

Hustle & Grades: Determining the Relationship Between Work-related Stress and Academic Performance

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Background

- Balancing work and academics negatively affects students' **mental** and **physical** health⁸
- These health effects contribute to **burnout, poor sleep, and stress-related illnesses** among undergraduate students⁵
- These issues interfere with students' focus, energy, and academic performance⁴
- 43% of full-time** and **81% of part-time** college students are employed nationwide⁶
- In **2022**, over **5,000** UCSD students were employed, with **10%** working multiple jobs⁹
- Few studies examine how job type and hours worked impact stress and academic perception³
- Exposure measured by job type, hours worked, and stress level using a 4-point Likert scale.

Objective

To examine the relationship between work-related stress and perceived academic performance among UCSD undergraduate students

Methods

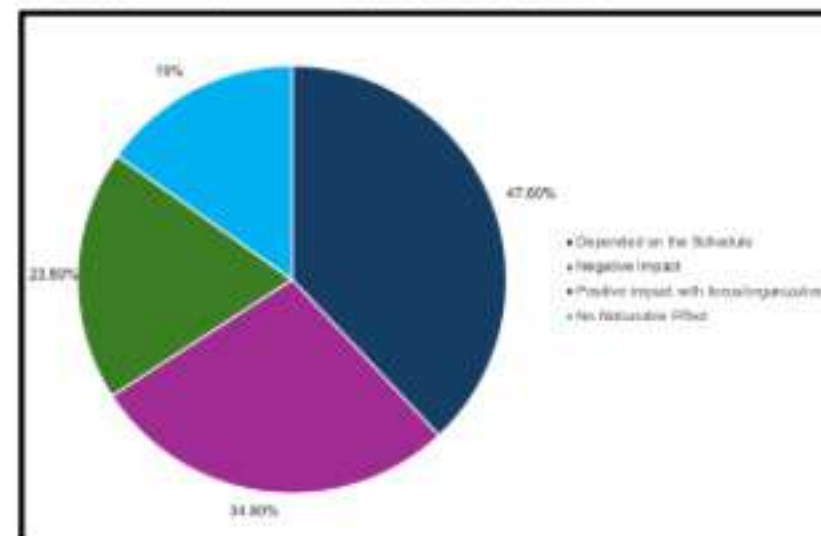
- Type of Study:** Cross-Sectional Study
- Target Population:** Undergraduate students at UC San Diego (**N=63**)
- Recruitment Tool:** Anonymous survey created via Google forms distributed by a QR code and Hyperlink
- Exposure:**work-related stress (impact on work/life balance)
- Outcome:** academic perception (graduation timeframe, completion of assignments)
- Recruitment:** Convenience sampling via social media (Instagram, Reddit, Discord) and email
- Analysis:** Data was assessed in **SPSS v29** using a Chi-square (χ^2) test with a **Likert scale** utilized to measure observed stress according to 4 levels (Not Stressful, Somewhat Stressful, Stressful, Very Stressful)

Results

Table 1. Demographics (N=63)

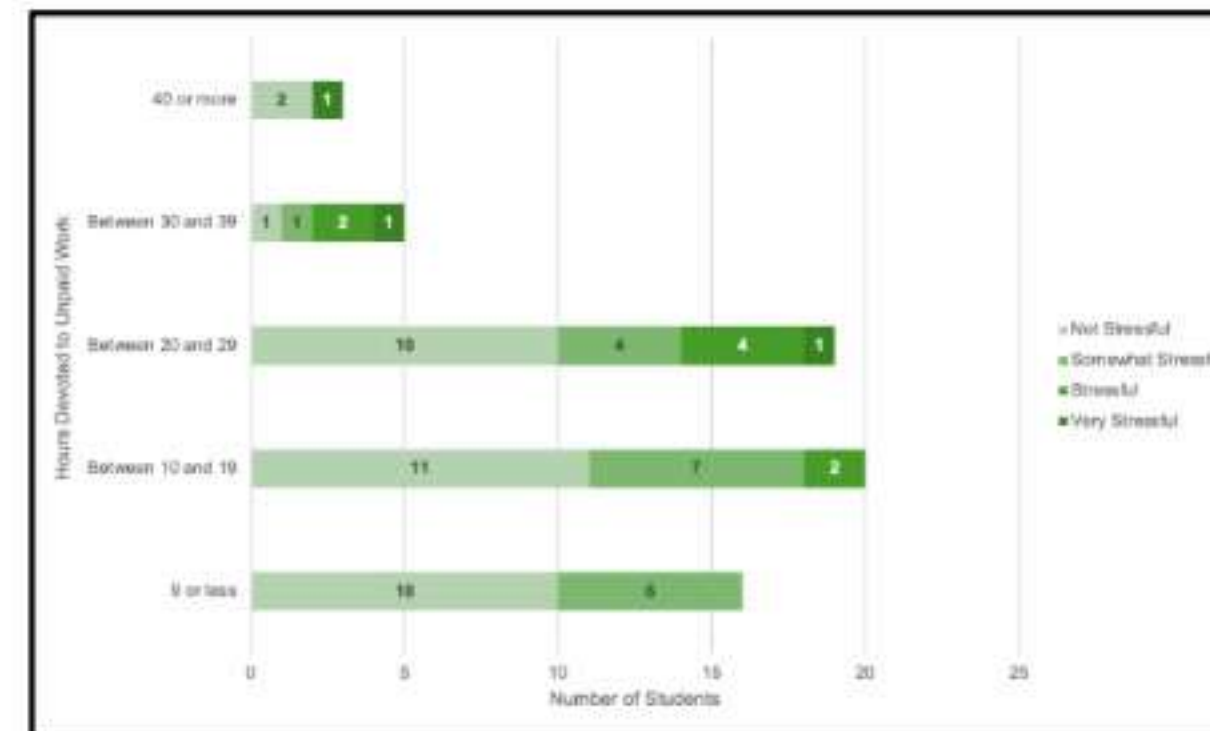
Age	
Mean	21.3
Standard Deviation	4.9
Gender	n (%)
Female	46 (73.0)
Male	13 (20.6)
Non-Binary	4 (6.3)
Race/Ethnicity	
Hispanic	33 (52.4)
Asian	13 (20.6)
White	6 (9.5)
Middle Eastern	5 (7.9)
African American	2 (3.2)
Biracial	4 (6.3)
Academic Year	
Freshman	12 (19.0)
Sophomore	11 (17.5)
Junior	25 (39.7)
Senior	15 (23.8)
Number of Jobs	
One Job	40 (63.5)
Two Jobs	15 (23.8)
Three or More Jobs	8 (12.7)

Figure 3. Academic-Related Outcomes Due to Work-Related Stress



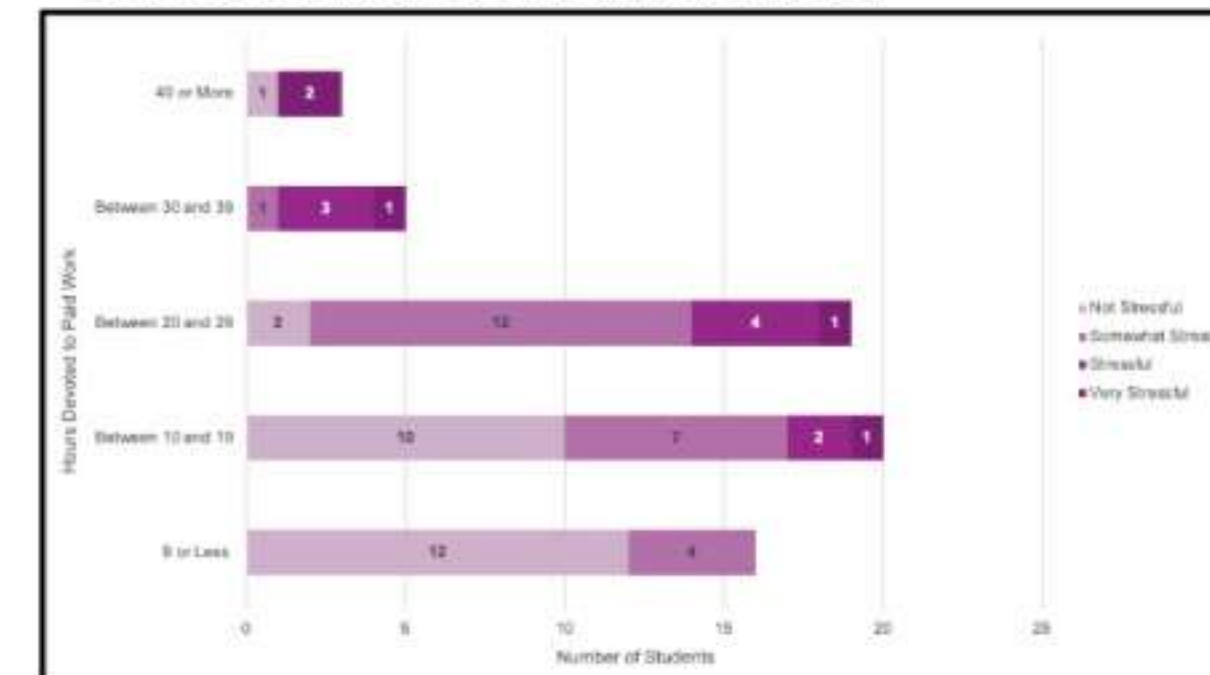
Around **35%** of students reported that work-related stress negatively impacted their academic experience, including study habits and assignment completion.

Figure 1. Frequency of Observed Stress Among Students Due to Hours in *Unpaid* Work



Utilizing a χ^2 test gives a χ^2 value of 19.3 and a p-value of 0.082, which shows that there is **not** a statistical significance between the number of hours worked per week and the stress levels of **unpaid** work activities

Figure 2. Frequency of Observed Stress Among Students Due to Hours in *Paid* Work



Applying a χ^2 test gives a χ^2 value of 43.6 and a p-value of **<0.001**, which shows that there **is** a statistical significance between the number of hours worked per week and the stress levels of **paid** work activities

Conclusion

- Paid jobs were linked to higher student stress, affecting academics and well-being. This was not seen in unpaid roles, suggesting financial strain plays a key role.
- These findings align with existing research on the relationship between work-related stress and academic outcomes.
- This study adds a new perspective by showing how work type affects the stress levels among students
- Work responsibilities clearly disrupt students' routines, making it more difficult to complete assignments and meet academic deadlines.

Policy Implications

- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) can provide peer-led support groups in-person and virtual workshops via Zoom that target stress management for working students
- **CAPS** can partner with campus **Career Services** to offer guidance to working students on balancing both employment and coursework schedules

Acknowledgments & References

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