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**CONTEST OR CONGRUENCE: THE EFFECTS OF WORK/SCHOOL  
CONFLICT AND FACILITATION ON WORKING  
COLLEGE STUDENTS**

by

Madeline Mareen Miscenich

A Thesis

Submitted to the  
Department of Educational Services and Leadership  
College of Education

In partial fulfillment of the requirement

For the degree of  
Master of Arts in Higher Education

at

Rowan University

June 3, 2016

Thesis Chair: Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.



## **Dedication**

I would like to dedicate this study to the people who may be struggling to balance the many roles they play in life, whether it be work, school, or otherwise.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would just like to thank all of the amazing people who have guided me through my college experience, as without them I would not be where I am today. Specifically, I would like to thank my family and friends, especially my parents, boyfriend, close friends, and other family members who have supported me throughout my college career. I would also like to thank my mentors and advisors, both from my time as an undergraduate and as a graduate student, who have given me the knowledge and inspiration necessary to keep going despite adversity. In particular, I would like to thank Dr. Burton Sisco for sparking my interest in this program and for always being there to offer encouragement and motivation throughout this endeavor. I am eternally grateful to everyone whom I have made connections with thus far, as I could not have made it through this process without your continued kindness, patience, and support. Thank you!

## **Abstract**

Madeline Mareen Miscenich

### **CONTEST OR CONGRUENCE: THE EFFECTS OF WORK/SCHOOL CONFLICT AND FACILITATION ON WORKING COLLEGE STUDENTS**

2015-2016

Burton R. Sisco, Ed.D.

Master of the Arts in Higher Education

The purpose of this study was to find out more about working students perspectives on work/school conflict and facilitation. The subjects that participated in the study included students workers of Rowan University employed through the Federal Work Study (FWS) Program in the area of Gloucester County, New Jersey. Data from the subjects were gathered using a quantitative survey design, with items presented in a Likert scale format. The data were analyzed using SPSS Software, and frequency of response, measures of central tendency, and Pearson correlations were examined in order to determine student attitudes regarding work/school conflict and facilitation. Subjects were also asked to provide recommendations for college administrators and off-campus employers regarding the balance of work and school for working college students. The results revealed that the majority of student workers experienced higher levels of work/school facilitation rather than work/school conflict, and many recommended that college administrators and off-campus employers provide flexibility when managing working college students.

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## **Chapter I**

### **Introduction**

With more young adults entering into the workforce while simultaneously transitioning into their first year of college, it is important to understand how these two very new and often times very demanding roles impact the lives of working college students. Some students may be able to tackle the responsibilities of both work and school with few problems. They may find the balance between the two to be rewarding and fulfilling. In this case, working students experience work/school facilitation, which occurs when the two roles of work and school compliment one another. However, in other cases, there may be students who do not handle the demands of work and school well. In fact, they may be unable to stabilize the two roles, and fall prey to the responsibilities that are required from each. This can cause work/school conflict, which often has negative results, such as poor academic and job performance and increased risk for unhealthy behavior. By taking a closer look at work/school conflict and work/school facilitation, both the rewards and challenges of working students can be better understood. This greater grasp of work/school conflict and facilitation can help to more confidently enhance the positive experiences from dual-role involvement, while also helping to diminish the detrimental effects of an unbalanced relationship between the responsibilities of work and school.

#### **Statement of the Problem**

College students make up a large percent of the workforce today. In fact, according to Davis' (2012) analysis of the 2011 *American Community Survey*, 19.6% of



college students worked full-time, year-round while also enrolled at least part-time in postsecondary classes. While that number may not seem very high considering there are 19.7 million undergraduate students spread out across the United States, Davis (2012) also found that 52% worked year-round, but less than 40 hours per week. These numbers show the prominence of college students who choose to divide their time between work and school. Whether it be to help fund their college education, to gain extra spending money for themselves, or just to get some work experience to boost their resume, more students are taking up the many responsibilities from both their place of employment and their place of education. Because of this large number of students splitting their time between work and school, it is important to understand how these two very demanding roles impact the lives of students.

While work can certainly be a compliment to college courses (as can college courses sometimes be a compliment to work), it takes a great deal of time management, organization, and planning to be able to comfortably meet the needs of both the work and school roles. Students who are up to the task and are able to balance both aspects of their lives evenly can experience a number of positive outcomes, often called works/school facilitation. However, for those students who cannot juggle the demands of these very high intensity positions, the result is not so favorable. In fact, those who struggle to manage their time and workload between their job and school can experience levels of work/school conflict, which could in turn negatively effect a variety of different aspects of the student's life, from academic performance to job satisfaction. It is important to understand both of these consequences, so that it is possible to enhance the positive

features of a balanced relationship between work and school, and also to better assist those students who struggle to stabilize these two very demanding aspects of life.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study's purpose was to gain a better understanding of how work/school conflict and facilitation impact selected Rowan University undergraduate students who work through the Federal Work Study (FWS) Program. More specifically, the study hoped to determine the levels of work/school conflict and facilitation for working college students attending Rowan University while also working on-campus or within the surrounding area of Glassboro, New Jersey. There was also interest in finding out whether the number of hours worked by college students was related to the levels of work/school conflict and facilitation that students experience.

### **Significance of the Study**

As more and more young adults opt to work while simultaneously attending college, this study may help those students who can manage the stress of both roles and for those students who cannot. The results of this study can provide a better understanding of the perspectives of working college students, so that the positive aspects of work/school facilitation can be enhanced and the negative consequences of work/school conflict can be diminished. In addition, this study can also help to inform both higher education administrators and employers, so that they can be aware of the effects of work/school conflict and facilitation and adjust their planning accordingly. It is hoped that as an outcome of all of these factors, working college students will begin to feel

more confident in their abilities to manage the roles of school and work, as well as more supported in their pursuit of both a job and an education.

### **Assumptions and Limitations**

This study assumed that all subjects completed the survey as honestly as possible. In addition, it was also assumed that the sample of students from Rowan University was representative of the general population. Finally, the study assumed that the survey and other materials that were used evaluated the intended characteristics of work/school conflict and facilitation.

There are also a few limitations to this study that had an effect on the results. For example, bias may be present due to the fact that I distributed the majority of the surveys and analyzed all data myself. The sample size as well as the sampling employed could also limit generalizability, as the group of students surveyed was small and pulled only from Rowan University in Glassboro, New Jersey.

### **Operational Definitions**

1. Federal Work Study (FWS) Program: A government-funded financial aid program from which students are awarded financial assistance in exchange for work. Students in this program can be employed on- or off-campus, and generally work 20 hours per week or less in conjunction with class attendance.
2. Off-Campus Employment: Opportunities for students to work outside of the university or college they are attending. For the purposes of this study, an example of an off-campus employment opportunity would be a server in a restaurant or a sales associate in a clothing store.

3. On-Campus Employment: Opportunities for students to work within an office in the university or college they are attending. For the purposes of this study, an example of an on-campus employment opportunity would be an office assistant for a department on-campus or a research assistant for a faculty member.
4. Student Employment: General term for the paid work responsibilities of those who are also enrolled either full-time or part-time in college coursework.
5. Student Employee/Worker: Terms used interchangeably to describe students who are working while in college. For the purposes of this study, a student employee/worker is someone who works at least 10 hours per week and is enrolled either part- or full-time in college courses.
6. Work/School Conflict: Phrase referring to situations in which work causes school obligations to be compromised.
7. Work/school Facilitation: Phrase referring to situations in which work compliments school obligations.

### **Research Questions**

The student sought to address the following questions:

1. What are the experiences of selected Rowan University students regarding work/school conflict?
2. What are the experiences of selected Rowan University students regarding work/school facilitation?
3. Are there any relationships between selected demographics of gender, GPA, age, and education and work/school conflict?

4. Are there any relationships between selected demographics of gender, GPA, age, and education and work/school facilitation?
5. What recommendations do student workers have for administrators of higher education and for off-campus employers regarding work/school conflict and facilitation?

### **Overview of the Study**

A review of relevant literature is examined in Chapter II of this thesis. All articles discussed directly relate to the current study, and provide a strong foundation for topic under investigation. Specifically, the main points that are reviewed consist of the different types of student employment, statistics related to student employment, as well as previous studies regarding work/school conflict and facilitation. In addition, a theoretical framework is presented in the form of the role scarcity and role expansion hypotheses. Finally, perspectives of both working students and employers are also explored.

The methodology of the study is contained in Chapter III. Included is information regarding the location of the study, participation and response rates, materials, and procedures. For example, details on the sample size, data collection instrument, the informed consent form, and data storage and analysis all given in Chapter III of this report.

Results of the study can be found in Chapter IV. This includes demographic data, correlations found, and percentage of responses regarding work/school conflict and facilitation. In order to determine these findings, measures of frequency, central tendency, and Pearson correlation tests were used.

Finally, the discussion of the findings can be found in Chapter V. Included is the relationship of the current study's findings to previous research, conclusions, and suggestions for further research. Following this section is the references and appendices discussed throughout the present study.

## **Chapter II**

### **Review of the Literature**

Seeing college students engaged in the workforce has become the norm in society today. With financial aid packages beginning to dwindle, students are now looking for alternative ways to fund their education, manage living expenses, and gain extra spending money for electronics and other recreational items. Students may also look to work in order to gain experience in their field or find more meaningful opportunities to learn new skills. Whether they choose to work on-campus in a specific department, or off-campus at a restaurant or retail store, the demands of both work and school can sometimes become overwhelming. In fact, when the responsibilities of these two domains contest with one another, students can experience work/school conflict, which can negatively impact a student's health and performance, both on-the-job and in the classroom. However, when the needs of both school and work are congruent and balanced, work/school facilitation can occur, which can empower students to perform more efficiently in both areas and experience more positive, fulfilling learning experiences. No matter what the outcome, there are a plethora of factors that can cause students to experience either contest or congruence between their school and school responsibilities.

### **Statistics and Reasons for Student Employment**

Working through college has become a largely normal aspect of the higher education system today. In fact, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2014), approximately 40% of full-time students and 76% of part-time students held some level of employment in the year 2013. More specifically, 7% of full-time

students worked more than 35 hours a week, 19% worked 20 to 34 hours per week, and 14% worked less than 20 hours per week (NCES, 2014). When looking at part-time students, the NCES (2014) reported that 35% worked more than 35 hours, 29% worked 20 to 34 hours, and 9% worked less than 20 hours per week. These statistics show that working through college is not an anomaly, but instead, the norm for many postsecondary students. While this double-life of work and study may be steady and standard in this day and age, the reasons for it are vast and different for each person.

Some students may continue working through college in continuation of a position gained in high school, according to an analysis by Bozick (2005). By analyzing a separate longitudinal study, Bozick (2005) found that those students who worked throughout high school were more likely to continue working through college. However, Bozick (2005) was careful to note that the socioeconomic status of working students from high school to college differed. According to Bozick (2005), many high school students who worked came from more affluent families, while working college students were more likely to have lower levels of funding and other resources. This shows the important financial piece that is often a strong motivator behind the choice to work while enrolled in college. In fact, many students tend to cite the financial aspects of a college education to be their main reason for taking up employment while attending classes. According to King and Bannon (2002), 64% of students they surveyed stated that they needed to work in order to pay for their education. Even with loan and grant packages, students of all income levels are often forced to find other means of financial support in order to fund their schooling (King & Bannon, 2002). According to an analysis by King and Bannon

(2002), 62% of students from household incomes of less than \$20,000 and 35% of students from households with total incomes of more than \$100,000 claimed that they needed to work to afford tuition and other living expenses while attending college. This shows that students of all income levels can struggle with the financial responsibilities of a college education, which may be one of many reasons that students choose to work while enrolled in classes.

Moreover, other students may choose to work in order to have some extra spending money for the social and extracurricular aspects of college life. This was found to be the case in a study by Dundes and Marx (2006), who found that 80% of students they surveyed worked as a way to earn additional money for themselves. Kozak (2010) found similar results in her study, citing that 95.33% of students responded that they were primarily working to gain spending money. This could include money to fund leisure activities with friends or other personal expenses, such as electronics, games, or other recreational items. King (2006) also found that students who are more dependent on their families to help with tuition and other living expenses tend to cite a desire for extra spending money as a reason for working through college. This is another example of how financial gain can motivate students to seek employment while studying for a degree. Finally, students may also choose to work while in college in order to enhance their career development and personal learning objectives. For example, according to Pascarella and Terenzini (2005), work-related experiences while in college can be beneficial for students' overall career development and skills in the workforce. It was also found that having work experience during college may also help to find employment

more quickly post graduation (Jensen, Yohalem, & Coles, 2011; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). In addition, a study by Lewis (2007) also suggested that students can achieve higher levels of learning as a result of student employment. According to Lewis (2007), students working in an on-campus employment setting experienced learning opportunities that could potentially enhance a variety of different characteristics in their lives, such as career development, leadership, and responsible independence. These examples show that money is not the only motivator in student employment. While many students may work for financial reasons, some may also have a desire to learn and gain a competitive edge over their peers through meaningful work experiences.

The reasons behind student employment are often dependent upon the motivations and circumstances of each individual student. However, no matter what those reasons may be, it is clear that the act of working through college is not going away anytime soon. In order to better understand student employment as a whole, it is important to examine the different types of work opportunities available to college students.

### **On-Campus vs. Off-Campus Employment**

Though there are many options for students to work while attending college, the two main categories to choose from are on-campus employment or off-campus employment. Though at first glance it may appear that these options are not much different from one another, there are a few factors (other than location) that separate the two.

First, according to Hayes (2014), on-campus jobs tend to become available through the Federal Work-Study Program, which is often offered to students through

financial aid packages. However, there are some jobs on-campus open to students outside of this program, depending upon the college or university (Hayes, 2014). In addition, most on-campus positions pay students the minimum wage, though Hayes (2014) stated that some positions may offer a higher rate. The payment methods may also vary depending on the position and school (Hayes, 2014). Many on-campus jobs provide students with a paycheck that can be used toward educational costs, living expenses, or just extra spending money (Hayes, 2014). However, Hayes (2014) also noted that some on-campus positions may put any money earned directly toward personal tuition, which can be seen as either a benefit or a drawback, depending on the individual student's needs. Finally, on-campus jobs are generally easier to find and obtain, and also usually provide flexible scheduling to allow ample time for students to attend classes, study, and take part in extracurricular activities and student organizations (Hayes, 2014). On-campus positions certainly have a variety of characteristics that make them appealing, but off-campus job opportunities also offer many benefits for college students.

Off-campus employment opportunities are much more varied, with options to work in the restaurant industry, retail or sales, administrative offices, and more (Hayes, 2014). In fact, when working in the restaurant industry as a tipped employee, such as a waitress or bartender, employed students have potential to make more money than may be offered by on-campus positions (Hayes, 2014). Off-campus employment also offers a more varied work experience, which, according to Hayes (2014), can look good on a resume post-graduation, especially if the job is related to one's major or future career goals. However, these jobs off-campus do require reliable transportation, which may cost

additional money in the form of gas or bus tickets (Hayes, 2014). In addition, Hayes (2014) also cited that off-campus jobs may be less flexible in terms of hours, which can make it harder for some students to juggle both work and school. Despite some of these potential drawbacks, off-campus opportunities can be just as rewarding and fulfilling as on-campus positions.

Both on-campus or off-campus job opportunities have a variety of pros and cons that need to be considered in order to find the best fit. In order to determine what options may be most viable, it can help to take in account the many different roles working college students must play as they juggle responsibilities of both work and school.

### **Roles of Working College Students**

The struggles and rewards that may occur as a result of working through college can be explained most fully through the idea of role theory. According to Goode (1960), social experiences are made up of roles that individuals take on in different settings. For example, the “student” role may be played while attending college, while the “employee” role is demonstrated while at work or on-the-job. However, according to Goode (1960), the theory of role strain, also referred to as the role scarcity hypothesis, individuals have a limited amount of resources, or energy, to offer to each of these roles. The inability to fulfill the needs and responsibilities in different roles can result in role strain. In addition, when multiple roles require large amounts of energy, sacrifices may need to be made elsewhere (in the “friend” or “family” role, for example) in order to meet those demands and obligations (Goode, 1960). Work-school conflict can be viewed in this way, as well. When there is a lack of balance between the work and student roles, they can become

strained, and students may be forced to make difficult decisions in order to succeed in one or the other. For example, when a student working off-campus is scheduled to work an eight hour shift the night before a big mid-term or final exam, he or she may have to sacrifice valuable time to study, or call out of work and lose a day's pay, another valuable resource. This struggle between the energy needed for both roles can cause work-school conflict, and in turn create negative consequences for students.

However, another perspective on role theory, often called the role expansion theory, has come about by Marks (1977). This idea is somewhat opposite of role strain theory, as it states that human energy is not a limited entity, but instead, it is plentiful and able to grow (Marks, 1977). Not only that, but Marks (1977) also determined that certain positive activities and interactions within a certain role can create more energy, therefore allowing for more fulfilling participation in other roles. For example, when positive experiences occur in the student role, energy can be created and used for more meaningful experiences in other roles, such as the employee role. This theory can be used to describe work-school facilitation. When roles are balanced, and positive experiences happen in each one, the ability to manage multiple roles at once can become much easier. Other positive side effects may even come about as a result of more balanced life roles and high levels of work-school facilitation.

Both work-school conflict and facilitation can effect a student's college experience. Whether it be for better or worse, either side of the coin can play a part in a student achieving his or her academic or career goals.

## **Work/School Conflict and Facilitation**

**Work/school conflict.** The negative consequences of student employment can be seen as work/school conflict. When the demands of work contest with a student's academic responsibilities, a number of unhealthy side effects can occur. For example, a student's physical and mental health can deteriorate when they are unable to balance the employee and student roles (Singla, 2013). The physical disruptions caused by work/school conflict can be seen more specifically in work completed by Teixeira and colleagues (2012), who found that working while in college can lead to sleep deprivation, which can in turn bring about other concerns, such as a hindered ability to learn. Park and Sprung (2013) found that working students who experience work/school conflict are also more likely to be negatively effected psychologically, as well. The physical and mental stressors of work/school conflict could push some working students to engage in risky behaviors, such as binge drinking.

Students who experience high levels of work/school conflict may also be at risk to engage in a number unhealthy habits. For example, Miller, Danner, and Staten (2008), found that students who work more than 20 hours per week were more likely to take part in binge drinking and other risky behaviors. Additional research completed by Butler, Dodge, and Faurote (2010) yielded similar results, though they also found that when students worked longer hours during the day, they were more likely to drink at night. Though it is only speculation, drinking after a long day at work could potentially mean forgoing studying or homework assignments, which could in turn bring down a working college student's academic performance.

In addition to studying risky behaviors, Miller and colleagues (2008) also found that work/school conflict can be harmful toward a student's academic progress. It was found that students who work more than 20 hours per week were more likely to have lower levels of academic performance than those students who worked less than 10 hours per week. Results from Hawkins, Smith, Hawkins, and Grant (2005) echoed these results, finding that out of 200 working students surveyed, 35% felt that their work stunted their academic growth and performance. Not only that, but research by Kulm and Cramer (2006) also found that students who worked longer hours are more likely to have lower grade point averages than those who worked only 11 to 20 hours per week. This shows that when high levels of work/school conflict are present, both the employee and student roles can be negatively effected, therefore causing an abundance of dissonance and stress.

These studies show that work/school conflict can strain the employee and student roles of working students, and can in turn negatively effect their overall college experience. However, when these roles are able to balance out, and compliment one another, work/school facilitation can occur, and more positive, healthy outcomes can arise.

**Work/school facilitation.** Work/school facilitation occurs when the student and employee roles are congruent with one another, and demonstrates the positive effects of student employment on a variety of aspects of the college experience, such as academic satisfaction and employability skills. For example, Butler (2007) found that work/school facilitation can actually be very rewarding for working students, as those with jobs related to their major had higher levels of academic performance and satisfaction than

their peers. In addition, Butler (2007) also found that from these more fulfilling experiences, students cited that their education became more meaningful, and that they were able to improve upon a number of organizational skills, such as self-regulation. Research by Jenson, Yohalem, and Coles (2011) yielded similar results, as they also found that students who worked were more likely to have heightened levels of interpersonal and time management skills. Other employability skills have also been found to be effected positively, such as leadership abilities.

Employers put a high value on leadership skills. In fact, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE, 2014), 77.8% of employers surveyed stated that they looked for candidates with high levels of leadership skills when filling a position within their company. These skills are more likely to be improved through student employment, as shown in a study completed by Salisbury, Pascarella, Padgett, and Blaich (2012). When studying experience of working students who held positions both on- and off-campus, Salisbury and colleagues (2012) found that those students who worked off-campus for more than 10 hours per week had improved levels of leadership skills, while on-campus work experiences had little to no impact on the development of leadership. In addition, Jenson, Yohalem, and Coles (2011) also found that those students who work while in college are more successful post-graduation than those who do not work at all. More specifically, Jenson and colleagues (2011) found that working through college can help students gain more prestigious employment positions after graduation. Learning employability skills are hugely important during a student's college experience, as this acquisition of abilities can have a hugely positive impact a student's life post-

graduation. This research shows how off-campus work experiences can compliment a student's education and, in turn, set them up for success after graduation.

Learning and engagement during college can also be positively effected by student employment. Jenson et al. (2011) also found that those students who work 15 hours per week or less felt more engaged in their academic endeavors, and were also more likely to be involved in learning experiences on campus. Lewis (2007) also yielded similar results when studying the work experiences of students employed by offices on-campus. According to Lewis (2007), learning is occurring at high levels through student work experiences. It was found that students are meeting learning outcomes on a variety of domains, such as leadership and career development (Lewis, 2007). This shows that when work is able to compliment education, students can gain even greater knowledge and skills that can benefit them both in college and post-graduation.

In contrast to work/school conflict, work/school facilitation can positively impact a student's college experience by balancing the responsibilities of education and work. These studies reveal that when the employee and student roles are congruent and complimentary to one another, student satisfaction, performance, and learning can greatly improve. However, to gain a more adequate view of the effects of both work/school conflict and facilitation, it is important to study the opinions of the two parties involved: the students and the employers.

### **Perceptions from Working College Students and Employers**

**Perceptions of working college students.** The student population is most widely effected by issues regarding work/school conflict and facilitation, as they must juggle the

responsibilities of their job as well as their education. When high levels of work/school conflict exist, their physical and mental capacities can decrease, and in turn effect their academic and job performance. This imbalance between employee and student roles can also put them at greater risk to engage in risky behaviors, such as binge drinking. On the other hand, when work/school facilitation is present, students can effectively put energy into both the employee and student roles, and in turn experience more opportunities for learning and advancement in both their education and career. To better understand the effects of these two very opposite lifestyles, Dakas (2011) examined the perspectives of undergraduate students. It was found that students who experienced work/school conflict were those who worked long hours at an off-campus job (Dakas, 2011). In addition, those students cited that because of the high levels of work/school conflict in their lives, they did not notice opportunities for learning, and felt less inclined to take part in educational experiences, regardless of whether they were on campus or on-the-job (Dakas, 2011). This shows that students recognize the strain from both roles and often struggle to cope with the responsibilities stemming from each one. Students need work/school facilitation in their lives in order to be aware of learning opportunities and experience greater meaning in both their education and work environments.

In contrast to Dakas (2011), whose study focused on the experiences of students dealing with work/school conflict, research by Lewis (2007) studied a group of students who worked on-campus and felt high levels of work/school facilitation. Lewis (2007) found that while working on-campus for approximately 10 to 15 hours per week, students were able to recognize and take part in many different learning opportunities while on-

the-job. The students stated that because their hours were manageable and flexible, they were more apt to take note of the learning that was occurring in the workplace, and in turn were able to channel that into both their work and academic experiences. When employee and student roles are congruent with one another, students can become more aware of the learning that is taking place and in doing so, gain more meaningful, fulfilling experiences from both their job and their education. Employers, who also play a critical role in work/school conflict and facilitation, need to take both of these findings into account when scheduling and managing student employees.

Another study who viewed the perceptions of working students comes from Kozak (2010), who did a more comprehensive research analysis of students who worked both on- and off-campus. Though both sides of working students felt that they were able to manage their time adequately between work and school, Kozak (2010) found that 76.71% of on-campus student workers were often given the chance to study during work, while only 46.75% of off-campus student workers were given that same opportunity. However, despite this difference in preparation time, off-campus workers were more likely than their on-campus counterparts to state that their job helped with their coursework and improved their understanding of class materials, which may help to provide a more even balance between work and school (Kozak, 2010). These differences in learning opportunities for students shows that work/school facilitation can come in a variety of different forms, but is equally important for working students, as it helps them to better prepare for classes and understand content on a deeper, more meaningful level.

**Perceptions of employers.** Employers hold a great deal of power in the struggle between work/school conflict and facilitation. By taking an interest and gaining a better understanding of the many different roles college students must play in order to succeed, employers can also become more aware and in turn present more meaningful learning experiences to their student employees. However, unfortunately, some employers feel that work/school conflict and facilitation aren't issues for their student employees. According to research conducted by Miscenich (2015), many employers of off-campus job sites feel that they adequately provide work/school facilitation for their working students, and that very few, if any, of those working students experience work/school conflict. While this may or may not be true at their worksites, this shows the importance of understanding working students needs and beliefs, in order to better address any issues between their work and academic responsibilities. When employers assume their working students are able to adequately manage their time between work and school, problems can arise, and opportunities for learning can be missed by both parties. Both on- and off-campus employers need to be aware of the needs of their working students in order to create a more enriching work atmosphere for all.

Another example of employer perspectives comes from research by Lewis (2007). In this study, Lewis (2007) examined the beliefs of on-campus employers who manage a group of working students. According to Lewis (2007), the employers surveyed recognized the fact that students may struggle to manage both work and school. In order to counter this, they took note of their schedules and work experiences to ensure that their students were getting the most out of both their job and their education (Lewis, 2007). In

addition, the employers believed that their working students were engaged in valuable learning opportunities, which is in line with the thoughts of those working students, who were able to take note of and utilize those learning experiences both academically and on-the-job (Lewis, 2007). This shows that when employers and student employees communicate with one another about work and school experiences, work/school facilitation can be achieved, and more fulfilling workplace opportunities can begin to take shape.

### **Summary of the Literature Review**

Student employment and the interface of work/school conflict and facilitation have been the main points of this literature review. The motivators behind the choice to work through college are vast and varying for each person, though financial concerns are often one of the most prominent deciding factors. Whatever the reason may be, students who choose to work while enrolled in college have many options when it comes to the type of employment they want to pursue. Whether it be on- or off-campus, there are a plethora of positions available for working college students, all with their own positives and negatives to consider. When the negative aspects build up, work/school conflict can occur, and in turn strain the employee and student roles and cause stress and dissonance. However, when work and school are balanced and there are a number of complimentary, positive aspects to each role, the working college student can invest adequate levels of energy to each one, and therefore more meaningful, fulfilling experiences can be established. Finally, perspectives from both students and employers were discussed, though unfortunately, research in these two areas is still greatly lacking. In order to better

understand the struggles and successes of working college students, it is important to conduct more research on their thoughts and perceptions regarding work/school conflict and facilitation.

## **Chapter III**

### **Methodology**

#### **Context of the Study**

This study was conducted on the Rowan University main campus in Glassboro, New Jersey. The university's participation in work study programs as well as its location in the heart of southern New Jersey make it an ideal place for students to be able to gain on-campus employment. To start, Rowan University is a part of the Federal Work-Study Program (FWS), which, according to the United States Department of Education (USDOE, 2014), offers part-time employment to students in need of greater financial support. Students gain access to this opportunity after completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA (USDOE, 2014). Once reviewed, students can be awarded a set amount to be earned during the school year through FWS (USDOE, 2014). Though this is a need-based program, according to Rowan University (2015), it is available to both full- and part-time students, and allows them to work up to 20 hours per week during the school year, and 32 hours per week during winter and summer break. As was also discussed by Hayes (2014), this is a great way for students to earn money to put toward their tuition, or just to gain some extra spending money for themselves. Rowan's participation in the program definitely sets the tone for a study conducted around work/school conflict and facilitation of working college students.

In addition to on-campus opportunities, Rowan University also has a growing partnership with the town of Glassboro, New Jersey, which is the area that surrounds the campus. Specifically, Rowan has been hard at work on a \$350 million dollar project that

will add a variety of different shops and restaurants for both students and citizens alike (Kent, 2015). This substantial venture, called the Rowan Boulevard, will add a great deal of off-campus FWS opportunities for students (Kent, 2015). Many new retail stores and restaurants have found homes in this new space, such as Barns and Noble, Domino's, and even some small businesses like Ry's at Rowan and Green Zebra. Because of this new expansion on the outskirts of Rowan University's campus, students will certainly be able to find a place of employment that fits with their personality, schedule, and goals for the future (Kent, 2015). These new off-campus FWS opportunities will provide a huge boost in student employment and will allow students a great way to obtain a college degree while also getting great hands-on experience in the workforce.

It is for all these opportunities that Rowan University is an ideal location to conduct this study. With the many different places for employment through the FWS Program, from on-campus office or research jobs to off-campus retail or restaurant positions, surveying the working students of Rowan University will certainly provide this study with very valid and reliable results.

### **Population and Sampling**

The target population was all working college students at an undergraduate level, working at least 10 or more hours per week while also enrolled in college courses either part- or full-time. The available population was working undergraduate students in the FWS program of Rowan University, who worked at least 10 or more hours per week while also enrolled in college courses either part- or full-time. The total number of students working in the FWS program was approximately 450. A random sample of

students 210 was acquired by surveying students working both on- and off-campus through the FWS Program. The survey was distributed by hand to all subjects. All students who were willing to take the survey and met all of the criteria were included in the results.

### **Data Collection Instruments**

A survey from a previous study completed by Singla (2013) was edited slightly and used to fit the needs of the present study. Permission was acquired from Singla (2013) to ensure that copyright laws would not be infringed upon in the use and publication of the updated survey. This permission is included in Appendix F. The survey contained a total of 30 items, with the majority formatted on a one through five Likert scale, with one representing ‘strongly disagree’ and five representing ‘strongly agree.’ Subjects were first asked to provide demographic information about themselves, which included items about gender, education level, and hours worked per week. These items were presented as either multiple choice or fill in the blank, depending upon the nature of the information needed from the subjects. Following the demographic items, subjects were then asked to rate a number of factors regarding their levels of work/school conflict and work/school facilitation. These items were also formatted on a Likert scale with options ranging from one through five. To ensure that the items were clear, concise, and easily understood, a pilot study was conducted on four volunteers. The validity of the survey can also be confirmed through the use of this pilot study, as well as the fact that the survey was created based on an inventory that was previously used to collect data from students attending the University of South Florida (Singla, 2013). The reliability of

the instrument can be assumed by the appropriate number of items included in the survey. A reliability test was also conducted via the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 21 using Cronbach's Alpha. With regard to the items about work/school facilitation, the calculations produced a relatively high score of 0.85, indicating a high level of internal validity. The calculations regarding the items about work/school conflict also produced a relatively high score of 0.88, indicating a high level of internal validity.

### **Data Gathering Procedures**

Prior to the collection of data, approval was gained from the Institutional Review Board (eIRB) to ensure the study was safe and appropriate. A copy of the eIRB approval is included in Appendix A. In addition, an informed consent form was made available to all subjects prior to the completion of the survey, explaining the overall study, as well as the risks and benefits of participation. The full informed consent form can be found in Appendix B. Subjects were told both vocally and in the informed consent form that their participation was voluntary, and that none of their employers or fellow employees would know of their participation or see their answers to the survey questions. After reading the informed consent form, students were given the survey and asked to answer each item to the best of their ability. Finally, once the survey was completed by the subjects, they were thanked for their time and participation in the study.

The survey was distributed on paper to all subjects. This was done by visiting various departments that hire students in the FWS Program of Rowan University and asking if their student workers would be willing to complete a survey. These departments were chosen at random to ensure a diverse sample of Rowan University student workers

was obtained. Student workers employed outside of Rowan University were recruited randomly with the help of the coordinator of off-campus FWS opportunities, and were also given surveys by hand on Rowan University's campus. Once permission was granted from the student workers, I distributed the informed consent form and survey to the students and collected the survey once they were completed. The paper version of the survey is included in Appendix D.

The paper copies of the data were stored in a secure folder held by me. The only two people who will have access to the surveys themselves are myself and the thesis advisor, Dr. Sisco. No identifiable information on the subjects were collected or included in the study.

### **Data Analysis**

The SPSS software system was used to analyze all data, including the demographic information, gathered from this study. For example, items such as age, gender, hours worked per week, major, and other demographic details were all analyzed using descriptive statistics. In addition, SPSS provided the frequency of responses, mean scores, and the standard deviation of each item, all of which described and analyzed the data in a meaningful and valid way. Finally, a Pearson Correlation test was conducted to determine if there were any relationships between selected demographics of students and their responses regarding work/school conflict and facilitation.

## **Chapter IV**

### **Findings**

#### **Profile of the Sample**

Subjects for this quantitative study were selected from the area of Glassboro, located within Gloucester County, New Jersey. In order to get a student perspective of job opportunities offered through the Federal Work Study (FWS) Program of Rowan University, students of all grade levels were asked to complete a short survey on the topics of work/school conflict and work/school facilitation. Though 210 students were asked to complete the survey, only 126 agreed for a 60% response rate.

Table 4.1 represents the demographic information obtained from subjects involved in the study. The gender breakdown of the subjects was 57.9% female and 42.1% male. Subjects ranged in age from 18 to 33, with the mean age being 23. With regard to ethnicity, 55.6% of subjects were Caucasian, 16.7% were African American, 7.1% were Asian American, 16.7% were Hispanic, 1.6% were two or more races, and 2.4% identified as “other.” Subjects also ranged from freshman to seniors, with the highest percentage (34.1%) being seniors.

With regard to academics, the majors of the subject were varied, with the most popular major being psychology (10.4%). The type of work subjects engaged in was most prominently identified as “receptionist” (37.3%) and “assistant” (33.3%). The subjects’ grade point average (GPA) ranged from 1.8 to 4.0, with the most common GPA being 3.6 (14.3%). Subjects selected a number of reasons for employment, but the most prominent of those listed were experience (57.9%) and other expenses (57.1%). The last academic

piece of the survey was credit hours, which ranged from 6 to 18. The most common amount of credits was 15 (38.9%).

Employment information was also obtained. The number of hours that subjects worked per week ranged from 10 to 50, with the most common amount of hours being 20 (19.0%). Subjects were most likely to be employed by the Rowan University Rec Center, with 17.5% of subjects indicating that they worked there. Only 1.6% of subjects worked off-campus, while 11.1% indicated that they worked two or more jobs, which may have been a combination of on- and off-campus positions.

Finally, subjects were asked to identify the extent that their job overlapped with the major, and the extent that their major overlapped with their job. When looking at job/major overlap, 44.4% indicated that there was no overlap, 51.6% indicated some overlap, and 4.0% indicated there was complete overlap between their job and their major. With regard to major/job overlap, 47.6% indicated there was no overlap, 46.8% indicated some overlap, and 5.6% indicated complete overlap between their major and their job.

Table 4.1 shows the frequency and percentage of all of this information.

Table 4.1

*Student Demographics (N = 126)*

Subjects	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	73	57.9
Male	53	42.1
<b>Age</b>		
18	4	3.2
19	34	27.0
20	32	25.4
21	27	21.4
22	17	13.5
23	6	4.8
24	2	1.6
32	1	0.8
33	1	0.8
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Caucasian	70	55.6
African American	21	16.7
Asian	9	7.1
Hispanic	21	16.7
Two or more races	2	1.6
Other	3	2.4
<b>Year of Education</b>		
Freshman	9	7.1
Sophomore	34	27.0

Table 4.1 (continued)

*Student Demographics (N = 126)*

Subjects	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Year of Education (continued)</b>		
Junior	40	31.7
Senior	43	34.1
<b>Major</b>		
Health and Physical Education	3	2.4
Sociology	5	4.0
Mathematics	3	2.4
Biology	9	7.2
Psychology	13	10.4
Elementary Education	3	2.4
Subject Matter Education	4	3.2
Human Resources Management	2	1.6
Marketing	6	4.8
Biochemistry	3	2.4
Athletic Training	4	3.2
Accounting	6	4.8
Health and Exercise Science	9	7.2
Public Relations	3	2.4
Law and Justice	4	3.2
Electrical/Computer Engineering	5	4.0
Chemical Engineering	3	2.4
Environmental Studies	2	1.6

Table 4.1 (continued)

*Student Demographics (N = 126)*

Subjects	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Major (continued)</b>		
Art	2	1.6
Bioinformatics	1	0.8
Chemistry	1	0.8
Communication Studies	1	0.8
Economics	1	0.8
English	3	2.4
Entrepreneurship	1	0.8
Exploratory Studies	1	0.8
Finance	2	1.6
Geography	1	0.8
History	4	3.2
Management	2	1.6
Mechanical Engineering	1	0.8
Radio/TV/Film	3	2.4
Writing Arts	2	1.6
Spanish	2	1.6
Political Science	2	1.6
International Studies	1	0.8
Journalism	1	0.8
Music Education	2	1.6
Urban Planning	2	1.6
Management Information Systems	2	1.6

Table 4.1 (continued)

*Student Demographics (N = 126)*

Subjects	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Type of Work</b>		
Server	0	0.0
Cashier	1	0.8
Assistant	42	33.3
Receptionist	47	37.3
Tech Support	5	4.0
Other	31	24.6
<b>GPA</b>		
1.8	1	0.8
2.2	1	0.8
2.3	1	0.8
2.5	3	2.4
2.7	1	0.8
2.8	2	1.6
2.9	4	3.2
3.0	13	10.3
3.1	3	2.4
3.2	10	7.9
3.3	12	9.5
3.4	12	9.5
3.5	10	7.9
3.6	18	14.3
3.7	8	6.6

Table 4.1 (continued)

*Student Demographics (N = 126)*

Subjects	<i>f</i>	%
<b>GPA (continued)</b>		
3.8	11	9.1
3.9	8	6.6
4.0	3	2.5
Not Specified	5	4.0
<b>Primary Reasons for Employment</b>		
School Fees	42	33.3
Other Expenses	72	57.1
Social Life	47	37.3
Experience	73	57.9
Other	12	9.5
<b>Credit Hours</b>		
6	1	0.8
8	3	2.4
9	4	3.2
10	3	2.4
12	23	18.3
13	3	2.4
14	2	1.6
15	49	38.9
16	13	10.3
17	6	4.8

Table 4.1 (continued)

*Student Demographics (N = 126)*

Subjects	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Credit Hours (continued)</b>		
18	19	15.1
<b>Hours Worked Per Week</b>		
10	42	33.3
11	1	0.8
12	10	7.9
13	4	3.2
14	6	4.8
15	12	9.5
16	5	4.0
17	2	1.6
18	6	4.8
19	4	3.2
20	24	19.0
22	1	0.8
24	1	0.8
25	1	0.8
28	1	0.8
34	1	0.8
40	3	2.4
45	1	0.8
50	1	0.8

Table 4.1 (continued)

*Student Demographics (N = 126)*

Subjects	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Organization of Employment</b>		
Rowan University Office of Career Advancement	4	3.2
Rowan University College of Education Dean's Office	3	2.4
Rowan University Student Center	3	2.4
Rowan University Office of Admissions	4	3.2
Rowan University Department of History	1	0.8
Rowan University Office of the Registrar	4	3.2
Rowan University Office of Orientation and Student Leadership	12	9.5
Rowan University Rec Center	22	17.5
Rowan University Office of Social Justice, Inclusion, and Conflict Resolution	2	1.6
Rowan University Office of Financial Aid	1	0.8
Rowan University Library	7	5.6
Rowan University Office of Graduation	1	0.8
Rowan University Housing Office	6	4.8
Rowan University Office of EOF/MAP	2	1.6
Rowan University Department of Music	2	1.6
Rowan University Office of Advertising	1	0.8

Table 4.1 (continued)

*Student Demographics (N = 126)*

Subjects	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Organization of Employment (continued)</b>		
Rowan University Owl's Nest	1	0.8
Rowan University Office of Student Activities	4	3.2
Rowan University Office of Information Resources Technology	5	4.0
Rowan University Human Resources Department	1	0.8
Rowan University Office of Equity and Diversity	1	0.8
Rowan University Parking Office	1	0.8
Rowan University Payroll Office	3	2.4
Rowan University College of Humanities and Social Sciences Dean's Office	4	3.2
Rowan University Department of Foreign Languages	4	3.2
Rowan University Department of Radio/TV/Film	1	0.8
Rowan University Department of Marketing	2	1.6
Rowan University Engineering Department	5	4.0
Rowan University Academic Success Center	1	0.8
Off-campus Daycare Services	1	0.8
Off-campus Glassboro Library	1	0.8
Two or More Jobs	14	11.1
Not Specified	2	1.6

Table 4.1 (continued)

*Student Demographics (N = 126)*

Subjects	<i>f</i>	%
<b>Job/Major Overlap</b>		
No Overlap	56	44.4
Some Overlap	65	51.6
Complete Overlap	5	4.0
<b>Major/Job Overlap</b>		
No Overlap	60	47.6
Some Overlap	59	46.8
Complete Overlap	7	5.6

## **Analysis of the Data**

**Research question 1.** What are the experiences of selected Rowan University students regarding work/school conflict?

Table 4.2 shows the subjects' perspectives on work-school conflict as it pertains to a number of different work and school characteristics, such as level of fatigue at school due to work. Subjects were asked to rate each of the six items on a Likert scale, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. The sample size, mean, and standard deviation is listed for each item, as well as the frequency and percentage of responses.

The statement with the highest mean score and the most support was, "my job takes up more time that I'd rather spend at school or on schoolwork," with 61.1% of subjects disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this statement. Following that, 71.4% of subjects disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, "because of my job, I go to school tired."

Table 4.2

*Work/School Conflict (N=126)*

*(1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)*

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
My semester-time work adversely affects my concentration at school. <i>N=126, M=1.86, SD=.94</i>	53	42.1	49	38.9	15	11.9	7	5.6	2	1.6
My exam grades would have been better if I hadn't been working during the semester. <i>N=126, M=1.88, SD=.97</i>	55	43.7	42	33.3	19	15.1	9	7.1	1	0.8
My job demands and responsibilities interfere with my schoolwork. <i>N=126, M=1.99, SD=1.03</i>	52	41.3	37	29.4	24	19.0	12	9.5	1	0.8
I spend less time studying and doing homework because of my job. <i>N=126, M=2.05, SD=1.06</i>	49	38.9	37	29.4	26	20.6	12	9.5	2	1.6
Because of my job, I go to school tired. <i>N=126, M=2.12, SD=1.12</i>	44	34.9	46	36.5	18	14.3	13	10.3	5	4.0
My job takes up more time than I'd rather spend at school or on schoolwork. <i>N=126, M=2.3, SD=1.27</i>	43	34.1	34	27.0	28	22.2	9	7.1	12	9.5

**Research question 2.** What are the experiences of selected Rowan University students regarding work/school facilitation?

Table 4.3 shows the subjects' perspectives on work-school facilitation as it pertains to a number of different work and school characteristics, such as whether having work is beneficial to their overall development as a student. Subjects were asked to rate each of the ten items on a Likert scale, with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree and 5=strongly agree. The sample size, mean, and standard deviation is listed for each item, as well as the frequency and percentage of responses.

The item with the highest level of agreement was, "my employment during the semester has been good for my overall development as a student," as 78.2% of subjects either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. Following that, 80.2% of subjects also agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that read, "The money I earn from working during the semester helps me to enjoy my life at school."

Table 4.3

*Work/School Facilitation (N=126)**(1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)*

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
My employment during the semester has been good for my overall development as a student. <i>N=126, M=4.07, SD=.87</i>	2	1.6	3	2.4	22	17.5	56	44.4	43	34.1
The money I earn from working during the semester helps me to enjoy my life at school. <i>N=126, M=4.02, SD=.86</i>	2	1.6	5	4.0	18	14.3	64	50.8	37	29.4
Being employed during the semester helps me organize my academic work better. <i>N=126, M=3.81, SD=.85</i>	11	8.7	27	21.4	63	50.0	25	19.8	25	19.8
Having a good day at work makes me a better student. <i>N=126, M=3.68, SD=.92</i>	4	3.2	7	5.6	34	27.0	61	48.4	20	15.9
Working during the semester has enriched my educational experience. <i>N=126, M=3.65, SD=.94</i>	3	2.4	10	7.9	37	29.4	54	42.9	22	17.5
Employment during the semester has a positive effect on my academic studies. <i>N=126, M=3.62, SD=.87</i>	2	1.6	6	4.8	51	40.5	46	36.5	21	16.7

Table 4.3 (continued)

*Work/School Facilitation (N=126)*

*(1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree)*

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
The skills I use on my job are useful for things I have to do at school. <i>N=126, M=3.53, SD=1.03</i>	6	4.8	12	9.5	38	30.2	49	38.9	21	16.7
Talking to someone at work helps me deal with problems at school. <i>N=126, M=3.46, SD=1.03</i>	6	4.8	13	10.3	44	34.9	43	34.1	20	15.9
Working during the semester enhances my social life. <i>N=126, M=3.45, SD=1.20</i>	11	8.7	17	13.5	27	21.4	46	36.5	25	19.8
The things I do at work help me deal with personal and practical issues at school. <i>N=126, M=3.42, SD=1.00</i>	8	6.3	11	8.7	40	31.7	54	42.9	13	10.3

**Research question 3.** Are there any relationships between selected demographics of gender, GPA, age, and education and work/school conflict?

Four significant correlations were found between work/school conflict and selected demographic information of the participants. More specifically, two significant relationships were found between work/school conflict and GPA. First, a significant, direct, and weak relationship was found between GPA the statement, “my job takes up more time that I'd rather spend at school or on schoolwork” ( $r = 0.21, p = 0.02$ ). Another significant, direct, and moderate relationship was found between GPA and the statement, “because of my job, I go to school tired” ( $r = 0.27, p = 0.003$ ). These relationships are shown in Table 4.4.

Two additional significant relationships were found between work/school conflict and level of education. A significant, direct, and moderate relationship was found between level of education and the statement, “my job demands and responsibilities interfere with my schoolwork” ( $r = 0.25, p = 0.01$ ). A second significant, direct, and weak relationship was found between level of education and the statement, “My exam grades would have been better if I hadn't been working during the semester” ( $r = 0.21, p = 0.02$ ). These relationships are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.4

*Correlations Between GPA and Work/School Conflict*

		GPA
My job takes up more time that I'd rather spend at school or on schoolwork.	Pearson Correlation	0.21*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.02
	N	121
Because of my job, I go to school tired.	Pearson Correlation	0.27**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.003
	N	121

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.5

*Correlations Between Education Level and Work/School Conflict*

		Education Level
My job demands and responsibilities interfere with my schoolwork.	Pearson Correlation	0.25**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.01
	N	126
My exam grades would have been better if I hadn't been working during the semester.	Pearson Correlation	0.21*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.02
	N	126

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Research question 4.** Are there any relationships between selected demographics of gender, GPA, age, and education and work/school facilitation?

A single correlation was found between work/school facilitation and age. An inverse, significant, yet weak relationship was found between age and the statement, “the money I earn from working during the semester helps me to enjoy my life at school” ( $r = -0.21, p = 0.02$ ). This relationship is shown in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6

*Correlation Between Age and Work/School Facilitation*

		Age
The money I earn from working during the semester helps me to enjoy my life at school.	Pearson Correlation	-0.21*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.02
	N	124

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Research question 5.** What recommendations do student workers have for administrators of higher education and for off-campus employers regarding work/school conflict and facilitation?

Table 4.6 shows student recommendations for administrators of higher education and for off-campus employers regarding work/school conflict and facilitation. Subjects were asked to write in their responses to this open-ended question. A content analysis was done to find prevalent themes in the subjects' responses.

While a number of subjects chose not to respond to this question (36.5% left this answer blank or indicated that they had no recommendations to make), the most prevalent theme given by subjects was for administrators and off-campus employers to be flexible and to allow school to come first for all student workers. For example, one subject responded by recommending that employers "continue to be flexible with scheduling due to classes and other coursework related obligations." The percentage of subjects who wrote in responses related to flexibility was 31.7%. Another common theme was that students need to be able to manage work and school on their own. For example, one subject noted that, "in order to maintain a healthy balance between school and work, you should know your limits. How many hours do you feel like you can handle or suit you in a week? Then understanding that you can keep on top of school work, like taking up whatever amount of credits while handling your job tasks." The percentage of subjects who responded within this thematic category was 9.5%.

Table 4.7

*Recommendations to College Administrators and Off-Campus Employers*

Theme	<i>f</i>	%	Rank Order
Not specified or no recommendations given	46	36.5	1
Be flexible, allow school to come first	40	31.7	2
Students need to know how to balance work and school on their own	12	9.5	3
Let students work more than 20 hours	6	4.8	4
Allow students to work on schoolwork during slow times	5	4.0	5
Higher wages	5	4.0	5
Lower school expenses such as tuition and books	3	2.4	6
Keep 20 hour maximum	3	2.4	6
Professors need to be aware of students balancing work and school	2	1.6	7
Work study jobs provide good opportunities for students	2	1.6	7
Have paycheck go directly to school expenses, such as tuition	1	0.8	8
Communication	1	0.8	8

## **Chapter V**

### **Summary, Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

#### **Summary of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to better understand student perceptions regarding work/school conflict and work/school facilitation. The subjects who participated were students of Rowan University, which is located in the area of Gloucester County, New Jersey, specifically within the town of Glassboro.

The quantitative data used in this study were collected through the distribution of a survey. A frequency analysis of the data completed on the SPSS software system was used to learn more about students' perspectives on work/school conflict and facilitation, as well as their recommendations for college administrators and off-campus employers. Measures of central tendency, along with Pearson correlations, were also examined when analyzing the data of this study. Finally, a content analysis was completed to get a better view of the recommendations students made to college administrators and employers.

#### **Discussion of the Findings**

The demographic data gathered about the students raised some interesting points in relation to previous studies. For example, Jenson, Yohalem, and Coles (2011) found that those student employees who worked 15 hours or less were more likely to be engaged in their academic life and campus community. In this study, 60% of students reported working 15 hours a week or less, which could suggest that, for most students, work could actually be a compliment to their educational experience rather than a hinderance. However, it still remains that about 40% of those surveyed do work 15 hours

a week or more, with 5% of those working 30 hours or more. This commitment to working almost full time while attending school could certainly create work/school conflict and have negative effects on student development and academic performance.

It was also found that most students surveyed worked on-campus. This could be viewed as a positive for many students, and may bring about higher levels of work/school facilitation. For example, Dakas (2011) found that students who worked off-campus positions tended to experience higher levels of work/school conflict, while Lewis (2007) found that those who work on-campus were able to recognize and take part in many different learning opportunities while on-the-job. Therefore, it is possible that those students who only work an on-campus position may experience higher levels of work/school facilitation than those who work off-campus.

With regard to the first research question, relating to student experiences of work/school conflict, it would appear that the majority of the selected students do not trend toward work/school conflict. However, while very few subjects agreed with statements such as, “My job takes up more time that I'd rather spend at school or on schoolwork” (16.6% either agreed or strongly agreed) and “Because of my job, I go to school tired” (14.3% either agreed or strongly agreed), those who did respond in support of these items may be displaying levels of work/school conflict, as discussed by Hawkins, Smith, Hawkins, and Grant (2005) and Teixeira and colleagues (2012). Hawkins and colleagues (2012) reported that, of the students they surveyed, 35% felt that their job interfered with their academic performance, thus creating work/school conflict. The same could be said for the 16.6% who indicated that they felt their job kept them

from being at school or getting schoolwork done. Teixeira and colleagues (2012) found that work/school conflict can lead to sleep deprivation, which may be happening for the 14.3% of subjects who indicated that they felt their job forced them to go to school feeling tired. Though most Rowan University students surveyed responded in favor of work/school facilitation, there are still some students on campus who may be exhibiting work/school conflict.

With regard to the second research question, which asked about student experiences with work/school facilitation, it would appear that students trended more prominently toward work/school facilitation. The most highly supported item, “My employment during the semester has been good for my overall development as a student,” which very much supports the idea of work/school facilitation that is discussed by Butler (2007), who found that students who exhibit work/school facilitation tend to perform better academically and have more meaningful educational experiences.

Moreover, these results also support findings by Jenson, Yohalem, and Coles (2011) who yielded similar results. Jenson and colleagues (2011) found that students who worked were more likely to have heightened levels of interpersonal and time management skills. The present study found that 56.5% of selected students of Rowan University either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that, “working during the semester enhances my social life.” This could mean that, by working, they are able to socialize and interact with others more, and therefore strengthen their interpersonal skills. It was also found in the present study that 39.6% of students either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “being employed during the semester helps

me to organize my academic work better.” This shows that, through working, students are able to enhance both their interpersonal and time management skills, as discussed by Jensen and colleagues (2011).

In addition, Lewis (2007) found that workplace learning can help student employees both in and out of the office. The findings from the present study were generally in alignment with Lewis’ (2007) findings. While a decent amount of subjects responded neutrally on this subject (30.2%), a little more than half of those surveyed (55.6%) felt that “The skills I use on my job are useful for things I have to do at school.” In addition, 53.2% of students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, “The things I do at work help me deal with personal and practical issues at school.” This shows that students who are able to learn and practice different skills while on the job can also utilize those newly learned abilities in the classroom and in other academic experiences. Therefore, these findings support Lewis’ (2007) results on workplace learning for student employees.

The results regarding research question 3, which asked about the relationship between work/school conflict and selected demographics, revealed four significant correlations. No correlations were found between work/school conflict and gender, nor were there any significant relationships between work/school conflict and age. However, two correlations were found between work/school conflict and GPA, and another two correlations were found between work/school conflict and education level. First, a significant relationship was found between the statement, “my job takes up more time that I'd rather spend at school or on schoolwork,” and GPA. This result makes sense, as

students who feel they do not have enough time to complete their schoolwork due to work may have lower GPAs than those students who do not have to split their time between work and school. In addition, this directly supports findings from Kulm and Cramer (2006), who also found that students who worked longer hours were more likely to have lower grade point averages than those who worked only 11 to 20 hours per week. Another significant relationship was found between the statement, “because of my job, I go to school tired,” and GPA. If students go to school tired because of their job, their GPA could suffer. This supports findings by Teixeira and colleagues (2012), who found that working while in college can lead to sleep deprivation, which can hinder learning.

Two significant correlations were also found between work/school conflict and education level. First, a positive relationship was found between the statement, “my job demands and responsibilities interfere with my schoolwork,” and education level. In addition, another positive relationship was found between the statement, “my exam grades would have been better if I hadn’t been working during the semester,” and education level. While research on how a student’s level of education impacts their perceptions of work/school conflict and facilitation, the results of the present study show that students can feel some level of work/school conflict depending on their grade in college. However, it is worth noting that the number of freshmen surveyed for this study (9) was much lower than the number of seniors surveyed (43). This could show that students are more likely to take on work experiences toward the end of their education rather than the beginning. Therefore, seniors would be more likely to suffer from work/school conflict than freshmen, as they often take on more responsibility regarding work

and school. More research on this topic is needed in order to find out more information about the relationships between work/school conflict and grade level.

Only one significant relationship was found in response to research question 4 ,which was, “are there any relationships between selected demographics of gender, GPA, age, and education and work/school facilitation?” A negative correlation was found between the statement, “The money I earn from working during the semester helps me to enjoy my life at school,” and age. While research on the topic of age as related to work/school facilitation is limited, it is interesting to note that the relationship is negative, which suggests that as one variable increases, the other decreases. Therefore, as work/school facilitation increases, age decreases, meaning that students who are younger are more likely to use the money they earn from working to enjoy school. More research on this topic is needed in order to find out more information about the relationship of work/school facilitation and a student’s age.

Finally, research question 5 asked what recommendations students had for administrators and off-campus employers who manage working college students. Unfortunately, many students (36.5%) chose not to write in an answer to this question. However, after reviewing the responses that were given, I was able to code each and find common themes. The most prevalent theme in the recommendations that subjects gave for college administrators and off-campus employers revolved around flexibility. In fact, 41.7% of students wanted their employers to be flexible and to allow school to come first. This is in line with what Lewis (2007) found when surveying employers of student workers. Those employers surveyed by Lewis (2007) recognized

that it may be hard for students to balance work and school, and therefore did their best to work around students' academic and personal lives. Based on the results of the present study, it appears that this is exactly the type of behavior that students want out of their employer. It is important for all employers, on- or off-campus, to take a flexible and academically-oriented approach to work when managing student employees.

However, one other prevalent recommendation made by students was not toward college administrators or employers at all. Instead, many students chose to address their fellow students in their responses by saying that students need to learn how to balance work and school on their own. While only 9.5% of subjects who gave a response like this, it is definitely interesting to note that a handful of students did not feel that it is the employers responsibility to help their employees better balance work and school. More research on this idea is suggested to get a better idea of how students truly feel regarding the balance of work and school.

## **Conclusions**

Overall, the findings from the present study supported the results from previous research. Students do seem to experience more work/school facilitation through the combination of their work and school experiences. However, while work/school facilitation was more prominent than work/school conflict for most students working on Rowan University's campus, there was still a percentage that indicated a large workload and higher levels of work/school conflict. This shows that it is important to keep working to ensure all students are gaining positive experiences out of the combination of work and

school, and that they are not being hindered in their educational goals as a result of their concurrent role in the workforce.

In addition, it does appear that selected students of Rowan University do experience some level of work/school conflict, which impacts their GPA. This shows that college administrators and employers do need to do more to ensure that a student's education is not being sacrificed for the sake of work. In addition, work/school conflict also appears to be related to a student's grade level. While more research is needed on this topic, it is important to recognize that older students, such as juniors and seniors, may be more likely to experience work/school conflict than students who are considered freshman or sophomores. Hopefully additional studies on this topic will shed more light on the relationships between work/school conflict and level of education.

Though only one significant relationship was found between work/school facilitation and age, is it certainly one worth mentioning and studying further. According to the results of the present study, an inverse relationship was found between work/school facilitation and age, meaning that as work/school facilitation increased, age of the students surveyed decreased. Research on this topic is limited, but it is hoped that more will be triggered as a result of this interesting finding.

Finally, based on recommendations from students, it can be concluded that in order to bring about greater amounts of work/school facilitation on college campuses, administrators and employers must provide flexibility and must put the "student" half of "student worker" first. While some students indicated that they felt it was not the responsibility of the college administrators or employers to accommodate student

workers, it is still important to take these two occasionally competing roles into consideration when managing working college students. Employers, along with college administrators, must work collaboratively with student workers to ensure the school and work roles are balanced and supportive of one another.

### **Recommendations for Further Practice**

Based on the results and conclusions, I recommend the following practices to improve work/school facilitation and decrease work/school conflict for students:

1. College administrators and employers who work with college students should keep in mind that student's area of study in order to help give them tasks that might overlap with their area of study.
2. College administrators and employers who work with college students should be flexible and put the student's academic priorities first when scheduling and delegating tasks.
3. Student workers must communicate their needs to their administrators/employers in order to ensure their work and school roles are congruent and not conflicting. College administrators and employers must strive to better understand how the balance of work and school can be challenging for students, so that they can help students navigate those roles in a healthy and positive way.
4. Universities and their departments should continue to find new ways to incorporate work/school facilitation and learning opportunities into positions held by student employees.

## **Recommendations for Further Research**

Based on the results and conclusions, I recommend the following research to improve work/school facilitation and decrease work/school conflict for students:

1. A study should be conducted specifically on students who work off-campus in order to determine if their feelings on work/school conflict and facilitation match those students who work on-campus.
2. Qualitative research should be conducted to gain even more in-depth knowledge on the concepts of work/school conflict and facilitation.
3. Continued research of how to create more work/school facilitation and how to lessen work/school conflict should be conducted in order to enhance the student experience for all students who work while taking classes.
4. Continued research on the relationships between work/school conflict and facilitation, age, and educational level is needed.
5. Additional research should be conducted to determine more best practices to enhance work/school facilitation and lessen work/school conflict.

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## Appendix A

### Institutional Review Board Disposition Form



Miscenich, Madeline <miscen13@students.rowan.edu>

#### Rowan University eIRB: Study Approved

1 message

eIRB@rowan.edu <eIRB@rowan.edu>

Mon, Dec 14, 2015 at 9:06 AM

Reply-To: eIRB@rowan.edu

To: miscen13@students.rowan.edu



\*\* This is an auto-generated email. Please do not reply to this email message.  
The originating e-mail account is not monitored.  
If you have questions, please contact your local IRB office \*\*

**DHHS Federal Wide Assurance Identifier:**

FWA00007111

**IRB Chair Person:** Harriet Hartman

**IRB Director:** Sreekant Murthy

**Effective Date:** 12/12/2015

#### eIRB Notice of Approval

##### STUDY PROFILE

**Study**

**ID:** [Pro2015000603](#)

**Title:** Contest or Congruence: The Effects of Work-School Conflict and Facilitation on Working College Students

<b>Principal Investigator:</b>	Burton Siegel	<b>Study Coordinator:</b>	None
<b>Co-Investigator(s):</b>	Madeline Miscenich	<b>Other Study Staff:</b>	None
<b>Sponsor:</b>	Department Funded	<b>Approval Cycle:</b>	Twelve Months
<b>Risk Determination:</b>	Minimal Risk	<b>Device Determination:</b>	Not Applicable

<b>Review Type:</b>	Expedited	<b>Expedited Category:</b>	7
<b>Subjects:</b>	210		

##### CURRENT SUBMISSION STATUS

## Appendix B

### Informed Consent Form



#### **CONTEST OR CONGRUENCE: THE EFFECTS OF WORK/SCHOOL CONFLICT AND FACILITATION ON WORKING COLLEGE STUDENTS**

You are invited to participate in a research survey entitled “Contest or Congruence: The Effects of Work/School Conflict and Work/School Facilitation on Working College Students.” We are inviting you because you are a student worker employed through the Federal Work Study (FWS) program of Rowan University. In order to participate in this survey, you must be 18 years or older.

The survey may take approximately ten to fifteen minutes to complete. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in this survey, do not respond to this paper survey. The number of subjects to be enrolled in the study will be approximately 210.

The purpose of this research study is to gain a better understanding of how work/school conflict and facilitation impact Rowan University undergraduate students who work both on- and off-campus through the Federal Work Study (FWS) Program.

Completing this survey indicates that you are voluntarily giving consent to participate in the survey.

There are no risks or discomforts associated with this survey. There may not be any direct benefit for subjects participating in this study. However, you may help us better understand how work/school conflict and work/school facilitation impact working college students. In addition, the results of this study could help employers to be more understanding when scheduling students around their academic and personal commitments.

Your response will be kept confidential. The data will be stored in a secure location. Any part of the research that is published as part of this study will not include your individual information. If you have any questions about the survey, you can contact Madeline Miscenich at [miscen13@students.rowan.edu](mailto:miscen13@students.rowan.edu), or Dr. Burt Sisco at [sisco@rowan.edu](mailto:sisco@rowan.edu), but you do not have to give your personal identification if you do not wish to do so.

Department of Educational Services and Leadership

College of Education  
James Hall, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
201 Mullica Hill Road  
Glassboro, NJ 08028  
856-256-4755 phone  
856-256-5677 fax

## Appendix C

### Research Instrument

Please circle or write in the answers to the following questions:

What is your gender?	Male	Female				
Please indicate your age in years:						
What is your ethnicity?	Caucasian	African American	Asian	Hispanic	Two or more races	Other (please specify):
What year of education are you in?	Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior		
Please indicate your major:						
Please indicate your GPA:						
Are you currently enrolled in at least 6 credits AND working at least 10 hours per week?	Yes	No				
Please indicate the number of credit hours you are registered for this semester:						
Please indicate the number of hours per week that you are involved in paid work:						
What type of organization are you working for?	Food and restaurant services	Grocery stores	Merchandise stores	Health care	Rowan University (please specify department):	Other (please specify):
What type of work are you doing?	Server	Cashier	Assistant	Receptionist	Tech Support	Other (please specify):
To what extent does your job overlap with your major?	No overlap	Some overlap	Complete overlap			
To what extent does your major overlap with your job?	No overlap	Some overlap	Complete overlap			
What is your primary reason for employment?	Money for school fees	Money for other expenses	Money to support social life	Gain work experience	Other (please specify):	

Please circle your responses to the following questions:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Because of my job, I go to school tired.	1	2	3	4	5
My job demands and responsibilities interfere with my schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5
I spend less time studying and doing homework because of my job.	1	2	3	4	5
My job takes up time that I'd rather spend at school or on schoolwork.	1	2	3	4	5
My exam grades would have been better if I hadn't been working during the semester.	1	2	3	4	5
My semester-time work adversely affects my concentration at school.	1	2	3	4	5
The things I do at work help me deal with personal and practical issues at school.	1	2	3	4	5
Working during the semester enhances my social life.	1	2	3	4	5
The skills I use on my job are useful for things I have to do at school.	1	2	3	4	5
Having a good day at work makes me a better student.	1	2	3	4	5
Working during the semester has enriched my educational experience.	1	2	3	4	5
Talking to someone at work helps me deal with problems at school.	1	2	3	4	5
The money I earn from working during the semester helps me to enjoy my life at school.	1	2	3	4	5
Being employed during the semester helps me organize my academic work better.	1	2	3	4	5
My employment during the semester has been good for my overall development as a student.	1	2	3	4	5
Employment during the semester has a positive effect on my academic studies.	1	2	3	4	5

What recommendations would you make to college administrators and/or off-campus employers regarding the balance between work and school?

Thank you so much for completing this survey! Your participation is greatly appreciated!

## Appendix D

### Survey Authorization of Use



Miscenich, Madeline <miscen13@students.rowan.edu>

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#### Question About Dissertation Survey

3 messages

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**Miscenich, Madeline** <miscen13@students.rowan.edu>  
To: NSINGLA@mail.usf.edu

Sat, Nov 14, 2015 at 9:11 PM

Dear Dr. Neha Singla,

Hello! Hope your day is going well. My name is Madeline Miscenich, and I am currently a graduate student in Rowan University's Master's program in Higher Education. I am currently going into my final year of graduate school and have also moved into the process of beginning work on my thesis. I have opted to do my research on the effects of work/school conflict and work/school facilitation on working college students, and I was highly intrigued when I found your study on the same topic! I am writing to ask you if you would possibly allow me to use your survey questions for my own study. Would it be okay if I utilized some of your questions for my research and published the finished product in the "Appendix" section of my thesis assignment? You would absolutely receive full credit for being the original creator of the survey, and if you would need any more information on the program or my research I would be happy to supply it for you! We were encouraged by our advisor to find a pre-made survey to make things a little easier as we work through the process and I thought your questions would be a great fit! Again, you would receive full credit, and if there's anything else you need from me please let me know and I will get it to you as soon as possible!

Thanks so much! Have a great day and hope to hear back from you soon!

Sincerely,

Madeline Miscenich

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**Neha Singla** <nsingla@mail.usf.edu>  
To: "Miscenich, Madeline" <miscen13@students.rowan.edu>

Tue, Nov 17, 2015 at 12:34 PM

Hi Madeline,

I'm glad to hear that you are interested in the work-school conflict/facilitation area. I appreciate you checking with me to use parts of the survey from my study. Yes, please feel free to use the details with appropriate citations, and let me know if you need any additional information from me.

Good luck,  
Neha

[Quoted text hidden]

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Neha Singla  
Doctoral Candidate  
Industrial/Organizational Psychology  
University of South Florida

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**Miscenich, Madeline** <miscen13@students.rowan.edu>  
To: Neha Singla <nsingla@mail.usf.edu>

Thu, Nov 19, 2015 at 2:12 PM

Hi Dr. Singla!

Thanks so much, I really appreciate it!

Have a great day!

Sincerely,