

Striking A Balance Between School and Work

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Project Dedication

My family immigrated to America from Italy in the early 1970's. My grandparents came here with everything they could carry along with my father and his three brothers. In search for a better life, my family settled in a small town named Kenilworth. Being a first generation American instilled in me the desire to carry on my grandfather's legacy. I was introduced to good work ethic from a very young age and carried myself as he would. There was nothing my grandfather couldn't do, there was no task too big or small for him to handle, and there was no such thing as impossible. I live my life everyday in honor of him since his passing in 2008. I dedicated this project to him because of his impact in my everyday life. Without his teachings, I would not have the capabilities to handle school and work full time.

Background

Balancing school, work, well being, and personal interests can be hard for college students. With many working to support themselves, it is imperative that they learn essential skills such as time management and resilience.

Purpose

This study is aimed to bring notice to the statistic of students who work during college and offer practical advice to those who find it difficult to manage all life's responsibilities. Additionally, I will also involve benefits of post-college employment in terms of financial earnings and differentiating characteristics compared to non-working students.

Methods

Instead of introducing new data to this topic I will focus on studying, evaluating, and expanding on secondary data.

Following key patterns in this field of study, I will acknowledge the methods used throughout these academic journals, university studies, and government articles. Included will be graphs, charts, and citations from the academic methods as listed above which focused on the population of students who work during college

Preliminary Findings (During College)

An article written by Jason Sockin at Penn Wharton, University of Pennsylvania, conducted a study that analyzed college student employment and the direct effects it has on academic performance. The study showed that students who work full time have a more negative impact on their GPA. Sockin says this could be due to:

- Pressure from work
- Poor time management skills
- Wrongful judgement on time sensitive assignments (both work and school)

On the other hand, students who worked part time had a less significant impact on their GPA. In some cases, some students even saw improvements in their grade averages. Reasons for this could be due to:

- More flexibility of work
- More time to focus on schoolwork
- Less pressure from work

Preliminary findings (Post College)

I then analyzed the article, "Study: Working During College Leads to Higher Earnings Later", published by the Education and Employment Research Center at the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations. This article was aimed at highlighting college effects of working during school. They found that students who worked during college saw significant advantages over their peers who did not work. The advantages were:

- Increased job experience
- An average of \$5,000 higher salary
- Better social networks
- More professional skill set

Table 2: Correlation between Working in College and Outcomes for Two-Year Enrollees

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	First enroll two-year institution					
	Z-score of college GPA	Earns associate degree	Enrolls in four-year institution	Earns bachelor's degree	Earns neither degree	Total months in undergrad
Share of college months employed 20+ hours	-0.239**	0.048	-0.158***	-0.069*	0.079*	1.992
	(0.116)	(0.040)	(0.041)	(0.036)	(0.041)	(4.359)
Sample mean at zero share	0.14	0.27	0.45	0.25	0.54	38.69
Mean share months	0.66	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63
Respondents	679	1259	1259	1259	1259	1254
Sampling weight (millions)	1.83	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.30	3.28
Adjusted R-squared	0.20	0.07	0.08	0.09	0.10	0.05

Sockin, Jason. "College Employment and Student Performance." *Penn Wharton Budget Model*, 4 Oct. 2021. <https://budgetmodel.wharton.upenn.edu/issues/2021/10/4/college-employment-and-student-performance>.

Conclusion

The ability to work during school is an opportunity to expand, achieve financial freedom, and learn for the future. Through this study you can see how the difference between working full time and part time bring their own separate challenges to students. Working part time allows for students to keep their focus on school while making money to provide for themselves. Full time work allows for more money to come through but limits students' freedom and sometimes has a negative impact on GPA. Overall, students who work during school have a step up on their peers after college in the ways of higher salary amounts, better time management skills, increased set of skills, and a bigger social network.

How Much Working Students Earned During Their First Year of College	Average Earnings Bump After College	
	Students Pursuing an Associate's Degree	Students Pursuing a Bachelor's Degree
\$1 - \$5,000	\$1,035	\$1,639
\$5,000 - \$15,000	\$4,532	\$4,332
\$15,000 - \$25,000	\$9,593	\$10,179
\$25,000 +	\$18,155	\$20,625

Education and Employment Research Center. "Study: Working During College Leads to Higher Earnings Later." *Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations*, 2019. <https://smlr.rutgers.edu/news-events/smlr-study-working-during-college-leads-higher-earnings-later>.

Discussion (closing thoughts)

As a senior in college who has worked everyday, I can tell you that it is hard to stay on top of everything. My piece of advice to all those who are in college now and working is to stay focused, trust the course, and take everything as it comes. You begin to stress when you look too far ahead and worry about things that are out of your reach. Conquer your objectives one at a time but do it with integrity and honor. You have the ability to make money while you make memories with your friends, so enjoy every moment. It will all pay off in the future. Goodluck!

References

