52%) rate their time management as "well" or "average," suggesting a generally balanced approach. However, 8% admit to poor time management, possibly affecting their academic or personal life.

8. Do you feel that your part-time job has positively or negatively affected your academic performance?

| Particular | No. of Respondents | Percentage |
|------------|--------------------|------------|
| Positively | 12 | 24.0% |
| Negatively | 9 | 18.0% |

| | | |
|-----------------|---|-------|
| No major effect | 7 | 14.0% |
| Not sure | 2 | 4.0% |

Interpretation:

24% believe their job has positively influenced their academics, likely through improved discipline or confidence. However, 18% reported a negative impact, indicating challenges in balancing both areas.

Findings

Based on the primary research conducted through a structured questionnaire from a sample size of 50 college students, the following key findings have been derived:

- 1. Prevalence of Part-Time Jobs Among Students:** 60% of the respondents reported being engaged in part-time employment, indicating a strong inclination among students to balance academics with work responsibilities.
- 2. Types of Part-Time Jobs:** The most commonly pursued part-time jobs were in food and delivery services (16%) and retail (12%), followed by tutoring, freelancing, and internships. This showcases a diverse range of employment preferences among students, depending on availability and skillsets.
- 3. Weekly Work Hours:** The majority of students (24%) work between 10–20 hours per week, which appears to be a balanced range. However, a notable proportion also work more than 20 hours, potentially affecting their academic engagement.
- 4. Reasons for Taking Part-Time Jobs:** The leading reasons were gaining work experience (40%) and financial support (36%), followed by resume building and personal interest. This implies both financial necessity and career development are strong motivators.
- 5. Academic Performance Distribution:** Most students maintained a CGPA/percentage between 61–80%, showing that part-time work does not necessarily hinder academic performance for the majority. Only 8% scored below 50%.
- 6. Impact on Academic Responsibilities:** Around 40% of the respondents admitted to either frequently or sometimes missing classes or assignments due to their jobs, indicating a moderate level of conflict between work and academic duties.
- 7. Time Management:** A combined 52% of students rated their time management as either “well” or “average.” However, 8% acknowledged managing their time poorly, suggesting a need for better planning or support.
- 8. Perceived Impact on Academics:** 24% of students reported a positive impact on their academic performance, possibly due to improved discipline and time management. On the other hand, 18% felt a negative impact, which could stem from overworking or stress.

Conclusion

"When it comes to juggling part-time work and academics, the research shows that it's a delicate balancing act. On one hand, having a part-time job can be a game-changer for students, providing them with much-needed financial support and valuable work experience that can boost their career prospects. On the other hand, if not managed carefully, part-time work can start to take a toll on students' academic performance and social life.

The secret to success seems to lie in finding that sweet spot where students can effectively juggle their work and study commitments. This requires strong time management skills, as well as a job that complements their academic goals rather than hindering them. Educational institutions can also play a crucial role in supporting students by offering flexible scheduling options and resources that help them thrive both in the classroom and in the workplace.

By recognizing the challenges and opportunities of part-time work, institutions can help students make the most of their experiences and set themselves up for long-term success.

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