ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 12| Issue: 5| May 2026|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 ||SJIF Impact Factor 2026: 8.753 || ISI Value: 1.188

UNDERSTANDING WORKING CRIMINOLOGY STUDENTS OF UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN PANGASINAN

Denmark Gin C. Valdez, RCrim
CICOSAT Colleges – Master of Science in Criminal Justice Lingsat, City of San Fernando, La Union, Philippines

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the number of college students who combine academic studies with employment has been steadily increasing in the Philippines. This trend is particularly visible in criminology programs, where students juggle the demands of coursework with part-time or full-time jobs. According to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), approximately 216,000 students in the country work while studying, representing about 8% of the total college population.

Criminology students face a unique set of challenges when they engage in employment during their academic years. The nature of their chosen field often demands rigorous academic preparation, while their jobs—frequently in physically demanding or emotionally draining environments—require time, effort, and mental resilience. While some students work to gain financial independence or professional experience, others do so out of necessity to support their families.

Balancing these two worlds can have both positive and negative consequences. On the positive side, working while studying can enhance time management skills, develop real-world competencies, and provide income for educational expenses. On the negative side, it can lead to sleep deprivation, decreased academic focus, and heightened stress levels.

Understanding the lived experiences of working criminology students is vital for developing support programs and policies that address their needs. Locally, in the University of Eastern Pangasinan, anecdotal accounts and informal surveys reveal that many students struggle to manage their dual roles. By exploring their coping mechanisms, challenges, and perceived impacts on academic performance, this study aims to contribute to the growing body of literature on student employment in higher education.

Several local and international studies support the relevance of this inquiry. For example, Muluk (2017) found that part-time jobs could either enhance or hinder academic performance depending on workload and time management skills. Stinebrickner and Stinebrickner (2007) highlighted that excessive work hours often correlate with lower academic achievement. Meanwhile, Ansong and Gyensare (2012) emphasized that financial literacy plays a role in how students manage income from part-time work.

While most of these studies focus on broad university populations, research specifically addressing criminology students—who face unique academic and occupational pressures—is scarce. This study fills that gap by examining the specific experiences of working criminology students in a provincial university setting.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to capture the lived experiences of working criminology students at the University of Eastern Pangasinan. The approach sought to understand the meanings participants assign to their daily routines, coping mechanisms, and perceptions of balancing work and study.

Population and Locale of the Study

The participants consisted of five criminology students: two in their second year and three in their third year. All participants had experience working while enrolled in the criminology program. Selection was made using purposive sampling, ensuring that participants had direct and relevant experiences.

Data Gathering Tools and Procedure

Data were collected through in-person semi-structured interviews guided by three key questions:

- What type of job did you have?
- What was the average number of hours you worked per week?
- Did you find your part-time job to have a detrimental or beneficial impact on your academic performance?

Interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and later transcribed for analysis. Ethical considerations included voluntary participation, informed consent, and confidentiality.

Data Analysis

Responses were analyzed using thematic content analysis, categorizing data into recurring themes such as workload, time management, stress, financial motivation, and academic impact.

RESULTS

- Nature of Employment – Jobs varied from service-oriented roles to manual labor, mostly part-time with flexible scheduling.
- Working Hours – Participants worked an average of 15–30 hours per week; peak work hours often coincided with exams.
- Perceived Impact on Academics – Some improved time management; others experienced reduced study time and occasional absences.
- Coping Mechanisms – Strategies included strict scheduling, prioritizing academic requirements, and

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 12| Issue: 5| May 2026|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 ||SJIF Impact Factor 2026: 8.753 || ISI Value: 1.188

seeking flexible shifts.

- Motivations for Working – Primarily financial necessity, with some viewing work as career preparation.

DISCUSSION

The experiences of working criminology students reveal a dual reality—employment can be both a source of empowerment and a source of strain. While working students gain practical skills and financial independence, the added workload often challenges their academic performance and personal well-being.

The findings align with Muluk's (2017) and Watts & Pickering's (2000) conclusions that part-time work can be beneficial if managed well but detrimental when workload exceeds a manageable threshold. Consistent with P.F. Strawson's Moral Responsibility Theory, participants acknowledged both the rewards and consequences of their choices to work while studying.

From an Existentialist perspective, students' decisions to work while pursuing their degree reflect personal agency and the exercise of free will. Whether to prioritize work, study, or both is ultimately a personal choice influenced by financial needs, career goals, and self-determination.

The recurring themes of time management, stress management, and financial motivation highlight the importance of institutional support systems. Flexible class schedules, on-campus job opportunities, and academic counseling could mitigate the challenges faced by working criminology students.

CONCLUSION

Working criminology students at the University of Eastern Pangasinan face a balancing act between academic obligations and employment responsibilities. While their experiences demonstrate resilience and adaptability, excessive workloads can hinder academic performance and well-being.

The study suggests that targeted institutional support—such as flexible academic policies, financial assistance programs, and counseling services—can help these students succeed in both their educational and professional pursuits.

REFERENCES

1. *Ansong, A., & Gyensare, M. A. (2012). Determinants of University Working-Students' Financial Literacy. International Journal of Business and Management, 7(9).*
2. *Blustein, D. L. (2013). The Psychology of Working. Oxford University Press.*
3. *Muluk, S. (2017). Part-time Job and Students' Academic Achievement. Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun, 5(3), 361–374.*
4. *Stinebrickner, T. R., & Stinebrickner, R. (2007). The Causal Effect of Studying on Academic Performance.*
5. *Watts, C., & Pickering, A. (2000). Pay as You Learn: Student Employment and Academic Progression in Higher Education.*