Abstract

This study explores the experiences of sixteen business students who worked part-time, in an effort to better understand how their jobs affected their academic performance, health, engagement with the on- and off-campus communities, competency development, and post-graduation employability. Literature outlining the impact of part-time work on the student experience has typically used large-scale surveys to establish correlations between the number of hours worked and variables associated with the specific aspects of the student experience. In contrast, the author engaged business students through in-depth interviews to further explore the working student experience and compliment the scholarly research in this area. The results of this study, presented in a comprehensive model, illuminate a number of immediate and longer-term impacts on the student experience, the majority of which the students described as positive. This study concludes with a series of recommendations for university staff and employers to consider to better support working students. In addition, personal, academic, and workplace factors that were shown to impact the working student experience are highlighted for working students to consider in selecting an ideal part-time role.

Keywords: student employment; part-time work; students; employers; grade point average; academic performance; health; engagement; post-graduation employability; skills; competencies.