

Students part-time employment: Benefits and consequences

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Abstract: *The purpose of the study is to investigate the positive and negative effects of part-time work for students. Twenty-six students who had part-time work were selected to participate in the study. The research instrument was the interview used with the purpose of investigating the impacts of part-time work on students. Research results showed that part-time work offered students financial benefits, improved their personal development, and enhanced their social relationships. However, it also negatively impacted their academic performance, health, and overall well-being. To manage these challenges, students prioritized careful time management, sought flexible work schedules, improved their study habits, and sought support from teachers and classmates. From the research findings, the researchers made some suggestions for English teaching and learning.*

Keywords: *Part-time employment, part-time jobs, benefits and consequences, positive effects, negative effects*

1. Introduction

Currently racing to work part-time is no longer strange or rare among students. Part-time work has almost become an indispensable part of student life. There are many jobs suitable for students, such as marketing, sales, tutoring, and so on. Normally, it's not unusual for students to want to work part-time. The reasons they pursue part-time jobs are countless, but most are driven by a desire to improve their financial situation, particularly to support their families. In addition to earning money for their studies, part-time work provides an opportunity for students to gain practical experience in the real world. From being fully subsidized, students today are often forced to work to support themselves if they don't want to be left behind.

Working part-time helps students gain a lot of experience, particularly practical experience. This is an essential aspect of part-time work because it allows students to interact with the real world. In contrast, if the students focus solely on academics, they may lack exposure to other jobs and the dynamics of the workplace. Fast-paced work environments help them learn valuable skills, such as teamwork, independent work and pay more attention to detail.

However, part-time work also presents several challenges for students. Primarily, balancing work with academic commitments can significantly impact their studies, leading to decreased focus and

potentially lower grades. The demanding nature of schoolwork and employment can also strain students' physical and mental health. Furthermore, the repetitive and often monotonous nature of many part-time jobs can contribute to feelings of boredom and even depression, especially when students feel confined by the rigid schedules and expectations of the workplace.

From the above reasons, the researchers decided to carry out this study to find out the positive and negative effects of part-time jobs on students in reality. The purpose of the study was to investigate the benefits and consequences of part-time work for students.

2. Literature review

Historically, youth employment was viewed very positively. It was widely believed that part-time jobs instilled valuable work habits, strengthened work ethic, and taught young people about financial responsibility. These jobs were seen as a way to keep young people engaged in productive activities and prepare them for successful future careers. This perspective led to the development of various educational programs aimed at providing young people with early exposure to paid work experiences.

In recent years, the long-held positive view of youth employment has been challenged. This shift in perspective can be attributed to two key factors. Firstly, a growing body of research has revealed

mixed and often negative consequences of student employment, such as potential impacts on academic performance and well-being. Secondly, changes in societal values and expectations have led to a re-evaluation of the role and nature of adolescent employment. These factors have prompted educators to reconsider the merits of combining work and school for teenage students.

3. Research methodology

3.1. Participants

In this study, the participants were 26 students who were studying at Tay Do University and had part-time work. There were 7 males and 19 females participating in the study. Their ages ranged from 19 to 22. Before the research was carried out, the researchers contacted the students to confirm their part-time employment.

3.2. Instrument

The instrument used in this study was an interview. The researchers decided to conduct semi-structured interviews. The students were asked with a set of prepared questions. Then the researchers followed up with probing questions to gain a richer understanding of the students' responses. These interview questions focused on the positive and negative effects of part-time work on students.

4. Summary of the results

The students' responses from the questionnaires and interviews were reported in the following sections.

4.1. The students' perceptions about the benefits of part-time work

Overall, most of the students stated that the biggest benefits they could get from their part-time work was financial benefits. In fact, 16 students stated that part-time jobs helped them have enough money for daily living and eating.

"My part-time job at the coffee shop helps me cover my textbooks and groceries. It's great not having to constantly ask my parents for money." (Female, 20)

"Working as a tutor allows me to save up money and pay for my own living expenses, such as rent and groceries." (Male, 19)

Besides, there were also a few students who recognized the positive effects of part-time jobs on their personal development. The followings are some examples from the students' opinions.

"I used to be really shy, but working as a cashier

has forced me to interact with different people every day. It's definitely helped me build confidence." (Female, 19)

"My part-time job taught me how to be organized. It's definitely improved my time management skills." (Male, 21)

Furthermore, some students enjoyed their part-time jobs because they could make new friends and had fun.

"Working at the restaurant has allowed me to meet a lot of other students. It's a great way to make friends outside of my classes." (Male, 20)

"I really enjoy helping customers at the store. It feels good to know I'm contributing to something meaningful." (Female, 19)

4.2. The students' perceptions about the consequences of part-time work

Most students who worked part-time admitted that their jobs affected their academic performance. They shared the reasons why part-time work influenced their studies as follows.

"I've noticed my grades slipping a bit since I started working. It's hard to find enough time to study properly when I'm working so many hours." (Male, 22)

"Sometimes I have to miss class or cut back on studying to cover my shifts at work. It definitely impacts my academic performance." (Female, 21)

"I'm quite worried because if I go to work and don't go to class, my knowledge will be interrupted and I won't be able to keep up with my assignments." (Female, 20)

Moreover, the students also shared with us about how working part-time affected their health and social life.

"I don't have as much time to spend with my friends anymore. I feel like I'm missing out on social events and fun activities." (Female, 19)

"Working part-time can be physically and mentally draining. I sometimes feel tired and burnt out, which affects my overall well-being." (Male, 19)

Besides, some students even got stressed and felt exhausted.

"Sometimes it feels like I'm juggling too many things. Work, classes, and my social life all compete for my time. I often feel stressed and overwhelmed." (Male, 21)

"I used to have more time for studying and relaxing. Now, I feel like I'm always rushing from

class to work, and then back to study late at night. It's exhausting." (Female, 20)

4.3. The students' solutions to balance study and part-time work

The students found different creative ways to balance their studies and part-time jobs. Most of them said that they often made detailed schedules to plan their time carefully, prioritizing their most important academic tasks. The followings are some examples from the students' solutions.

"I use a planner to schedule everything – classes, work shifts, study time, even time for meals and exercise. It helps me stay organized and on track." (Male, 21)

"I prioritize my tasks based on urgency and importance. Assignments due soon or major projects always come first, even if it means working late or waking up early." (Male, 22)

"I've learned to say no to things that aren't essential. If I'm already overloaded, I have to decline social invitations or extra commitments to avoid burnout." (Female, 20)

Another solution from the students was that some of them tried to find jobs that were flexible or related to their studies.

"I talked to my manager about my class schedule and we worked out a flexible work schedule that fits around my classes." (Female, 19)

"I chose a part-time job that's related to my major. It's more interesting and I feel like I'm gaining valuable skills that will help me in my future career." (Male, 21)

"My boss is really understanding. If I need to miss a shift for an exam or a major project, she's always willing to work with me." (Female, 20)

In addition, the students also used helpful study techniques, like focusing on their work for short periods and then taking breaks.

"My technique is that I spend 25 minutes of focused study followed by a 5-minute break. It helps me stay concentrated and avoid getting distracted." (Male, 20)

"I study in the library or at a coffee shop where there are fewer distractions. My dorm room is just too tempting to relax in!" (Female, 20)

"I form study groups with classmates. We quiz each other, discuss readings, and help each other stay motivated." (Female, 19)

Lastly, reaching out to professors, friends, and

campus support services for help and advice was also a common strategy used the students.

"I talk to my friends about the challenges of balancing work and school. It helps to know I'm not alone and to get advice from others who are going through the same thing." (Male, 20)

5. Conclusions

The results of this study showed that part-time work provided the students with benefits in term of finance, personal development and social relationships. However, working part-time also had negative effects on students' academic performance, health, social life and well-being. To manage their studies and part-time jobs, the students focused on carefully planning their time and trying to get flexible work schedules. They also learnt to study more effectively and got support from teachers and classmates. Based on these findings, the researchers suggest that schools can help by offering classes at different times or online, and by giving students good advice on careers. Besides, teachers can be understanding and help students manage their time by teaching them how to plan and stay organized.

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