

Evaluating Impact of Online Jobs on Academic Performance of Undergraduates in State Universities of Sri Lanka

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Abstract

In recent years, the rapid growth of digital technology and the on-going economic crisis in Sri Lanka have encouraged many undergraduates to engage in online jobs to earn income and gain work experience. While this trend creates new opportunities, it also raises concerns about how balancing work and academic responsibilities affects students' learning outcomes. Many students face challenges in managing their time, maintaining focus, and handling stress, which can influence their academic performance. Therefore, this study investigates how such employment impacts the academic performance of students in state universities. It focuses on three independent variables: working hours, skills gained from online jobs, and work–life balance and their relationship with academic performance as the dependent variable. A quantitative research design was employed, targeting undergraduates enrolled in state universities across Sri Lanka. Using snowball sampling, data were collected from 374 respondents through a structured questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale. The data were analysed using SPSS software with descriptive statistics, reliability and validity testing, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis. The findings reveal that students who maintain a healthy work–life balance and effectively apply skills gained from online jobs tend to achieve better academic results, whereas the number of working hours alone does not significantly affect academic performance. This shows that the quality of the work experience and the ability to manage responsibilities are more influential than the time spent working. The study concludes that the impact of online jobs on academic performance depends largely on the quality of the working experience and students' ability to balance academic and personal responsibilities. These findings provide useful insights for students, universities, and policymakers to promote effective student employment practices. Future research can explore the influence of different types of jobs and psychosocial factors on academic success.

Keywords: academic performance, online jobs, skills development, undergraduates, work–life balance