75% of students work while being in college (Tylor, Snyder & Lin, 2020). Researchers found negative effect of work on students' mental health (Cinamon, 2018; Mortimer, Harley, & Staff, 2002; Oviatt, Baumann, Bennett & Garza, 2017; Park & Sprung, 2013). It is important for us to have a better understanding of how work negatively affects students.

Keywords: employment, work

Abstract

Working while attending college can be difficult. Three out of every four students work, 20% of them work a full-time job (Tylor, Snyder & Lin, 2020). Researchers have identified the main factor that moderates the relationship between work and student's mental well-being to be an inter-role conflict termed work-school conflict (WSC). Butler,2008; Cinamon,2018; Oviatt, Baumann, Bennett & Garza,2017; Park & Sprung, 2013. Students who experience WSC feel that their working interfaced with their ability to fulfill their role as a student. Although not much research has been conducted on WSC, previous works have built upon WSC with a more understudied inter-role conflict, work family conflict as the theoretical framework (Butler,2008; Cinamon,2018; Oviatt, Baumann, Bennett & Garza,2017; Park & Sprung, 2013). Studies have found that long work hours, less social support, and low job control positively correlated with WSC (Butler,2008; Cinamon,2018; Oviatt, Baumann, Bennett & Garza,2017; Park & Sprung, 2013). Of the many effects that WSC has on college students, such as poorer academic performance and physical health, this research focuses on the impact of WSC on students' mental well-being. Several studies have found a direct negative effect of WSC on mental health, notably depressive symptoms (Cinamon,2018; Oviatt, Baumann, Bennett & Garza,2017; Park & Sprung, 2013). Findings suggest that students who experience WSC are more likely to have depression than those who do not experience WSC.

Introduction

• Work-school conflict is defined as the "extent to which work interferes with an adolescent’s ability to meet related demands and responsibilities" (Markel & Rueger, 1998).
• Physical strain from work does not lead to depression but the subjective conflicts (WSC) does. (Cinamon, 2018; Park & Sprung, 2013).
• Several factors that contribute to WSC are such as long hours work, low social support and low job control.

Long Work Hours

• More time at work result in lesser time to for school duties
• Positively associated with WSC
• Cognitive Appraisal plays a role as a moderator
  - If student appraises long work hours as less time, they experience greater WSC.
  - If appraised as a gain of resource (money), less WSC is experienced (Cinamon, 2018).

Job Control

• Students who have more control over their responsibilities at work report lower work-school conflict (Butler, 2007).
• Control over necessity of work/ reason for work affects WSC
• Some students work to pay for monthly bills appear work as lost of time and freedom; some appear work as gaining resources (money, experience, social contact); Cinamon, 2018; Park & Sprung, 2013).

Academic performance

School grades are thought to be a direct reflection of student learning and it is one of many ways to manifest the student’s role (Cinamon, 2018).
• Negatively linked to WSC
• May be caused by WSC
• Poor academic performance early in the semester may lead to greater strain later in the semester if student fail to catch up with their studies (Park & Sprung, 2013).

Social Support

• Plays a role in stress resistance (Park & Sprung, 2013).
• Positively associated with WSC
• Receiving social may help student adjust to school and work, reduce WSC (Rogers et al, 2010).

Psychological well-being

• WSC has a negative effect on students mental health, especially depression (Cinamon, 2018; Park & Sprung, 2013).
• Students may experience depressive symptoms such as restless sleep, feeling of sadness, inexperience, and loss of appetite (Oviatt, Baumann, Bennett & Garza,2017).
• Students who attempt to strive at work and school simultaneously may experience greater WSC.
• Failure to attend to school duties may induce excessive worry and anxiety (Park & Sprung, 2013).

Discussion

• Negative effects of work on psychological health is mainly caused by WSC
• Factors that contribute to WSC discussed in this study are work hours, job control, academic performance and social support WSC has potential to build up (Park & Sprung, 2013). If it left unneeded may lead to a noticeable effect.
• Cause and effects of WSC also found linked to student drop out or suicidal attempts (Godeman & Ha, 2020; Hoedvangel, 2015). Working 20 hours a week in and WSC are linked to students dropping out.

Future Research

To have a fuller understanding of WSC, it will be beneficial to target students who experiences WSC that work help from counseling centers. Future surveys should include other mental illnesses such as anxiety and the student’s perception of which aspect of work has the greatest impact on their mental health. If I were to conduct a study on WSC I would look at other aspects of school that may impact WSC such as financial aid and I would conduct a study in the form of an online survey. The targeted population is working college students who receive any forms of financial aid. This would also allow me to observe any relation between financial burden and WSC.

Limitations

• Existing research fail to thoroughly study WSC. Other factors that may contributes to work school conflict (gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, personality type, type of work and student’s academic focus) has yet been studied. There is also a lack of study on the relationship between WSC and mental health. Current studies have only focused on WSC and depressive symptoms.

References