Working Students in Kazakhstan: Their Experiences and Academic Studies

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in Educational Leadership

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October 2019

Dear Assel Mussayeva,

This letter now confirms that your research project titled "Working Students in Kazakhstan: Their Experiences and Academic Studies" has been approved by the Graduate School of Education Ethics Committee of Nazarbayev University. The changes recommended by the reviewer have been addressed and the proposed study now complies with all of the requirements of Nazarbayev University.

You may proceed with contacting your preferred research site and commencing your participant recruitment strategy.

Yours sincerely,

Bilyalov

Darkhan Bilyalov

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Thank you.

Assel Mussayeva

Abstract

The working students pursuing degrees in Kazakhstani universities choose full-time study along with employment following their economic, societal, and personal needs. Such students' working status may be challenging for them. Along with valuable experiences and benefits associated with the combination of work and academic studies, their efforts pose significant challenges that require their peers, colleagues, employers, faculty, and administration to be supportive. The aim of this research is to assess the understanding of the perceptions of full-time undergraduate students about the role of working on their academic successes. This is explicated by the need to understand the perspectives of full-time undergraduate students who are concurrently engaged in paid work in connection with the impact of work on academic performance in the context of Kazakhstan. In assessing this explication, the study employed a qualitative research methodology for data collection. The data collection included fifteen working students regarding the experiences, challenges, benefits, and support from the university and employers to the working students in Kazakhstan. The selection was done using a purposive sampling technique. The results indicated that external factors such as universities and policymakers are central to the attainment of work-study balance, depending on the prevailing or developed policies geared towards supporting the students.

Keywords: Experiences, Academic Performance, Undergraduate, Support

Аннотация

Работающие Студенты В Казахстане: Их Опыт И Академическая Успеваемость

Работающие студенты, получающие ученые степени в казахстанских университетах, совмещают работу с очной формой обучения, исходя из своих экономических, социальных и личных потребностей. Рабочий статус таких студентов может быть сложным для них. Наряду с ценным опытом и преимуществами, связанными с сочетанием работы и академических исследований, их усилия ставят перед ними серьезные задачи, которые требуют поддержки со стороны сверстников, коллег, работодателей, преподавателей и администрации. Целью данного исследования является оценка понимания восприятия студентами очной формы обучения влияния работы на их академические успехи. Это объясняется необходимостью понимания перспектив студентов, обучающихся на дневном отделении, которые одновременно заняты оплачиваемой работой, влияющей на успеваемость в контексте Казахстана. При оценке этого объяснения в исследовании использовалась методология качественного исследования для сбора данных. Сбор данных включал пятнадцать работающих студентов относительно опыта, проблем, преимуществ и поддержки со стороны университета и работодателей для работающих студентов в Казахстане. Выбор был сделан с использованием целенаправленной техники отбора проб. Результаты показали, что внешние факторы, такие как университеты и политики, играют центральную роль в достижении баланса между работой и учебой, в зависимости от преобладающей или разработанной политики, направленной на поддержку студентов.

Аңдатпа

Қазақстандағы Жұмыс Істейтін Студенттер: Олардың Тәжірибесі Және

Академиялық Үлгерімі

Қазақстандық жоғары оқу орындарында білім алып жатқан студенттер күндізгі білім алуды, сонымен қатар экономикалық, әлеуметтік және жеке қажеттіліктеріне қарай жұмысқа орналасуды таңдайды.

Мұндай студенттердің оқумен қатар жұмыс қатар алып жүру қиын болуы мүмкін. Жұмыс пен академиялық зерттеулерінің құнды тәжірибесі мен артықшылықтарымен қатар, олардың әрекеттері құрдастарынан, әріптестерінен, жұмыс берушілерден, мұғалімдерден және университет әкімшілігінен қолдауды талап ететін күрделі міндеттер туғызады. Бұл зерттеудің мақсаты - күндізгі бөлімде білім алатын студенттердің жұмыспен қатар оқуды алмастыру бойынша рөлін бағалау. Бұл Қазақстан жағдайындағы жұмыстың оқу үлгеріміне әсеріне байланысты бір мезгілде ақылы жұмыспен айналысатын күндізгі бөлім студенттерінің болашағын түсіну қажеттілігімен байланысты. Бұл түсініктемені бағалау кезінде зерттеу деректерді жинау үшін сапалы зерттеу әдісін қолданды. Мәліметтер жинағына он бес жұмыс істейтін студент тәжірибесі, қиындықтары, университет тарапынан, сондай-ақ жұмыс берушілер тарапынан қолдаулары туралы қарастырылды. Таңдау мақсатты іріктеу әдісін қолдану арқылы жасалды. Нәтижелері сыртқы факторлар студенттерді қолдауға бағытталған немесе әзірленген саясатқа байланысты жұмыс пен оқу арасындағы тепе-теңдікке қол жеткізуде университет пен әкімшіліктің басты рөл атқаратынын көрсетті.

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Working Students in Kazakhstan: Their Experiences and Academic Studies

Introduction

Students in Kazakhstan have many opportunities in terms of getting short-term employment with various organizations, agencies, and government parastatals in Kazakhstan. However, getting such opportunities is not guaranteed as students are often required to demonstrate some level of skills and experiences relating to the jobs they are interested in (Portnov- Neeman, Y., & Barak, 2014). Most students at undergraduate and graduate levels usually get engaged in different youth development and practice programs and contribute significantly towards the economic empowerment and improvement of the country. Besides, the students who are engaged in diverse employment opportunities within the country get a lot of job training and acquisition of skills that later shape and impact their career practice and professional disposition and capacity in different ways.

Before the students get employed in these organizations, they are required to demonstrate a certain level of experience and expertise in their areas of specialty. Under some circumstances, the organizations enroll students in professional development and training initiatives to ensure that their skills remain relevant and match the required job skills. The students enrolled for various employment duties in different organizations within the country usually do not go beyond six months (Zhang, G., Shao, C. Y., & Johnston, 2019). In effect, this strategy ensures more students get opportunities for employment that shapes their career experiences as much as possible.

Moreover, working students play a crucial part in every society, as they are part of academics as well as of the employment market. With the increasing demand for more working people to boost economies globally, students are required to be serving along with other professionals. The governments of developed economies encourage their students to

get employment and have some experience along with completing their studies so that they

can prove themselves beneficial for the states. This research evaluates the work

experiences and academic studies of working students in the Kazakhstani context

(Yergebekov, M., & Temirbekova., 2012). This chapter aims to provide background

information necessary to understand the research reasoning, the research issue under

exploration, and the purpose of the study and research questions that drive this analysis

along with the study's significance. This chapter is as follows: background of the study,

problem statement, and purpose statement of the study and lastly, the significance of the

study. All of the sections are crucial as they introduce my topic of study in depth.

Background of the Study

Kazakhstan, a Central Asian republic, has large numbers of students in both private

and public universities. Public universities had 229,526 undergraduate students in the

2018-2019 academic year, 15,900 at the master level and 1,800 at the doctoral level. As a

plus for the graduates, the education system in Kazakhstan has a university program to

pursue work opportunities and professional growth.

The Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan assures the right to education by

the State through the development of the education system, working to improve the

regulatory framework of its operation and creating the required economic situations for

education (Nabi et al., 2016). There are several critical goals of the education system as

noted by Nabi et al., (2016) and they include the following. These are: 1) ensuring the

production of the requisites for quality education directed at the growth, development and

career development of a personality based on regional and shared human values and the

accomplishments of research and study. Secondly, the creation of a person's artistic, social

and intellectual skills followed by formulation of strong moral standards and a healthy

lifestyle. Another goal is the conceptual prosperity through the creation of circumstances

for the formation of civic awareness and nationalistic education, fostering the affection

for the Republic of Kazakhstan, fostering reverence for state symbols and official

language, respect for national traditions, prejudice to any anti-constitutional and antisocial

attitude. Another goal is promoting socially active character; fostering interest in social and

political contribution, economic and cultural participation; awareness of rights and duties.

Lastly, lifelong learning programs are designed to ensure alignment between general

education, on-site learning and labor market needs, and to help people optimize the use of

their individual skills and competence, etc.

In Kazakhstan, full-time education is perhaps the most common type of HE. Case

in point, the word "intramural" means the pupil is "in front of the eyes" of the teachers and

the dean's office every 4/5 years, that is, the learning process - the key occupation for

students to know all the time. The instructional cycle is arranged in such a way that the

curriculum and the schedule are uniformly spread all year round in semesters or trimesters,

classes are held over five days per week for a number of hours a day, with compulsory

lessons, conferences and other modes of coaching sessions (Yilinsky, 2011).

Full-time students comprise 75% of the overall enrolment, with far more than 20%

of students enrolled in extramural courses but less than 5% learning in the evening. Almost

(48.6%) of graduates are enrolled in public sector universities (Ruby et al., 2017).

Extramural education typically means that a student has been in rigorous

preparation for about a month twice yearly. Presently, in Kazakhstan higher education

consists of correspondence programs since 2008 in certain disciplines on the rationale of

general secondary education ruled in absentia may learn just based on secondary technical

and university education. Evening classes, also recognized as part-time courses, is that the

academic cycle has shifted to the evening, which means that the student can perform a

job during the daytime and late in the evening learning at the University (Myrkhalykov,

2014). The evening program of education follows every educational program; but also allows for a relatively short period, training in similar specialties or on the criteria of higher education, and a restriction on acquiring other specialties in this context (Myrkhalykov, 2014)

In recent times, the cases of full-time undergraduate studying when engaged in paid jobs have increased tremendously globally (Dadgar, 2012; Ibrahim, Freeman, & Mack, 2012; Tessema, Ready, & Astani, 2014). Academics and administration widely share the view that students' academic performance is declining because of the increased external workloads they bear when undertaking their academic work (Zhang et. al, 2019). However, these opinions are not entirely acceptable as studies show mixed results. Although full-time students participate in paid jobs for a variety of purposes and benefits, the learners face the challenge of juggling work and study, regular attendance at university, and completing assignments.

Study over the last three decades shows a high number of students working all over the world (Carney, McNeish & McColl, 2005). Working and studying offers rewards as well as challenges. Notwithstanding the inconsistent findings, one common result is that prolonged hours of work result in decreasing academic performance. Several research findings indicate that employee students who work more than 15 hours per week face adverse effects in classroom, persistent, and educational grades (Astin, 1999; Rockika, 2014; Pope, 2016). Furthermore, the extent of negative impact relies heavily on the workplace; occupations on campus have less influence on academic success than employment off-campus. Many literature findings affirm the positive impact of pre-graduate jobs on skills and personal development, which are essential for future employment of students (DeSimone, 2008). The literature indicates that the participation of

students in paying jobs comes from several factors, including the need to pay for tuition, lead different lifestyles, and raise money for basic needs.

Problem Statement

In the Kazakhstani context, there is a lack of current research on the perceptions of undergraduate students on the role of paid jobs in their academic success. For this reason, conducting a study of the attitudes of undergraduate students will contribute to the higher education literature. The act of reporting to a workstation while still attending the classes is a bit challenging though it as well offers advantages. The benefits entail acquiring the proper skills on time management, avoiding debts, gaining job experience, and additionally getting the healthcare benefits (Sony & Mekoth., 2016).

One of the many issues that university undergraduates primarily struggle in is ensuring that they settle and make payments to the loans acquired while schooling. Working through college life will assist a student in either avoiding or reducing such kinds of debts (Britt et al., 2017). Generally, many students who report to jobs while still pursuing their college education tend to have less or no debt. This is as opposed to the number of individuals who did not secure a working place while in school and therefore substantial student loans for their survival. It is therefore recommended that students who in any position happen to come across a job opportunity while still learning, to take the appropriate steps to ensure that he/she secures the position in that precise working place. This will help the student in totally or partially avoiding student loans acquired while learning that later turns out to be significant debts affecting one's budget.

A careful financial plan accompanied by a part-time job will easily help in supplementing what a student manages to earn in the summer period and spend it to cater for the payment of classes. In the situation, that a student does not want to be on a steady basis or fully occupied with the job, taking a side hustle will be of paramount importance

to help avoid debts by earning that extra cash (Bogness, 2016; Swain & Hammond, 2011). These, among many aspects, are the main reasons for ensuring the recommendations for working while in school are affected as the benefits accruing from combining the two are evident.

A student who is always on the safe side while settling for the best work plans in allowing a better balance between work and studies is far much ahead of the rest and the difference is unmatched. This is so because while the college mates will be struggling to secure places for internships and attachments, a student who was already working while in school will have a good link and an effective network towards the same. Acquisition or prior knowledge of such matters occurs through the students socializing with the employment firms and organization, which is mainly achievable by seeking employment at an earlier stage.

Purpose Statement

This research study aims to get a better understanding of the perceptions of full-time undergraduate students about the role of paid jobs in their academic success. The purpose of the study is to understand the perspectives of full-time undergraduate students who are concurrently engaged in paid work as regards the impact of work on academic performance in the context of Kazakhstan during study years. In the comparison of a working and non-working student, the working student greatly surpasses the mere learner who only specializes in academics. Working while at school can be beneficial for a future as employed students exercising a vital role in their communities. This is because working college students lie in the bracket of academics and the part of the employment market as well (Scott & Minaya., 2016). Such activities of job interests by the schooling youths will trigger the governments of both the developed and developing economies to allocate more job opportunities to students while still in school. Acquiring the prior experience will

confidently equip the students and will later prove themselves beneficial to their respective states.

Generally, from the information obtained in the conducted interview on the experiences of working students, it will be of the essence to ensure that any student or any other individual attends classes. If the individual is in a situation where he/she can manage to work, then reporting to work will be the best course of action. The research proved that students, who in their free times do some constructive things such as reporting to jobs and doing their best on the side hustles, tend to avoid debts. The same students as well are always in a position to provide for their basic needs comfortably, for instance, food, clothing, and transport - this might involve commuting charges from the working place to home, class, or any other traveling (Stein & Andreotti., 2016; Neal, Fletcher, Shook, & Webster, 2012).

Research Questions

The research questions of the study are:

1. What are the experiences of working students in Kazakhstan in terms of combining employment and university learning?

2. What are the benefits the working students in Kazakhstan get in terms of their work and studies?

3. What challenges do the working students in Kazakhstan face in terms of their work and studies?

4. Are there any support programs from academic administrations to working students in Kazakhstan?

The Significance of the Study

This study is quite crucial in the Kazakhstani scenario because research regarding the roles and experiences of working students in relation to academics and the job market

is inadequate. This project seeks to enhance retention and performance of students. . The results from this study will guide administrators and faculty at the university in developing policies and or strategies to help working students excel academically.

Through recognizing the role of working students in their academic success, the faculty and students may work collaboratively to manage the pressures of concurrent employment and full-time university. Additionally, administrators and faculty at the university should encourage and foster favorable conditions for undergraduate students, which will help working students, achieve adequate academic performance.

The results of this study have the potential to influence positive change in society. The possibilities for positive social change may include improving the academic performance of students, which further results in higher retention rates, graduation rates, and improvement in employment opportunities for working students. However, it is necessary and advisable for the working students to let the institution know of the activities that the student engages in after the classes. Giving this information to the school department will ensure that the administration has the necessary information that it may use while generating support programs all for the benefits of the students such as student services (Quinn et al., 2019; Arnold, 2018; Ciobanu, 2013). In this study, some of the working students made it clear to the members of their family that after classes, some report to the working places and such transparency has been of great importance to the students.

Literature Review

This literature review is supportive of my study as it highlights and elaborates on related issues to my research. The purpose of this chapter is to inform the readers about the conceptual framework of my study with the help of scholarly works. In the current study, the study provides a theoretical and empirical foundation useful in understanding the perceptions of students regarding their disciplines, experiences, and university programs. The chapter provides critical historical and theoretical perspectives on students' engagement in paid work and the impact of their work on their academic performance.

The current research relates to the experiences of working students in Kazakhstan to evaluate their strategies to balance work and study. It also informs about the support programs designed by academic institutions for the welfare of working students. The research also highlights the benefits and challenges faced by the working students in Kazakhstan concerning their academics and work. This chapter involves the history of student employment in Kazakhstan, current educational and employment trends in Kazakhstan, the connection between working students, their academic performance and their engagement, the benefits, and challenges that working students face and the support programs offered to students in Kazakhstan.

Conceptual Framework

Today, the majority of educators recognize that learning is not only about delivering the knowledge but also encompasses a cognitive process of knowledge creation that is heavily influenced by multiple socio-cultural and emotional factors (Blumenfeld et al., 1991, Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1989; Hmelo-Silver, 2004). This learning perspective expects schools to adapt to a more constructivist, student-centered instructional methods based on problem-based practices and project-based learning where students can collaborate with others to address real-life questions and problems. Schuman and Presser

(1996) suggested that educators should increase the utilization of modern information and communication technologies (ICT), resulting in a constructivist-learning environment in schools. Interestingly, the 'factory model' of schooling continues to dominate many education systems around the world, where teachers are often required to teach the curriculum and stick to the use of traditional instruction methods. According to Stevenson (2004), an education system should focus on the perceptions, experiences, and beliefs of the student to be able to anticipate the instructional goals of the teacher. The study highlighted that more emphasis should be on the learning activities in which students can engage, not the instructional activities, which the educators engage.

The collaborative activity-learning model incorporating community aspects has the potential to respond to some of the needs of the students. This model emphasizes structured group work, project coordination, and sharing to solve academic tasks while also developing new skills (Tutty et al., 1996). Many approaches are relevant in actualizing the goals of this learning model, including targeted working groups, partnerships, workplace experience, and community building activities. Portnov-Neeman and Barak (2013) showed that the collaborative activity-learning model resulted in higher student engagement, accountability, and cooperation in class work and other activities. Thornberg (2008) hinted that getting assistance from others outside the school environment helps students to become more involved in their learning. Hence, it is important to note that the activity-learning model closely relates to the social-constructivist learning and cognition perspectives. That is, learning is a process of human growth and development and integration of high mental functions that have both social and cultural backgrounds. Work setting is, therefore, an integral part of learning. According to Van Aalsvoort (2004), considering the work setting as an informal learning environment, unnecessarily reinforces the ambiguity of activity learning approaches. The study insisted that the nature of the

work indicates a label as incidental or unstructured, but the focus should be on the skills, experiences, and behaviors gained.

Benson and Lawler (2008) highlighted that there are three main principles defining students' lifelong learning, i.e., (1) the person who controls the learning objectives, (2) what is to be learned, and (3) how learning can be categorized. This study noted that a person's learning depends on the locus of control of the situation at hand. The study further suggested that based on the locus of control, learning can be divided into four types: 1) Formal learning (where the learner has full control of study objectives or means of learning). 2) Non-formal learning (this is where the learner controls the learning objectives, but not the means of learning). 3) Informal learning (where the learner controls the means of learning but not the objectives); and 4) Self-directed learning (where the learner controls both the objectives and learning means). Jaworski and Potari (2009) suggested classifying the workplace as being informal, formal, or non-formal depending on the locus of control of the learner. In sum, studies suggested that formal learning and training and informal learning are both integral components of workplace learning.

Workplace learning refers to the process individuals use when engaging in training programs, development courses, and education or some forms of experiential learning activity whose goal is to acquire competence needed for the current and future workplace requirements (Savery, 2006). From this definition, it is evident that there is a need to balance the needs of the organization and provide a learning context where individuals can advance their work-related interests and goals. On the other hand, training infers to can a single program (Benson & Haith, 2009). Workplace learning and training are platforms for employee development as they represent opportunities for learning the focus on the attainment of broad career and professional goals. Similarly, talent development is a form of learning to include several programs and experiences characterized by simulations and

role-plays, which focus on the acquisition of competences for a particular position. Paid employment of students serves similar roles as workplace learning and training. Paid employment helps students to gain specific skills such as responsibility, teamwork, and communication, among others, which they cannot learn in the classroom (Venkat & Adler, 2008).

Specifically, the cases of undergraduate learning full-time while engaging in paid employment have tremendously increased globally in recent years. A study in a Scottish university on full-time students engaged in paid jobs revealed that fifty percent of full-time undergraduate participants had part-time jobs (Carney, McNeish & McColl, 2005). While full-time students participate in paid employment for various reasons and benefits, the learners endure the challenge of balancing work and studies, consistency in school attendance, and accomplishment of assignments. Kazakhstan, a country in Central Asia, still has a significant number of students both in private and public universities. In the 2018-2019 academic year, public universities had 229,526 students at the undergraduate level, 15,900 at the master level, and 1,800 students at the doctorate level. As a plus to the students, the Kazakhstan education system has a policy on universities to find job opportunities and professional development (Egov, 2020). The factor of assisted job opportunities makes the job market highly competitive, with many students engaged in full-time jobs alongside studies.

The framework helps to build an invaluable foundation of the current literature on undergraduate and student experiences and perceptions of the workplace. Despite the shortage of data on this topic, the conceptual framework provides detailed reviews of university teaching and learning perceptions, which are critical for understanding the experiences and academic studies of different students in Kazakhstan.

University Learning and Teaching

The range of studies on student learning consists of multiple perspectives. For instance, some studies focused on the differences between deep and surface approaches to learning. Conventionally, these studies focused on specific learning experiences but have today spread to distinct learning tasks (Tudor, 2015, Bakhurst, 2009). Bakhurst (2009) showed that university learning approaches determine the achievement level of learners as it can help them in understanding the core ideas within the assignment. Factors that determine learning approaches include learner's intention when deciding the learning process to adopt and the level of understanding of the learner. Garland (1991) identified six levels of understanding among university students, i.e., mentioning, describing, relating, explaining, conceiving, and expansive awareness. The latter category of understanding levels encompasses understanding the discipline more broadly and reinterpreting it to fit new contexts and establish a personal relationship with the prevailing phenomena Issrof & Scanlon (2002) defined the experiences of students based on a track of evolving conceptions of knowledge during the degree course. The researcher distinguished dualism and relativism, which evolved from the students' acknowledgment of the need to justify their conclusions with evidence and logical reasoning.

Various factors influence students' learning experiences such as wide range of individual factors and strong feelings on the expression of aspirations and sense of identity as a learner. The studies focused on the emotions expressed by students on their learning experiences, such as enjoyment and relief, as compared to boredom and anxiety (Hopwood & Stocks, 2008). Hopwood and Stocks (2008) described student learning as the meeting of minds and the development of a positive relationship with the teacher. Meanwhile, past studies on students' preferences for different teaching techniques and types of teachers have yielded varied results (Portnov- Neeman & Barak, 2013). Many students indicated

that they preferred teaching methods, based on emotional proximity, such as teacher assistance and support and directing. Harris & Goodle (2008) revealed that the primary features of an outstanding university teacher included the ability to acknowledge the student perspective, create learning ethos and convey feelings, and arouse learning interest. Authenticity was also a major quality of outstanding teachers. Hmelo-Silver (2004) indicated that teachers should be able to express their enthusiasm regarding their ideas, values, and enthusiasm openly. The studies also explored the cognitive and affective features of university teachers based on different forms of teacher knowledge (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). The cognitive characteristics of teachers included conceptualization of the topic and discipline, ability to link teaching with learning strategically, and understand how students learn. Affective features encompass expression of feelings of discipline, commitment, and fostering conceptual development while also showing empathy with the students.

In today's educational world, many students are engaging in their learning activities while also participating in paid work, a trend attributable to the rising cost of education. Though this trend is rising out of necessity, studies confirmed that paid work has significant positive social and educational benefits to the students. Moreover, when the pay aids vocational coursework of the students, it can hugely aid the students' knowledge and career prospects. Fowler (2009) also found that semester-time paid work can have both positive and detrimental impacts on student learning, especially the adverse effects on academic activities. For example, students may be forced to spend long hours at work leading to inter-role conflicts and an increase in stress. According to Lingard (2007), university students who worked for between 20 and 29 hours a week were almost two times more likely to drop out compared to those who did not work at all. The figure is even

higher among those who did not work at all. For better learning outcomes, students must find an appropriate balance between work and schoolwork.

The Relationship among Student Employment, Student Engagement, and Academic Performance

Research over the past three decades indicates a high number of working students across the globe (Carney, McNeish & McColl, 2005). The involvement in work alongside studies presents both benefits and challenges. Despite the inconsistent findings, one common outcome is that extended hours in employment result in decline in academic performance. Several research outcomes found that employee students who work more than 15 hours face adverse effects regarding their dedication in classes, persistent and academic grades (Astin, 1999). The magnitude of negative impact, however, depends on the place of work; on-campus jobs pose less impact in academic performance than off-campus jobs. Most literature findings confirm the positive effect of pre-graduation jobs on skill and personal development essential for students' future careers (DeSimone, 2008). The literature shows that students' involvement in paid jobs stems from varied reasons, including the need to pay for tuition, live particular lifestyles, and earn money for basic needs.

Literature shows the possibility of students in employment, managing the constraints presented by studies and work. More participation in recreational activities like swimming, gaming helps the working students break the stressful life of juggling work and academics (Kwadzo, 2014). The literature credits sharing with friends as a stress remedy tension experienced when struggling to meet deadlines on assignments within a limited time, resulting from more commitment to jobs. The rationale of sharing is to help to build a relationship to improve well-being. Further, as Richardson, Evans, and Gbadamosi (2014) noted, an excellent strategy for undergraduates in the employment sector is to find

institutions with flexible timetables to allow them to balance their work and academic

lives. The balance enables them to rip the benefits from the paid job without compromising

their academic performance.

The majority of students who learn and work at the same time agree that the

education system is moving in the right direction (75.8%). About 22 percent of working

students are also pleased with the educational reform that has taken place in the Republic

of Kazakhstan over the last ten years. Among high school graduates and college students,

the approval for education in the Republic of Kazakhstan is 71.9 percent, which includes

almost 17.7 percent of students who endorse the current education policy of the

Kazakhstan government (Gabdulina & Zhuman, 2019) entirely. In a study on the impact of

employment on students' health and academic performance, Carney, McNeish, and

McColl (2005) found that the more hours full-time students worked, there more

significantly poor grades they had on their performance. Di Paolo and Matano's (2016)

findings correspond to Carney, McNeish, and McColl's (2005) findings by indicating that

pre-graduation work engagement is detrimental to academic outcomes despite the

experience improving the probability of future employment. Neyt et al., (2019) have found

that engagement in work significantly constraints time as the student has to choose

between academic enhancing activities and work demands. The students, however, can

balance their study-work time by reducing the time spent on leisure.

Robotham (2012) have found that employed students have their academic

performance compromised. Kwadzo (2014) has discovered the effects of work on

academic achievement and well-being among student employees. While work engagement

improved participants' interpersonal and communication skills, income to supplement

funding from parents, work demands result in tiredness, inadequate sleep, frustration, and

distress. Astin (1993) links the stressful life of working students to low GPA grades and

lower satisfaction, particularly those who spend more than 15 hours weekly. Understanding the role of paid jobs in fulltime Kazakhstan students is critical as it helps to contribute to the literature and guide the policy-making process to improve students' academic performance in various departments. Companies are still searching for workers with practical work skills, and universities have not yet been able to prepare highly qualified experts, at least on a wide scale. However, Gabdulina & Zhuman (219) argue that Kazakhstan cannot increase the mass flow of professionals that would fulfill the intrinsic demands of the job market on all its key requirements).

Student employment can also negatively impact on the student performance due to the student burnout. Several studies support the argument that a combination of paid work and study has consequences on the mental health of the student (Brand et al., 2003; Fanga et al., 2008). Fanga et al., (2008) reported that the excessive and often unsocial hours of part-time could lead to tiredness or even depression among the students. Engeström (2009) reported that student burnout was more common among younger students than among those above 30 years of age. This finding implied that university students were at a higher risk of burnout. In a study involving medical students, researchers attributed burnout to stressors such as long hours of work engagement, concerns about academic grades, the less satisfying balance between professional and personal life, lack of support from family and friends, and uncertainty about the future. In addition, Karagiannopoulou and Entwistle (2019) found that burnout grew progressively during the course of education, leading to worsening symptoms of burnout. The research suggested that burnout among students was a result of subjective overload, long hours, and the need to fulfill the demands of conflicting roles.

History of Student Employment in Kazakhstan

The Soviet economy in Kazakhstan was guided by five-year plans since the year 1928, reflecting the centralized nature of decision-making in the Soviet Union. Kazakhstan, under the governance of the Soviet Union, followed different educational policies, but they facilitated the students in terms of focused learning (OECD, 2014). Educational policies in 1928 aimed at achieving rapid industrialization of the economy. Hence, the economy demanded not only a rise in the number of working-class graduates but also an expansion of creating a new technological intelligentsia having the capability of serving a socialist industry (Azimbayeva, 2017). The University schools were divided and placed under the administration of different organizations for example, economic schools were put under the supervision of Gosplan and the Ministry of Finance while the Commissariats of Justice and Health was given the role to oversee law and medical institutions (Azimbayeva, 2017). Similarly, Van Klaveren et al., (2010) indicated that significant changes in the political and economic landscape had influenced the education sector, in particular, the Higher Education system. In February 1956, the 20th Congress of the Communist Party launched an initiative for closer relations between Higher Education and production. The study-work combination believed to have a significant impact on both education and growth. The idea was part of the systematic transformation, which ultimately meant to remove and minimize the disparities between mental and physical labor (OECD, 2014).

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Kazakhstan experienced a somewhat volatile employment development from year to year. According to recent economic reports, yearly GDP growth per person employed dropped consistently between 2001 and 2008 from 7.6 percent in 2001 to 6.2 percent in 2008 (OECD, 2014). Since 2010, the job market has considerably expanded due to economic reforms, improved agricultural production, and

foreign direct investment. With the new industrial policy, which aims at economic diversification, prospects for Kazakhstan economy look good? This implies that going forward; job opportunities for undergraduates and university students will increase (Van Klaveren et al., 2010). Pursuing the decision of the 20th Congress of the Communist Party on closer cooperation between HE and development, HEIs were relocated from central cities to more urban locations. This meant that HEIs had got closely linked to the proximate workplaces of the potential specialists. Besides, pursuing the policy of regional administration, the control of the majority of HEIs was by the separate Union Republic authorities and various economic locations. For example, twenty-five HEIs belonging to the Kazakhstan SSR were under the control of the administration of the Republic (Azimbayeva, 2017). The explicit aim of this strategy was to push the HEI nearer to the productive forces and the partial unloading of the old university centers. Khrushchev proposed to "proletarianized" students of non-working class descent by allowing them to work full-time.

Subsequently, reforms aimed at linking Higher Education and development, and extending Higher Education ties with practice are no longer tenable, hence removed in the Higher Education system. As a result, the governing body of Higher Education got over-centralized (Azimbayeva, 2017). The primary goal of these educational reforms was to adapt to the country's education system to the new social and economic environment realities. In launching the education reforms, Kazakhstan aims to become one of the top 30 most competitive economies globally (Van Klaveren et al., 2010). In Kazakhstan 2050, strategy, accessible, and quality education are the main pillars of economic advancement, thus the need to change the structure, governance system, and legal regimes within the education sector. For example, in 2005, the President launched the "Zhasyl El" program, which intends to provide opportunities to young people to work during the summer

vacation as student detachments, including construction, landscaping, and urban development (Egov, 2020). In recent years, this program has become the most active student formations, with more than 200000 participants (Egov, 2020). In this program, students work under the supervision of the Republican staff of youth groups.

Benefits and Challenges for Working Students in Kazakhstan

The increasing ratio of working students all over the world is noteworthy. In the scenario of Kazakhstan, the students receive benefits as well as face challenges based on their status as working students. Alonso and O'Neill (2011) emphasize the role of practical experience for full-time students. Part-time jobs are imperative for undergraduates in universities as they help the students to prepare for the demands and skill expectations in their respective professions. These findings resemble those of Kwadzo (2014), who found that part-time jobs enhance professional skills because of the responsibilities the employee students strive to accomplish. Hall (2010) asserts that despite the minimal wages they receive for those engaged in on-campus jobs, the money is essential for the purchase of foods, clothing, and other learning materials.

Students working within the University of Kazakhstan enjoy accessible learning resources. Vargas and Maalouly (2012) indicate that students enrolled in studies and working on campus premises have better access to resources like library materials, laboratories notwithstanding one on one interaction with the professors. Access to resources has a significant role in academic achievement. As Astin (1993) noted, engagement in employment on a part-time basis contributes positively to degree attainment and learner's cognitive growth. Those students that engage in part-time within a campus score higher GPA than those working off-campus. DeSimone (2008) affirms Astin's findings. He states that on-campus jobs seldom harm academic performance. On the flipside, unrelated off-campus jobs present detrimental effects on performance. Besides the

earnings, Perna (2010) finds that working students have opportunities for real-life experiences, the building of social capital, and meaningful, lasting relationships. Tinto (1993) earlier investigated the positive impact of on-campus job and social development. The study indicates that students in on-campus employment alongside studies are more persistent because the expansive engagements help learners intellectually and socially.

At present, higher education in Kazakhstan provides students a chance to select the tools of skilled self-determination, research, and manufacturing methods during practice, and to be able to work part-time in firms and other institutions (Gabdulina & Zhuman, 2019). Working-class adolescents in Kazakhstan historically did not have these rights, but also endured several forms of prejudice against them. There was a separation based on rural-urban population differences. Rural youth were worse off, had limited access to societal and recreation amenities as compared to urban youth. The rural youth population had no choice but to start work at an earlier age (Rigi, 2003).

Pre-graduation jobs are useful in developing professional skills, increasing employability, and generation of substance funds (Perna, 2010). Students engaged in paid employment are predisposed to cases of low content retention. Astin (1999) argues that engagement in non-academic activities, especially in full-time job scenarios, deprives the students of enough time and energy they would otherwise devote to studies and other university activities. Students face the hard challenge of balancing work-education life. Students working for over 20 hours per week are disadvantaged in coping with their academic demands, particularly in the case of first-year working students. Nonetheless, engagement in work in periods lower than 20 hours weekly makes a positive impact on their studies. Qualitative research among 565 students in a Norwegian University by Bugge and Wikan (2012) found that students working less than 15 hours a week

experience relatively fewer adverse effects on their grades than those who work for

prolonged periods beyond 15 hours a week.

Later studies by Kosi, Nastav, and Sustersic (2013) found similar findings by

demonstrating that work only impacts academic performance where working hours exceed

18 hours a week. The other challenge is that students in the work program have difficulty

with satisfaction. According to Tessema et al., (2014), student employees experience

declined satisfaction and GPA. An increase in employment for students between semesters

negatively affects students' cumulative grade point averages. Tessema found that

employed students had an average of 3.07 GPA, working averagely 14.4 hours. However,

Wenz and Yu found contrary findings to Tessema et al., (2014) on the low GPA among

working students compared to non-working students. Richardson, Evans, and Gbadamosi

(2014), in qualitative research on how full-time students cope with part-time jobs, find a

straining impact of balancing work and studies. The study found that students who double

up as employees cannot satisfy the demands of all aspects of their lives. The academic life

suffers significantly as most students forgo studies and allocate more time to part-time

work.

Students on full-time jobs face the challenge of the right educational institution

search. Richardson, Evans, and Gbadamosi (2014) indicate that the extent of curriculum

flexibility significantly impacts students' work schedules. Despite the proper facilities in a

college, working students must find industry-specific institutions and programs that take

less than 2-4 years to complete. Some of the participants in Kazakhstan shared how they

tirelessly searched for universities with flexible timetables that could enable them to attend

their work duties without missing crucial classes. Another student described the long to-do

list working students have to put up with. The nature of student-work life demands that one

has to accomplish so much within the available time. The concerns of the students confirm

the findings of Visser (2011). The study indicated that students in full-time employment find it hectic to do all and still meet the demands of social life. The priorities of working students force them to go to bed late exhausted. The school and workforce them to de-prioritize social engagements resulting in impaired emotional well-being.

Studies by Dieters (2013) uncovered the prolonged years working students spend in colleges than unemployed full-time students. The demands of schools and work require that one find a flexible schedule to accomplish all aspects of their to-do list. In cases where work and school schedules are not flexible enough, students have to extend their periods in colleges to meet the academic hours needed to complete a degree program before they can graduate. Well-paid jobs present to students a challenge of agonizing whether to commit to school or drop and resume later. The need to get back to class makes students busy in a workplace environment with less committed workers. Some students say colleagues consider them too serious about their work, an aspect that often affects work relationships. Studies by Hayes (2010) confirmed the cases of delayed graduation among working students. The same research further pointed out the increased cost of education of the extender students. For example, a four-year degree in Texas costs 41,636 dollars, while an extension by two years would cost 60,264 dollars. The additional costs are burdensome regardless of the money an employed student makes from their jobs. There are reduced salary implications of delayed graduation (Hayes, 2010).

It is worth noting that the performance of the labor market may differ in relation to the different areas of the employment market and with reference to the pursuit of training. In Kazakhstan, students work beyond their disciplines because of the unavailability of jobs in their respective disciplines. Consequently, students do a different job separate from their training. Students do not use their expertise; they merely pick different jobs, which, in effect, undermine their skills development at universities (Jumabayeva, 2016). Empirical

studies by Hakkinen (2006) demonstrated a definite link between pre-graduation

employment and future economic performance about employability and earnings. Di Paolo

and Matano (2016), however, posit that earnings are only positive if the pre-graduation

jobs relates to the degree programs the students are undertaking. However, in the age of

globalization, students need to be prepared to join the domestic and international job

markets. This can include specific skills, such as the learning of foreign languages, a range

of learning experiences, and such skills, which may include critical learning, skills related

to communication, and interpersonal skills (Jumabayeva, 2016).

Although the Ministry of Education keeps playing a role in controlling the

availability of experts to address the needs of Kazakhstan's modern economy – including

by offering government subsidies – its measures have not been comprehensive. Kukeyeva

et al., (2014) inform that Kazakhstan experiences persistent systemic unemployment,

wherein the skills of its employees are not in line with the demands of its economy. The

latest research on post-graduate jobs has shown that a significant percentage of students

from higher education institutions in Kazakhstan have senior roles that vary from their

areas of study. In May 2012, the media outlet Rating KZ issued a report evaluating the

progress of Kazakhstan graduates in seeking jobs (Kukeyeva et al., 2014). As per survey

results, 51 percent of survey participants – chosen from the student bodies of Kazakhstan's

universities from the year 2007 to the year 2009 – reported that they were employed in a

job that represented their field of research. The survey also found that many students

assumed that their degrees would have little relevance to their future employment.

Furthermore, about 25 percent responded that their degrees have not been useful during

their job quest (Kukeyeva et al., 2014).

The Conflict between Paid Work and Study

The relationship between a person's work and non-work life is an essential aspect of academic and professional engagement among working students' lives. However, this area remains largely unexplored in research, as many studies focus on the work and family balance (Benson & Haith, 2009). Work-family balance refers to a form of inter-role conflict attributed to work and family role pressures, which may be incompatible in some cases. Among young people, studies suggested that work and education are the primary life domains. Work-university conflict refers to the extent to which a person is involved in a particular role, e.g., works, may interfere with their ability to academic roles at the university. The research on work-university conflict is consistent with the conceptualization of the bi-directional phenomenon of the work-family interface. For instance, the number of hours they spend in paid employment each week relates to the sense of conflict between education and work among young adults. Benson and Lawler (2008) demonstrated that inter-role conflict is a potential stressor that can lead to negative well-being and performance outcomes among individuals. In another study, researchers found that university students had trouble balancing studies and work, thus leading to elevated levels of stress (Engeström, 2009). Elevated stress levels inversely relates to school readiness and academic performance.

Consequently, there is a need to distinguish between the extent to which participation in paid employment interrupt the ability of the student to understand university responsibilities (work-to-university conflict) and the extent to which participating in university life interfere with the ability of the student to realize paid work requirements (university-to-work conflict). Focusing on the work-university conflict, Schimmel (1997) demonstrated that role-related time commitments are the primary predictors of the conflict. In this case, time is a limited resource; thus, the student's

commitment to paid employment could reduce the amount of time available to them to undertake university roles. Thornberg (2008) suggested that excessive time engagement in paid employment would limit the ability of the student to university requirements resulting in a sense of work-to-university conflict. Elsewhere, university time requirements suggest a negative impact on the students' work activities. For instance, class lectures could clash with some of the scheduled work project tasks (Bakhurst, 2009). Hence, a positive association between the number of hours spent in the university and university to work conflict is expected.

Besides, inter-role conflict is also positively associated with psychological distress. One sign of psychological distress is burnout. Burnout refers to a psychological condition characterized by cynicism, the decline in personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion (Portnov-Neeman & Barak, 2013). Tudor (2015) reported that student burnout negatively correlates with academic performance and positively associates with student disengagement from life at the university. Therefore, one expects a positive correlation between work-to-university conflict and students' burnout. Many studies on the specificity of conflict-satisfaction relationships found that family interference had a negligible effect on the level of job satisfaction (Lingard, 2007; Fanga et al., 2008). These findings can, however, are used to assume that paid work may negatively interfere with the studies but not job satisfaction (Lingard, 2007). As a result, an increase in university-to-work conflict could lead to a decline in the level of satisfaction with university life.

Support Programs from Academic Administrations to Students in Kazakhstan

The trend of engagement in paid employment while still undertaking studies continues to increase as prospective employers demand work experience and practical skills. Working students must, however, strive to find coping mechanisms to navigate the strenuous study-work responsibilities. Students experiencing emotional and physical stress

have an opportunity to share with their friends. According to Kwadzo (2014), involvement in leisure and other non-leisure activities is a useful remedy for breaking stressful feelings. Students can engage in shopping, playing games, swimming, cooking, and sporting activities to reduce their stress levels. Social engagements allow students to interact with their friends so that they can share their thoughts to release tension. Astin (1999) reported elevated stress among students who work for long hours. According to Giri and Polly (2004), available hours for studies and work limit family time, leading to stressful feelings.

The key funding sources for higher education in Kazakhstan are specific Republican budget grants for universities, state funds that are essentially merit-based scholarship vouchers, and university fees. Tuition is also significant as only 30% of students receive state funding, while the majority of the students pay for tuition. The levels of education differ between private and public bodies. Many prestigious institutions, such as the Kazakh British Technical University, charge about $10,000 annually (Ruby et al., 2017). State institutions charge fewer, about $3,500, while other public provincial universities charge as low as $2,000. Seventy 70 percent of students who pay for their education typically do so on their own or with parental help. Educational grants issued by the government are not common due to high-interest rates (Ruby et al., 2017). Under the provisions of the Bolashak program, graduates must participate in work activities in their discipline acquired through the program for a period of five years. If their employment is not in accordance with their areas of expertise, this implies that the scholars of the Bolashak system have failed to comply with the terms of the policy and must refund the full amount of the scholarship. Thus, graduates may face problems searching for a job that suits their education and following the demands of the job market (Jumabayeva, 2016).

Finally, studies recommended that working students settle for work plans that allow a better balance between work and education. The balance can ensure that employee

students do not compromise their studies. Most of the time, students allocate more time on

work duties than academic work. According to Smith (2016), working students experience

lower grades due to low retention, persistence with a considerable number of students not

graduating within the stipulated program period. Students with more hours dedicated to

their studies have considerable chances of scoring higher grades. The working, however, is

imperative in bolstering students' practical skills and enhancing networking

(Karagiannopoulou & Entwistle, 2019). The exposure to the workplace environment

prepares a good ground for prospective employment in the competitive job market

characterized by a large population of graduates eying the same limited jobs.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the literature on theories of students' learning and university

teaching. Based on a work-life conflict construct, past research demonstrated that paid

employment could have an influential impact on the academic performance of the

university student. Furthermore, many hours spent in paid work could lead to

disengagement from university and academic activities leading to psychological distress.

Focusing on Kazakhstan established that many university students were increasingly

engaging in paid employment as a way to supplement their tuition fees and other needs. In

addition, the literature review noted that it was part of the government policy to encourage

work engagement among students as they aim to make Kazakhstan more competitive.

Besides, this chapter presented the literature on the historical and current trends of

education and employment in Kazakhstan; the relationship among students' employment,

engagement, and academics; the benefits and challenges for the working students in

Kazakhstani scenario and the support programs offered by the university administrations in

Kazakhstan. The literature review gives a detailed overview and analysis of current

literature related to the working students and the conditions they have to cater to while combining work and study in the Kazakhstani scenario.

The conclusions in the extensive literature review present the need to understand perspectives of working Kazakhstan full-time undergraduate students about their experience and academic performance. Despite the vast literature on the issue of paid work engagement and student performance or academic studies, the researcher found that there were still many literature gaps concerning students' working experiences, benefits, and support programs for university students in Kazakhstan. The current study, therefore, informs the role of paid jobs on their grades. From the gathered and analyzed information, I developed a project to improve the performance of working Kazakhstan students and prevent detrimental compromises students make to handle enormous workloads from work and academics. The outcomes could be imperative in guiding policy-making at faculty levels to enhance academic performance for full-time students engaged in paid jobs. The next chapter informs about the methodology employed for conducting the research.

Methodology

Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology used for data collection procedures and instrumentation along with the data analysis approach used in conducting this research. The topic of the study that is "Working Students in Kazakhstan: Their Experiences and Academic Studies" comes under the category of educational research for which; qualitative research methodology has been selected along with semi-structured interviews as the research tool for data collection. Fifteen among working students in Kazakhstan who divided their time between their studies and work were selected through a purposive sampling technique.

The research questions of the study are:

1. What are the experiences of working students in Kazakhstan in terms of combining employment and university learning?

2. What benefits the working students in Kazakhstan get in terms of their work and studies?

3. What challenges the working students in Kazakhstan face in terms of their work and studies?

4. Are there any support programs from academic administrations to working students in Kazakhstan?

The discussion below contains a description and justification of options I have made in developing a qualitative, interview-based study to answer the research questions mentioned above. This chapter discusses the research design, sample of the study, research methods used in the research, the data analysis approach, and ethical considerations in this study.

Research Design

The intention of research studies is to generate knowledge (Ercikan & Roth, 2006). A research design leads to the techniques that a researcher utilizes to collect and evaluate various research factors (Lewis, 2015). The essence of the study explains using a qualitative approach, with an emphasis on gathering information based on the context of the participants and focusing on their contribution as working students (Creswell, 2007). As for the working students in Kazakhstan, the researcher tried to record the experience of individuals and the significance they assign to their contribution. The definition of the design is evolving instead of firmly preordained, as some queries that change based on the context of the individual participants or the significance they attach to various concepts used throughout the study.

Qualitative research begins with assertions and the use of interpretive/conceptual frameworks that notify the study of research concerns that discuss the purpose ascribed to a societal or human issue by individuals or groups. Qualitative researchers use an evolving qualitative approach to investigation, data collection in a natural placement that is responsive to the people and places under review, and data evaluation that is both inductive and deductive and identifies trends or themes to analyze this issue (Creswell, 2013). This research also refers to an interpretive investigation that is the researcher serves as a vital tool and interprets the information gathered through interviews. Interpretive information-rich cases permit the researcher to collect useful information about a phenomenon and describe it into theoretical blocks to make it meaningful (Merriam, 1998).

Qualitative research design and approach is useful for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2012). Moreover, a qualitative research design allows the researcher to understand the concept of interest from the participant's viewpoint (Yin, 2003). The research questions revolve

around the employment activities of students and the effect on their academic performance.

It also involves the attitude that educational institutions in Kazakhstan have towards

employment alongside the academic performance of students. It also allows

administrations to use the data provided in research for coming up with solutions for the

problems experienced by their students. The qualitative case study approach is applicable

to this study because it allowed me to determine the participants' perceptions about their

involvement in employment during the study, and gain insight and an in-depth

understanding of the individual's experiences (Lodico, et al., 2010, p. 269).

The present research relates to a phenomenological-based investigative process, as

it involves the participants' observations and their experiences. Phenomenology refers to

an interest in people's personal experiences from their viewpoints. Phenomenology is a

conceptual perspective that promotes the analysis of personal experience interpreted

literally; and one that views actions as defined by experiential phenomena instead of by

extrinsic, factual, and physically represented fact (Cohen et al., 2013). The essence of this

inquiry has driven the preference of interviewing as a research tool or process, which is

probably the most suitable path; since it permits an individualistic comprehension of the

participants of the research (Seidman, 2013). This study is phenomenological as the

researcher focuses on a common phenomenon experienced by all participants (Creswell,

2007) that are working along with studying in Kazakhstan.

The research design is incomplete without the scope of the study that describes the

setting and sample of the study. The scope involves purposeful choosing of the setting and

the sample. It means selecting the "closest", the best example of the phenomenon and the

context in which the researcher is most likely to view what he is interested in. It may

require professional research or questioning on that particular subject or experience

(Richards, 2006).

This is interview-based research, in line with the qualitative approach of this study (described in detail in the Research Methods below). In the literature, interviews indicate consistency with qualitative inquiry because the qualitative interview appears to step away from a pre-structured, hierarchical form towards an open-ended or semi-structured framework that allows the participants to create their way of understanding the world. This allows for versatility rather than constancy in the sequencing of conversations, encouraging participants to discuss and address concerns and problems that would not have been included in a pre-developed schedule (Cohen et al., 2013). Interviews allow participants to discuss their interpretations of the world in which they live, whether they are interviewees or interviewees, and to convey how they view scenarios from their own perspective (Cohen et al., 2013). In this study, students' attitudes and experiences regarding their study and work were required making interviews as the most suitable option for data collection.

Population and Sample

No researcher can evaluate every individual or item in a chosen target population. This is because a target population generally includes multiple items or topics that require plenty of time and comprehensive resources to research (Hultgren et al., 2016). Surely, the best way to do it is to reduce the number of items or individuals in the target population to a workable estimate that encourages the researcher's work and facilitates them to come up with more timely and accurate conclusions about the target population's specific behaviors. Consequently, the sample size is basically an empirical reflection of the number of subjects that a researcher considers fit to study in a particular target population to arrive at their results, enabling them to draw conclusions in their results representative of the entire target population (Hultgren et al., 2016).

Purposive sampling strategy enables the qualitative study to focus on small samples such as purposefully selected individualistic samples for in depth study. The rationale and

strength of purposive sampling reside in choosing information-rich cases for in-depth study (Patton, 1990). The aim of purposive sampling is to identify and prioritize knowledge-rich cases that are particularly familiar with or acquainted with an interesting phenomenon (Palinkas et al., 2015). Information-rich cases can be identified as those from whom, one can learn a lot about concerns of fundamental importance for the purpose of the research making the sample purposeful (Patton, 1990). This sampling is useful in "selecting individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study" (Creswell, 2009). Such as this study deals with working students in Kazakhstan, and the sample contains fifteen working students from Kazakhstan selected purposefully. The researcher selected these participants as information-rich cases and employed useful knowledge required for the study of the research.

The researcher made use of personal contacts to select the participants of the research enabling the process of selection feasible and flexible. All the study participants were acquainted with the researcher to varying degrees; and had some contact before recruitment. This aspect of personal awareness of the participants has permitted building up of rapport, which is of paramount significance in the qualitative interview-based study to attain profound, substantive, and open discussion (Dundon & Ryan, 2009).

Demographically, the participants were located in Almaty city of Kazakhstan highlighting the regional linkage of all participants. In total, only fifteen participants participated in data collection for the research study restricting the scope and design of the study keeping it focused as the qualitative research study usually focuses on small samples for collecting information-rich data (Bickman & Rog, 2009).

Research Methods

An interview is an exchange of views on a particular subject of common interest between two or more individuals that is recognized as the importance of human communication for knowledge creation; and exemplifies the societal situation of the study of information (Cohen et al., 2013). Kvale (1996) describes an interview as a raw material for meaning evaluation at the later stage of data collection processing. As far as the research interview is concerned, it can be described as a two-person dialogue initiated by the interviewer for the precise purpose of collecting study-relevant information centered on the information of purposeful characterization, projection, or description stipulated by study aims (Cohen et al., 2013).

Semi-structured interviewing is a qualitative method of data collection, which encourages the interviewer to query participants using predetermined open-ended questions (Ayres, 2008). Semi-structured interviews offer greater flexibility, adaptability along with direct communication permitting the researcher to review and interpret responses of the respondents, follow-up clues, reflect on the original comments, and get more comprehensive and explicit results (Tichapondwa, 2013). Redesigning and reconstructing interview questions of this kind as per the answers of the respondents adds value as per the answers of the respondents, adding flexibility granted to the researcher. The choice of the participants for interviewing was by purposive sampling explained by Etikan et al., (2016).

The working students in Kazakhstan selection was on their being knowledgeable about the work available for students, their attitudes towards academics along with working and their work-based and study-based experiences. In addition, the students contributed willingly in the research with the help of informed consent. A schedule for conducting semi-structured interviews aided in making the interviewing process flexible.

Interviews helped gather useful information from interviewees regarding their knowledge and experiences about working and studying at the same time.

Listening to audio recordings helped transcription into Word in the interview language and afterwards translated. Indeed, transcribers must be familiar with the study's theoretical viewpoints and this manifests in the transcription method (Chandler & Reynolds, 2013). The interviews recordings occurred through the use of a voice recorder and transcribed later on. The transcription process for this analysis represents the interpretative approach that characterizes qualitative research, trying to express the participants' perceptions and interpretations as thoroughly as possible (Chandler & Reynolds, 2013). All the files were stored on the researcher's personal computer. Only the researcher and the supervisor had access to the data. After transcription, informed consent guided the deletion of the recorded interviews.

The interview protocol contains questions that are open-ended to facilitate the interviewer to investigate based on individual experiences of participants for clarity and further information acquisition. Open-ended questions are perhaps the most effective instrument for questioning on a phenomenological basis (Seidman, 2013). With the help of such questioning, the researcher can investigate the initial answers and come up with a further discussion of the given responses to ensure clarity and accuracy. This helps an interviewer to create an inquiry upon initial reactions and discuss responses more precisely.

Collecting the data from face-to-face semi-structured interviews from individuals and open-ended questions aligns appropriately with the problem and research question. The use of open-ended questions is appropriate because it enables the interviewer and the participants to explore and discuss the research topic in depth, giving the researcher opportunities to probe and ask for clarification and elaboration of the interviewees'

expressed perceptions in greater depth. The semi-structured interview is appropriate for investigating perceptions because it is engaging, conversational, and promotes two-way communication that reveals individuals' expressions, viewpoints, opinions, feelings, and behaviors. The interview questions include their perceptions of work and study, its benefits and challenges facing and in what ways working and study simultaneously have an impact on their academic studies.

The researcher used the three-interview sequence methodology when constructing the interview questions. This method involves knowing about a participant's experience, putting it in perspective, and reflecting on its interpretation (Seidman, 2013). The three steps in the methodology are specific life history of the participant, descriptive experiences regarding research phenomenon, and reflection on the meaning. In the interview procedure, the initial questions asked the participants to introduce themselves, inform them about the division of their work, and study experience. These questions fit with Seidman's first suggested interview method (2013), where the aim is to know about the scope of a specific personal experience. Further specifics about those experiences were asked in the following questions. In particular, they examined how the participant believes about becoming a working student, what tasks he/she carries out, and what contribution he/she makes. The last set of questions represents the last approach to interviews, where a participant is encouraged to seek clarification and significance of their experience (Seidman, 2013).

Data Analysis Approach

Throughout the interviews, the researcher produced periodic summary notes to record the answers and emphasize crucial observations that included a query from the investigation. They were thoroughly transcribed on a computer, after documentation of the interviews. During the transcription, the interviewees were given number pseudonyms (Participant 1 to Participant 15) which left out personal information such as the name of

the participant, the names of the individuals they stated and the names of the agencies they served in compliance with ethical standards and in order to retain privacy.

Qualitative coding refers to making definitions out of data interpretation (Brymen & Burgess, 2002). Codes use is to encapsulate, refine, and form several of the observations that came from the data. Coding refers to the process of data breakdown, investigation, contrast, conceptualization, and classification (Brymen & Burgess, 2002). The codes, which are sorted in this study, are context codes as they are based on informants' perspectives. A collection of codes describing the trends and results that originated and had relevance for this work; were created using an inductive coding approach using both conceptual analysis and in detail codes (Creswell, 2014). The translation of these codes is in English and are categorized according to thematic divisions, and provided in the following sections by the researcher for discussion. Such thematic divisions came from the Index for Inclusion conceptual structure (Booth & Ainscow, 2002). In general, in a qualitative study a conceptual structure offers a specific emphasis on the topic under research (Bickman & Rog, 2009). The collected interview data coding resulted into four categories that are experiences of working students, benefits of working with studies, challenges, and support.

Ethical Considerations

As moral reasoning is practical reasoning, the researcher should consider ethical questions specific to his scenario (Stutchbury & Fox, 2009). It means the researcher should be acting morally justifiable to be ethical for a research study. The researcher has to be ethical, having more influence over the research study, and the researcher tried to be friendly, cooperative, and respectful with the participants. Particularly during data collection, the ethical concerns emerge with respect for the location and the participants, and collecting data in ways that do not establish power imbalances and misuse the

participants (Creswell, 2013). The provision of informed consent, the freedom to deny, and the safety of the participants are some of the pertinent ethical concerns. The researcher took care of all things as a researcher, and maintained friendliness and transparency with the participants.

Informed consent is defined as a series of steps involving the disclosure of information about the study and its impact on participants ' decision making to enable them to opt whether or not they wish to participate (Cohen et al., 2013). For this research study, an informed consent form was created to obtain participants ' acceptance to ensure ethical study, and they are assured about their privacy and anonymity.

Preece (2016) describes an ethical study as directing the ethical approach of the research. The researcher suggests that ethics require more than studying how to get an ethical committee to reach a reasonable opinion. Ethics, according to the report, is simply about the dignity and reliability of the study. In light of that, before conducting the study, the researcher addressed all ethical issues, which mean ethical policies guide the study's process (Preece 2016).

Summary

The chapter on methodology gives an overview and reasoning for the design, instrument, and population, and sample, procedures used in this study. This qualitative inquiry focused on the interview as a method for collection of data examined how participants perceived their role as working students, what are their experiences in creating a balance between their studies and employment, and what support programs are relevant. The researcher recruited fifteen study participants with purposive sampling, who shared information on their experiences. Their answers appear in the next chapter together with the presentations of these findings.

Data Analysis and Findings

Introduction

The study employed a series of research questions that required the application of the qualitative research approach. Interviews assisted in helping inform the research on the right approach to take in trying to answer the research questions. The study applied a thematic analysis that consists of four categories that directly address the research topic and questions. The categories used are experiences of working students, benefits of working while studying, challenges faced by students, and the support students required. The categories, in particular, address the circumstances surrounding students in Kazakhstan.

The categories identified directly address the study's research questions. The categories include further subdivision into sub-categories to help address the research questions more comprehensively. The identified thematic categories, together with their sub-categories, description, and analysis are pertinent in this section.

Study Respondents

The study includes fifteen participants who took part in interviews aimed at answering the study's research questions. All the participants in this study were students working in Kazakhstan. Face to face, interviews done to all respondents with the researcher using an audio recorder to record. The participants were both male and female, even though gender was not a determining factor or a variable in the study. The respondents who could agree for face-to-face interviews were included in the research, regardless of their gender. Purposive sampling applied in the study as described in the methodology section. Participants in the study, however, were selected based on their working status, i.e., whether full time or part-time while they continued their education in Kazakhstan.

Interview Response Analysis

The coding of interview transcripts resulted in four primary categories, with each containing at least two sub-categories. The coding process resulted in four distinct categories of experiences, benefits of working, challenges faced, and support needed. The experiences category outlines both the personal and professional development that students perceive to receive while working and, at the same time, going to school. In terms of benefits, students were required to provide the perceived advantages, either profession-related or study-related, while they attended school and worked. The challenges category addresses the different issues or problems encountered by students while they worked. The problems related to academics, work, and personal challenges. The last category, support, mainly covers the things the students need to thrive. The support category bore sub-categories such as personal support, work-related support, and academic support.

The detail of the results of the analysis is in Table 1 below. This is the summary of the four identified categories and their respective sub-categories.

Table 1.

Categories and Sub-Categories

Research Question	What are the experiences of working students in Kazakhstan in terms of combining employment and university learning?	What benefits the working students in Kazakhstan get in terms of their work and studies?	What challenges the employed students in Kazakhstan face in terms of their work and studies?	Are there any support programs from academic administrations to working students in Kazakhstan?
Category	Experiences	Benefits	Challenges	Support

Sub-categories	Professional development	Profession – related	Academic challenges	Academic
	Learning of new skill	Get the opportunity to work	Lack of guidance and support of the faculty	Work-related
	Management of their work and academic lives	Attain work-related skills beforehand	Lack of administration guidance	Personal
	Creation of balance			
	Promotion	Apply knowledge	Assessment of assignments	
	Networking	Networking		
	Goal setting		Lack of interaction with lecturers and peers	
	Earning money	Study-related		
		Acquire new knowledge		
	Personal development	Attain skills		
	New knowledge acquisition	Academic integrity	Work-related challenges	
	Time management	Feel a sense of community		
	Generation of self-esteem		Time management	
	Having a source of self-awareness	Gain financial benefits and Scholarship	Lack of time	
	Communication network building		Creating a balance between	
		Personal growth		

	Learning stress handling	Able to create their network	Balancing the work and family life	
		Develop their skills of time-management	Lack of multitasking skills	
		Multitasking		
		Self-esteem		
		Create a balance	Personal challenges	
		To acquire new knowledge	Stress	
		Becoming more responsible and experienced	Financial issues	
		Opportunity to incorporate work and study	Family issues	
		Networking		
		Scholarship		
		Application of expertise		
		Skills and techniques learned		
		Development of academic abilities		

		Self-esteem Sense of community		

Experiences

All the respondents had information to share about their experiences in working while at the same time earning university education. The most evident themes concerning experiences were personal development and professional development. In terms of personal development, the majority of the respondents experienced new knowledge acquisition, time management, and a boost in their self-esteem.

Ten students out of fifteen students reported having acquired new knowledge while working and studying at the same time. Some of the students stated that they had no prior experience of working and that working while they were in school made it easier to apply the knowledge. The students agreed that working while still in school provided them with the much-needed job experience and made it easier to source for jobs upon completing school.

Nearly all the students stated that their time management skills had improved because of working while still in school. Some of the students alluded to the fact that they had to balance both school and work, something that is not easy. To the majority of the respondents, planning for work and schoolwork required them to improve their time management skills. Some had come up with schedules that helped them manage their time efficiently. Planning to do some of the work in advance also demonstrates how some of the students have experienced personal development. Student 2 explains that he has to do his

assignments early, so that he can complete them in time and avoid issues where work and school activities are colliding.

Self-esteem also emerged as an attribute of personal development for some of the students interviewed. However, this attribute was only evident in a few of the respondents. In one of those interviewed, there was clear evidence that, working while at the same time studying had elevated their self-esteem. The student was super confident in herself that success was guaranteed as long as things did not change. In another student's case, however, there is evidence that their self-esteem had decreased because of trying to multitask between school and work. Student 12 explains that he doesn't feel comfortable with the position he plays at work.

The interview results also demonstrate that very few students who work while still in school had good communication network building. Since they interacted with some senior officials while at work, they were able to learn how to communicate with them. 7 out of 15 interviewed students failed to mention good communication networking building or simply state something relating to it.

Learning stress handling was also another personal development attribute that was rarely evident in the interviews. Only one of the students interviewed mentioned that they had learned how to handle stress while working while at the same time studying. The absence of this attribute in those interviewed is attributable to first-time experiences of working while studying. Based on the findings, the students were not capable of learning how to handle the stress that comes with working while still going to school.

Professional development was another central theme that was evident from the interviews. All the respondents had at least one professional development attribute resulting from both work and school. The most popular characteristics of professional

development from the interviews were earning money income, work and schoolwork

management, creation of balance, and learning new skills.

The majority of the students interviewed had developed professionally through

proper management of their work and academics. The majority of the students had learned

how to manage both their schoolwork and work life, without interfering with either. Some

of the students claimed to have designated specific times for work and academics. A good

number of the students had come up with schedules that helped them manage both work

and school at the same time. Student 9, for instance, claimed that they were required to go

to work from Monday to Friday and attend school on weekends. This type of flexibility

enabled some of the students to focus solely on a certain activity for a certain period before

embarking on the other. In cases where the two would overlap, the students had learned

how to manage their work and schoolwork in advance. Similarly, the same students also

proved that they had created a balance between school and work.

A fair number of respondents also claimed to have learned new skills because of

working while still in school. Some of the students interviewed confirmed that their work

closely related to what they wanted to be after graduation. To these students, it was an

opportunity to learn skills that relate to the careers they aspire to have. In the process, the

students had come up with goals that helped them remain on track towards achieving their

aspirations.

Analysis, furthermore, established networking an attribute that most students had

come to experience. Some had improved their communication skills, making it easier to

network both at work and in school.

The chance to earn some income is also another professional development attribute

that is evident from the interviews. The motivation of the majority of the students

interviewed comes from getting some income. Some used the work they had as a way of

getting some extra cash since their stipends were not enough to cover all their needs. Indeed, some students saw working as a way of being productive and earning some extra cash. To these students, they used the free time at their disposal working to bring in some extra income. For example, student 5 claimed: "I wanted a source of income. You know … in college, there is always free time, and I chose to be productive rather than attend night parties and other unimportant activities at the university."

The interviews also brought out promotions as an attribute of professional development. A minimal number of those interviewed claimed to be after promotion from the work they were doing. The motivation of the majority of the students was resulted from other factors such as money and learning new skills but did not mention promotions as a critical factor. Promotion means to be on the minds of people who have already completed school and have stable careers. Students, in contrast, often have other motivations in regards to the work they are doing. The urge to seek promotions always comes after graduation once a person has already settled into a career.

Overall, the experiences of the students in working while still in school were mostly supportive in developing them personally and professionally. The personal and professional developments seemed to make them ready for their career challenges. The interviews also revealed that some of the students were not at all happy with their work or sense of responsibility, and to some, working was the only option they could improve their lives financially. The drive of such students resulted from university authorities who had come up with higher costs for tuition that could sometimes eat into the little stipends they had.

Benefits

Working while still in school certainly, has some benefits. The interviews occurred to determine the different kinds of benefits the students enjoyed because of going to school

while at the same time working. The benefits include three distinct sub-categories, i.e.,

profession-related, study-related, and personal growth. Each sub-category had different

factors alluding to the perceived benefits the students enjoyed.

Profession-related benefits, firstly, were most common among the majority of the

students. These had anything to do with the opportunity to work while studying. The

factors identified under this attribute include getting the opportunity to work, attaining

work-related skills beforehand, applying knowledge learned in school, and networking.

The first factor, getting the opportunity to work, was most evident in the majority of

the respondents. A good number of students treated working while still in school as an

advantage. Student 10, for instance, explained that earning an income was a distinct

advantage of having a job. To a few of the respondents, the opportunity to work helped

them learn how businesses and organizations conduct their businesses in preparation for

their future entrepreneurial endeavors.

The majority of students, moreover, claimed that working while still in school

enabled them to attain work-related skills beforehand. To these students, the chance to

work before graduation is an opportunity to go ahead of peers and get the skills the

employers require. The best possible way of doing this was by starting work early. As a

result, a person's employability improved when he or she had some work experience on

their resume before graduation.

Nine out of fifteen students, additionally, saw working as a way to apply the

knowledge they had learned in school. The students saw working as an opportunity to put

the knowledge they had learned into practice. Utilizing knowledge from school also

provided the students with an added advantage and boosted their chances of getting hired

permanently by companies after graduation. Some of the students, in their roles, were

required to multitask. The idea of having to multitask between school and work had already made them masters of the skill.

Another key profession-related benefit that was evident is networking. A few of the students alluded to the fact that interacting with people at work boosted their social and work networks. Student 6, for instance, claimed that they were communicating with many people while at work and as a result, improved their communication skills.

The second major benefit sub-category was study-related. From the interviews, the most evident benefits students had in this regard included acquiring new knowledge, attaining skills, academic integrity, feeling a sense of community, gaining financial benefits, and scholarships.

The third sub-category of benefits was personal related. Personal-related benefits were by far the most popular among the interviewed students. The benefits had everything to do with improving one's skills because of working while still studying. The most evident themes from the interviews in terms of personal-related benefits were the ability to create one's network, earning money, developing time management skills, multitasking, and self-esteem, becoming responsible, opportunity to incorporate work and study, and having a sense of community.

The majority of the study participants particularly enjoyed the benefit of earning money while still in school. The money earned because of working was a big incentive to the students. The money earned was used to cover bills and other financial needs the university students had. Working was also an opportunity to save some money for after school. To a good number of the students, it was an opportunity to be independent and manage their affairs on their own. The benefit of making summary stated by student 13: "The extra cash from part-time work lets you cover the cost of living more comfortably, sometimes even living a little aside for fun".

A good number of students interviewed also claimed to have benefited through multitasking activities, time management. For example, gaining self-esteem, indicates more responsible, and having a sense of community, by integrating work and school life. These benefits mostly cater to the skills developed by the students to help them balance school and work. In general, the skills the students received, other than those related to study and work, helped them grow. From the interviews, it is clear that the students were personally better off while working than when they were not.

In general, working while still in school was overly advantageous to the students. Each student had at least one benefit emanating from the three identified sub-categories. The work students did helped improve their professional, academic, and personal development. The significant benefits that are evident from the interviews are the opportunity to work and study, creating a balance between work and school, and acquiring new knowledge. The students were also more equipped with skills that would help them further their careers. They had become more personally responsible, independent, and experienced in handling most of the challenges students face daily. The emerging themes included the application of skills learned in school at work, gaining experience on the job in preparation for other career goals, and improvement of one's academic abilities.

Challenges

The interviews also revealed that students that are working have a series of challenges. The researcher aimed at finding the different problems the students had encountered while working. A simple and direct question regarding the challenges followed and each of the 15 students had something to say. From the interviews, three underlying sets of problems the students faced while working. The challenges were academic-related, work-related, and personal-related.

The challenges sub-category related to the issues the students had encountered in their academics while working. The interviews bore specific challenges such as lack of guidance and support from their faculties, lack of administration guidance, problems with assessment of assignments, and limited interaction with peers and lecturers.

The interviews revealed that ten out of fifteen interviewed students lacked guidance and support from their faculties. Their faculties meant to benefit students that solely focused on their studies. Seven out of fifteen students were personally responsible for finding time to do their work and balance with their academics. Some courses were not available for students who were working, forcing them to improvise. To some, they had to wait until they had received their academic schedules before they could begin work to ensure that they did not have clashing schedules.

A few of the respondents, moreover, also pointed out the lack of administration guidance to students who were working. The interviews revealed that most of the administrations and faculties provided very little guidance to students that were working. As a result, the students were required to seek their advice. Student 15 stated: "Study-related problems …. Is that your teachers do not understand you."

Based on student fifteen's statement, it is clear that some of the students that are working have some explaining to do whenever they miss important deadlines, even if it is because of work.

Five out of fifteen of the students, additionally, revealed that there was a lack of interaction with their peers and lecturers. Students who have to work have very limited time to interact with their peers. Five students of the time they have are spent doing work or catching up with students who do not have a job. Similarly, the time the students spend with the lecturers is very limited in nature. Some of the students, based on the busy

schedules they have, can only interact with their peers and lecturers during exams and must-attend academic events.

Two out of fifteen students of those interviewed also brought out the issue of assignment assessment. Firstly, the effort they would put in completing assignments would not match that of students that are not working. Some find it hard to complete their academic assignments on time, sometimes guaranteeing a lower grade. Another underlying issue is the inability to complete assignments on time. The students sometimes have to go to work and then report for their exams and assignments. When this happens, the students have a lot on their minds, resulting in shoddy academic work done and as a result, an increased chance of failing a course. Student 3 provided a glimpse of what working students went through when she stated: "As for the schedule, for example, I don't have enough time."

Work-related challenges were also evident from the interviews. The students revealed that they encountered a series of problems at their places of work. Some of the most common challenges identified include time management, balancing work and family life, and inability to multitask in some instances.

Eleven out of fifteen of the students had difficulty in managing their time. Having to work, go to school, and have some personal time seemed to be a problem for some of the students. Since their jobs and school work required maximum commitment, it was impossible to keep all of them running at once. Some of the students claimed to have gone to attend classes late. Others who worked far away from their school had to travel long distances to reach their learning centres. As a result, this interfered with their preparation time and at times could result in absenteeism. Student 7 summarized the problem of time management by stating: "One of the problems I am facing is time management. Sometimes the classes start late, and this affects my job when I arrive late."

Another critical challenge that affected many of the students is balancing work and family life. To most of the students, this is the first time they have to work and at the same time, be with their families. Whenever the students leave their places of work, they are required to attend their classes. As a result, this leaves very little time for family activities. This also adds to the problem of time management.

The interviews, moreover, revealed that a few of the students had a problem with multitasking while at work. The pressure of having to balance work, school, and personal life was sometimes too much to the extent that the students lost their concentration at work. Performing their duties in certain instances became an issue, especially if they involved some multitasking. Student 15 provided a glimpse of what challenged him when he stated: "Well, work-related challenges … for it are a challenge with my clients. When your clients want something but you give them something else."

In terms of personal-related challenges, a few themes emerged from the interviews. The three main problems identified in the students interviewed were stress, financial issues, limited family time, and lack of recreational activities.

The majority of the students stated that their work resulted in them spending little time with family. Work and school occupied their time, meaning their interaction with family members was minimal. Student 10, for instance, claimed that her family complained that she did not have time for them. Most of her time was spent at work and school

A good number of students also revealed stress levels. Some were under immense pressure to perform well both at work and in school. At work, they had to perform well to keep receiving the financial cushion they were getting. At school, they had to pull up their socks to get good grades. With time being a factor, the students developed stress from the strenuous activities they had. An instance of how this played out is through Student 11's

statement: "I feel the emotional pressure that there are so many tasks and assignments related to studies and work."

A number of respondents complained of a lack of recreational activities. Working and going to school at the same time had resulted in the students having very little time for themselves. At times, some of the students would have a very limited amount of time to sleep at night, as they need to sleep late and wake up early in the morning. Additionally, the students had very little time to visit other places other than work and school. Student 13 summarized the problem of recreational activities when she made the statement: "The challenge that I face is that I am always sleep-deprived. My work plus studies never let me complete my sleep hours. I consequently sleep in the classroom or feel sleepy all day and tired, which further messes up all the work I do."

In general, the challenges the students face is divided into three distinct sub-categories of academic, work-related, and personal challenges. Some of the observable difficulties in terms of academics include lack of support and guidance from faculty and administration, assessment of assignments, and lack of interaction with peers and lecturers. Work-related challenges include time management, balancing work and family life, and lack of multitasking skills and abilities. In terms of personal problems, the participants had stress, family issues, and a lack of recreational activities.

Support

The interviews conducted resulted in students suggesting areas where they would need support. The areas identified, just like in other categories above, were related to academics, work, and their personal lives.

In terms of academic support, the majority of the students talked about the support they would desire. A good number of those interviewed wanted support from their peers and their lecturers. Some of them even went further to point out that some of their lecturers

and peers had been very supportive of them. Some provided instances of how their schools did not care about their decision to work. In general, the students acknowledged that with improved support from their schools, i.e., from peers and lecturers, they would be able to cope with some of the academic challenges they had identified. Having a student support center, according to Student 1, for instance, was very helpful in scheduling for critical educational events.

The study participants rarely talked about work-related support. Interestingly, only one student suggested that work colleagues could offer students support. Student 2, in particular, stated that she had received tremendous support from her colleagues at her place of work. The lack of support from work is an issue that stems from organizations' management with little regard to employees that are still in school.

The majority of the support the study participants talked about related to the family. A high number of participants were thankful for the support they had received from their family members since they began working. The participants also outlined the different kinds of support provided by families. Student 8, for instance, stated that he had received both financial and emotional support from his family. He said that his course was costly, and the salary from work would not cover the cost. Some of the participants claimed that some of their family members were not at all supportive of their decision to work. Student 10 stated: "Apart from my father, everybody understands my job"

Some of the participants claimed that their family members had become tolerant with their coming home late and had even excused them from doing some of the house chores.

Recommendations for Working while in School

The study participants' motivation was for different reasons to work while they were still in school. As a result, the researcher wanted to know whether the students would

recommend working while even in school. Interestingly, the majority of the participants stated that they would recommend anyone that could find work while still in school to do it. Many claimed that it was a chance to quick-start their careers and, at the same time, make money and network. Some argued that working while in school made one creative and hardworking. However, a few of the participants were skeptical of the idea of working while still in school. They claimed that students should only work if it is necessary.

Participants of the study who were also working students gave recommendations to their peers, faculty and university administration to bring betterment in terms of development of professionalism, academics and university support towards the working students. The recommendation is for students to work during the studies as it will enhance experience as well as help in improving the attitudes towards professionalism in a positive manner. It will also improve their financial status and decrease dependency on their parents and guardians. Working during studies also increases social connectivity and ultimately helps the students to get better jobs after completion of their graduation program. According to interviewees, working students do get practical experience while studying, know the pros and cons of working, and try to fulfill the demands of the employment sector. It also helps the students to stay away from bad peer groups who get indulged in smoking, drinking and other criminal activities.

It is suggested that working during the studies makes the students learn about the value of time. The working students know the worth of time and therefore, utilize the time positively as compared to non-working students. Working along with studies makes a person responsible so it adds the factor of responsibility sharing and mental maturity. Working during studies also makes a student creative and hardworking. It also teaches them the art of investing money so they usually do not spend the money lavishly.

Working along with studies improves one's skill and area of knowledge hence it helps in gaining practical knowledge along with theoretical studies. In other words, it helps one in better application of the acquired knowledge and skills. Working along with studies thus helps in making a CV or Resume look great and it points out to the employers that a person can work in tough situations and can handle the pressure of work. Thus working along with studies proves more fruitful and points out the hard-working nature of the particular person who on the basis of his/her experience holds a better chance of job offer as compared to non-working peer groups. Since a student who works along with studies, has better social connectivity and helps in better recommendations or networking opportunities. The recommendation then is that students should work along with conducting their studies. However, there are some exceptions as two of the participants found their works to be adversely hectic and recommend other students not to work if they can manage their expenses with parental support or any other support.

In the view of certain participants, the universities do not follow certain procedures and do not distinguish between the working and non-working students. According to them, every university must have students support centers for working students to consider their legitimate demands and help them in pursuing their studies to earn and learn at the same time. According to such students, the central aim of getting education is to get a better job, through universities facilitation centers and the working students gain some sort of relief during their tenure of studies, as they have to bear the expenses of studies on their own, and have to financially support their families as well. Such cases should be given special leverage by the university administration and the teachers rather than punishing them for late submission of assignments, late entry in class etc.

Moreover, universities must have the data of the working students to know where they work and what their office timings are. The universities need to fight for the rights of

student workers so that they can get reasonable payment from their respective jobs. There are certain cases where working students get little pay accordingly since the assumption is that they are still young and lack understanding about employment. It is a healthy sign for socioeconomic prosperity of a nation that more and more students work nowadays.

Furthermore, universities should minimize the number of lessons per week for the students who are engaged in part-time jobs. The Student Support Centers in universities should provide real support to working students. The working students require counseling by expert psychologists to know the mental condition of the working students and to suggest a proper remedy as per their needs. Universities should work towards improving the lives of all students. Providing working students with scholarships and reducing their fees for working can alleviate their pressures. The recommendation is that the working students should get loans and bursaries because in most of the cases, they work for their survival to earn money in order to bear the expenses of their education. In today's world, university has to be a place not just for learning but also for a suitable earning once a student completes graduation.

The universities can enter into an agreement with companies. Universities may arrange job fairs for the students and help them in acquiring internships leading to jobs after completion of their studies. The universities should also help the students to get suitable wages or salaries. The work force related to various fields comes from the universities, which can prove helpful for the economic prosperity of the country and skill development of the various working students.

Chapter Summary

The chapter outlined significant findings of the study, presenting them as a set of categories, and supporting quotes that address the research questions and research topic provided. Four categories were identified, i.e., experiences, benefits, support, and

challenges. The participants of the study, who were also students working, provided a series of experiences, challenges, benefits, and support and helped in answering the research questions. Different themes were identified under each category, making it easier to understand categories that were identified by the researcher fully. Furthermore, the interviews proposed to determine whether the participants would recommend working while still in school. The results were overwhelmingly in favor of other students working while still in school. The findings pointed to the fact that working enabled students to quick-start their careers and become independent rather than wait for graduation to look for employment.

Discussion

The interviews revealed the perceptions and experiences of full-time graduate students on the role of paid employment in their academic success. It also revealed the benefits and challenges of paid employment to the academic performance and study engagement of various students in different courses. Through the interviews, the researcher was able to identify some of the support programs for University students in Kazakhstan in relation to paid employment. In this chapter, the researcher attempts to interpret different perspectives of full-time undergraduate students who are concurrently engaged in paid work and how it affects their academic performance. The researcher discusses these findings through comparison with those of other past studies and from different regions. Through this, the researcher was able to answer the four primary research questions:

1.   What are the experiences of working students in Kazakhstan in terms of employment and university learning?

2.   What benefits the working students in Kazakhstan get in terms of their work and studies?

3.   What challenges the working students in Kazakhstan face in terms of their work and studies?

4.   Are there any support programs from academic administrations to working students in Kazakhstan?

The interpretation and discussion of the findings was done based on the themes discussed as follows.

Student Experiences

The data analyzed reveals that students have different experiences when they opt to work. The experiences, as already determined, depend on the nature of work and the busy nature of an academic program. One of the most affected areas in a student's life is his or

her academic performance. Soliz and Long asserted the reasons why student's academic achievements fell were due to inadequate time to catch up with students that were not working. Students who spend the majority of their weekly hours at work are at a higher chance of performing poorly based on analysis done by Fanga et al., (2008). Time management was a significant issue that affected the majority of the participants. The concept of navigating between work, school, and home life was challenging to the majority of the respondents of the study. Zhang et al., (2019) have echoed these sentiments, where the findings were mainly out of favor for students learning while working. Zhang et al., (2019) argued that participating in studies while working resulted in poor time management among students.

Similarly, researchers confirmed that extensive time commitments to paid work affected the overall experience and satisfaction of the students with the university education (Bakhurst, 2009; Benson & Haith, 2009). Bakhurst (2009) demonstrated that there was an inverse relationship between paid work engagement and university life. Specifically, students who spend many hours in paid work had difficulties in undertaking readings, lecture and tutorial preparation, and utilization of library study resources. These findings were consistent with those of the current study, further suggesting that students have to make sacrifices on some aspects of the university learning, including attending lectures and tutorials in order to fulfill all the requirements of the paid work. Tudor (2015) posited that students preferred to minimize the time they spend at the university so that they may engage in an uninterrupted paid work. Some studies have even suggested that students preferred condensation of the syllabus so that they may engage more in paid work even on a full-time basis. A contrasting view that posits that students who manage their time properly when in school while working was put forth by Fanga et al., (2008)

explaining why some of the students working while studying in Kazakhstan managed their time well than the majority of the population.

From the interviews, it is evident that engagement in paid work contributed to the satisfaction of the students not only with the work but also with the university life. This finding is consistent with a Portnov-Neeman, and Barak (2013) study, which found that students were more tolerant of the time demands of the work due to the financial rewards. Nevertheless, this study did not measure whether engagement in paid work contributed to happiness and satisfaction. The study pointed towards the greater ability of the students to fulfill their personal needs due to the paid work, gaining field experience, thus leading to greater satisfaction. This finding is consistent with those of Karagiannopoulou and Entwistle (2019) and Lingard (2007), which noted that paid work enhances the responsibility, skills, and knowledge of the students. The development of skills and experience of doing a specific job was also a major experience that the majority of participants had demonstrated. According to Jaworski and Potari, D. (2009), students participating in term-time employment boosted their chances of getting employment upon graduation. Having a job while still in school meant that some of the students could put the skills and knowledge into practice. Jaworski and Potari (2009 asserted that students mainly focused on getting job experience to position them favorably for future career opportunities, sharing the same analysis as Tichapondwa (2013).

Benefits of Paid Employment to University Students

The study revealed that students that were working while studying enjoyed several benefits. The benefits were mainly professional-related and study-related. Getting an opportunity to work was a universal benefit the majority of students revealed, as outlined in the collected data. Perna (2010) supported these findings in his study when he acknowledged that students were motivated to get a job to get the real-life experiences of

employment before securing permanent employment. Schoffstall (2013) also stated that students were pushed to seek jobs while still in school just to get an opportunity to work. Networking is another profession-related benefit that was evident in the collected data. Hakkiken (2006) had demonstrated that the reasons why one opted to participate in internship programs or employment while still in school were to create or expand their professional networks.

Another key professional-related benefit, as evidenced by the data collected, was a chance to earn an extra income while still studying. Students who were working while still studying were mostly after earning income to help maintain certain lifestyles that they desired. Hall (2010) asserted that most students were pushed to start working while still in school, as they were from poor backgrounds. Despite the minimum wages that most of the jobs pay, the students are often willing to persevere and save the little that they make (Hall, 2010). Tessema et al., (2014) had also supported Hall's assertion in their study. Di Paolo and Matano (2016) posited that earnings were the only reasons that pushed students to look for employment while still in school.

Students' assessment also considered study-related benefits when they opted to work while studying. Jumakulov and Ashirbekov (2016) had argued that one of the most prominent benefits of students studying while working was the ability to integrate class work and professional work. When students get exposed to work in the fields of their studies, they will learn to put what they learn into practice. At times, it becomes easier to understand some of the concepts taught in class after interacting with them at work on a regular basis (Tichapondwa, 2013). Time management is also a key benefit that some of the students have alluded to benefit from. Since both work and academics are vital to one's success, some of the students develop a means of managing the little time they have.

Challenges in Balancing Studies and Paid Work

Despite the benefits and the wonderful experiences that students that are working while studying might enjoy, there are challenges that some of them go through. One of the most recurring challenges arising from the data collected was lack of administration support to students that had work commitments. Richardson et al., (2014) indicated that students who were studying while working faced issues with curriculum flexibility that significantly affected one's schedules. The school programs were not flexible enough to accommodate last-minute changes or adjustments that students might have. The assertions of Richardson et al., (2014) were echoed by Visser (2011), who had demonstrated that students found it hectic to balance academic, work, and social life. Dieters (2013) also posited that faculties were rigid in coming up with programs that would make it easier for students who were working.

The results also indicated that certain students' stress occurred when they had to manage between work and studies. As highlighted by Barron and Anastasiadou (2009), the likelihood of students stress resulting from their work and studies is high. Time management was a major issue among those that stressed students. Segmentation theory asserts that one needs to find a way of segmenting between work and life (Engeström, 2009). For students, segmenting between their work and school life should be a priority, but this becomes stressful when they cannot find ample time to concentrate on both of them. Structural functionalism theory, as explained by Parsons (2017), is pertinent in explaining the stress experienced by students when studying while working. The theory implies that a person's life is mostly concerned with two spheres, i.e., productive life and emotional life. The two spheres need to work in tandem with each other. In the case of this study, students need to find a way of balancing between work and studies. Through the

theory, students can also expect some form of external support from other life aspects such as family in order to manage their stress.

Support

In this study, the students suggested various areas where they will need support, including academics, work, and personal lives. For example, the students indicated that there should be cooperation between student bodies and the university concerning the scheduling of school events. Nevertheless, they decried a lack of support from the organizations they were working with in relation to their studies. The support challenge in university education and work balance is understandable using structural-functional theory. Structural-functional theory is relevant in explaining how faculties and university administrations can offer support to students that are working (Perna, Cooper & Li, 2007).

Since work mainly relates to a student's productive life, family and peers can chip in and help one with emotional life. This states the ecological systems theory, as outlined by Bronfenbrenner (Perna, Cooper & Li, 2007). The ecology systems theory outlines that there are different systems that cause stress to a person within the work environment. The mesosystems, exosystems, and macrosystems that describe a person's emotional life can play a vital role in providing support whenever a student is stressed. Support also results from the integration of other social systems. Giri and Polly (2004) had developed a work-family facilitation theory that asserts that a person's engagement in one system should contribute to growth in other social systems. In this regard, students facing difficulties from either school or work should expect to receive support from their families. In other cases, albeit extreme, students facing pressure or problems should expect their studies to provide growth and vice versa.

The Conclusion to the Chapter

In this chapter, the significant findings of the study are outlined, presented as a set of categories, and supporting quotes that address the research questions and research topic provided. Four categories are pertinent, i.e., experiences, benefits, support, and challenges. The participants of the study, who were also students working, provided a series of experiences, challenges, benefits, and support and helped in answering the research questions. Different themes result under each category, making it easier to understand categories identified by the researcher fully. Furthermore, the interviews proposed to determine whether the participants would recommend working while still in school. The results were overwhelmingly in favor of other students working while still in school. The findings pointed to the fact that working enabled students to quick-start their careers and become independent rather than wait for graduation to look for employment.

Conclusion

Answers to Research Questions

Experience

As earlier mentioned in the analysis, the most evident aspect relating to experience was the professional and personal growth whereby most of the students had to experience an acquisition of new knowledge and as well boosted the learner's self-esteem. Quite a number of students said they previously had no experience in professions and consequently engaging in such working activities while still studying made them efficient in their knowledge application. The aspect of time management in many students improved from the efforts of the same students who managed to work and attend classes, an experience that was of utmost significance not only at school but more so in the future. According to the interview, most of the working students were in a position to have proper management of work-study activities an experience that proved the capacity of such students to multitask effectively on future and career activities (Jackson & Wilson., 2017)

Benefits

Attending that job after school comes with many benefits if at all, the student manages to have a balance of the two activities. In any case, a student makes it to grasp that opportunity and deliver any service in terms of employment ensures that he or she plays a very crucial role in the development of the economy at large (Brooks & Youngson, 2016). Some of the benefits that accompany a working student include; the student is in a position to provide comfort for expenses such as clothing, food, and transport. Another significant benefit is the fact that the working student gets in a position where he/she has the chance to increase professional skills. This is evident to students who are lucky enough to secure a job in line with their profession.

Challenges

A working student whose major responsibility is pursuing a given course to its successful completion faces various difficulties and serious challenges no matter how keen and successful one might be in planning. The major challenge as earlier mentioned in the above discussion is the time factor. A student who really combines working and studies will always have a shortage of time in either of the two activities, that is, in either school or the place of work. The most common side affected is academics, as the students will presume that it will be easy to cover up with the rest. Balancing between the two activities is, therefore, the major challenge to working students, which adversely affects their studies (Sanchez et al., 2017).

Support

For a suitable coordination between work and studies as a working student, there should be a developed support program to help students combining the two to give out the best in both fields. Among the interviewed students, some stated that family members were aware that the students not only did schooling but as well reported for work and therefore exempted such students from performing daily house chores. If all the working students open up clearly on both ends and let the administration know that various students report to part time jobs, then support programs in learning institutions will be amplified (Van Aken & Berends, 2018). These support programs will help in the ease of handling activities by the working students and any other who might have a similar idea, working while learning.

Results

The purpose of this research was to ascertain the effectiveness of the working students in Kazakhstan and consequently explore their experiences in jobs and in the academic fields. Though different observations while interviewing on the matter gave different results, there must be a determination on whether the act of working while still

learning adversely affects the learner. It will be commendable for a student who makes it to have a combination of the two effectively working and gives promising results in both fields. According to the study, when a student works while learning, it helps the learner to start quickly on his/her career and therefore gauges the extent of competence that one holds. This then helps the students in knowing where much effort needs to be included to ensure success in one's specific line of duty (Chama et al., 2020).

Recommendations on the same are of utmost importance as it will as well equip the learner and familiarize him/her with the right network that pertains to the profession. Therefore, after school, the learner will be familiar with the correct linkage and system to follow and adapt quickly. Recommending students to work while learning makes them hardworking and more creative and this acts as an advantage not only while at school but as well after completion (Picton et al., 2018). The research would there give the right recommendations that every student who might be in a position to secure a place and work while studying, the said student should grasp that opportunity and enjoy the benefits that come along with working while still studying. From a scholar's point of view, working will not only generate income but most importantly, equip the learner and mentally prepare him/her with the skills to handle the future hurdles after the studies.

Limitations of the study

Though the study was successful and informative based on the assumption that the information collected was a perfect representation of the entire students in colleges, some elements in the course of the overall study that, in one way or the other, may limit the general research. Assuming that the interviewer had purposively sampled such would give the best results as compared to the interview of all the students. The sample size in this study is the major limitation as the results of the research will be biased and according to a small population (Bujang & Adnan, 2016). The second limitation of the study in this

analysis relates to the interview time; that is, while interviewing, the interviewer only conducts the interview for thirty minutes.

Any research conducted and whose results are intended to portray a perfect replica of an entire population, time element must be given priority and enough time should be allocated to not only each participant but more so to any single question or an observation conducted throughout the entire interviewing process. The method of data collection used in the process should not be subject to misinterpretation (Valdes et al., 2016; Molina-Azorin, 2016). In the research, data collection happened through recording and later on the voices transcribed and converted into text. For an effective data collection, the study would have used questionnaires for the fifteen participants to fill in, and therefore, no conversion of data would arise. In the process of data conversion, there are possibilities of manipulating and misinterpreting the information and this would lead to the recording of erroneous data because of the research.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations for this research:

1. The growing importance of getting an education over the past few decades has influenced many young people to seek additional schooling as a way of remaining competitive. Yet, the search for employment while schooling presents problems for many young individuals. Fundamentally, students seek out employment opportunities to earn money to support themselves for college and also gain some valuable experiences. Ideally, successful completion of education greatly influences students' future income and working many hours can greatly compromise the chances of students completing their education or getting successful. However, at times, there is no choice, especially for low-income students, leaving them at the mercies of their own capacities or incapacities. In essence, due to inadequate

policies surrounding student work-life pursuit and balance, students risk achieving adverse outcomes (Carnevale & Smith, 2018). Case in point, In Kazakhstan, current students tend to work more than study as compared to their predecessors and this is attributable to the prevailing imbalance in economic realities, which means such students do not have a choice, otherwise they would not survive without paying their fees or feeding themselves. Given such realities, it is possible that a growing number of students will perform poorly in their studies. Moreover, universities in Kazakhstan exacerbate the situation because they do not have effective policy embedded within their framework to assist students in completing their coursework in a timely fashion. Indeed, the development of relevant student work-life efforts and or strategies is meant to provide students with the opportunities to gain more by aligning their personal needs with educational ones. As such, policymakers can support students by facilitating flexibility such as setting lectures on evening or weekend modes. Universities can also come up with policies that support affordable and accessible learning that will not push students to the breaking point.

2. The major themes or patterns deducible from the data interviews include the following. The interviewees are in their early 20s, suggesting that the dire need to work and study comes at an early age. Some interviewees thought that earning extra income gives them freedom and greater autonomy in making choices, which is a good outcome. Yet, the challenges persist such as universities not doing enough to support the students working and learning, given that they do not mind the welfare of their students. Indeed, trying to balance work and study under such conditions, means that there is hardly any time to read, challenging the premise of work and school life. Given the necessity of work for the interviewees, institutions

of higher learning can incentive students by communicating to them the advantages of part-time learning. Knowing that the option to study part-time is available and that the students can access it, can assist in reducing the pressure or burden associated with pursuing demanding work and study schedules. Universities can also invest in technology. Investing in technologies can improve remote learning such as distance or online learning that removes the need for physical presence of students in class (Eller, Araujo, & Araujo, 2019). The frustration of students can be greatly mitigated in investment in relevant and precise technologies. This is because the use of technology will free-up the demands for physical learning for the students and indicates that the university is concerned about the welfare of its students. In addition, universities must be deliberate with their support activities targeting their students by improving their communication (O'Mahony & Jeske, 2019). The expected outcomes in taking care of the welfare of the students is that it provides a better chance of improving students' performances without stressing them and also their overall wellbeing.

3. In conducting data analysis, some of the findings included the following. Significant determinants on student work and life actions or balances include personal development, self-esteem, professional development, time management, learning new skills, creating work, and school balance, including others. The overarching challenges include stress, inability to manage time, financial problems, including others. The support required emanated majorly from family. From the above, the central forces influencing student work and study balance come from the student. This calls for personal appraisal over issues such as attitudes or personalities, values or beliefs, wants or needs, and performance and non-performance, including others. The idea is to determine the role the student plays

towards the attainment of good performance or their contribution towards bad performance. The idea is also that students are responsible for their own successes and despite the challenges that they might face, it is still upon them to make beneficial choices. As such, this calls for every student to perform individual self-appraisals that can assist in determining their strengths and weaknesses in such a way that the students will know in which areas they are doing well and which areas they need to work on with the aim of improving their outcomes. For example, students' ability or inability to handle stress can hinder their dispositional, situational, and institutional successes or failures respectively (Ajjawi, Dracup, Zacharias, Bennett, & Boud, 2019). Consequently, inasmuch as external forces such as universities or policymakers largely impact on the experiences of working and studying students, personal factors or characteristics also play a huge role and this is the reason students must also conduct personal evaluation to determine their strengths and weaknesses and how such contributes to their ability or inability to attain study-work balance.

Conclusion

In conclusion, quite a good number of the working students in Kazakhstan manage a better balance between work and studies and thus accommodating the two in best coordination would be the finest a student will do while studying. The above-analyzed research on the job experiences and academic studies needs to be addressed carefully taken care of as; in any case, the student might fail to maintain a proper balance on the two. Failure to allow a perfect balance between studies and work will most likely result in poor performance in academic studies, which will adversely influence the results of the particular student.

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Appendix A

Interview Protocol

Location _____ Date/time _____ Participant Code

_____

Hello! My name is _____ and I would like to take an interview for my research study. The goal of this project is to explore undergraduate students' experiences on combining work and study. The information will be used in the thesis dissertation, presentations and conferences.

You are selected to become one of fifteen study participants, who were chosen for their engagement in work and study. The participation is voluntary, and you can refuse to participate at any moment. In addition, you can stop the interview or refuse to answer some questions, if you feel uncomfortable. Please note that no names will be recorded and/or revealed. You may choose to name the organization where you work or not, depending on your personal preference. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes.

Prior to the interview, you were sent an introductory letter and consent form. I also have two copies printed for you now, which you can read and sign, if you agree to participate. You can keep one form. Do you have any questions? If there are no questions, may I start?

To get started, could you please tell me a little bit about yourself and what do you do?

In what sphere do you work? What are your key responsibilities?

Could you describe your average workload? How busy are you at work?

Why have you chosen to work while studying?

What achievements do you have in your studies?

Tell me about your experience of combining employment and university learning?

How are you

balancing your time between work and study?

In what ways are you benefiting from study and work?

What challenges are you facing? (study, work-related)

Where do you get support when you need it? (job, family, university)

Why would or wouldn't you recommend students to work while studying?

What kind of recommendations could you provide to universities that support

students who work and study?

Appendix B

Informed Consent Form

Working Students In Kazakhstan: Their Experiences And Academic Studies

DESCRIPTION: You are invited to participate in a research study that seeks to achieve increased understanding of full-time undergraduate students' perceptions regarding the role of paid employment in their academic performance. Once you confirm participation, you will be asked to participate approximately in a 45-minute private interview scheduled at time and place convenient for you. Your participation in the study is on a voluntary basis, and you can withdraw from the study at any point. In case you hesitate to answer a question, you may not respond to it. The interviews will be recorded using a voice recorder and transcribed later. All the files will be stored in the researcher's personal laptop. Only the researcher and the supervisor will have access to the data. Once the interviews are transcribed, they will be deleted. The interview information will be kept confidential. I will not use your real name in the research report. Instead, to refer to each participant in the research report, I will substitute students' names using a coding system, such as Student 1, Student2, etc., to protect your identity. Research findings will be summarized in the final report and might be used for publications or conferences. Confidentiality is guaranteed by the researcher through the use of a coding system for the research participants and numbers to the interviews.

TIME INVOLVEMENT: Your participation in the interview will take approximately 45 minutes.

RISKS AND BENEFITS: There are no potential risks in this study as the data will be collected through one-on-one interviews, and no information related to your personal life will be touched on. Confidentiality will be guaranteed and only codes (Student 1, Student 2, etc.) will be used in the report. In case you hesitate to answer a certain question,

you are free not to respond to it. Your participation in this research study is voluntary and you may leave it any point.

Being part of this study gives you a chance to open up on the issue of students balancing their academics while working. There is a lack of current research in Kazakhstani context about undergraduate students' perceptions of the role of paid employment in their academic performance. For this reason, conducting a study of undergraduate students' perceptions will contribute to the literature about higher education. Student retention and persistence could also be improved as a result of the project study. The findings from this study will provide insight to university's administrators and faculty that can help them develop policies and/or interventions to help employed full-time students succeed academically. By understanding the role of full-time students paid employment in their academic performance, the faculty and students can work collaboratively to control the challenges of concurrent employment and full time college. In addition, the university's administrators and faculty can facilitate and promote conditions favorable for undergraduate students that will help employed students to achieve satisfactory academic performance.

The findings from this study have the potential to affect positive social change. The implications for positive social change could include an improvement of students' academic performance that further results in increased persistence rates, graduation rates, and improved graduation employment opportunities for undergraduate students.

PARTICIPANT RIGHTS: If you have read this form and have decided to participate in this project, please understand that participation in the survey is strictly voluntary and you have the right not only to refuse to answer particular questions but also to withdraw from the research at any stage or re-join it at your will.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Questions: If you have any questions, concerns or complaints about this research, its procedures, risks, and benefits, contact the Master's Thesis Supervisor for this student work, _____ or Master student _____.

Independent Contact: If you are not satisfied with how this study is being conducted, or if you have any concerns, complaints, or general questions about the research or your rights as a participant, please contact the NUGSE Research Committee to speak to someone independent of the research team at +7 7172 709359. You can also write an email to the NUGSE Research Committee at gse_researchcommittee@nu.edu.kz

Please sign this consent form if you agree to participate in this study.

- I have carefully read the information provided;
- I have been given full information regarding the purpose and procedures of the study;
- I understand how the data collected will be used, and that any confidential information will be seen only by the researchers and will not be revealed to anyone else;
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without giving a reason;
- With full knowledge of all foregoing, I agree, of my own free will, to participate in this study.

Signature:_____   Date: _

The extra copy of this signed and dated consent form is for you to keep.