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The Life of Young Adult: The Factors Affecting the Academic Life of Working Students at Noveleta National High School

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Abstract

A working student is a student who balances studying and working to help meet their family's needs. Currently, we encounter many working students due to the hardships of the times and the insufficient income of citizens to cover their needs. This is why some students decide to help and work while studying to assist their parents, juggling school work and employment. We can also observe that some students fall behind on submitting activities because they work while studying and have limited rest time.

This study discusses the challenges faced by each working student. Whatever the obstacles, every working student

faces them to fulfil both their responsibilities and work duties. The study will show the difficulties that working students overcome to balance work and study for their families.

This survey of working students aims to understand how each working student feels and to grasp their situation. It is conducted to recognize and take note of each working student's circumstances, so that their school can be aware that some students are falling behind on school work and sometimes even fall asleep in class because they work while studying.

Keywords: Grade Point Average (GPA), Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), Philippines

1. Introduction

Recognizing the reality of working high school students in Noveleta National High School. Balancing work and study without financial support presents significant challenges. As students take on part-time jobs to sustain their education, there is a growing need to understand how their work affects their grades and personal lives.

This paper examines the challenges and experience of working students, exploring how they balance work, study, and personal responsibilities. Research can provide strategies, tips and solutions that can help working students balance work and study more effectively.

Not all parents have enough income to send and support children in school. As a result, some students have to support themselves by becoming working students. These students commonly encounter many problems with their work and studies. Working while studying has its positive and negative sides. When students have a job they will earn money to pay for school expenses, while other students need it to make their life easier.

The most common negative effect on working while studying as a working student is their performance in their school. Working more than five hours in a day causes students to lose their focus in studying. Consequently, they may exhibit low academic performance. Many working students are given multiple demands and roles as a student, and at the same time, an employee. This causes the students to have a high level of stress and anxiety. In result, some students got poor school grades or worse, failed high school. Being a working student also affects the physical health of children by the lack of sleep, according to Juan R. Liwag (2022) ^[3], sleep loss is usually caused by the school to overtime work of the students and it can affect the students' physical and intellectual performance.

The purpose of the Research is to identify the working students' problems and challenges that they encounter and to help students that need to work for school expenses to provide tips and advice so they can easily handle work and studies at the same time. The study also aims to identify how their job supports daily living and what contributions it makes to them.

Background of the Study

Despite their financial difficulties and the challenge of earning income, Filipino students are still able to meet their financial needs through working. According to The Working Student (2022), online jobs, extra work in clothing stores, vegetable, fruit, and fish stalls, among others, are some of the employment options. They face challenges because they need to maintain their responsibilities as students to avoid failing grades and meet the standards in their jobs to retain their positions. The financial burden of tuition is increasing. Due to the rising prices of tuition fees, school fees, and other educational expenses, families tend to face financial crises, particularly in managing the family budget based on their income. There are programs, such as scholarships, that help working students, especially other students. The scholarships provided help reduce their school expenses and prevent them from using the money they worked hard for.

The money they earn is focused on essential needs, including the budget for food, education, electricity bills, and other financial bills. Families cannot manage all these because their income is insufficient to cover these expenses, especially the valuable cost of education. Considering these facts, students affected by the crisis experienced by their families will be necessitated to work while studying; they can be either part-time or full-time working students. Every student has their own aspirations in life, and that is why some students are now working by virtue of aiming for those aspirations. ACLC College of Mandaue also has its own aspirations.

This study is important for young students who have started working early for themselves and their families because the number of working students is also increasing, especially those who are still in junior high school who work or do extra jobs that they can manage and are sure to provide sufficient financial funds for family and school expenses.

The number of working students is increasing continuously and several problems experienced by those students have risen. As the main purpose of this study, this paper aims to determine the problems that exist in working students, the factors that affect their academic performance and the advantages and disadvantages of being a working student.

Statement of the Problem

The main focus of this research is to identify the effects on students by working while studying. Conducting this study will help us understand the struggle of working students. This study will address the following questions:

1. In what specific ways does your job contribute to different aspects of your life?
2. Does being an employed student have a negative impact on your academic grades, especially in terms of performance tasks, classes, submissions, written works, or overall grade point average (GPA)?
3. How is your mental health being impacted by your job, and are there specific work-related factors driving these effects?
4. What changes does being a working student bring to your daily living routines?
5. What specific tools or strategies do you use to manage time between work responsibilities, academic requirements, and how effective are these methods?

Hypothesis

Ho: There is no significant difference in academic

performance (measured by GPA) and perceived work-life balance between working students enrolled in higher education institutions in Noveleta, Cavite who are employed within the municipality versus those employed outside Noveleta, after controlling for hours worked and year level.

Ha: Working students enrolled in higher education institutions in Noveleta, Cavite who are employed within the municipality have significantly higher GPAs and better perceived work-life balance compared to those employed outside the municipality, after controlling for hours worked and year level.

Objectives of the Study

These objectives aims to fully understand the struggle of every working student. This study determines the effects on combining study and work.

These are the following objectives of this research:

1. To determine the effect of working while studying to the students of Noveleta National High School.
2. To identify the impact to the mental health of every working student at Noveleta National High School.
3. To find out the difficulties they face in their daily lives and on how they manage their sleeping schedule as a working student.
4. To figure out the benefits of being a working student.
5. To determine how they handle their time management as a working student while studying.

Theoretical Framework

1. “Juggling Rhythms” Framework – Alison Taylor (2025) this framework is relevant to working students because it identifies the struggle of juggling different roles. Students have to possess “rhythmic competence,” which is the ability to juggle education, work, and personal life while being flexible to fit into different rhythms and boundaries. It also identifies that success is not only dependent on time management but also on how one coordinates different aspects of their lives to prevent burnout and succeed in both academic and personal aspects. **2. Job Quality Determinant Theory – Adrian Wright et al. (2025)** ^[12] this theory is relevant to our topic because it illustrates that the quality of the student’s job, rather than just the number of hours they work or the amount of money they earn, is a factor in their academic achievement. A high-quality job will help the student succeed in school, while a low-quality job will increase stress levels and cause grades to suffer. This is why working students can have such different experiences based on the type of job they have. **3. Platform Work Autonomy-Anomie Continuum – Marie Trespeuch & Elise Verley (2025)** ^[4] the relevance of this theory is that many students today are involved in gig economy jobs. Even though these jobs can offer students flexibility and the ability to learn entrepreneurial skills, they can also lead to insecurity, confusion, and stress. This theory is important in understanding how social factors and job types can affect whether platform work is an advantage or a problem for working students.

Significance of the Study

Working students will gain knowledge on how to manage their time, finances, and fatigue. They will also learn that many others experience these challenges, which they may face in the future. This brings strength and gives hope to continue working and studying. Parents of working students

will be able to identify and examine their children's needs and help them learn how to provide emotional, physical, and financial support to assist their children in balancing studying and working.

Schools and teachers can use the findings to develop policies such as appropriate class schedules, provide academic assistance, or establish scholarship programs for those balancing studies with employment; this will help each educator understand the situation of every learner, particularly those who work while pursuing their education. Additionally, researchers will benefit from expanded knowledge and a clearer grasp of the challenges faced by this group, as the study contributes to increasing overall understanding of student workers and their experiences.

To Working Students: They will gain knowledge on how to manage their time, finances, and fatigue. They will also learn that many others are experiencing these challenges, which they may face in the future. This brings strength and gives hope to continue working and studying.

To Educational Institutions Schools: Colleges, and universities can use the results to design targeted interventions such as flexible class schedules, academic support services, financial assistance programs, and career guidance tailored to the needs of working learners.

To Parents of Working Students: They will be able to see and study the needs of their children and help them learn how to provide emotional, physical, and financial support to help their children balance studying and working.

To Schools and Teachers: They can use this to develop policies such as appropriate class schedules in their schools, provide assistance for the studies of working students, or create scholarship programs for them. This will help each teacher understand the situation of every student, especially working students.

To Future Researches: This will help provide additional knowledge about working students and identify the problems each one faces. It contributes to increasing the understanding of all working students.

Scope and Delimitations

This study focuses on the challenges and experience of working students in Noveleta National High School during the school year 2025-2026, the research will explore the profile of the working student, their age, sex, grade level, and part time job. It will also identify the reason for working at an early age, challenges of a working student, impact of work in academic performance, how does working while studying affect the learner's mental health, and determine how they manage time as a working student while studying.

The study is limited only to enrolled students in Noveleta national high school who are working part time jobs, and only covers the academic year 2025-2026, the research also focusing on the experiences of student employees, excluding non-working students, the collection of information will be done through survey and interviews with the working students. And this study does not explore if the students job will help their long term career goals.

Definition of Terms

Academic performance: Is the process where the student has achieved their goals. Typically through Grade Point Average (GPA), written tasks, performance tasks, or completion of the school work activities.

Burnout: A state of emotional, physical exhaustion caused

by excessive stress from responsibilities of heavy academic works and demand in job schedules.

Financial independence: The status of a student who relies on their own income to sustain their personal needs and school expenses rather than relying on parental support and government help.

On-Campus Employment: Job opportunities provided by the school campus, such as canteen assistant, library clerk roles, usually designed to be flexible with the students' schedule.

Part-time employment: A type of job or employment that carries fewer hours per week or in a day than a full time job, or what are mostly called side lines or on-call jobs.

Self-efficacy: The self-belief that they can handle time and control to organize and execute the courses of action to manage both work responsibility and academic performance by themselves.

Time management: Is the process of controlling the spending of time on specific activities or prioritizing responsibility in everyday living, or balancing time in studies and work.

Working student: Is a person or individual who is working a part-time or full-time job while officially enrolled in a school or any academic institution.

Work-study balance: Where a situation of gap that students prioritizes the demands if their school works and responsibilities of their employment without negatively impacting the one in another.

2. Review of Related Literature

International

A global study was conducted by Taylor and Sandoval in *Vocations and Learning*, 2024, to explore students' experiences and how such programs help balance work and education despite the education costs. It fills a gap by focusing on understudied campus employment programs. This explores how flexible scheduling helps students to manage their time better. Moreover, equity plays such a huge part in working students' lives, it addresses whether all learners have fair access to opportunities, resources, and support to balance work and education- regardless of their background or circumstances. This connects to our research topic to determine the possible outcomes that help working students' function in their daily lives. It basically supports learners to claim fairness between employed and unemployed students.

According to Romano and Abadiano, (2021)^[7] this shows that time management is important for working students. This study shows that working students also encountered physical and mental health problems, distraction and stress. It shows us the struggle they faced while working and studying. They also experienced financial problems for their daily needs and school expenses. In a study that was conducted by Summer, McCoy, Trujillo, Rodriguez, (2025)^[9] working while studying limits students' time schedules, showing how vulnerable they are during emergencies and life crisis as a student.

This also explained the struggle of every working student during the pandemic that caused a lock-down- causing the students to experience more struggle and stress because of them being unemployed. This also shows how they effectively overcome this situation through positive thinking, a work-study-life balance, and self-trust. And lastly, determination, good time management, perseverance

and knowing the responsibility of each are the most important foundations of being a working student.

A study conducted by Remenick and Bergman (2021) found that higher education institutions among students are needed to consider them. This study shows us the recommendation for working students to increase their incentives in school. It shows us the recommended things for students who need support systems that assist students in finding an employment that works for them, the work that also helps them financially and academically. This study also recommended on-campus employment, meaning; that work is provided by the school institution itself. This study is related to our research because this study also stated the struggle of finding support through the people who should support working students.

This 2025 OECD policy paper frames secondary school students' part-time work not just only to earn money, but as an early career development that enhances learners' transition to the labor force. This study is connected to our research topic to oversee the possible outcomes and the struggles that working students have gone through. This study explains how it shapes young adults' essential skills such as time management, communication, and problem-solving. However, the report also addresses potential risks—such as excessive hours that interfere with academic performance, health issues, and exposure to unsafe working conditions. To balance these, it shows concrete strategies for schools to help learners. These strategies like, collaborating with employers to set fair hours and safety standards for students, integrating work experiences into career guidance programs, and providing academic support. The goal of this study is to ensure part-time work serves as a stepping stone to long-term success rather than a barrier to educational achievement.

Local

Based on the Philippines, one of the studies that explored the life of working high school students in private educational institutions is that of Santos and Rivera (2022) [8], which focused on senior high school working students. Based on the study, most of these students work due to financial conditions and family obligations. However, despite the difficulties of time and physical fatigue, these individuals showed resilience, responsibility, and perseverance.

According to Balacuit and Lopio (2022) [1], many university students decide to work while studying to help their families who do not have enough money. Some students are forced to work because their parents are unemployed or have health problems. The study found that the biggest problem for working students is money. Even though they have jobs, they still struggle to pay for school projects and daily needs. Another challenge is time management. It is very hard to balance work and school at the same time. Because of this, students feel exhausted, lack sleep, and have a hard time focusing on their lessons. In the study of Victorio (University of the Philippines Diliman Thesis, 2022) [11]. It highlights significant challenges such as limited school hours, high level of stress, balancing work demands, and academic deadlines. It defines how challenging it is to be a working student, how they handle time management and daily life routines. Challenges are known for shaping people's skills and life experiences. It shapes their minds to be open-minded as they move forward in their journey.

In a study that was conducted Canto, *et al.* (2025) [2], this research focuses on the real-life experiences of working students. It explores motivations on why students choose to balance work and studies, whether it is to support family, self, gain financial independence, build work experience, or to pursue their education despite limited resources. It also addresses challenges similar to the study of Mutya, *et al.* (2022) [5], challenges were faced as the time goes by for learners.

Whose early employment. It also explains how this study aims to understand the challenges, support, and the role of discipline in balancing work and online learning as the pandemic era started. This study focuses on how self-discipline substantially affects the students to manage work and academics. It also suggests to effective intervention for employed students. The study of Canto also highlights coping strategies that working students often use to stay on their academic track— such as seeking support from family, prioritizing tasks, making strict schedules, and making adjustments to work hours or school loads when needed. Time management will also play a huge part in students' lives as they walk their student employee journey.

3. Research Design

Exploring the lived experiences of working students in Noveleta National High School. This study conducted qualitative data to explore and understand the experiences, challenges, time management and coping mechanisms of working students in Noveleta National High School. This study aims to provide insights into the experiences of working students, which can inform school authority and policies to support their needs. In studying working students life using phenomenology, to better understand the "lived experience" of working students and how they experience and take control of balancing work and study, and by using in-depth interviews to gather their own stories and perspectives as a working student.

Population and Sampling

The study will be conducted in Noveleta National High School. The study's participants can participate by being interviewed face-to-face by the researchers. The researchers chose Noveleta National High School because it is the most convenient, and the researchers wanted to know the different challenges that were faced by the respondents. This study focuses on students' struggles and the effect of working on students' daily lives— especially on their academic performance.

Purposive sampling was utilized in this study to get the data needed for this research study. In purposive sampling, every room of the school was asked and selected a working student to interview. Purposive sampling was the easiest way to gather all participants, it was the most convenient to use for the researchers and respondents. The sampling used was based on our topic— working students, it helps the researchers to organize the data that was taken on the face-to-face interview.

Research Instrument

In this research, the researchers used close-ended and open-ended questionnaires as research tools that were asked to the respondents. The questionnaire had 10 items that were adopted and modified by the researchers to identify the impact of being a working student. The respondents of this research were working students from Grade 7 to Grade 10.

The first two questions aimed to identify if the students help in providing for their families and if they understand their role to work for their family's needs. The third to sixth questions aimed to identify the impact of working at an early age to the students' mental health and academic performance. These questions also aimed to identify how the students cope with stress and their school activities while working.

The last questions, from the seventh to the tenth, aimed to identify the reasons why the students made sure not to be late for school and school-related activities. These questions also aimed to identify the benefits and the contribution to their personal growth by working at an early age.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers will gather the data through the use of interviews. The study participants will be asked 10-item questions made by the researchers to collect the data needed. The questionnaires made are all related to the research topic and to the statement of the problem in this study. Here are the procedures used by researchers to conduct this research:

First, the researchers will create a letter of approval to ask both school principals about the study that the researcher will conduct within the schools so that the researchers will have the permission to conduct an interview for the data needed. Then, the researchers will create a letter for the participant's consent to have a permission also to interview them. The questionnaire will be contained by the research instrument to deeply understand the questions asked.

Second, the researchers will use a voice recorder to the interview to contain the data needed for transcription. The recorded answer of the participant will only be for research purposes and will remain confidential to respect the respondent's answer and privacy.

Lastly, after the personal interview that was made, the researchers will gather all the data and transcribe it. They will use it to analyse the data given by Junior High School students. In this step, the interviewers will also recognize the working student' real-life experiences and challenges.

The following are the questions asked to the researcher's respondents:

1. As a working student, are you providing for your siblings who are also studying?
2. As a student who began working early, have you come to understand the responsibilities your parents dealt with?
3. How does working while studying affect your academic performance?
4. How do you cope with your activities during work hours?
5. How can you handle stress and lack of sleep on your daily routine?
6. How do you manage your time between work and studying?
7. Why did you choose to be a working student?
8. Has your job been having an impact on your mental well-being?
9. What do you do to avoid being late at school and activities?
10. In what ways does working help with your personal growth and managing daily life as a student?

Data Analysis Procedure

The analysis of this study is involving the working students

in junior high school that were carrying pressure and have the determination to balance their mental energy and managing their schedules and being the provider of their families. This study will also show how working can affect their academic performance and daily lives. We collected those data by interviewing working students in junior high school and we combined their answers to also know how they can handle their time and maintain social support—especially if they are working students.

Those 10 students that the researchers interviewed were working to support themselves and their families. They gained a better understanding of their parents' responsibilities and challenges. Working has helped them grow personally, teaching them responsibility, maturity, and time management. While it affects their studies and sleep hours at times, they have learned to cope and prioritize.

Their experiences have improved their financial situations and skills, contributing to their personal growth. Half of the 10 students that we interviewed answered that their jobs cannot impact their mental well-being and said that their job distracts them sometimes but they can handle it easily. Their jobs are also the reason why they are mature enough and can buy things to provide for their families and themselves.

Ethical Considerations

The data collected was about young students working early for their lives and for their own families, doing this in early ages makes them more stress and unfocused on their activities on school, home and even forgot their own chores at their own home because of this few of those working students are having a lot stress and even depression, because of this other young students wants to live like other students that are having fun and enjoying their lives as a working students.

They could have added skills and experiences but on the other side lack of study and even forgot to go to school just to sell their items to earn money for their parents just to live for one whole day or even a week, but even if they earn money per day, that was not enough for them because of bills, rents, school projects that needs contribution for another students because of this, the money they earn for their parents are being used to their school and other taxes instead of buying food for the family or using the money for something good, but whether they use this money on this stuff they always have strength to work all day just to earn or get money just by being young students. They needed to work like adults for their future.

And all of the respondents answered for the same reasons and some respondents answered differently, but their answers were all because of working at such an early stage. This study contains all the respondents' data for confidentiality and respecting their privacy as they have rights to whether they answer the questions or not.

4. Materials and Methods

Working students are individuals who bear the responsibility of effectively balancing their time between employment and academic commitments. Most students choose to work while studying with the aim of financing their needs or helping their families. However, it is not easy for working students because they have the responsibility of balancing the time for working and school needs. Because of this, working students may face some challenges such as lack of time to study, as well as physical and mental exhaustion

from both work and school needs. Despite the challenges that come with being a working student, one can also have the opportunity of acquiring different skills.

The working students may have the opportunity of acquiring different skills such as time management, responsibility, independence, as well as perseverance. These skills may be helpful to the working students not only in school but also in the future. The experiences of the working students may also shape the character of the student to be disciplined and motivated to reach his/her goals in life. The objective of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences, challenges, and impact of working students. The study also aims to find out how working students affect their academic performance, activities, and well-being. The researchers hope that from this study, they will gain a deeper understanding of the situation of working students and provide information that may somehow contribute to improving the situation of working students.

Presentation of Findings by Research Question

This chapter presents the findings derived from the transcribed interviews with working students at Noveleta National High School. The data is organized and presented according to the research questions that guided this study, offering insights into the experiences of young adults balancing work and academic life. The subsequent sections will detail the participants' responses grouped by each research question, including direct quotations to support the identified themes.

Research Question 1: Are you providing for your siblings who are also studying?

Theme: Financial Necessity and Motivation

Some working students actively contribute to their siblings' educational and financial needs. For instance, Respondent 1 directly affirmed,

"Opo."
(Respondent 1, 3, 7, 10)

When asked if he provides for his siblings' schooling, Respondent 6 elaborated on her support, saying,

"Opo. Like nagbibigay din po ako ng baon pag wala rin po silang baon."
(Respondent 6)

Respondent 9 mentioned his earnings help not only himself but also his family:

"Hindi po na ano lang pang tulong sa mga kapatid tas sa mga magulang po at para pambili lang din po ng mga kailangan ko."
(Respondent 9)

Conversely, some students do not provide for siblings, often because they are the sole students or their siblings are not living with them. Respondent 2 clearly stated,

"Siyempre hindi, sa magulang ko lang,"
(Respondent 2)

Indicating his focus is on his parents. Respondent 4 noted a different family dynamic, saying,

"Ako na lang mag-aaral samin."
(Respondent 4)

Respondent 5 explained,

"Wala na akong kapatid na nag-aaral."
(Respondent 5)

Respondent 8 clarified,

"Wala sila dito nasa Bulacan sila."
(Respondent 8)

Regarding his siblings' location. It states that some of the respondents are consistently helping to provide for their siblings.

Research Question 2: Have you come to understand the responsibilities your parents dealt with?

Theme: Heightened Awareness of Parental Responsibilities and Life's Hardships

After starting work, all interviewed students expressed a profound understanding of the difficulties their parents face. Respondent 1 simply

"Nodded" in agreement,
(Respondent 1)

While Respondent 2 articulated,

"Oo. Mahirap pala. Maraming gastusin."
(Respondent 2)

Respondent 3 conveyed the emotional toll, stating,

"Kinakalungkot ko rin po... Kasi minsan po wala po sila eh.... Kaya ako rin po napapagod din ako po,"
(Respondent 3)

Linking his own fatigue to his parents' struggles. Respondent 4 expressed the financial burden vividly:

"Hirap boy, t@n6 In yung allowance ng mga bata sweldo ko na... allowance ng mga mayayaman sweldo ko na."
(Respondent 4)

Respondent 5 concisely described the experience as:

"Nakapagod, mahirap."
(Respondent 5)

Respondent 6 echoed this sentiment, confirming,

"Mahirap po."
(Respondent 6)

Respondent 7 and Respondent 10 both affirmed their understanding with,

"Opo."
(Respondent 7, 10)

Respondent 8 explained the specific challenges, saying,

"Mahirap po, mahirap po maghalo ng kung ano anong gagawin."

(Respondent 8)

Respondent 9 noted the continuous effort, remarking,

"Oo, mahirap siya eh kasi madalas lagi ko ginagawa tas ang dami-dami pa nilang bumibili, nakakapagod."

(Respondent 9)

At an early age, working students have come to understand the difficulties that their parents dealt with in every daily life expenses. While walking through this path, reflection comes after them day by day.

Research Question 3: How does working while studying affect your academic performance?

Theme: Varied Academic Impact Ranging from No Effect to Decreased Performance

Several students maintained that their academic performance remains unaffected. Respondent 1 initially said,

"Wala naman... okay."

(Respondent 1)

Though she later clarified she's not an honor student. Respondent 5 described the effect as,

"Sakto lang hahaha."

(Respondent 5)

And was even recognized by interviewers as an honor student. Respondent 7, Respondent 8, and Respondent 10 all stated,

"Hindi po" or "Wala, wala po," respectively.

(Respondent 7, 8, 10)

Respondent 9 confidently said,

"Wala naman, 'di naman ako nadidistract sa pagbebenta, kaya ko naman pagsabayin."

(Respondent 9)

Conversely, some found it challenging. Respondent 2 admitted,

"Mahirap. Maraming ano, eh, may mga ginagawa na 'di ko na nagagawa sa school na mga gagawin."

(Respondent 2)

Respondent 3 observed a decline in his grades:

"Nababa po, kasi nakukulangan po ako sa oras."

(Respondent 3)

Respondent 6 felt her focus was divided, stating,

"Ano po, nahihirapan po ako kasi po, parang nakafocus na po ako roon sa pag b-benta ko."

(Respondent 6)

Respondent 4 acknowledged a balancing act, explaining,

"Hindi naman kasi ano eh minsan absent ako sa school minsan sa trabaho ako absent... na absent lang ako pag walang ginagawa sa school. Balance lang."

(Respondent 4)

Working while studying can feel like constantly running on a treadmill – you're moving, but it's hard to feel like you're getting ahead. There's this persistent juggle between needing to earn money and needing to learn, and often, one has to give a little for the other. It's a challenging path, but it builds a unique kind of resilience and a deep understanding of the value of hard work.

Research Question 4: How do you cope with your activities during work hours?

Theme: Strategic Prioritization and Flexible Scheduling of Academic Tasks

Most students prioritize their academic responsibilities by completing them before or after work. Respondent 1 clearly stated,

"Inuuna ko po muna 'yung pag-aaral ko po bago po trabaho. Tinatapos ko muna lahat ng activities bago 'yung trabaho."

(Respondent 1)

Similarly, Respondent 6 does her activities:

"Kapag ubos na po s'ya."

(Respondent 6)

And Respondent 7 does them at home,

"Pag-uwi lang 'te."

(Respondent 7)

Respondent 4 also confirmed,

"Ginagawa ko pag-uwi." and "Oo, pag-uwi. After ng ano, ng work? Oo, pag-uwi."

(Respondent 4)

Respondent 10 said,

"Pinagsasabay ko,"

(Respondent 10)

Indicating an attempt to manage both simultaneously, while also stating she prioritizes activities first. Other coping mechanisms include peer support or last-minute efforts. Respondent 2 admitted,

"'Di ko ginagawa dun, dito ko ginagawa. Nangongopya ako."

(Respondent 2)

Showing he relies on peers and does not do schoolwork during work. Respondent 3 sought help from classmates while selling during school:

"Nag papatulong din po ako sa mga classmate ko."

(Respondent 3)

Respondent 5 admitted to cram his activities,

"Kina-cram ko,"
(Respondent 5)

Respondent 8, instead of doing them during work, checks for missing activities with his teacher:

"Tinatanong ko kay Ma'am kung may kulang ako na activities."
(Respondent 8)

Respondent 9 mentioned his mother's role in preparing goods, which minimizes his work distraction, allowing him to listen to music or eat:

"Nakikinig lang ako sa music o kumakain na lang ako diyan sa baba kasama mga kaibigan ko."
(Respondent 9)

As they share this statements on how they manage their time, some asked for help to their teachers and peers to still be update on their school works.

Research Question 5: How do you handle stress and lack of sleep on your daily routine?

Theme: Diverse Coping Mechanisms for Stress and Sleep Deprivation

Coping strategies range from proactive management to acceptance or reliance on external factors. Respondent 1 claimed,

"Okay lang naman po sa akin mastress hehe," But admitted to taking short naps in school due to,

"Puyat na puyat po ako kasi wala po akong tulog nun."
(Respondent 1)

Respondent 3 found strength in faith, stating,

"Kumakapit nalang po ako sa Diyos kasi alam ko po malalagpasan ko rin yung mga problema ko," and coped with lack of sleep by

"Iniisip ko na lang po yung mga pamilya ko po."
(Respondent 3)

Respondent 4 manages by:

"Kakain tas ano laro, uuwi tas tulog, minsan inom"
(clarifying the "inom" as juice).
(Respondent 4)

Respondent 10 simply said,

"Ahmm, ano, kumakain (laughing), kinakain ko na lang po," for stress.
(Respondent 10)

Respondent 9 maintains a routine and takes "power naps" after school and work:

"pasok sa school, benta tas balik na ako sa tulog na lang ako yung na lang... power nap."
(Respondent 9)

Other students claimed little or no impact. Respondent 2 humorously suggested smoking then mentioned,

"Listen to music, ano, jamming with friends."
(Respondent 2)

Respondent 5 stated "Hindi naman" for stress, but admitted to,

"Kulang-kulang na nga eh hahaha," sleep.
(Respondent 5)

Respondent 6, Respondent 7, and Respondent 8 all stated,

"Hindi po" or "Hindi"
(Respondent 6, 7, 8)

When asked about stress and lack of sleep. Respondents replied with different answers and experiences due to working at an early age.

Research Question 6: How do you manage your time between work and studying?

Theme: Strategic Time Allocation and Task Prioritization

Many students prioritize their studies by allocating specific times for schoolwork before engaging in their jobs. Respondent 1 emphasized,

"Inuuna ko po muna 'yung pag-aaral bago pagtatrabaho. Tinatapos ko muna lahat ng activities bago 'yung trabaho."
(Respondent 1)

Respondent 6 also stated,

"Mas uunahin ko po 'yung homework bago po sa pag b-benta."
(Respondent 6)

Respondent 7 manages by working:

"Pagkatapos magschool."
(Respondent 7)

Respondent 10 also noted,

"Inuuna ko muna yung mga activities bago yung working."
(Respondent 10)

Respondent 8 manages by concentrating his work on weekends:

"Nagratrabaho kasi ako Sabado, Linggo lang eh."
(Respondent 8)

Some students adapt through flexible or less structured methods. Respondent 2 confessed,

"Di ko naman mina-manage 'yon, eh," stating he goes "diretso na ako sa work." after school.
(Respondent 2)

Respondent 3 said,

"Pinagsasabay ko po sila," implying simultaneous management.

(Respondent 3)

Respondent 4 expressed a preference for constant activity:

"Wala kasi akong araw na laging ano, walang ginagawa, gusto ko yung may ginagawa ako lagi."

(Respondent 4)

Respondent 9 benefits from his mother handling the product preparation, making his selling role less time-consuming and less distracting:

"Nanay ko nag-aasikaso ng ibebenta, ako lang yung parang seller... 'Di naman ako masiyado na didistract."

(Respondent 9)

Respondent 5 simply mentioned his schedule:

"Pag ano sa umaga papasok tas pag tanghali walang ginagawa..."

(Respondent 5)

Working students master time management to juggle work and study. They often use detailed schedules and apps, optimize study time in short bursts, and seek flexibility from employers and academic institutions. While facing challenges like reduced social lives and potential burnout, they develop crucial skills in discipline and resilience.

Research Question 7: Why did you choose to be a working student?

Theme: Financial Necessity and Family Support as Primary Motivators

The overwhelming majority of students cited financial reasons and the desire to support their families. Respondent 1 expressed a deep personal reason:

"Kase... para rin po, ano, sa pag-aaral para makatapos po ako, para sa parents ko po kasi 'yung... Opo kasi may diperensiya po siya... pipi po siya, gusto ko po siya matulungan."

(Respondent 1)

Respondent 2 explained,

"Kasi minsan po nahihirapan din po mga magulang ko, kasi minsan po nawawalan din sila ng trabaho kaya ako na po yung umaasenso... sa amin."

(Respondent 2)

Respondent 4 wanted,

"Para makatulong sa papa ko, kasi yung papa ko kasi matanda na eh gusto ko lang din makatulong."

(Respondent 4)

Respondent 5 concisely stated,

"Para ano rin, makatulong sa sarili tsaka sa magulang."

(Respondent 5)

Respondent 10 said,

"Para makatulong sa mga magulang at ano, para makatulong tsaka para, ano, para di pabigat, ganon."

(Respondent 10)

Respondent 8 worked for,

"Para may panggastusin sa pang araw-araw po at pambili ng gamit."

(Respondent 8)

Respondent 7 plainly stated,

"Kulang yung baon, 'te."

(Respondent 7)

Respondent 6 aimed to,

"Kasi po para maka-ipon."

(Respondent 6)

Respondent 9 had a specific family-oriented reason:

"pinili ko lang siya para tulungan yung nanay ko kasi nanay ko, mahiyain kasi siya, hindi siya mahilig magbenta. Nahihya siya kaya naisip ko tulungan muna sya."

(Respondent 9)

Respondent 2 provided a more personal motivation:

"Para nabibili ko mga gusto kong bilhin."

(Respondent 2)

Working students chose this path because of financial instability and parents not able to do work. Some may said that they work because of own needs and wants.

Research Question 8: Has your job been having an impact on your mental well-being?

Theme: Predominant Resilience and Lack of Perceived Negative Mental Impact

A significant number of students reported no negative impact on their mental health. Respondent 1 stated,

"Hindi naman po. Okay lang naman po."

(Respondent 1)

Respondent 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 all responded with variations of:

"Wala naman po" or "Hindi."

(Respondent 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10)

Respondent 9 confidently affirmed,

"'Di naman maayos naman yung aking mental."

(Respondent 9)

Respondent 4 even claimed a positive effect, saying,

"Wala... lumalakas lang ako lalo eh."
(Respondent 4)

Respondents mostly answered that working does not affect their mental health. Some answered that it makes them stronger just by being early employed.

Research Question 9: What do you do to avoid being late at school and activities?

Theme: Varied Strategies for Punctuality, with Some Admitting Persistent Lateness

Strategies for punctuality included rushing, managing time, and early preparation. Respondent 1 said she,

"Nagmamadali po" to avoid lateness.
(Respondent 1)

Respondent 3 explained,

"Kinocontrol ko po yung sarili ko kasi kapag nawalan po ako ng control mas lalo po ako male-late tas di po ako makakagawa ng mga assignment, PT, activity..."
(Respondent 3)

Respondent 6 and Respondent 7 both stated they are not late.

"Hindi po,"
(Respondent 6)

"Maaa ako pumapasok, 'te."
(Respondent 7)

Respondent 10 manages by:

"Maaga natutulog."
(Respondent 10)

Respondent 8 seeks help from classmates:

"Humihingi ako ng tulong sa mga kaklase ko."
(Respondent 8)

Respondent 9 uses modern transport to his advantage:

"Naka e-bike naman ako kaya mabilis lang pasok ko."
(Respondent 9)

Conversely, some admitted to frequent lateness. Respondent 2 candidly responded,

"Late nga ako ngayon, eh," and "Araw-araw ako late, boy!"
(Respondent 2)

Respondent 5 also confessed,

"Araw-araw hahahaha," for school and "Minsan" for activities, even humorously suggesting a "Gawa ng pekeng excuse letter hahaha."
(Respondent 5)

Respondent 4 initially stated:

"Wala hindi naman ako nalelate," which might reflect an ideal rather than consistent reality given his earlier comments on balancing.
(Respondent 4)

In their statements, some of them answered working hours does not affect their time going to school. They even said that they have strategies to be not late in school. But the others also experienced being late every day.

Research Question 10: In what ways does working help with your personal growth and managing daily life as a student?

Theme: Development of Maturity, Responsibility, and Financial Independence

Working has fostered a sense of responsibility and independence among the students. Respondent 1 highlighted her contribution to her family:

"Ang ambag niya po is binibigyan ko rin po ng pera 'yung parents ko, tapos pambili nga ng pagkain kasi minsan wala kaming pagkain."

She also generally felt "Nag-iimprove po ganun."
(Respondent 1)

Respondent 3 emphasized its practical benefits:

"Kasi po doon din po ako nakakakuha ng pangkain namin saka pambayad po ng bill."
(Respondent 3)

Respondent 10 noted,

"Meron, dahil yung mga kailangan ko nabibili ko."
(Respondent 10)

Respondent 6 found it helps her,

"Nakaka-ipon po ako."
(Respondent 6)

Respondent 7 linked it to financial growth:

"Dumadami yung pera."
(Respondent 7)

This implies the lived experiences of working students and on how they coped with their struggles. Their answers revealed the unknown experiences of every student that is early employed. As their responses were stated, the researchers saw how dedicated they are as a working student and as a regular student. This suggests that each individual possesses their own unique personal experiences that are beyond the judgment of others.

Thematic Analysis

Diverse Contribution to Siblings' Education and Well-being: Working students provide varied forms of support to their siblings, including financial assistance for school needs and daily care, taking on active roles in their family's educational and personal growth, also leading their siblings to pursue their goals.

Heightened Awareness of Parental Responsibilities and Life's Hardships: Through balancing work and studies, students gain a deeper understanding of the effort and sacrifices their parents make, as well as the realities and challenges of adult life and financial survival, and increased empathy, newfound appreciation, and shift in perspective revealing how students' experiences have shaped their understanding of family dynamics and personal growth.

Varied Academic Impact Ranging from No Effect to Decreased Performance: The effect of working on academics differs among students: some maintain their performance without issue, while others experience a decline in grades due to fatigue, limited study time, or competing priorities, while some students maintain stability including coping mechanisms and adaptability, ability to balance responsibilities.

Strategic Prioritization and Flexible Scheduling of Academic Tasks: Students adapt by identifying which academic tasks require immediate attention and adjusting their study schedules dynamically to fit around their work shifts and other responsibilities.

Diverse Coping Mechanisms for Stress and Sleep Deprivation: To manage the physical and emotional toll of their dual roles, students employ various strategies—such as seeking social support, engaging in leisure activities, or adjusting rest patterns—to alleviate stress and fatigue.

Strategic Time Allocation and Task Prioritization: Students carefully divide their time between work and school, deliberately ranking tasks by importance and urgency to ensure they meet both their employment obligations and academic requirements.

Financial Necessity and Family Support as Primary Motivators: The need to address financial constraints and contribute to their families' needs serves as the main driving force that pushes students to continue working while pursuing their education.

Varied Strategies for Punctuality, with Some Admitting Persistent Lateness: Students use different methods to arrive on time for school or work, such as adjusting wake-up times or planning routes; however, some still struggle with consistent lateness due to unpredictable work demands or fatigue. **Development of Maturity, Responsibility, and Financial Independence:** Navigating work and school fosters personal growth: students become more self-reliant, accountable for their actions, and capable of managing their own finances, gaining life skills beyond the classroom.

Linking Findings in Related Literature

This study examines the experiences and challenges faced by working students, focusing on their motivations for working at a young age, the types of jobs they take, and how they balance academic responsibilities with employment. It also explores their financial management and spending priorities to better understand the realities they face. To contextualize these experiences, existing literature on the intersection of employment and education is reviewed. The intersection of employment and education presents several challenges, particularly in time management, health, and financial stability.

According to Romano and Abadiano (2021) [7], effective time management is essential for working students, yet many experience stress, distraction, and physical or mental health problems. Similarly, Summer, McCoy, Trujillo, and Rodriguez (2025) [9] found that working while studying

limits students' schedules, making them vulnerable during emergencies and life crises. These challenges were intensified during the pandemic due to unemployment and increased stress. Despite these difficulties, students demonstrated resilience through positive thinking, self-trust, and perseverance. As noted in one perspective, determination and responsibility serve as the "most important foundation of being a working student."

Furthermore, "Students who work while studying often experience financial, mental, and social pressures that affect their overall well-being." Addressing these challenges requires institutional support and equal access to opportunities. Taylor and Sandoval (2024) [10], in their global study in Vocations and Learning, examined how campus employment programs help students balance work and education despite rising costs. They emphasized the importance of equity in ensuring that all students have access to opportunities regardless of background. This supports the findings of Remenick and Bergman (2021), who suggested that higher education institutions should provide more incentives and support systems for working students. They specifically recommended on-campus employment programs that allow schools to provide work opportunities aligned with students' academic needs. This connection highlights the importance of institutional support for working students.

On a broader policy level, the OECD (2025) [6] views secondary school students' part-time work not only as a source of income but also as a form of early career development that supports the transition into the labour force. The report explains that work helps develop important skills such as time management, communication, and problem-solving. However, it also warns of potential risks, including excessive work hours that may interfere with academic performance or expose students to unsafe conditions. To address these concerns, the OECD recommends collaboration with employers to ensure fair working hours and the integration of work experiences into career guidance programs.

Overall, these studies present a dual reality for working students. They face significant personal, financial, and health-related challenges (Romano & Abadiano, 2021; Summer *et al.*, 2025) [7, 9], which require institutional support (Taylor & Sandoval, 2024 [10]; Remenick & Bergman, 2021) and policy-level protection (OECD, 2025) [6]. The literature supports the current research by showing that while working students develop resilience and essential life skills, structured support systems are necessary to ensure that employment does not negatively affect their education and well-being.

Transition to Chapter V

This chapter presented the thematic analysis of the experiences, challenges, and motivations of working students at Noveleta National High School, detailing key findings regarding their financial drives, academic adjustments, coping strategies, and personal growth. The identified themes provide a comprehensive understanding of how these students navigate the dual demands of employment and education. It reveals the lived experiences of working students and exploring their lives. The data gathered were like an old book, unveiling the silent struggles of these students.

Building upon these results, Chapter 5 will discuss the implications of these findings, draw conclusions based on the analysed data, and offer recommendations aimed at supporting working students, educators, and policymakers. It will also address the limitations of the study and suggest directions for future research, ultimately translating the insights gained into actionable steps to enhance the well-being and academic success of working students.

5. Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of balancing work and studies on students' overall well-being and academic performance. The findings revealed that working students primarily work to support their families financially. While balancing work and studies helps them develop responsibility and time management skills, many students experience fatigue and limited study time, which can affect their academic performance. The study also seeks to identify the benefits of working while studying, such as developing time management skills and gaining work experience. Additionally it will examine how students handle their time management and prioritize their responsibilities. Furthermore, the study aims to provide insights into how working students can achieve a better balance between work and studies.

This study uses qualitative data and interviews to gain in-depth insights into the experiences of working students at Noveleta National High School. By talking directly to students, it uncovers the personal challenges, coping strategies, and benefits they associate with balancing work and studies.

The major theme that we have found from our thematic analysis and based on research questions that working students support their families financially. They develop time management skills, prioritizing tasks and adjusting schedules to balance work and studies. While some students maintain good grades, others struggle due to fatigue or limited study time, and some working student provide for their siblings who are also studying so it is also another reason they struggling to work and provide for their self needs. To cope, students use strategies like social support, and adjusting rest patterns. Overall, working students grow more independent, driven by financial necessity and family support.

6. Conclusions

The findings of this research show that working students face complex challenges, mainly due to financial needs that affect their time for school, rest, and personal life. While some choose to work to gain responsibility, many are pushed by family needs and poverty. Their main struggles include balancing schoolwork and job responsibilities, coping with fatigue, and maintaining good academic performance.

Despite these difficulties, they manage by organizing their time, seeking support, and staying motivated, which shows their resilience and desire to succeed. Their experiences reveal that being a working student helps develop responsibility, emotional strength, and problem-solving skills. However, without proper support systems, their efforts may not be enough. This highlights the need for schools, families, and policymakers to understand their situation and provide support. With the right help, working

students can succeed, proving that young people can overcome challenges but should not face them alone.

Overall, the findings suggest that working students demonstrate resilience and determination despite the challenges of balancing employment and academic responsibilities. However, adequate institutional and family support is essential to help them succeed academically while maintaining their well-being. The reasons why students work while studying are different for each student. Nevertheless, the main reason why students work while studying is that they want to become financially independent and help support their daily expenses. Working while studying has both positive and negative effects on students. One of the main advantages is that students get experience in a real working environment. While conducting this study, the researchers were amazed how working students still have their hope despite of what they have been through and discovered the unveiling lived experiences of working students.

7. Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are put forward to address the challenges faced by working students and enhance their overall academic and professional well-being:

For Teachers: Implement flexible assessment deadlines and submission policies to accommodate students who may have limited time for academic tasks due to work commitments. Provide clear and detailed course outlines, study guides, and supplementary learning materials in advance to help working students plan their study schedules effectively.

For School Administrators: Establish a dedicated support program or office for working students that provides resources such as academic counselling, time management workshops, and career guidance. Review and adjust school policies, such as class scheduling and attendance requirements, to be more responsive to the needs of working students, where feasible.

For Working Students Themselves: Develop and implement a structured time management plan that balances work responsibilities, academic tasks, and personal well-being. Prioritize important tasks and set realistic goals to avoid burnout. Communicate openly and proactively with teachers, employers, and family members about their dual roles as students and workers, seeking understanding and support when needed.

For Parents and Guardians: Provide emotional support and encouragement to working students, recognizing the challenges they face in balancing work and studies. Avoid placing excessive pressure on working students to achieve perfect academic results or meet unrealistic expectations.

For Future Researchers: Conduct a more extensive study with a larger sample size and broader geographic coverage to generalize the findings to a wider population of working students. Explore additional factors that may affect the academic performance and well-being of working students, such as the type of work, work hours, and financial support.

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