

# Work-Related Stress on Academic Engagement of Part-Time Students

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**Abstract**— Work-related stress for part-time students refers to the challenges and pressures that arise from balancing academic duties with part-time jobs, resulting in a triple burden of work, study, and limited personal time. This study examined the work-related stress in relation to the academic engagement of part-time students at a private higher education institution in Ozamiz City. The study assessed work-related stress among part-time students in terms of schedule, workload, and work hours, evaluated their academic engagement through class attendance, assignment submission, exam performance, and school activities, and determined the significant relationship between work-related stress and academic engagement. A descriptive-correlational research design was utilized, with 100 part-time students chosen as respondents through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using a self-made questionnaire to assess factual results. Data analysis utilized mean scores and the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results revealed that the overall work-related stress was very high, while the academic engagement of part-time students was high. A significant positive correlation was found between work-related stress and academic engagement, indicating that higher stress levels were associated with greater academic involvement. The study concluded that despite experiencing intense work-related stress, especially from long hours and heavy workloads, yet, part-time students remained actively engaged in academics, particularly in examinations. It is recommended that institutions implement flexible academic policies, offer support services, and collaborate with employers. Teachers should provide academic flexibility, while students are encouraged to manage their time effectively and seek support when needed.

**Keywords**— academic engagement, class attendance, examination performance, higher education, part-time students.

## INTRODUCTION

Many students today engage in part-time work while studying to meet financial obligations, yet this dual role often presents challenges that affect their academic performance. Balancing work responsibilities with school tasks can generate work-related stress, which reduces students' focus, participation, and overall engagement in academic activities. Time constraints may prevent them from completing assignments, preparing for exams, or attending classes regularly, resulting in both physical and mental fatigue. While part-time employment helps cover tuition, daily expenses, and educational materials, it also limits the time and energy available for learning and school involvement. Understanding the impact of such stress on academic engagement is crucial for developing better support systems for working students (Liu & Wang, 2023).

Work-related stress among part-time students arises from the pressure to manage academics, employment, and limited personal time, creating a "triple burden." This stress is pervasive and influences various aspects of life, including academic performance, emotional well-being, and physical health (Madhavan & Nithyanantham, 2023). International research demonstrates that factors such as time management, job nature, income, and social support can affect students' academic outcomes. For instance, Phan Thuy (2024) found that time management had the strongest positive effect on academic performance among 237 students in Hanoi, followed by social support, job nature, and income. However, the study's findings were limited by a geographically narrow sample and did not compare working versus non-working students or variations in work hours.

Other studies have focused on the relationship between academic burnout, work, and performance. Drăghici and Cazan (2022) reported that students experienced greater burnout from academic demands than from employment, with test anxiety mediating the connection between academic burnout and poor adjustment. Additionally, employment status influenced the strength of this relationship, suggesting that factors such as job type, self-efficacy, and personality traits should be considered in future research. Reports from the UK highlight a growing trend of working students due to the rising cost of living, with the proportion of students holding jobs increasing from 35% in 2015 to 68% in 2025. HEPI (2025) noted that this shift has reduced study hours and slightly lowered student satisfaction, prompting universities to provide financial and mental health support, while experts call for greater government intervention to safeguard learning experiences.

Globally, research indicates that working more than 20 hours per week can lead to cognitive overload, stress, and lower academic performance due to limited rest and rigid schedules (Dawar, 2025). Yet, employment also enhances students' time management skills and employability. In the Philippine context, Conde-Francia et al. (2024) observed that students at Cavite State University experienced high academic-related stress but maintained good study habits and strong academic performance. Baja (2024) highlighted the experiences of students in Technical Vocational Livelihood programs, identifying financial pressures, overlapping academic and employment demands, and the importance of personal determination, peer support, and time management. Jayson and Tigbabao (2024) similarly emphasized that Filipino students rely on strategic scheduling, prioritization, and support networks to maintain work-life balance while pursuing education.

Despite these findings, much of the existing research has focused on full-time students working only a few hours or employed adults managing job and personal responsibilities. Part-time students, who must simultaneously balance studying and working, face unique challenges such as financial burdens, severe time constraints, and both physical and emotional

exhaustion. This gap highlights the need for localized studies exploring the experiences of part-time students in managing academic and employment responsibilities. Understanding these dynamics is significant for developing practical interventions, such as flexible scheduling, targeted academic assistance, wellness programs, and institutional support, to enhance academic engagement, well-being, and overall student success in this growing population.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Work-related stress can significantly affect the academic engagement of part-time students, as physical exhaustion, emotional pressure, and high job demands may reduce their ability to concentrate, participate in class, and complete academic tasks effectively (Lesener, Gusy, & Wolter, 2019; Salmela-Aro & Upadaya, 2020). Key factors contributing to this stress include workload, defined as the quantity and complexity of tasks assigned within a specific timeframe, which requires sustained physical and mental effort and can negatively affect well-being and performance (American Psychological Association, 2023; Bakker & Demerouti, 2017), and work hours, where extended or excessive periods of employment are linked to fatigue, stress, and reduced productivity (International Labour Organization, 2021; WHO & ILO, 2021; Pfeffer, 2018). Structured scheduling is a critical strategy for managing these demands, allowing students to allocate time efficiently, prioritize tasks, reduce overlapping responsibilities, and improve accountability and productivity (Robbins & Coulter, 2018; Kerzner, 2022; Tracy, 2019). Together, workload, work hours, and scheduling shape students' capacity to balance employment and academic responsibilities, influencing both their stress levels and engagement in learning.

Academic engagement encompasses students' emotional, cognitive, and behavioral involvement in learning, including class attendance, assignment submission, examination performance, and participation in school activities (Reschly & Christenson, 2019; American Educational Research Association, 2014; Ancheta et al., 2021; Kuhfeld et al., 2020). Regular attendance fosters interaction with instructors and peers, deepens understanding of course

content, and promotes positive academic habits. Timely submission of assignments demonstrates responsibility and supports comprehension and performance (Chiu et al., 2024; Musawi Maliki et al., 2024; Akçapınar & Kokoç, 2020). Examination performance reflects mastery of academic material and effective study strategies, while participation in extracurricular activities enhances motivation, social-emotional skills, leadership, and a sense of belonging (Brown & Harris, 2014; Bridgeman & Adler, 2020; Richardson et al., 2019; Eccles et al., 2003; Fredricks & Simpkins, 2012; Wang & Degol, 2016). Understanding these dimensions in relation to work-related stress is essential for developing interventions and support systems that improve engagement, well-being, and academic outcomes among part-time students.

### **Objectives of the Study**

This study examined the work-related stress in relation to the academic engagement of Part-time students. Specifically, it sought to:

1. Determine the level of the respondents' work-related stress in terms of schedule, workload, and work hours.
2. Determine the level of the respondents' academic engagement in terms of attendance to classes, submission of assignments/activities, examination performance, and school activities participation.
3. Examine the significant relationship between the levels of the respondents' work-related stress and the academic engagement.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a descriptive-correlational research design to examine the relationship between work-related stress and academic engagement of part-time students, following Creswell and Creswell's (2023) framework that allows for describing sample characteristics and assessing variable relationships without implying causation. Conducted at a private, non-sectarian higher education institution in Ozamiz City, Misamis Occidental, the study involved 100 part-time students aged 18 to 35 who balanced academic responsibilities with employment. Purposive sampling

was utilized to ensure that participants experienced both work and academic demands. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire divided into two parts: Part I measured work-related stress across constructs of schedule, workload, and work hours, while Part II assessed academic engagement through attendance, assignment submission, examination performance, and participation in school activities. Both instruments were validated by experts, pilot-tested, and demonstrated high reliability with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of 0.941.

The data-gathering procedure involved obtaining institutional approvals, securing informed consent from participants, and administering printed questionnaires in person, with assurances of confidentiality and voluntary participation. Ethical considerations were strictly observed, including the protection of personal information and the respondents' right to withdraw at any time. For data analysis, weighted means were calculated to assess the levels of work-related stress and academic engagement, while the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient was employed to determine the significance of the relationship between the two variables. This methodology ensured a systematic, ethical, and reliable approach to understanding how work-related stress influences the academic engagement of part-time students within the context of private higher education.

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### ***Level of the Respondents' Work-Related Stress***

Table 1 shows the respondents' work-related stress in terms of schedule, workload, and work hours. It is indicated that the respondents always experience excessive stress on work hours, with a highest mean of 3.48 (Very High), and workload as well, with a mean of 3.40 (Very High). However, they are just sometimes feeling stressed on the schedule with a mean of 3.34 (High). With the overall mean of 3.41, the work-related stress is evaluated as "Very High".

Based on the results, this implied that part-time students experienced significant stress due to their work responsibilities. The very high levels of stress related to workload and work hours suggested that

many students were likely exhausted from job tasks and spent long hours at work, which may have affected their energy, focus, and availability for academic activities. The high stress related to managing their schedules also indicated that balancing school and work was a major challenge. These results highlighted the need for better support systems, such as flexible class schedules or counseling services, to help students manage their stress and maintain academic performance.

The results were supported by the study of Drăghici and Cazan (2022) which explored the connection between burnout from work and academic maladjustment among university students who also had jobs. The study revealed that students experienced more burnout from academic demands than from their jobs. It also showed that test anxiety played a key role in linking academic burnout to poor academic adjustment. Students who felt more burned out academically tended to experience greater test anxiety, which negatively affected their academic performance. Furthermore, the researchers found that

whether or not a student was employed influenced the strength of this connection. They suggested that future studies should consider factors such as the type of work students do, their confidence in managing tasks (self-efficacy), and their personality traits.

Similarly, a global study published in the International Journal for Multidisciplinary Research revealed that working more than 20 hours a week can cause mental overload, increased stress, and reduced academic performance, mainly due to limited rest and tight schedules. The study emphasized the importance of further research and stronger support from schools and institutions to help part-time students balance their responsibilities. On the positive side, the findings showed that working while studying improved students' time management and employability, helping them handle both academic and job tasks more effectively. However, it also found that excessive work hours led to sleep loss and emotional fatigue, which negatively impacted their overall well-being and academic success (Dawar, 2025).

**Table 1. Level of Respondents' Work-related Stress (n=100)**

Constructs	Mean	Interpretation
Schedule	3.34	High
Workload	3.40	Very High
Work Hours	3.48	Very High
Overall Mean	3.41	Very High

Interpretation: 3.4- 4.19 (Very High); 2.6- 3.39 (High), 1.8- 2.59 (Low); 1.0- 1.79 (Very Low)

**Level of the Respondents' Academic Engagement**

Table 2 presents the academic engagement of part-time students in terms of attendance to classes, submission of assignments/activities, examination performance, and school activities participation. It is indicated that the respondents always engage in their examination performance, with a highest mean of 3.48 (Very High), indicating that part-time students still perform well on exams despite other demands. However, submission of assignment activities has a mean of 2.9 (High), school activities participation has a mean of 2.81 (High), and attendance to classes indicates a mean of 2.78 (High). With the overall mean of 3.15, the academic

engagement of part-time students is assessed as "High".

The findings indicated that part-time students were able to stay academically engaged despite the pressures of their work. This implied that they prioritized key academic responsibilities, such as attending classes and completing assignments, likely because these were crucial to their academic success. Their strong performance in examinations may have been a result of their motivation, discipline, and effective time management skills. On the other hand, their lower involvement in school activities suggested that their work commitments may have limited their

participation in extracurricular events. These results suggested that schools and institutions needed to be more responsive to the needs of part-time students by providing flexible academic support to help them remain fully engaged in both their academic and campus life.

The results were supported by the study of Conde-Francia et.al. (2024) which assessed the level of stress, the quality of study habits, and the academic performance of students at Cavite State University, Carmona Campus during the pandemic, as well as the relationships among these factors. Findings showed that students generally experienced low stress in areas

related to relationships and personal well-being, but high stress related to academic responsibilities. This indicates that school tasks were a major source of emotional and physical exhaustion. Despite this, students demonstrated good study habits and performed very well academically. The results also revealed significant relationships between stress levels and academic performance, and between study habits and academic performance. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that campus departments, together with the Office of Student Affairs and Services, develop wellness initiatives such as student support groups and stress management webinars to help reduce academic-related stress.

**Table 2. Level of the Respondents' Academic Engagement**

Constructs	Mean	Interpretation
Attendance to classes	3.35	High
Submission of assignments/activities	2.9	High
Examination performance	3.48	Very High
School activities participation	2.81	High
Overall Mean	3.15	High

Interpretation: 3.4- 4.19 (Very High); 2.6- 3.39 (High); 1.8- 2.59 (Low); 1.0- 1.79 (Very Low)

**Significant Relationship between the Levels of the Respondents' Work-Related Stress and Academic Engagement**

Table 3 presents the significant relationship between work-related stress and the academic engagement of part-time students. Using Pearson correlation as the statistical tool to assess the constructs, the result shows a value of Pearson-r is 0.45 with a p-value of 0.002, indicating a moderate positive relationship between work-related stress and academic engagement among part-time students. This means that as work-related stress increases, academic engagement also tends to increase. Since the p-value is less than 0.01, the relationship is statistically significant. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, confirming that there is a significant connection between the two variables.

The findings revealed a significant relationship between work-related stress and academic engagement among part-time students, indicating that job stress influenced their academic performance.

Part-time students who managed their time effectively were often more focused and motivated despite the pressure. Their work experience helped develop discipline, responsibility, and time management skills that supported their studies. Their determination to succeed academically was also driven by financial needs or personal goals. Overall, some part-time students used work-related stress as motivation to remain committed to their education.

To support the result of the study, Phan Thuy (2024) conducted research in Hanoi to examine how part-time employment affects the academic performance of university students. The study gathered responses from 237 students through questionnaires and used structural equation modeling for analysis. The findings showed a significant positive relationship between academic performance and four main factors: time management, social support, job type, and income. Time management had the most substantial impact, followed by social support, the nature of the job, and income.

**Table 3. Significant Relationship between the Levels of the Respondents' Work-Related Stress and Academic Engagement**

Variables	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
Work-related stress & Academic engagement	0.45	0.002	Moderate negative correlation (Significant) Reject Ho

**H<sub>01</sub>: There is a significant relationship between work-related stress and academic engagement among part-time students**

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The study highlighted that effective scheduling, support from peers and institutions, and selecting jobs related to one's field of study can significantly improve academic success. However, the research was limited to one geographic area and did not include comparisons between students who work and those who do not, or among students with varying work hours.

### CONCLUSION

The study concluded that part-time students experience very high levels of work-related stress, primarily due to long work hours and heavy workloads, while stress from scheduling was slightly lower. Despite these high stress levels, students maintained high academic engagement, particularly in examination performance, demonstrating their ability to manage work demands while performing well academically. A significant positive relationship was identified between work-related stress and academic engagement, suggesting that, for some students, work-related stress may act as a motivating factor that encourages focus, discipline, and active involvement in their studies.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the school administration implement more flexible class schedules and supportive academic policies for part-time students, including academic advising, time management workshops, and stress-relief activities, while collaborating with employers for adaptable work arrangements. Teachers can assist by offering flexible deadlines, providing alternative assessments when necessary, maintaining open communication, and using practical teaching methods to keep students

engaged. Part-time students are encouraged to prioritize tasks, organize schedules, and seek support from peers, teachers, or school resources to manage stress effectively. Employers should provide flexible work hours and foster a supportive work environment for student-workers. Guidance counselors and student affairs offices can offer counseling, workshops, and regular monitoring to strengthen coping skills and provide timely assistance. Finally, future researchers may explore other locations, compare part-time and full-time students, and investigate the long-term effects of work-related stress on academic performance, mental health, and how varying job types and hours influence engagement.

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