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**COMBINING WORKLOAD AND ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE: CASE OF INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AT  
TALLINN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY**

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I hereby declare that I have compiled the thesis independently and all works, important standpoints and data by other authors have been properly referenced, and the same paper has not been previously presented for grading.

The document length is **12870** words from the introduction to the end of the conclusion.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	3
INTRODUCTION .....	5
1. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	9
1.1. Theoretical review on workload and time management.....	9
1.1.1. The multiple resource theory .....	9
1.1.2. The 80/20 rule.....	11
1.1.3. Parkinson's law .....	12
1.2. Impacts of workload on academic performance.....	13
1.2.1. Academic performance of working and non-working students.....	13
1.2.2. Full and part-time work and its impacts on academic performance.....	14
1.2.3. Nature of work and academic performance.....	16
1.2.4. Differences between bachelor and master's students in terms of how workload affect academic performance .....	17
1.3. Reasons for student's engagement in full-time or part-time work.....	19
1.4. Summary.....	20
2. STUDY CONTEXT AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	21
2.1. Study context .....	21
2.2. Research design and sample .....	21
2.3. Data collection and analysis methods.....	23
3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION .....	26
3.1. Findings .....	26
3.2. Discussion.....	32
CONCLUSION .....	34
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	38
APPENDICES .....	43
Appendix 1. Interview guide .....	43
Appendix 2. Interviewee information.....	44
Appendix 3. Interview transcripts .....	45
Appendix 4. Non-exclusive licence.....	47

## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis study tries to find the role of workload in the academic performance of international students at Tallinn University of Technology in Estonia. The research aim is to explore how TalTech business and governance international students combine working and studying and offer solutions to improve their academic performance. The research questions include determining the role of working in the academic performance of TalTech business and governance international students; exploring the role of workload (full or part-time) and the nature of work in combining working and studying for TalTech business and governance international students; how do TalTech business and governance international bachelor and master students differ in terms of how they combine working and studying; and which are the solutions for better combining working and studying for TalTech business and governance international students. The author will utilize the qualitative case study method and a descriptive research design to help fulfill the aim of this research and obtain answers to the research questions.

This research used both primary and secondary sources due to limited data and resource constraints. The data was collected using interviews from a sample of 17 participants from Tallinn University of Technology. The purpose of the semi-structured interviews was to explore how TalTech School of Business and Governance international students combine their work and study and maintain academic performance. Based on the analysis of interviews, it can be agreed that there is a difference between the working and non-working students in terms of their academic performance. It is also noticeable that the work can positively affect academic performance as it can improve the communication, time management skills, and practical experiences of students. Interviewees also highlighted that flexible part-time work enables them to do well in the study, although it is not easy to get a job like this. Additionally, it is also observed that study pressure is higher for bachelor students while master students need to perfectly combine both work and study at the same time as it may hurt them in their future job career. Interviewees also suggest planning the workload of both study and work to combine successfully and do well in both the short-run and long run.

**Keywords:** Workload, academic performance, international students, working and non-working students, part-time, full-time, policymakers.

## INTRODUCTION

How a student combines their work with study has received considerable attention from all over the world as students show more interest these days in achieving higher studies. The challenge of combining both work and study is becoming more common nowadays. Thirst for good knowledge has led many people to search for jobs to meet their needs and pay for their school fees. Over the past, investment in knowledge has been seen to yield promising interests to an individual (Mora *et al.* 2020). Although learning is much significant in gaining skills and knowledge, the data indicates that many students are not able to enroll in their courses due to lack of finance. Lack of finance is one factor affecting the learning process all over the world; International students have established working while learning as a strategy for maintaining them in their schools. ERR (2020), data indicates more than 5,500 international students' study in Estonia. According to Lang (2012), to sustain themselves in school, more than three-quarters of the international students have looked for employment in Estonia. This study tries to establish how the Tallinn University of Technology (TalTech) business and governance international students combine working and studying and offering solutions to improve their academic performance.

They are working while studying is not main concern. The main problem of the students who are employees is to divide the available time between study and work. A successful student who is an employee needs to have good time management skills, or else either work or school life will be negatively affected. A study conducted by Tetteh and Attiogbe (2019) indicated that combining both work and schooling leads to less time for studies, which negatively affects a student's performance. Additionally, this study also found that finding time for studies is difficult as the student has other work requirements, which affects the student's learning process. Various forms of employment affect learning in different ways. Some students are employed on a full-time basis while others are employed on a part-time basis. According to Lang (2012), data indicate that international students who work on a full-time basis show low performance in their academics compared to those who work part-time. In modern days, students are not just students but workers. Many people decide to work while learning to meet their needs that are in many

times more than the pocket money or the income that their parents have. Humphrey (2006) conducted a study on the effects of part-time working indicated that there is a notable difference between students who work part-time, students who work full time, and students who do not work while learning. This thesis will explain these three classes of students and how they perform in their academic year while they are working.

Studies conducted by Santoso *et al.* (2020) found that students who can possess a higher self-management skill can perform well both in school and at work. The study emphasized the need for self-management in work while learning students who can self-manage themselves have minimum academic stress compared to those who have lower self-management skills. Students with low Self- management tend to be demotivated, and their performance is affected negatively. When student lack self-motivation, he is less interested in learning and doing schoolwork (Mora *et al.* 2020). Self-management is an essential discipline element applied by many international students to avoid low school performance and work performance. However, in some instances, a student may have good self-management, but the workload can exceed, and thus his performance in school is negatively affected.

International students who engage in work as you study schedule are left with less or no time to glam their academic studies, affecting their academic performance—according to Muluk (2017), having less time studying means low test scores and overall grades. However, students who work full time trying to balance their work and study time by learning during their free time out of work. As a result, such students tend to record low grades due to a lack of enough time to concentrate on their studies. These students' pressure as they try to balance their time is too much (Fan Smith 2017). Additionally, various surveys have indicated that the academic output of those students who engage in either part-time or full-time jobs is not equivalent to that of those students who do not have part-time or full-time employment.

While the advantages of engaging in such arrangements (part-time jobs) outweigh their drawbacks, students prefer undertaking an extra chore which in return affects their academic performance (Fan Smith 2017). Those students who work more than twenty hours a week and receive less or no support from their families negatively impact their academic performance. Education offers a foundation of development from which most of the economic and social well-being is built. Education acts as a critical aspect of increasing economic efficiency and social consistency (Beerrens *et al.* 2011). Thus, increasing the value of education helps to raise the

poor from poverty. Therefore, care should be exercised when determining the nature of the job and location to ensure the educational needs are also taken care of (Simón *et al.* 2017). Many students who work while learning are economically disadvantaged. Although they can meet their needs, there are many social and academic effects of working while learning on the undergraduate students (Corona *et al.* 2017). According to Humphrey (2006), studies conducted over time have indicated that students who work while learning are likely to score less than those who are not working. One of the major reasons for this discrepancy is that working students have a high workload that either makes them feel tired or at some time stressed, and thus, they are unable to study. Other students concentrate more on work-life and forget their main intention was to learn not to work, and thus their academic performance is affected.

In general, the student population in TalTech constitutes a considerable number of international students. The enrollment of international students is still rising in the university. About 12.2% (over 5,500 students) of the students studying in Estonia are international students, with 62% of this number coming from third-world countries (ERR 2020). TalTech has the most significant number of international students at 1,612 by 2020, which makes up 16% of the total student population. However, combining work and study is a matter of big deal for them. So, the **research problem** of the current thesis is the lack of information about how TalTech business and governance international students combine working and studying from students' perspective.

From those perspectives, the author developed the **research aim**, which is to explore how TalTech business and governance international students combine working and studying and offer solutions to improve their academic performance. Additionally, the purpose of this study is to identify some important solutions from students' point of view regarding the balance of both work and study. The major contribution of this study is twofold. Firstly, it will give some important information about the workload of international students and how they balance it with their study. Secondly, the solutions can also assist future perspective students in combining their study and work for getting a good output from university.

**In order to fulfill the aim, the following research questions were formulated:**

1. What is the role of working in the academic performance of TalTech business and governance international students?
2. What is the role of workload (full or part-time) and the nature of work in combining working and studying for TalTech business and governance international students?



3. How do TalTech business and governance international bachelor and master students differ in terms of how they combine working and studying?
4. Which are the solutions for better combining working and studying for TalTech business and governance international students?

In order to fulfill the aim of the thesis and answer the research questions a qualitative study was conducted. The data was collected by conducting 17 semi-structured interviews with TalTech business and governance international students. Purposive sampling method is applied.

An overview of the thesis paper, the contention is introduced here about how the paper was developed. This thesis paper divides into several chapters. A brief and synthetic overview of the context of the problem. Where after introducing a problem of the research aim and research question is formulated in the introduction chapter.

**In the first chapter**, a literature review is discussed where workload and academic performance are introduced, background studied, different types of workload in academic performance, reasons for students engaging in work, and differences between the level of studies and academic performance. **The second chapter** consists of the study context and research methodology, which represents the study context, research design and method of data collection and analysis. **In the third chapter**, the interview findings and discussions are illustrated where the author brings out the theoretical part and interview results together, which summarizes the main findings, and the research question is answered from the analysis. **In the last chapter**, before drawing some limitations, a conclusion and recommendation about combining workload and academic performance are depicted.

# **1. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Maintaining both work and study at the time is becoming tougher and tougher as the day progresses for the university students particularly when they pursue higher studies. Researchers from all over the world also give priority in this aspect as it is becoming more common in these days. In this chapter, prior studies about combining the work with studies will be discussed. The main task features affecting academic performance are workload components that determine how people perform their necessary work and understand the task. The demand for tasks is the ratio of time necessary to perform a given task to time and the time available to fulfill it (Kenny 2017). The workload is a combination of available operating system resources, the demand for a task, and individuals' capacity. According to Kaviyarasi and Balasubramanian (2018), workload affects and reduces an individual's ability. The performance of the students also determined the amount of work they do; some focus is on the work being done. An increase in demand for tasks can lead to errors and an increase in response time. The high workload, complexity, and performance reduction are considered two of the most critical factors.

Primary task performance tests measure the performance product of the task. On the opposite, secondary output measurements analyze residual or non-principal capital. According to Kaviyarasi and, Balasubramanian (2018), subjective procedures comprise scales that users respond to measure the subjective effort necessary to complete a task. The Cooper-Harper Scale, NASA-Load Index (NASATLX), and Subjective Workload Assessment Technique are widely and most frequently used as subjective measurements (SWAT). Several theories that have been done can explain the situation of performance of the working and non-working students. This part of the paper will examine how different researchers have viewed students who learn while still working.

## **1.1. Theoretical review on workload and time management**

### **1.1.1. The multiple resource theory**

The multiple resource theory notes that individuals have a finite number of resources for mental processes. These tools can be called an energy reservoir used for a range of mental operations,

from sensory to sensory perception (MacCann *et al.* 2020). This communal pool of expertise is delegated to various tasks, methods, and processing. This thesis explores how complex individual tasks can be translated into difficulties in processing and how dual-task success can be impeded more by related tasks than unlike tasks (Kaviyarasi, Balasubramanian 2018). In psychology, multiplayer tools theory has been used to explain how people use television signals and how people interpret product knowledge in dual-task success and applied areas, including communication. They have also added that students can also combine both their work and study at a single time by concentrating on study. But in this case, they should join a job which is flexible, related to their background. As a result, they are not only able to manage their expenses from the job but also gain some strong experiences, gain soft skills, gain knowledge about their study backgrounds etc.

Initially, the roots of the several-recourse theory can be traced to the 'single-channel bottleneck' idea for the transmission of human information, which restricted the ability to attain two high-speed operations in combination to be achieved on their own. Costa *et al.* (2018) claim that such a vision was very prominent in studying high-speed tasks, indicating that time is a minimal resource that cannot be shared among tasks. They wrote a paper describing the idea that human beings have a finite, central processor of ability that can be shared to some extent among tasks instead of a not split, non-divisible time resource.

In our culture, numerous roles are prevalent. Issues such as the hazards associated with mobile phones when driving require us to consider how much such dual-task success can lead to reduced capacity to share time. One solution to this understanding is the multiple resource theory. In this point of view, two seeds were created to create the idea of multiple resources. An available mental effort pool assists human success. The definition of progressive initiative contrasted markedly with the then all or no single-channel bottleneck vision. The models of Kahneman highlighted task demand for these smaller resources, the scarcity of resources available for completing tasks, and the consequent suffering from them (Wickens 2021). In the final chapter, however, Kahneman notes other 'structural intervention' sources, which could not be considered by pure request for resources or the 'undifferentiated capability' model. Two similar terms, often confused, are multiple resource theory and mental workload. They are overlapping but separate. To differentiate between them, note that the multi-resource model's architecture consists of the demand, resource superimposition, and assignment politics three components (Costa *et al.* 2018). The definition of mental workload often concerns the first, characterizing human capital demand,

whether individual or multiple, as tasks. Critically, this condition can be coupled theoretically with one of the two work demand "regions." The first is that demand is smaller than the capability of available resources (Wickens 2021). This is the optimal state because it means that the employee has specific tools to impose unforeseen circumstances.

### **1.1.2. The 80/20 rule**

The 80/20 rule implies that 20 per cent of the results are accounted for by 80 per cent of the workload. This rule can be applied in any field, including academics, for students who work as they study (Tanable 2018). In other words, the bulk of the findings are obtained by 20% or less of the sample. Also, the bulk of the assessments' contents include 20 per cent or less of the course material. Notice that professors apply the 80/20 rule to their examinations (whether or not they know it). Because of time constraints, just a few pieces of paper could test knowledge in the course. Students will, without a doubt, do their best by checking the significant ideas of the course, which are 20% of the material they teach.

According to Gkiokas (2017), spending more time learning does not guarantee success. There are different ways this rule can be applied when learning a language example. Initially, it should be used to choose a study method before selecting the content. Students can choose between several different methods of study in learning a language. Some people learn by themselves through textbooks and therefore work in and spare some time later. The most productive way to learn a language has proved immersion. In addition to learning processes, the 80/20 rule can be beneficial for selecting the correct material. Again, we know from the language example that approximately 50 per cent of the overall written content is the top 100 written English words (Akhiar *et al.* 2017). They can understand the most written or spoken texts by studying the 300 most common words while studying less than 20% of common words.

Nelson (2019) claims that most working students are unaware of applying the 80/20 rule to priorities part of their academic work's most important element. Rather than concentrating more on 20%, one should emphasize 80% more to optimize effects. Working students primarily concentrate on their jobs and neglect their studies because of the more significant workload. It would be hard for one to finish their lessons because of a shift in schedule, action, or other interruptions, and every day return home with dissatisfaction. Working students tend to dwell more and place about 80percent of their focus on their jobs rather than academics and have poor performance. Nelson gives one of the primary reasons for this: we tend to value our 100%

quality performance as an ideal result, especially in educational circumstances. He claims that most teachers are not instructors with an overall performance rate of 80 per cent (McCarthy, Winer 2019). It is essential to assume that 80% of the work we can do is the best.

### **1.1.3. Parkinson's law**

The law states that the total work amount expands to fit the available time for the task to be completed. It is just an observation, not some witty magic of Parkinson's Law. It works because it offers work longer than need, sometimes because they want some "leg space" or buffer, but mostly because they have an overwhelming sense of how long you must do it (Mantis 2017). People do not entirely understand how easily such tasks can be accomplished before this concept is checked. Many workers who oppose the "work harder, not smarter" unwritten rule realize that it is not always respected despite its increased return on investments (Chen, Hall 2021). This has to do with the fact that the longer it takes, the greater the standard it intrinsically must be. The rule of Parkinson is just an observation. It works because people offer tasks longer than they need, often because they want a "pad" or buffer, but mainly because the task is bloated. People do not fully understand how fast such tasks can be accomplished before these principles are checked (Grant 2019). This has to do with the idea that the longer it takes to finish something, the better it must be.

Stefan Thurner, professor of Complex System Science at the Vienna Medical University, has taken a close look at Parkinson's Law (BBC 2019). He said that in 2004, the University of Vienna faculty of medicine broke into its independent university, and he became interested in the idea. In only a few years, he said, 15 people were running at the Medical University of Vienna at 100, although there was almost the same number of scientists (Thurner 2016). He wanted to understand the happenings and why his work burden was never reduced. His book motivated him to make it a mathematical model that could, along with co-authors Peter Klimek and Rudolf Hanel, be manipulated and checked.

Parkinson's initial purpose was to target a certain kind of inefficiency – the British Civil Service's bureaucratization – rather than old lady letter-writers or journalists (BBC 2019). Parkinson noted in his original essay that, after a two-thirds reduction in navy ships and the third reduction in staff between 1914 and 1928, the number of bureaucrats increased by almost 6% each year (Tanable 2018). Even though there were fewer employees and fewer jobs to do, management

continued to rise, according to Parkinson, who believed that this was due to reasons unrelated to naval operational requirements.

## **1.2. Impacts of workload on academic performance**

### **1.2.1. Academic performance of working and non-working students**

Research shows that a student's performance depends on factors such as emotional and social factors, mental factors, physical factors, and external factors, among several others (Health 2018). The external classroom factors work and financial problems, extracurricular activities, and family problems (Goloshumova *et al.* 2019). Working student study patterns and academic success have drawn more interest to university teachers and students to understand the causes, difficulties, and other factors that concern them. Working students with their busy lives have little time to study, which lowers their academic achievements (Bongo *et al.* 2020). Students' research patterns and academic success positively and negatively affect their qualifications based on how they treat them.

Working while studying lets the student cover tuition costs, purchase their needs and support parents and siblings, if possible (Health 2018). Moreover, students can afford to go to work or college by taking part-time jobs or other full-time jobs. It lets them develop expertise in self-discipline, commitment, and responsibility. Firstly, it encourages them to become more robust, more independent, and more individual, to follow and achieve their potential. Interestingly, student employment poses equity problems, which could help to replicate socio-economic disparity in education performance. It is the case since students with lower social-economic status are more likely to work to finance their studies, and if student employment declines, academic advancement (Theobald *et al.* 2020). Secondly, the question of successful jobs for students arises is it feasible for students to practice and achieve the same outcomes regarding the number of credits obtained.

Students who work while studying have a limited time for their studies and may be negatively affected in their performance. It is more likely and possible if the students lack essential time management skills. "Students who work" are more much different from "workers who study" (Kisken 2020). It is the case since a student who works is much concerned with their studies, thus positively affecting their performance instead of workers who study and central their time

on work rather than academics, negatively affecting their performance. However, working in university can adversely affect academic outcomes and increase postponement or lower grades. The zero-sum method says that time was restricted during university studies: as the time of work goes up, students' time to research goes down (Bernardo 2020). There is also a clear trade-off between study and work according to this viewpoint. A time not spent in researching, visiting schools, preparing for tests is used for delivering pizzas in a contact Centre or an office.

Owing to the theory that non-working students have greater academic and advance than working students, 'negative selection to work' is likely to be observed (Twaruschek *et al.* 2018). The negative approach to selection assumes that the gaps between non-working students in academic advancement will go away as its pre-existing features are regulated. Non-working students may invest most of their time towards academic achievement, thus positively boosting their grades. However, non-working students lack outside world exposure (Merga 2017). Non-working students mainly come from poor background and lack external support may lack funds to continue with their studies, thus forced to drop out of school due to lack of school fees and other essentials in their school life.

In the end, for many reasons, a negative association does not exist between student jobs and academic results. Firstly, according to the "reconciliation solution" (Huang *et al.* 2020), the nil-sum hypothesis was developed to understand the relationship between job creation and school results for high-school students. It seems less applicable to students at universities because they do not always have mandatory courses, spend less time at school, and is therefore more versatile in their time arrangement. Secondly, an hour spent at work is not so precise, that the student may not spend the time studying, for instance, a student working could decide to cut the time spent by keeping the time spent studying almost constantly. Thirdly, if the academic calendar is flexible, working students may select fewer challenging courses or those not required for classes to pass the final exam (Mitani 2018). Finally, working students should consider the time pressures they face, which can be an incentive for more effective time management.

### **1.2.2. Full and part-time work and its impacts on academic performance**

The empirical evidence indicates that, when employed at school, the results differ according to job form (for example, full-time versus part-time work) and the connection to academia (that is, an on-campus vs an off-campus job). Part-time student jobs might have a favorable impact: for example, an on-campus study job may attract students' interest in more academic programs

(Broadbent 2017). Students who do their studies less than 10 hours a week often have much higher GPAs than most comparable students.

One of the essential difficulties of work and research is that all tasks are incredibly challenging. Balancing these tasks can be difficult, and it takes a person with outstanding management skills to get this off the ground (Carnevalle, Smith 2018). Evening shifts can influence a person's course of study, particularly students who are below the average. If a person plans to take morning shifts, they may skip seminars, lectures, or lessons at morning school. It extends to students who travel and use some much-needed family time to learn the evening shifts.

Many studies show that students would adversely influence academic success by part-time jobs when they study. It is very typical for students to opt for part-time work during their studies (Hordosy *et al.* 2018). However, since there is no definitive inference, the connection between doing a part-time job and students' success is still questionable. An online survey was created to gather data from the Sunway University students, and 40 respondents (16 men and 24 women) attended the study. The findings found that students who work part-time while learning CGPA also have elevated tension levels and less sleep than those who do not work (Yikealo *et al.* 2018). The study found that the correlation between part-time employment and academic success was poor (Hordosy *et al.* 2018). The research paper has generally added to the present area of study by examining the impact of part-time work on students' academic achievement. They also claimed that if the students involved with job that are not relevant to their study, it will surely break down some courage and make them stressed in their study. Because coming from abroad, their prime objective is study and they cannot do well in University results, they will surely lose the chance of gaining more fruitful job after their study.

Students working in full-time jobs will also leave school more likely. For instance, the data presented are consistent with a graduation rate difference of approximately ten percentage points between whole and part-time jobs. Due to the detrimental consequences of such full-time jobs, tens of thousands of these school children are expected to leave school and struggle to graduate (Broadbent 2017). It is evident from research that working on a full-time job for students has significant adverse effects on their academic performance, and therefore it has become a considerable concern (Yikealo *et al.* 2018). For such students, it could be wise to look for other financial ways to maintain an excellent creditable academic performance.



Small hours of work on campus (e.g., 10 hours per week) affect students' success constructively, whereas extensive hours of work (e.g., 35 or more hours a week) have adverse effects (Haikari *et al.* 2021). It is not clear how desirable student employment is to be detrimental. However, the distinction between a college graduate and not a college graduate can entail changes in working hours, which negatively affect student profits than a completing college's lifetime benefits. Cutting the working time by 10 hours (from 35 to 25 hours a week) will lower the average income during the academic year.

Research conducted shows that less than twenty per cent of teachers feel that working does not affect a student's performance (Chien *et al.* 2020). Some students are bright and take very little time to prepare so that their hours of work have little or no effect. These students are in the minority, making sense to get the most negligible voting in this poll in this group. Whether or not work affects students' success is unlikely to affect the number of students hired. Many teens get hired by cars, clothing, or family necessities at some point. We can only assume that they have some time left to research.

### **1.2.3. Nature of work and academic performance**

The nature of an employee's job characterizes the type of work the employee is assigned when success is often associated closely with the nature or type of work the employee is assigned to (Stankovska *et al.* 2017). The performance of employees with the positions they suit best can be enhanced. Student's academic performance can be significantly affected by the nature of work that the employed students do. It is entirely conclusive that a job affects an active student's academic performance according to the type of work or work nature in which they participate.

The choice of a student to spend more hours possibly depends somewhat on his satisfaction in the work (Andrew *et al.* 2020). Provided that workers are identical in design, variations in individual jobs' non-currency advantages tend to be impossible to explain any of the interwork hour variance. However, it is no concern to assume that occupations have no apparent consequences for academic success because of work pleasure disparities. If work seems to be very close physically and does not permit a study period, this presumption would be infringed if the excellent job provides positive "feelings," which increase an individual's attention or the will to study while he is not working. Moreover, the prejudicial effect will result in a cautious calculation of the detrimental effect of operating on grades and a spillover effect with other workers.

#### **1.2.4. Differences between bachelor and master's students in terms of how workload affect academic performance**

Researchers' study shows that several differences exist between students who work as they pursue their bachelor's degree and pursue their master's degree (Adams, Blair 2019). However, it is never a guarantee for an excellent performance for one who opts not to work during their studies. Master's degree students have high levels of work-study facilitation and provide a high degree of engagement, academic achievement, happiness, and high academic preparation levels. It is primarily opposed to the working bachelor's degree students who may not perform excellently in their studies since their time could be a chapter read in their classwork (Brechet 2018). Brechet (2018) also highlighted that students from abroad coming here to do bachelor have huge study pressure, their class schedule is tight, they must do lots of assignments, homework, presentations in their study. It will not be easy for them to concentrate on work more. But those are coming from emerging and developing countries without any scholarship must involve with job which hamper their study and result in the university.

There appear to be no critical connections between a career study's facilitation and intentions for turnover/dismissal or involvement. Most master's degree students take their classes as part-time classes (Jung 2019). It may affect their academic performance negatively since they attend their classes after work, exhausted. Simultaneously, the bachelor's degree students take classes full time and their jobs part-time. It ensures that they fully attend their lectures and academic-related activities towards academic excellence.

Research by Kurata *et al.* (2015) on the impact of workload on academic performance of working students in a Bachelor of Engineering program found that there is a significant association between the overall workload and academic performance of working students. The findings show that moderating factors that influence workload can also affect the academic performance of students. Due to the psychological and physiological consequences of learning, changes in lifestyle, health, the pressure on schools and current years will affect the performance of academics. Working students are usually busier, although their success in their academics is lower than non-workers. Primary data were used to collect data from non-working and working engineering students in the Philippines, where questionnaires were utilized to collect the data. The study suggests that the administration understand the effect of workload on academic achievement and physical and psychosocial factors in order to optimize student intellectual capacity.

Atalay *et al.* (2016) study a study to examine the extent of the association and linearity between academic motivation and subjective workload; the personal workload influenced medical students' academic motivation. The trial was completed from December 2013 to February 2013 and included Phase 5 Phase, six medical students, at Baskent University School of Medicine in Ankara, Turkey. The subjective degree of workload was calculated using the Turkish-adapted scale for national air and space administration task load. The Academic Motivation Scale university form was used to collect values for academic motivation.

Research by Rose and Sika (2019), Suba Sub-County, Kenya: Studies of students' workload effects in academic work in high schools revealed that the influence of teacher workload on student achievement is substantial ( $r = 0.523$ ,  $N = 154$ ,  $p 0.01$ ) and the academic performance of students is decreased, with each of the units increased in teacher workload ( $- .558$ ). Results show that it is essential that workload be minimized while the impact on teacher participation in the school is maintained. According to the findings, all players should be interested in improving students' academic success, and teachers should follow best practices while doing their duties. Thirty-three high schools, with 33 principal professors, 164 teachers and 1,035 pupils, were included in the study population. The sample size was determined by stratified sampling, which included 311 students in form four.

Students must create a work-life balance to retain academic performance and satisfaction in their lives. Sallehuddin (2019) carried out a study to examine the relationship of stress, workload, and time management between joint postgraduate students at the University of Utara (UUM). The objective of the study to achieve the data were collected from 103 postgraduate students of the UUM Graduate School. The study showed that stress, workload, time management and student performance are not significant and positive on academic performance. This indicated that stress affects part-time students' academic success, regardless of whether they will do well or not. They must strike a balance between their jobs, personal lives, and educational pursuits. This finding was like what had been seen in the past results. The researcher essentially suggests conducting training and courses for students to help them learn how to assign the required amount of time for learning different topics to reach better academic success standards.

### **1.3. Reasons for student's engagement in full-time or part-time work**

Academics and job do not have to be mutually exclusive. Students are motivated to attend university and then get a promising career. The combination of school and work occurs at an expense, physical and mental exertion being the most apparent. In some instances, working while studying is worth the effort and with the right approach.

Most students work for financial purposes; they like the freedom of their profession; they generally enjoy the job. They think that part-time working experience will assist them in finding jobs later in life. For a limited number of student workers - may be as many as one in ten - their decision to work during school shows a financial necessity (Faizuddin 2017). One of the most apparent advantages of working at college is the additional income. Money can be tight if you are a student, so every penny count is significant. Part-time work will help them extend their income and help it last longer. Those working are more likely than those without a part-time job to satisfy many aspects of their life - particularly the amount of money they receive, their social life and their freedom (Chama-Chiliba *et al.* 2020). The relative meaning of these positive effects differs from gender, as part-time work affects men's social and personal lives and the sense of independence of women, including financial freedom.

If a student is sufficiently cautious about taking place in an area of study, his/her work experience increases the level of his/her resume. Work during studying demonstrates a certain level of commitment, and prospective employers are delighted when they see that they are at the same time motivated to work and research (Faizuddin 2017). Even as students work part-time, they practice efficient time management. Students who balance schools and jobs learn valuable time management skills to work during their studies (Lopez-Mayan 2018). Interestingly, the number of time students spend on the homeworking would not affect the type of work or the number of hours they study. In later careers, the skills you gain from part-time student employment can have a natural effect. Students, for example, can learn to deal with money or make sales calls. Most part-time positions need people to be generalists, which mean they can gain comprehensive skills.

Soft skills are intangible yet desirable attributes for some types of work that are not reliant on expertise. Common sense, efficient communication, and decision-making ability are all examples of soft skills. These soft skills are, for the most part, acquired naturally (Faizuddin 2017). On the other hand, individuals can develop these soft skills during their time at work. They first

recognize the value of these skills in the real world, and then they work to hone them before taking the stage.

#### **1.4. Summary**

A high level of workload needs to be sensitized in an academic environment. In maximizing the student's learning potential, the administration needs to consider the effects of workloads on academic achievement, including physical and psychological social factors. Therefore, the assessment and assessment of the moderating factors must be considered to deal properly with the issue of subject retakes. This could potentially increase the number of high-quality graduates annually. Balancing academics with other activities such as occupation has revealed a challenge and substantially affects the students' performance in their studies. Most of the studies indicate that non-working students have a higher chance of excelling than working students (Martin-Sardesai, Guthrie 2018). Despite academic performance relying on a lot of commitment, including extensive reading and research, the workload may be a source of fatigue which affects their motivation. Motivation is an essential incentive for students in their studies.

Several findings indicate why working part-time whilst studying has a negative impact on academic performance. Part-time employment is really common among students when they are studying (Hordosy et al. 2018). Nevertheless, while there is no conclusive evidence, the similarity regarding working part-time and academic performance remains speculative. To obtain information from Sunway University students, a national questionnaire was generated, and 40 people (16 men and 24 women) responded. According to the results, students who study part-time when studying CGPA have higher levels of anxiety and rest less than someone who does not work (Yikealo et al. 2018). Part-time work has a negative association with academic performance, according to the report (Hordosy et al. 2018). By analyzing the effect of part-time jobs on students' academic performance, the journal article has usually contributed to the current field of study.

## **2. STUDY CONTEXT AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Study context**

This study explored how international students at TalTech combine working and studying at the same time. More specifically, in this study, students from School of Business and Governance at TalTech have been considered. Although it contains one group of students, it can give a picture of student's situations when balancing both work and study in Estonia. A large percentage of TalTech's student body is made up of overseas students and the enrollment rates still continues to rise. According to TalTech activity report 2019, the total number of students at TalTech School of business and governance is over 3000 (from 74 countries) and among them, around 800 are international students.

### **2.2. Research design and sample**

Research methodology entails specific procedures or techniques adopted by researchers to identify, select, process, and analyze the information obtained regarding a given topic. The study will use a qualitative research approach. The focus of the methodology chapter is to determine the approaches that will be used for data collection, analysis, and investigating the component that guides the research dissertation.

This study aim is how TalTech business and governance international students combine working and studying and offer solutions to improve their academic performance. The author will utilize the qualitative case study method and a descriptive research design to help fulfill the aim of this research and obtain answers to the research questions. From a case study, in-depth and detailed emulation of a particular area can be explored (Tellis 1997).

Using qualitative research design will allow the researcher to systematically describe and interpret the issues or phenomena from the individual or the population under study (Rutberg,

Bouikidis 2018). Similarly, the research will be able to generate information from the study population. Qualitative studies entail the collection, organization, description, and interpretation of the data obtained systematically.

Data obtained will be in the form of texts, verbal or visual data (Siedlecki 2020). To supplement the data used in this research, the researcher has worked through several articles, archival records, newspapers, and other documents that have relevant information on the effect of workload on academic performance. To add to this, the author will distribute interview questions and conduct face-to-face interviews to help answer the research questions and bring the main aim of this dissertation to light. Various operations are facilitated through research design before the stage of data collection and analysis, and the research is adequately structured. Leavy (2017) considers research design to be an advanced activity used in the preparation of the system to be adopted in data collection and the methods that will be utilized in the study of these approaches while keeping in mind the priorities and personnel, finances, time and availability of the resources need to carry out the research.

The research aims to determine 'how' based questions and various inquiries about how TalTech business and international governance students combine working and studying and offering solutions to improve their academic performance. This makes the research explanatory because the researcher will utilize a qualitative case study approach to determine the answers to the research questions. Qualitative method inquiring and approaches will be adopted to gain a deeper understanding of the combining workload on the academic performance of international students. The use of a TalTech case study method is significant for various reasons. Firstly, a case study produces a well-detailed description of a phenomenon; secondly, different possible explanations to a phenomenon are developed; and lastly, a phenomenon is evaluated efficiently and adequately. In this research study, the researcher will focus mainly on providing explanations, more specifically, an analysis based on a single case study on international students of the department of business and governance in TalTech in Estonia on combining work and study. The research will study carefully through face-to-face interviews with each aspect of the concerned issue from the sample population.

This study applied purposive sampling method to obtain the information. The criterion of choosing sample is the international students who are working while studying from the department of School of Business and Governance at TalTech. Among the 17 interviewees, 15

are male and 2 are female. Highest number of students is obtained from India and the lowest from Iran, Sri Lanka, and Jordan. From the study level perspectives, 11 students are from bachelor, 5 from master, and 1 from newly graduate. 10 of them are studying in Master in International Business Administration (IBA) program, 5 of them are Bachelor in International Business Administration (IBA). The details of the 17 interviewees are presented in Appendix 2.

### **2.3. Data collection and analysis methods**

The data of this study is collected from semi-structured interview method. Semi-structured interviews allow the interviewees freedom to express their own opinion. It also can provide reliable, comparable, and qualitative data. The research on combining workload and academic performance has not been widely conducted. Therefore, this research will use primary data from the interviews and secondary sources due to limited data and resource constraints. I have collect information from few journal articles to conduct questionnaire. The author will prepare interview questions based on the research questions and objectives to facilitate data collection using primary sources. The use of interviews has various advantages, including low cost, unbiased answers because interviewees provide answers in their own words, adequate time for the participants to respond to the questions, and a large sample can be generalized easily and its reliability (Dalati, Gómez 2018). In this regard, the research will design semi-structured interview questions, where open-ended questions will be used. The interview questions will be self-administered by the researcher, where the research will carry out a face-to-face interview with the participants. To conduct the review, this study follows some prior studies including Beerkens *et al.* (2011), Fan and Smith (2017), and Sallehuddin *et al.* (2019).

The author will also use online interviews because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The population used in this research will be international students enrolled in TalTech in various programs, including Bachelors, Masters, and newly graduate students. The study will use a purposeful sample and stratified sampling techniques. These techniques effectively ensure that only the needed information is collected (Etikan, Bala 2017). Therefore, the sample size for this study will utilize 17 students who will respond to the interview. The focus discussion group will include a wide variety of students from foreign countries with different cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the sample size will include international students from India, Iran, Bangladesh,



Pakistan, Srilanka, and Nigeria. The nationality, program, study level, gender of the interviewees is included in appendix II. The sample will be taken from the School of Business and Governance international students studying at TalTech from various countries and different disciplines.

Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic, which affects the globe, the researcher will observe all the measures to curb the spread of Covid-19. Therefore, the researcher will maintain social distancing when conducting interviews, wear a mask, and avoid contact with the interviewees. The researcher will make appointments with the interviewees on the interview dates and times. The researcher will consider using the various platforms for the face-to-face interview to avoid close contact with the interviewees. Such platforms include skype and phone calls.

The study will carry out a pilot study to examine the soundness and dependability of the study instruments. The pilot study is used to test the validity and reliability of the research instruments before conducting the actual research study to allow the researcher to adjust and modifications to correct the research instruments (Mohaddesi, Harteveld 2020). Therefore, the researcher will conduct a pilot study in Tallinn University, where five international students will be used to provide data based on the interviews. The pilot study will be helpful to determine whether the questions in the interviews measure what they are intended for and whether the question interpretation was like all the interviewees and if responses were elicited from those questions. This will assist the researcher in determining the possibility of the research implementation and execution.

The researcher will use interview questions to collect data for this research study. The interviews will be done both way face to face and online because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The interviews questions will be administered to those business and governance international students who will agree to participate in the response. The research will attempt to reduce any more personal data to encourage the interviews to reply to the questions posed to them. The researcher will review and analyze various papers to get the best idea about the proper technique to use for data analysis for this study. The coding process will be employed in this study. The coding approach is based on the core principle of reflecting the interactions between the researcher's subject concerning the nature and aspects of the phenomenon under study (Hordosy *et al.* 2018). The coding strategies that are open, axial, and selective are essential as they enable a cyclical and evolving

data loop to allow the research to compare and apply techniques on data reduction and integration to develop theory and meaning construction.

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 3.1. Findings

This study aim is to explore how TalTech School of Business and Governance International students combine their work and study and maintain academic performance. International students are struggling to combine work load and academic performance as they expressed such thing throughout the interviews. Specific problems were unique to international students, and the author concentrated on how to combine workload and academic performance.

First, the role of working in the academic performance of business of governance international students at TalTech, the author asked if there is any difference between working and non-working international students. From the analysis of all 17 interviewees, it is found that there is a difference between the working and non-working students in terms of their performance in academics. One common point is claimed by the interviewees that makes the working and non-working students different is result. Generally, working students pay less critical to their study as their work can be tight and their economic and professional development are also higher, while non-working students cannot give for concentration on their study and ultimately it affects on their result. Working students can become fatigued and sometimes become mentally stressed. On the other hand, Non-working students also can involve with social and universities' extracurricular activities that boost up their confidence and it surely encourage them to study hard and do well in the examination. For instance, one interviewee from Pakistan (interview no. 5) states, *“Sure I always believe that there is a many different both working and non-working international student as for example working student indirectly related there study, also they are not attain in any university activity, working student think study is less important, that’s why they are not getting good score, on the other hand non-working student directly related their study, also attend all social and university activity, they pass huge time with study as a result their academic result always better then working student.”* Few interviewees also highlighted that students could manage their work and job effectively at the same time if they can properly plan their scheduled based on the study hours and working hours. They are also gaining work experiences with their studies which may assist them in their future job career. Interviewee from

Pakistan (interview no. 14), claims, *“Working international students are gaining practical work experience besides study and they are really very hard worker, determined because they are maintaining study and work at the same time which is appreciated.”*

For the deep understanding of working in academic performance, the author asked a question about the positive and negative impacts of working academic performance. In terms of the positive impact of working on academic performance, most of the students mentioned about the importance of work experiences such as communication skills, presentation skills, product demand, customer behavior, and organizational behavior which may play a crucial role in their future job career. They will be able learn about time management and most importantly they will gain some practical knowledge by facing different people, different situations, and different presentations. To exemplify, one interviewee from Nigeria states, *“The student who work during study, he will get to know about lot of things like time management, self-oriented, presentation and so on. Therefore, he would get extra advantages in study sector as he has knowledge about how to cope up with different situation, different environment, presentation and so on.”* (interview no. 5) . A different but very important aspect mentioned by one interviewee is that if anyone get involves with works that are pretty like their academic background, it will surely assist to gain knowledges, skills, and experienced related to their study and it can influence the result).

The interviewees also stated some important negative aspects of work on academic performance in their respective interview. Almost all the interviewees mentioned a common negative view about the impact of work on academic performance is that students are not getting enough time for participating in the classes, spending crucial time in work. As a result, the academic performance become poor in which they will not gain competitive advantage in their future job prospects as academic background is very important for that. For instance, one interviewee from Pakistan (interview no. 5) claims, *“The negative impact of working is most of the students are unable to maintaining their time between work and job, spent vital time in work also they are not maintaining their daily life properly as a result they are not concern about good academic performance.”* Another negative view about the negative effect of work on academic performance mentioned by several interviewees is stress level. They are facing stress due to many reasons such as tight work schedule, sleep deprivation, mental fatigue etc. while balancing their work and study at the time. They feel they are not doing the assignments, homework, and most importantly they are missing the important lectures. Stress initiated from both work and study make them frustrated and it affects the performance in courses they enrolled with the

university. One interviewee from Iran (interview no. 1) mentioned about the effect of stress level, *“the negative effects of work on academic performance can be a lack of time to attend classes, enduring much stress and stress to do all the work on time, sleep deprivation, academic failure, fatigue, the occurrence of some diseases caused by high stress Daily and many other things mentioned”*. Additionally, one student from Bangladesh highlighted that if the work is irrelevant to their academic study, their academic result is becoming more disappointing (interview no. 4). It suggests that students work related to their study have little advantage over those are involved with irrelevant works.

In order to know the role of workload and nature of work in combining working and studying, the author asked about interviewees workload (part-time and full time) whether they are flexible or not to determine their work. Because student’s flexibility for working is another issue that has a significant role in combing workload and academic performance. Majority of the students work on a part-time basis while few of them are involved with full-time jobs. From the interview results, it is found that most students who work part-time are more flexible to their job to create time for their study. Despite finding a suitable, flexible, friendly environment for part-time job, still it is a hard job for them to give their best on study. Ultimately, their academic performance is becoming poor. For instance, one interviewee from Bangladesh (interview no. 4) stated, *“working in a supportive team environment, it’s always been flexible when it comes to the matter of study. But campus classes made lots of problem on study. Even, one time I left full time job and started doing part - time job only for better result.”* On the other hand, few students who are engaged with full time job feel the necessity of challenging situations, challenging tasks and they think they need professional experiences and doing full time job can give them the benefits they are looking for. Interview no. 6 from Nigeria opined that *“Its Full time. In the case of flexibility, I would say, my employee chooses my working schedule for me. If there is a serious issue, they take into consideration”*. Overall, it can be said that most of the interviewees preferred a part-time job as it can be flexible and create little pressure, which is ultimately good for combining workload and academic performance.

The author also asked the interviewee how workload affects academic performance to balance workload and academic performance in terms of nature of work (Part-time and Full-time). From the study's findings, the nature of work has been found to have a significant effect on academic performance. From the answer given by the students, it is observed that apart from few, all are agreed that the workload had affected their academic performance, and the other five of them

experienced no effect of working and academic performance. For example, one student from Pakistan (interview no. 14) claimed that *“Sometimes workload puts pressure on my mind then I feel very nervous as a result I cannot set up my mind to study. I think this is a way how workload creates bad effects on academic performance. But I am a very hard-working person. I can recover myself very firstly”*. Those found to be working full time had experienced a significant effect, with most of them being unable to balance education and work, therefore failing most of their exams.

On the other hand, some of those working part-time were also found to experience the same effect while some managed their time well and ran their schedules well. Most of the students believes lack of enough time and tiredness were the factors that led to failure in their academics, which leads out of control to balance their workload and academic performance. Students working next to the study lack enough time to work with their study plan, which makes them, most of the time, forfeit the study schedule or postpone to days which they will not recover. Pressure from the workplace is also another factor associated with a workload, making most students concentrate on their studies. Some who had enrolled to working full time were forced to find other jobs that could absorb them but worked part-time to balance the work. Most of the students admitted that workload caused mental pressure; thus, paying attention in class would become hectic.

Results from the interview also indicate that many students were found to be working on fields not related to their program, while few others are being lucky to work on fields related to their study program. Those are not getting relevant work to their study become more stressed and they have concentrated differently on their work and study, ultimately the outcome from university is not good. For example, an Indian student stated that *“I am studying Technology governance and digital transformation. So, I should have worked that is related to my academic field, but I am working in a restaurant as a service attendant, which does not make any sense. This work is opposite from my study program”* (interview no. 2). On the other hand, if a student gets jobs that are mostly related with their study gains some practical and relevant knowledge from work too and it will surely help them in their study which may play a crucial role in improving academic performance. One interviewee (interview no. 10) from a Bangladeshi said that *“This job is more consistent with my field of study. Wolt is a technology-based company for food delivery platforms. This job thrills me every day to think of some new idea. How they grab their customer and how they fulfill the customer demand.”* One interviewee (interview no. 10) from a

Bangladeshi said that *“This job is more consistent with my field of study. Wolt is a technology-based company for food delivery platforms. This job thrills me every day to think of some new idea. How they grab their customer and how they fulfill the customer demand.”*

From the interviews obtained, it is seen that there is a significant role between relatedness and non-relatedness of their work with the study program. For those students working in a related field to their study, the experience obtained helps them have a practical overview of the study program. Students working in a different area from their study feel unsatisfied since they lack that chance to better understanding their lesson and find difficulties combining their workload and study.

The author asked to interviewees about the impact of their study level on their academic performance to find out if international bachelor and master degree differ in terms of combining workload and study. It is noticeable that academic performance differs in terms of study level among almost all interviewees, few others think differently. Students who are studying at bachelor level feel more motivated and gaining skills for getting prepared for the future. Sometimes the extra pressure of bachelor curriculum makes them stressed, however it is not severe. An interviewee from India (interview no.15) said, *“Well, working students can gain practical knowledge in their relevant field. They can earn some money and having this they can be solvent at student life which can help them to pay their tuition fees.”* In contrast, master student believes that master students always stay in understudied pressure. Some students think that for doing well in master level, it is important to gain theoretical, practical, and some research skills and those are not calculative suffers sometimes with their study. One student from Pakistan (interview no.14) said that *“Well, I have completed my Bachelor of Business Administration in my home country very well. Now I am doing a master’s program. I believe a master program is much more complex than a bachelor because this level of the program is mainly based on practical, theoretical, research and others. So, it is something to negatively affect academic performance, but it is still not impossible.* This means that international bachelor students are more flexible than master students.

The author also asked for some recommendations from the interviewees about how students can balance work while studying and improve their academic performance. All interviewees come up with some practical suggestions. One common suggestion is given by almost all students is that if possible, they should choose more relevant works to their study. By studying a study-related

job, they will be able to know more practical knowledge and acquire soft skills that will be more helpful in their upcoming job future. One student from Pakistan (interview no. 16) said, *“well, my suggestion would be that the students who intend to work and study simultaneously must need a study-related job. Then they will easily cope up with it. They will learn so many things practically from work. Moreover, they should not work more at least they have to study, homework and others. I think it is the best way to maintain workload and study.”* Another area most of the interviewees gave importance is time management skills. Those students who have time management skill can manage both sides effectively (work and study). However, it is not an easy task in foreign life as they may face few other issues when they combine both work and study at the same time such as health. But it is also true that if someone can achieve the ability of managing time by calculating both work and study time; it not only gives them some edge in job career but also will help them in every aspects of their life. An interviewee from Jordan (interview no. 8) draws an important finding by saying, *“Working student can have a good performance only if they manage them time properly between work and academic life by not wasting holidays or any opportunity to study more and read as much as they can.”*

Few students suggest with the help of teachers, they can act in both work and study perfectly. If a teacher guides them about how a student can manage their work and study at the same time by maintaining a scheduled time, the student can become confidence and it can work in both short run and long run. One student from India (interview no. 15) claims, *“It would be a difficult task to indulge balance between work and study in order to improve their academic performance. I think that a proper schedule of work and study would be a proper solution of this and if a student cannot make schedule a teacher can asset them to study and give them proper guidance to trickle this problem.”*

Overall, it is noticeable that students need to balance both their study and work at a single time by conducting flexible time schedule. Also, they can give concentrate more importance on their study and manage living expenses by doing related job. With this effort, they will be able to do well in University results and it will surely assist them in the long run. Once they face problems regarding the maintaining both work and study at the same time, they can ask for help from their teacher and make a proper time schedule for their study and work.



### 3.2. Discussion

In terms of the role of working in the academic performance of business and governance international students at TalTech, it is observed that most of the students found a significant difference between the working and non-working international students. In other words, it is noticed that most of them feel the result of a particular student may fall drastically if he or she involved with works. However, interviewee also mentioned that they must involve with works most of the times to manage their living cost. Overall, it is crucial to balance both work life and study. Bongo *et al.* (2020) found a similar finding while studying Critical success factors in implementing industry, which highlighted that working students with their busy lives have little time to study, which lowers their academic achievements (Bongo *et al.* 2020). In the case of the negative and positive impact of work on academic performance, most students claimed that work could make them sensible about time management, become self-oriented, gain experiences, and acquire skills and knowledge. However, most of them also documented that students are becoming more stressed due to work, and it influences the performance in university. The result is consistent with some prior studies, such as Kiskan (2020), who mentioned that students who work while studying have a limited time for their studies and may be negatively affected in their performance. It is more likely and possible if the students lack essential time management skills. Students who work while studying have a limited time for their studies and may be negatively affected in their performance. It is more likely and possible if the students lack essential time management skills. "Students who work" are more much different from "workers who study" (Kiskan 2020).

For examining the role of workload (full or part-time) and nature of work in combining working and studying of business and governance of international students at TalTech, it is noticeable that most of the students are doing a part-time job and can balance with their study although the result is not good all the time. It depends on lots of factors; for example, one student gets a flexible job while others do not. If the employer is friendly, flexible, and cooperative, it is easy for them to balance their study. The result is consistent with some previous studies, such as Andrew *et al.* (2020). The same study found that the choice of a student to spend more hours possibly depends somewhat on his satisfaction in the work. Students who balance schools and jobs learn valuable time management skills to work during their studies (Lopez-Mayan 2018). Many studies show that students would adversely influence academic success by part-time jobs when they study. It is very typical for students to opt for part-time work during their studies

(Hordosy *et al.* 2018). The nature of an employee's job characterizes the type of work the employee is assigned when success is often associated closely with the nature or type of work the employee is assigned to (Stankovska *et al.* 2017). They have also added that the performance of employees with the positions they suit best can be enhanced. In terms of affecting workload on academic performance, most of the students said that their academic performance is affected by workload as it can create extra stress and pressure. Students know that passing examination is vital, if they want to continue with their courses and after doing lots of works, it is not easy for them to concentrate on study and do well. Research by Kurata *et al.* (2015) on the impact of workload on academic performance of working students in a Bachelor of Engineering program also found that there is a significant association between the overall workload and academic performance of working students. The findings show that moderating factors that influence workload can also affect the academic performance of students.

In this study, most of the students are doing masters, and claimed that their academic performance is good when they found a job related to their background. In other words, if students involved with jobs that are dissimilar to their background may stress them a lot and put an extra burden on their mind. Sallehuddin (2019) said that stress affects part-time students' academic success, regardless of whether they will do well or not. Students must strike a balance between their jobs, personal lives, and educational pursuits.

Most of the students also recommend combining working with studying for business and governance international students at TalTech. As with previous studies, most of them stated that the workload should be planned in both cases (work and study). Interviewees further suggest that it is vital to integrate work and study to balance between them. Build a proper connection with the course teachers and classmates.

## CONCLUSION

International students often face various types of difficulties when studying in the host country and when working and studying simultaneously. This study explores how TalTech School of Business and Governance international students combine working and studying and offer solutions to improve their academic performance. In order to fulfill the purpose of this study, 17 semi-structured interviews were conducted. The international students at TalTech are no exception. Most international students are from less developed countries from all over the world. When they come to the host country, they find themselves in a different climate, culture, food. However, they face more problems when working and studying to help in their upkeep and support their families in their homeland. The author gave an overview of university students, the Estonian education system, and the difficulties international students face when working and studying.

Over the past, investment in knowledge has been seen to yield promising interests to an individual. Although learning is significant in gaining skills and knowledge, the data indicates that many students cannot enroll in their courses due to a lack of finance. Several factors affect or result in students looking for either part-time or full-time jobs, the main reason being lack of finances.

Regarding research question 1 (What is the role of working in the academic performance of TalTech business and governance international students?) as my results show that there is a difference in the academic performance between working and non-working students. The differences are brought about by the difference in students' time in their studies and other works. The working students have limited time when some do not even have the time to attend classes or even take class assignments. This negatively affects their academic performance instead of non-working students who have all the time to commit themselves to their studies. The effect is more for the full-time students who are less flexible in their jobs and therefore have less time for their tasks, unlike the part-time students who mainly take their jobs in the evening after classes or even over the weekends.

Regarding research question 2 (What is the role of workload (full or part-time) and the nature of work in combining working and studying for TalTech business and governance international students), it is found that full-time workers have a more significant workload and are more affected by their work than the part-time workers whose workload is not as much and the non-working students who have no workload. Therefore, it can be concluded that workload affects academic performance for the working international students studying at TalTech.

In the case of research question 3 (How do TalTech business and governance international bachelor and master students differ in terms of how they combine working and studying?), it is noticed that bachelor students have more study pressure than masters students. However, the life of master's students is not easy as they have to take theoretical, practical, and research knowledge to do well in their future job career. By doing both study and work at the same time they cannot concentrate on study much.

For exploring solutions (Which are the solutions for better combining working and studying for TalTech business and governance international students?) (research question no. 4), the author asked the interviewees about their opinions. First of all, they suggest that students should go for related works to their study. It will assist them in future. Secondly, they mainly prefer to make a proper time schedule in which they can maintain both work and study at the same time effectively.

Most of the international students have no other option but to work as they study. This is due to their humble background and low-income families that cannot support them in school. Thus, most international students have taken either part-time or full-time jobs that give them extra workload, thereby affecting their academic performance. For the full-time workers, their workload is a bit more, and this brings them a more significant burden to carry since they have to balance their classwork and their job responsibilities. For this reason, the following **recommendations** are made based on the study to help the international students balance their work and studies for better academic performance.

- Students who are working while studying need to come up with an effective way to balance the two. Academic performance has been shown to be reliant on the time spent and the students' effort during learning. Working as a part-time worker is more recommended than working full time since a student will have space where they can

have space and time to study. When students are searching for work when studying, it will be an effective way to find work related to their program. Working on a related program has a significant effect on academic performance since the student gain experience and have a practical overview of the lesson they are pursuing.

- High workload requires understanding in an academic setting. To maximize the ability of the student to learn, administrative should understand the impacts of labor burden on academic achievement, including physical and psychological influences. The evaluation and the assessment of the moderating factors also need to be considered to address the problem of retakes correctly. This will theoretically increase the number of high-quality graduates per year. Fatigue, pressure from the workplace is some of the constraint's student's encounter while working either part-time or full-time.
- It is important to note that certain aspects of the program are not flexible in particular classes and working days. They should, however, take advantage of opportunities to study such as leave, job sharing, or flexible hours to complete their homework. It is best to create a flexible routine in which to stick. Students who are also employed should be prepared to adjust to new tasks, unforeseen job crises, and routines. The most important thing to remember is to have enough study time in their schedule. Being a student and an employee at the same time means that stress is inevitable. As a result, learning to handle stress rather than avoiding it is the best course of action. Get enough sleep, take daily breaks, stay busy in class and at work, eat healthily, exercise, stretch, and even go for a walk. Keeping a balanced lifestyle helps students to cope with stress.
- Students should make use of every minute of their time by having a fixed schedule. The students learn to say no to individuals and activities that impact their studies or their job negatively. They should try to have the lessons as near as possible to home or work. They should be aware of time management strategies to avoid time wastages. They do not have time to rest but should use the time wisely. This is not to say. Students should aspire to pursue part-time and not full-time employment. Any part-time work will provide students with various skills that will make them more employable; in reality, a part-time job will improve their resume almost as much as a related internship. Employers like to see part-time work on a graduate's CV; learn about the best part-time jobs for a variety of common graduate careers, as well as how they can use their part-time job to develop additional skills. If they can get part-time

jobs in the industries they are interested in, this is undoubtedly advantageous. Alternatively, the most desired skills in their favorite profession are identified, and part-time employment is sought so that they can learn and display these skills.

- Students should first think about their schedule before applying for a part-time position. They should be frank about how much work they can do. Employers who need employees to cover shifts over time frequently benefit from willing students who need money and often expect the part-time workforce to be flexible and work more hours over busy times. Even if they agree, make a note of when lectures and workshops will be held, as well as deadlines for coursework and assessments. While taking extra tasks is very important to be vigilant, part-time work can bring great importance to the schedule, motivating people to keep productive during the day. If one works an afternoon or evening shift, they may need to get up early in the morning to study.

An essential fact to mention is that author had some **research limitations**. For instance, this study contains interviewees from a particular department from a particular university. The result can be different for other departments from another background. Additionally, if more departments and more universities are considered to combine their study with work, the result will be more fruitful and conclusive. Another limitation is that the number of interviewees is only 17 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. **Further study** can be conducted by considering interviewees from all over the world. After that, it will also outlast how different background students can cope with both work and study.

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# APPENDICES

## Appendix 1. Interview guide

1. What is your study program and when did you start your studies?
2. What is your country of origin?
3. How long have you worked next to your studies? Is this your first job or do you have a longer career?
4. Do you believe there is a difference between working and non-working international students studying at Tallinn University of Technology?
5. What is the negative impact of working for academic performance if there is any?
6. What is the positive impact of working for academic performance if there is any?
7. What is your workload (part- or full-time) and how flexible are you in determining when you work?
8. How does your workload affect your academic performance?
9. To what extent is your work related to your study program?
10. What impact does the relatedness/non-relatedness of your work to your study program have on your academic performance?
11. At which study level are you studying?
12. What impact does your study level have on your academic performance?
13. What are your suggestions on the ways international students studying at Tallinn University of Technology could balance study and work to improve their academic performance?

## Appendix 2. Interviewee information

<b>Total number of interviewees</b>	17
<b>Nationality</b>	
Iran	1
India	5
Nigeria	2
Pakistan	2
Bangladesh	5
Jordan	1
Sri Lanka	1
<b>Program</b>	
Masters in International Business Administration (IBA)	10
Bachelor in International Business Administration (IBA)	5
Technology Governance & Digital Transformation	2
<b>Study level</b>	
Master	11
Bachelor	5
Newly graduate	1
<b>Gender</b>	
Male	15
Female	2

### **Appendix 3. Interview transcripts**

Interview 1:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1zeDMbKkanQLpD0pfCdaj7zx8I5edDwhp/view?usp=sharing>

Interview 2:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/17-9T9VvhXi2H8ylUH4hC1ppWGaLsS\\_N-/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17-9T9VvhXi2H8ylUH4hC1ppWGaLsS_N-/view?usp=sharing)

Interview 3:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/11\\_mhrVOMKcvVIOjoxovRzRkzP3i79VSx/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11_mhrVOMKcvVIOjoxovRzRkzP3i79VSx/view?usp=sharing)

Interview 4:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ndEt87AokIY\\_iIYEJSjXivw0lv10QnVj/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ndEt87AokIY_iIYEJSjXivw0lv10QnVj/view?usp=sharing)

Interview 5:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dM\\_9yUJ6HCQ1EpsgbZPOxJZtK16zb0Fe/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1dM_9yUJ6HCQ1EpsgbZPOxJZtK16zb0Fe/view?usp=sharing)

Interview 6:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qkOEo4eccxJe9y7jW5QWDe52nyL3qvBY/view?usp=sharing>

Interview 7:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1QqLb5meQjWR-ohwn9htpY-RYavztMa-1/view?usp=sharing>

Interview 8:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1XhDa5AroDmbhMkxNVFCQlnkKn-cRGrZc/view?usp=sharing>

Interview 9:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/13CoPN4T-L-CjfvbwdM12yxLQCW0BJ71T/view?usp=sharing>

Interview 10:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tBZroq\\_66hUn89cTL0Wb80KpfxReYAuY/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tBZroq_66hUn89cTL0Wb80KpfxReYAuY/view?usp=sharing)

Interview 11:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/11UmucgVD-e\\_K4YJEPHRz70aPr8sfOIA/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11UmucgVD-e_K4YJEPHRz70aPr8sfOIA/view?usp=sharing)

Interview 12:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1u99fiLH79NZyEh3RPn3HfrUctyqoyxI/view?usp=sharing>

Interview 13:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v\\_9EbNVEfHYRfVebTwJL0g9ISud\\_elEt/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v_9EbNVEfHYRfVebTwJL0g9ISud_elEt/view?usp=sharing)

Interview 14:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v\\_9EbNVEfHYRfVebTwJL0g9ISud\\_elEt/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v_9EbNVEfHYRfVebTwJL0g9ISud_elEt/view?usp=sharing)

Interview 15:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1eeFjrkyFdiuzv4PYaLJ26JFVOx3LJ0I2/view?usp=sharing>

Interview 16:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wq4lY3atpDVodr\\_cz2sDJT00X7weWrUO/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1wq4lY3atpDVodr_cz2sDJT00X7weWrUO/view?usp=sharing)

Interview 17:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Wk\\_vKU0rAHEpfouirGlf83pe-CGkj3A/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Wk_vKU0rAHEpfouirGlf83pe-CGkj3A/view?usp=sharing)

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