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Working Through Nursing School:  
The Effects of Working 10 or More Hours per Week on  
Self-reported Stress Levels and Academic Success

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### Abstract

This paper explores the effects of working 10 or more hours per week on the self-reported academic success and stress levels of upper division nursing students on the campus of Southern Adventist University (SAU). The researchers hypothesized that working more than 10 weekly hours would negatively impact the academic performance and heighten the stress of the participants. Previous research studies indicated divided results concerning the effects of employment on college students. In gathering data for the current study, the researchers utilized surveys containing both quantitative and qualitative data such as Likert scales and open ended questions, as well as conducting interviews to gather additional in-depth qualitative data. The results were analyzed in two groups: students who worked 10 or more hours per week (test group) and students who worked less than 10 hours per week (control group). The study found that working 10 or more hours per week caused statistically significant negative impacts on the students' GPA, perception of academic success, and time management skills. However, there was also a statistically significant indicator that students who worked less than 10 hours per week experienced more stress than those who worked 10 or more, contrary to the researchers' expectations. The implications are significant for nursing students, nursing professors, and administrators of SAU.

*Key words:* Term-time Employment

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Self-Reported Stress Levels and Academic Success

## **Introduction**

### **Research Problem and Hypothesis**

At Southern Adventist University (SAU)—a private institution in Collegedale, TN—the cost of tuition is substantially higher than that of a public university. Therefore, many of the students enrolled in SAU find it necessary to work part-time during the semester, even when faced with rigorous academic demands. The aim of this study was to determine through surveys and interviews how term-time employment affects the self-reported academic performance and stress levels of undergraduate nursing students. The researchers hypothesized that working more than 10 hours per week would decrease academic performance and significantly increase stress levels.

### **Literature Review**

As a result of the growing percentage of students nationwide who work while attending college, many studies have been done to address the relationship between term-time employment and academic performance. According to Stern and Nakata (1991), the number of students who work while enrolled in college classes has increased exponentially since the 1960s, resulting in a large majority of college students holding jobs—a trend that continued even further since the publication of that study, and working during the semester has gone so far as to be considered “the norm” (Barber & Levitan, 2015). As claimed by Beerkens, Mägi, and Lill (2011), not only has the number of working students spiked in recent decades, but so has the number of hours those students work. Driving this trend, there are a large number of reasons as to why students

may choose to work during the semester, although financial need and an attempt to integrate into the workforce are some of the most prevalent (Barber & Levitan, 2015; Yanbarisova, 2015).

As students continue to enter the workforce earlier and earlier in their academic careers, the importance of studying the effects of student employment grows (Yanbarisova, 2015). In a study done by Manthei and Gilmore (2005), the researchers attempted to determine how student employment affected the students' academic performance and social lives. The results of this study found that roughly half of the students believed working to be "detrimental" to their academic success and a huge hindrance to spending enough time socializing and relaxing (Manthei & Gilmore, 2005, p. 211).

However, not all current research agrees with this finding. According to some studies, students may actually benefit from working while attending college. Beerkens et. al (2011) claimed that employment only marginally affected academic performance and that it actually facilitated the development and display of students' ambitions and capabilities. A similar study done by Wenz and Yu (2010) found that a low number of hours marginally improved Grade Point Averages (GPA). On the other hand, each additional hour of work (beyond an average of 10 hours) caused a steady decrease in GPA (Wenz & Yu, 2010). These researchers claimed that working for a small number of hours per week can help improve student time management and organization, but for each additional work hour, these skills became more difficult—thus making it more difficult for students to retain a high GPA (Wenz & Yu, 2010).

Digging a little deeper, researcher Yanbarisova (2015) claimed that the *type* of work in which students are engaged significantly affects the impact of that employment on their schooling. According to this study, when students are professionally employed in the field they are attempting to enter, their academic performance remains much higher than that of their non-

professionally employed counterparts. In some cases, the professionally employed students actually out-performed the students who chose not to work at all. Yanbarisova (2015) argued that working professionally may heighten students' motivation to learn and provide a way for them to apply their learned knowledge and skills in a real-life setting. However, while this study outlined the need for correspondence between school and work, it did not specify the number of work hours as an important factor beyond specifying full-time versus part-time employment. This could be considered a weakness of the study given the fact that the specific number of hours had a specific corresponding effect in multiple other studies (Barber & Levitan, 2015; Rochford, Connolly, & Drennan, 2009; Wenz & Yu, 2010).

According to Rochford et al. (2009), a vast majority of university nursing students worked an average of 16 hours per week. This number is larger than the 10 hours suggested by Wenz and Yu (2010) and in congruence with this study, Rochford's (2009) results indicated that such employment had a significant negative impact on students' self-reported grades and overall college experience. The findings throughout the study consistently indicated that the larger the number of work hours, the greater the negative impacts became (Rochford et al., 2009). These researchers concluded their study with the claim that it was not the work itself but the number of hours that hindered the nursing students (Rochford et al., 2009). In a similar study, a large majority of the students who were asked indicated that they would choose not to work if they felt they had a choice (Barber & Levitan, 2015). Furthermore, many students from both studies also indicated that they believed work held them back from reaching their full academic potential and that it accounted for a large amount of stress (Barber & Levitan, 2015; Rochford et al., 2009).

Therefore, while several studies suggest that working is beneficial (Barber & Levitan, 2015) and that it can aid in the development of knowledge and skills (Yanbarisova, 2015), the

number of hours still needs to be limited so that students may have adequate time for study, socialization, and leisure in order to reach their full potential and have the best possible college experience (Barber & Levitan, 2015; Manthei & Gilmore, 2005; Rochford et al., 2009; Wenz & Yu, 2010).

At Southern Adventist University, one of the more prominent and popular majors is nursing. Nursing students go through one of the most academically rigorous programs on campus, and yet many of them choose to work during the semester. While some studies show that this may be beneficial to them and help them solidify their learning, many more indicate that an excessive amount of term-time employment—often suggested to be no more than 10 hours per week—can have significant negative impacts on academic performance and stress levels. This then points to the question, what exactly are the effects of working more than 10 hours per week on the nursing students at SAU?

## **Methodology**

### **Participants and Data Gathering**

The parameters of this study were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The content of the study contained sensitive information concerning grades and other confidential data. Therefore, anonymity was maintained throughout the research process by using the letters of the alphabet to identify and differentiate between participants. Informed consent was obtained from every participant (see Appendix A).

For the purpose of this study, only nursing students were included as participants. The researchers primarily targeted upper division nursing students because these students were more likely to be experiencing an even amount of academic demands, as well as the pressures of graduating, paying off loans, and seeking future employment.

For this study, the researchers employed the methods of Likert scale surveys and interviews, thus gathering both quantitative and qualitative data (for examples, see Appendices B and C). In order to solicit participants, the researchers were present before and after various nursing classes, visited the library in the nursing building, and employed the help of current nursing students to seek out eligible and willing participants. Thirty out of approximately 100 upper division nursing students agreed to participate in the study by taking the survey, five of whom also agreed to participate in an interview. The participants represent about 30% of the upper division nursing population, thus creating a relatively small yet adequately representative sample size.

### **Results and Discussion**

**Quantitative data.** The researchers gathered quantitative information about the academic background of each student and then compared that of the test and control groups through the surveys (see Figures 1 and 2). These are broken into the categories of each student's number of credit hours and hours they spent working, studying, completing clinicals, and relaxing in an average week. On average, the test group reported having significantly less free time than the control group. Many of the other categories (aside from work) were very similar between the two groups (see Figures 1 and 2).

Figure 1, *Academic Background of Test Group*

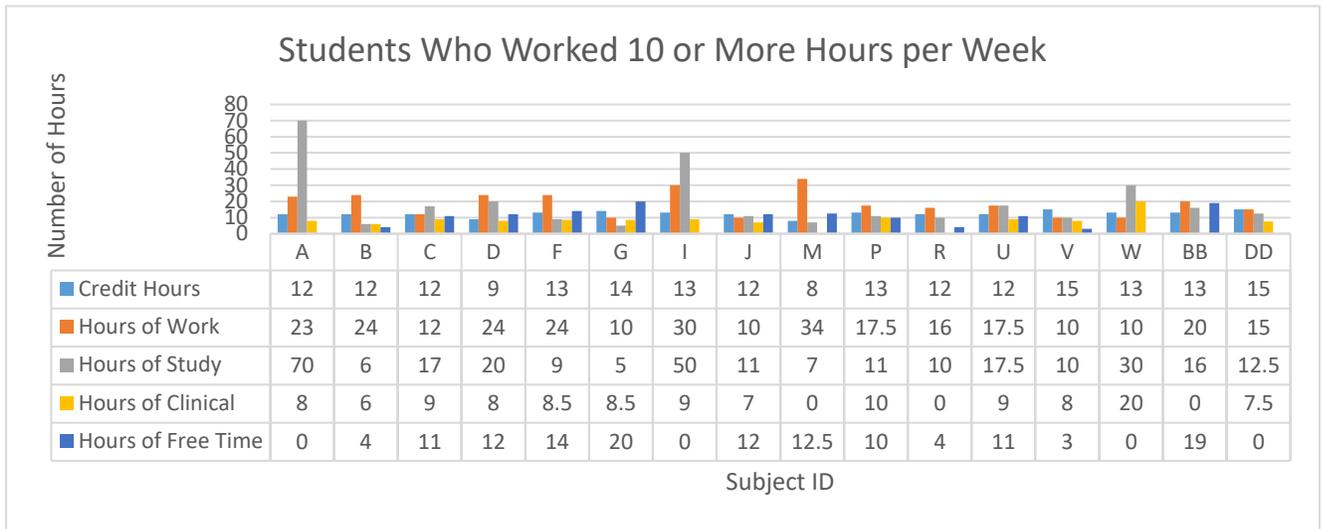
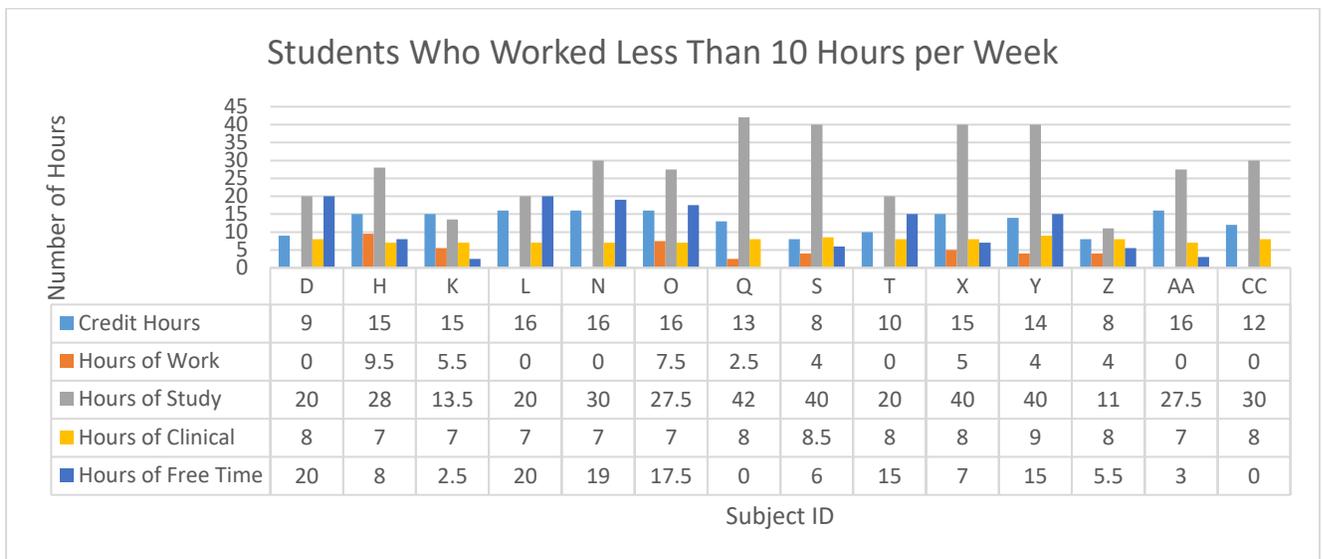


Figure 2, *Academic Background of Control Group*



After comparing the background knowledge of each participant, the researchers compared the student-reported results of working more than 10 weekly hours in the categories of GPA, perceived academic success, time management skills, and stress levels of the control and test groups. On average, the test group reported slightly lower GPA, perceived academic success, time management skills, and stress levels (see Figures 3 and 4). These results are discussed in greater detail below.

Figure 3, *Self-Reported Results of Test Group*

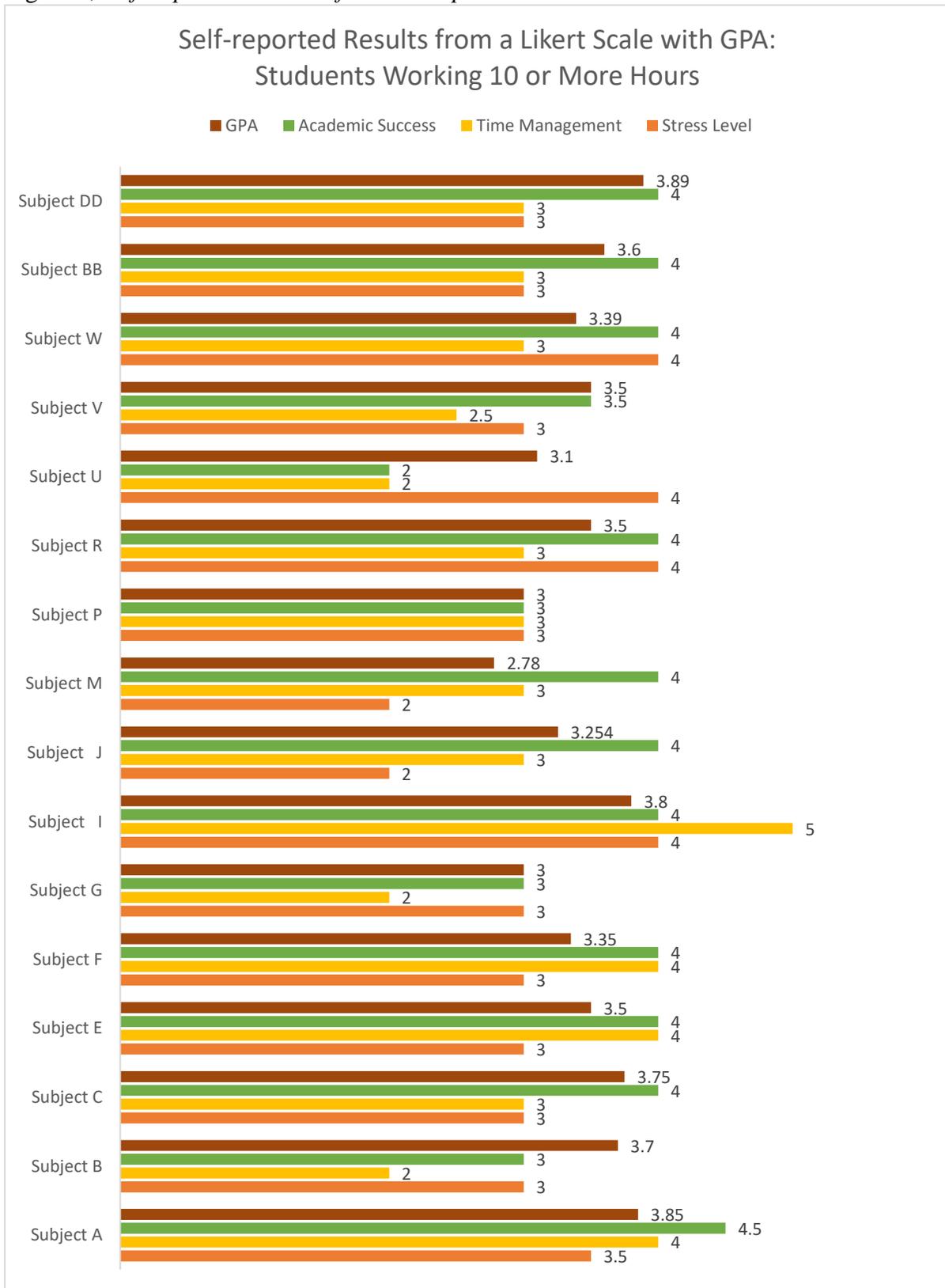
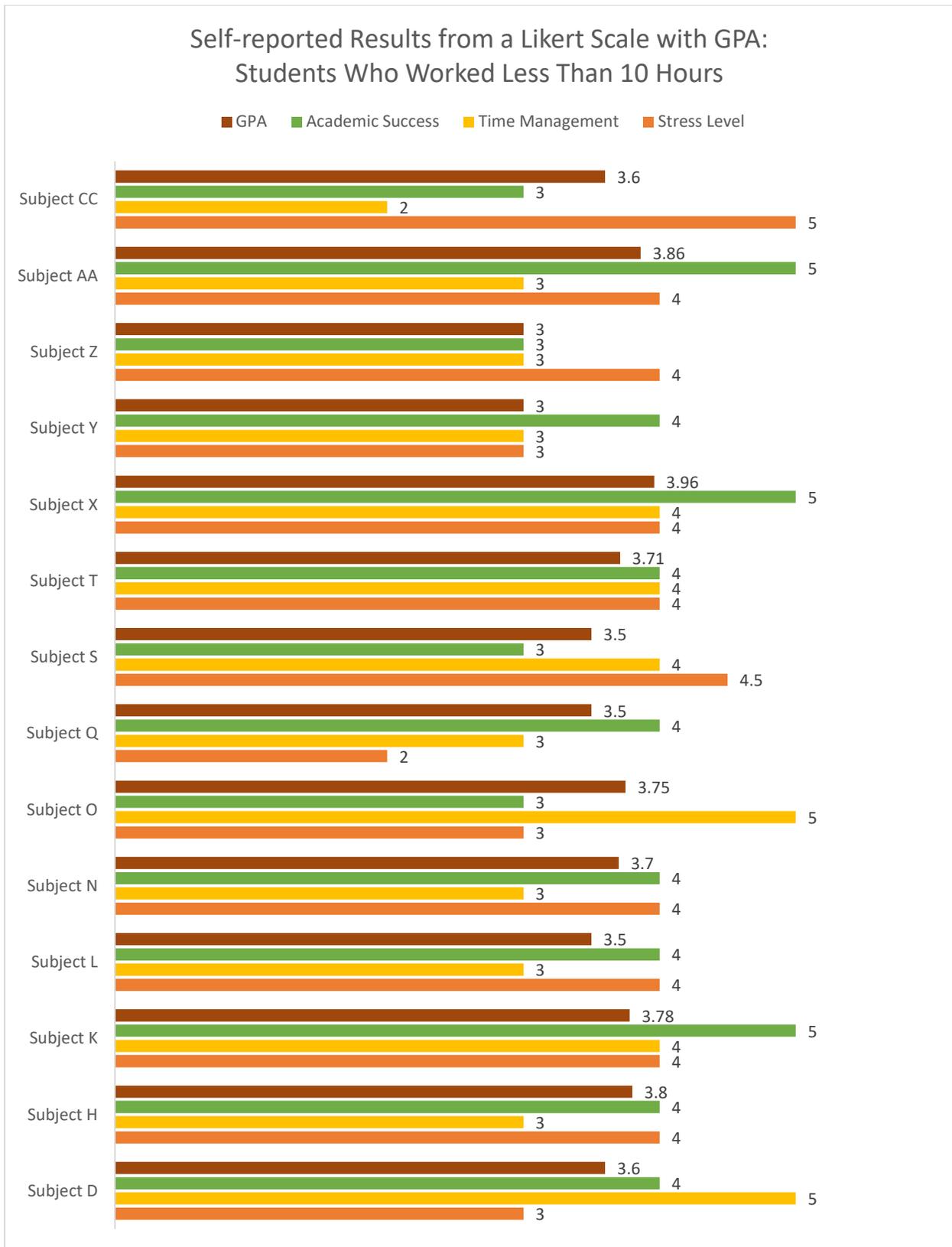


Figure 4, *Self-reported Results of Control Group*



When interpreting these data, it is important to note a few things. First, the maximum possible GPA report is four, even though it is listed on a graph that goes from one to five. The number in the figure states the exact GPA as reported by the student. This number is included in the figures to provide a concrete piece of information about academic performance to be closely compared with the Likert scale results in the rest of the graph, but it was not reported on a Likert scale. Second, a high or low score has different connotations depending on the category. For GPA, perceived academic success, and time management skills, a higher score is indicative of a positive result. In contrast, a higher score in the area of stress level indicates a negative result. Lastly, the results are entirely based on student reported results, and are thus highly subjective and relative.

As can be seen in these figures, working more than 10 hours per week seemed to influence the self-reported academic success and stress levels of participants in varied patterns. Students who worked 10 or more weekly hours reported an average GPA of 3.435 while the control group reported that of 3.590. The difference of 0.155 is statistically significant and indicated that the control group as a whole achieved a higher GPA than did the students working 10 or more weekly hours. Moreover, the test group reported an average of 3.688 out of five in the area of perceived academic success, which was again lower than that of the control group who reported an average of 3.929. The difference of 0.241 is significant and indicated that students who worked less than 10 hours per week generally reported more positive perceptions of academic success.

This statistic may be slightly misleading due to the subjectivity concerning the criteria for “academic success” as it differs from student to student. This subjectivity may account for inconsistencies in the comparison of reported GPA and success perception between groups, with

GPA representing a much smaller gap. Hence, the direct effect of working on actual academic success may not have been quite as large as was suggested by the significant differences in the perception of academic success. However, coupled with the GPA averages which resulted in a smaller difference, there remained a clear and statistically significant indicator that working more than 10 hours per week had a negative impact on the academic performance of the participants.

In the area of time management, students who worked more than 10 hours per week indicated an average score of 3.094 versus the control group who reported an average of 3.500. The difference of 0.406 was a statistically significant finding, and appeared to indicate that students who worked less than 10 hours had better time management skills. However, it could also indicate that these students simply have more time during the week to complete tasks due to the fact that they are not spending much less time working. Students involved in 10 or more weekly hours of term-time employment, in contrast, may be faced with a sparse amount of time and thus experience more difficulty keeping up with a greater volume of tasks. Therefore, it is possible to speculate that students from the test group reported lower time management skills simply because they have more to manage, and the lower scores may be indicative of stronger time pressure rather than lesser skills. Regardless of what caused the low self-reported scores in time management in the test group, it was clear from the data that students who worked more than 10 hours per week experienced more difficulty with having adequate amounts of time to complete their daily tasks, which the researchers expected, and further predicted would heighten the students' stress levels.

Contrary to these expectations, the differences in reported stress levels provided surprising results. The test group reported an average stress level of 3.156 on a scale of one to

five where one is the least stressed and five is the most stressed. The control group reported an average stress level of 3.750 which indicated a difference of 0.594. This statistic is surprising in that the control group actually reported significantly higher stress levels than that of the test group—the exact opposite of what was expected. Given the previous results concerning academic success and time management and the results of previous studies, it was expected that the control group would experience less stress than the test group, yet this was not the case.

The unexpected stress level results could be due to a number of factors. First, as mentioned above, the control group students might not actually possess the necessary time management skills required to successfully maintain the stressful schedule. Their time management skills may actually be lower than that of their test group counterparts, making it more stressful for these students to cope with academic demands and time pressures even though they have more time to do so. Second, the unexpected results could be related to the perspective focus of each student. For example, students who engaged in very few work hours during the week may have little else to focus on besides schoolwork. Hence, they may begin to feel a large amount of pressure to do well academically and perhaps even experience burnout or procrastination tendencies, whereas a student who breaks up study hours with work hours is able to vary their focus from one task to another which may actually help reduce stress. Third, having an adequate amount of free time does not guarantee that students will use that time for schoolwork. Some control group students may not regard time pressures until it is too late, thus leading to procrastination and a lack of completion, ultimately leading to higher stress even in the presence of adequate free time. There are many other possible explanations for the unexpected results, but unfortunately, the results of this study provided no definite explanation for the discrepancy between the expectations and the data. The possible explanations presented

within this section are simply speculations, and more research is needed to test the ideas and establish concrete datasets (for a numerical representation of the quantitative data averages from this study, see Table 1 below).

Table 1, *Comparison of Quantitative Averages between Test and Control Groups*

	<b>Averages of Test Group Scores</b>	<b>Averages of Control Group Scores</b>	<b>Differences in Averages</b>
<b>GPA</b>	3.435	3.590	0.155
<b>Academic Success</b>	3.688	3.929	0.241
<b>Time Management Skills</b>	3.094	3.500	0.406
<b>Stress Level</b>	3.156	3.750	0.594

**Qualitative data.** Qualitative data were gathered through open-ended questions on the surveys and through interviews (as seen in Appendices B and C, respectively). As briefly mentioned above, different students defined academic success differently. During the interview process, one student reported being content with all B's whereas another stated that they would be highly unsatisfied even one B, especially if they had been studying hard. Some reported only grades as a factor while others mentioned completion of assignments and tests as a big success, and still others stated that simply achieving a passing final grade in all classes constituted success. Most students who were interviewed, however, seemed to agree that tests scores were one of the biggest indicators of whether or not they were academically successful.

One student, Subject A, explained his/her stress levels, stating that average weeks produced a stress level of three out of five, while test weeks created maximum stress levels and resulted in a score of five out of five. Yet, on the survey, this student reported only a 3.5 out of five for an average. Therefore, when calculating the averages for student stress levels, the differences between test weeks and non-test weeks should have been included to provide more

accurate results. This same student later reported during an interview, “Nursing tests are legitimately the most stressful thing I have ever endured.”

All students who were interviewed indicated that studying for tests was how they spent a large portion of their time. However, of the five students interviewed, the three from the test group—Subjects A, B, and M—also indicated that working took up a large portion of their time. Despite these similarities, many inconsistencies arose when comparing the academic performance and stress levels of these five students. For instance, Subject M reported working 24 hours per week while still maintaining the low stress level of 2. This student also reported having a low GPA and yet a high perception of academic success. The student stated, “Based on how hard I have had to work to get here, I would say I have been pretty successful.” In contrast, Subject B also reported a workload of 24 weekly hours but claimed average stress levels of 3, a high GPA of 3.7, and yet reported a numerically low perception of academic success, stating a desire to retake some classes for an A- or higher.

Therefore, even though these two students worked the same amount of hours—both significantly over 10 per week—they were vastly different in their reported academic success and stress levels. Meanwhile, Subject K, who reported working only 5 hours per week, stated that studying and doing nursing paperwork were the two main stressors in her life and the things that took up the most time. This student also reported a stress level of 4, despite a low number of working hours, along with efficient time management, and perfect academic success, which would be expected given the amount of time allocated to studying. Subject S, who reported working an average of 4 hours per week, also reported extremely high stress levels, stating “I have more to do than I have time allotted.” Like Subject K, this student also indicated having a high GPA and relatively adequate time management skills, despite a lack of time. During the

interview, this student specified, “I am still able to get everything done, just not at the quality I wish it was.” Subjects A and B from the test group and Subject K and S from the control group all consistently reported feelings of constantly being behind, fatigued, and stressed, although their numerical answers did not consistently match their verbal explanations and statements. Subject M from the test group was unlike the other four students interviewed. He was one of only five males in the sample, which may have been a factor in his report of low stress and high perceived success, despite relatively low achievement in comparison to the other students. Regardless, the varied, inconsistent, and unpredictable qualitative results from these five students indicated that academic performance and stress were influenced by a number of factors aside from work hours, many of which appeared to be more significant and indicative, including personality, personal perspective and outlook, aspects of life outside of school, and many others.

### **Conclusions**

The purpose of the current study was to determine the effects of term-time employment on the academic performance and stress levels of upper division nursing students at Southern Adventist University. The results of the study made it clear that there are statistically significant negative impacts concerning GPA and perceptions of academic success. The survey results (see Figures 3 and 4) indicated slightly more positive scores among the students who worked less than 10 hours per week (control group) in the areas of GPA, perceived academic success, and time management skills, as hypothesized by the researchers. However, no concrete conclusions could be drawn concerning stress levels. There was a significant difference between the test and control groups in the area of stress levels, but it was the control group—not the test group, as had been predicted—who experienced markedly high levels of stress. Many speculations were

provided in the quantitative data analysis section above, although the time allotment, resources, and parameters of this study did not allow for further testing of these speculations.

In analyzing the qualitative data that were gathered, some of the numerical inconsistencies could be explained to a certain extent, such as the continual fluctuation of a particular student's perception of success and stress levels depending on the week. Yet, even in the qualitative data, there was no clear explanation for the differences in stress levels between the students who worked 10 or more hours and those who worked less than 10 hours, except to conclude that there are many different contributing factors.

The results of this study seemed to suggest that there are a large number of variables to be considered, some of which may be more significant and indicative than the number of weekly work hours. Possible other variables could include the personality of the student, the student's personal tendencies toward perfectionism, and other areas of the student's life. On a more quantitative level, the specific number of work hours, the time of day of working hours, and the type of employment may also have played a part. Some other contributing factors could possibly include the general academic capabilities of one group over another and each student's reason for seeking employment. Due to the lack of consistent patterns or definitive data, a conclusive causal relationship could not reasonably be drawn between weekly hours of work and nursing students' academic success and stress levels.

### **Limitations**

One of the biggest limitations of this study was that it was conducted on only one campus with a relatively small group of only 30 nursing students, and the results were therefore not generalizable for other non-nursing students on the campus of SAU or students on other campuses. Furthermore, all results were self-reported by students, thus leaving room for human

error and the possibility of inaccurate data that could not reasonably be verified. Additionally, the response rate for this study was low. Roughly 80-100 students were asked to participate, but only 30 took the survey (30-60% of the population) and only five of the 30 (16% of participants and only 5% of the overall population) chose to participate in the interview.

Another limitation of the data gathering and analysis was the use of averages to compare the control and test groups. These numbers can be misleading in the event of outliers, which were present in the current study, although small in number and relatively insignificant.

Lastly, some of the biggest limitations of this study were the parameters and resources. Simply having one specific median number (more or less than 10 hours) was not specific enough to make the results of the study conclusive. Furthermore, due to a lack of time and funding, the study was unable to recognize and test the many variables that surfaced throughout the research process. Therefore, the results of the study were extremely limited and inconclusive.

### **Comparison to Previous Research**

The results of this study seemed to relate to previous research. According to Beerkens et al. (2011), the number of hours that students work has grown, often turning into full time employment, or coming very close. This was observed in the current study as many students reported working an average of 16-30 hours per week. The inclination of non-working students to have a higher academic performance than their working peers as studied by Manthei and Gilmore (2005) was evidenced partially in the current study through the Likert scores concerning GPA, perceived academic success, and time management skills. The small—though statistically significant—negative impacts which were noted in these areas appeared to match the results of more recent studies, as well (Barber & Levitan, 2015; Beerkens et al., 2011; Wenz & Yu, 2010). Furthermore, as noted in the analysis and conclusion sections, many more factors appeared to

play a role in the results, such as the specific number of hours (Rochford et al., 2009; Wenz & Yu, 2010), the type of employment (Yanbarisova, 2015), and the reasons for being employed (Manthei & Gilmore, 2005).

According to both previous research and the current study, term-time employment has the potential to be useful to students in helping them develop work ethic and time management skills as well as achieving early integration into the workforce (Manthei & Gilmore, 2005; Rochford et al., 2009), as long as the work hours are kept relatively small in number (Beerkens et al., 2011; Wenz & Yu, 2010). However, unlike some previous studies such as Barber and Levitan (2015) and Manthei and Gilmore (2005), the researchers of the current study did not find any consistent indicators that hours of work actually play a large role in the success or stress of the students.

### **Recommendations for Action**

For future action, the researchers suggest further and more in-depth study on this topic. The parameters of this study did not explore the specific number of hours, particularly concerning how many can be positive and how many constitute an overload. Furthermore, future research should also attempt to determine the specific positive results of the appropriate amount term-time employment hours, along with the negative results that follow an overload. Additionally, further exploration is needed to determine the significance of the types of jobs and reasons for employment in correlation with student academic performance and stress levels, along with personal factors such as individual students' personalities, tendencies, and perspectives.

Specifically, the implications of the current study are significant for nursing majors at Southern Adventist University, as well as nursing professors and university administrators. The results of the current study, along with the results of previous research, indicated that working

too many hours has a high likelihood of negatively impacting the academic performance of students, regardless of other variables. Hence, students and faculty should take this impact into consideration when deciding to work or recommend that students work.

Furthermore, this study showed that all students experienced a lot of stress at some point. Therefore, it is important for students and faculty to determine the causes of this stress and remediate wherever possible. When deciding whether or not to engage in term-time employment, nursing students at SAU need to consider their current stress levels, academic capabilities, and time management skills. If the student is already employed, he or she may need to consider cutting back on hours to reduce excess stress as necessary. Regarding the school faculty, the researchers of this study suggest recommending to nursing students that they not work an overabundance of hours and that they work within their field of study whenever possible. University administrators should also consider implementing specific school policies concerning how many work hours the students may engage in. In this way, the nursing students—as well as students in other majors—may still enjoy the benefits of developing work ethic and time management skills, along with keeping stress levels to a minimum as far as possible.

The goal of this research was to determine the effects of term-time employment on nursing students. Though relatively small, the negative impacts on student success were significant and should be heeded. Moreover, while the results of this study were inconclusive concerning stress levels and contained gaps regarding the number of hours and other variables, they still strongly indicated that the number of weekly working hours may be one of the biggest stressors and time commitments for university students. Therefore, while working can be beneficial to students, the number of weekly hours should be limited—either by school policies,

professor recommendations, or the decisions of informed individual students—in order to maximize the academic performance and minimize the stress of nursing students at SAU.

## Appendix A

**Study Consent Form**

You are being asked to take part in a research study of how college nursing students with jobs rate their personal stress levels and academic success. We are asking you to take part because you are an upper division nursing student. Please read this form carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to take part in the study.

**What the study is about:** The purpose of this study is to determine how working affects the self-reported stress levels and academic success of nursing students.

**What we will ask you to do:** If you agree to be in this study, we will ask you to fill out a brief survey and/or conduct an interview with you. The interview will include questions about your job, your classes, your time management skills, and your levels of stress and academic success. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete, and the interview will take no longer than 30 minutes. With your permission, we would also like to tape-record the interview.

**Risks:**

There is the risk that you may find some of the questions about your classes, academic job conditions to be sensitive. If at any point you feel uncomfortable with a question, please feel free to skip it. You are not required to provide an answer.

**Your answers will be confidential:** The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we make public, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be kept in a locked file; only the researchers will have access to the records. If we tape-record the interview, we will destroy the tape after it has been transcribed, which we anticipate will be within two months of its taping.

**Taking part is voluntary:** Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer. If you decide to take part, you are free to withdraw at any time.

**If you have questions:** Please ask the researchers.

**Statement of Consent:** I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I asked. I consent to take part in the study.

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having the interview tape-recorded.

Your Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person obtaining consent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Printed name of person obtaining consent \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix B

Subject # \_\_\_\_\_ Level of Nursing: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How many credit hours are you enrolled in? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Do you have a job? \_\_\_\_\_
3. If yes to question 2, how many hours per week do you work? \_\_\_\_\_
4. How many hours of studying do you normally do per week? \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many hours of studying do you normally do per day? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many clinical hours do you do in an average week? \_\_\_\_\_
7. How much free time do you have in an average week? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Rate your stress level during an average week, 1 being the least stressed and 5 being the most stressed

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Please use the following space to explain why you chose the number you did.

9. What is your current GPA? \*Note: this information is confidential, and your name will not appear in the study at any time\* \_\_\_\_\_

10. Rate your time management skills, 1 being the least efficient and 5 the most efficient

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Please use the following space to explain why you chose the number you did. Please include specific examples of how you manage your time and what makes those choices excellent or poor.

11. What does academic success mean to you? (Good GPA, passing grades, scholarship attainment, etc.) Please briefly explain why you chose your answer(s)/why those things are important to success.

12. Please rate your perception of your academic success, 1 being unsuccessful and 5 being very successful, according to your own specifications in the previous question.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

Please use the following space to explain why you chose the number you did.

## Appendix C

## Unstructured Interview Guide

\*Note: Additional questions may be added during the interview as the researchers see need to probe further based on subject responses. Some questions may also be omitted depending on time limits. The order of the questions may also change as the researchers see fit during each interview. Written notes and audio recordings will be taken during each interview. Names will not be used. The test subjects will be assigned a number that will help match their survey answers with the interview.\*

Subject Number (assigned by researchers): \_\_\_\_\_

1. What are some of your worst stressors and what makes them stressful?
2. What do you think might help reduce your stress levels?
3. What do you spend most of your time doing during an average week?
4. What do you wish you had more time to do during the week?
5. What does academic success mean to you? (Good GPA, passing grades, scholarship attainment, etc.) Please explain why you chose your answer(s).
6. Do you feel that you have sufficient time during the week to study, sleep, socialize, etc.? Why or why not?
7. What do you wish that you had more time to do during the week? Why?
8. How does the time you have during the week relate to your stress levels (as reported on the survey)? Your academic success? How/Why?
9. In what ways do you think that balancing a job, clinical, and classes affect your stress levels and academic success? How/why?

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