



Results-masked-review article

Thriving at school and succeeding at work? A demands-resources view of spillover processes in working students

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that at least forty percent of students enrolled in college full-time also hold part-time employment, this sector of the workforce has been severely understudied in organizational research. Although there have been efforts to explore how work demands and resources spillover to influence academic outcomes, particularly little attention has been paid to the extent to which school experiences affect work outcomes. Accordingly, little is known about how demands and resources within the work- and school-domains individually and jointly predict work-related well-being and performance. In light of this gap in our understanding, we build from the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and Work-Home Resources (WH-R; ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012) models to develop and test hypotheses regarding within- and cross-domain relations among demands, resources, and their interaction in the prediction of work outcomes in a sample of part-time working students ($N = 188$). Utilizing a longitudinal research design with evaluations of both student well-being and supervisor ratings of work performance, we observed a larger role for within-domain (i.e., work) demands and resources in the prediction of work outcomes. As such, our work adds insight into the experiences of students who are working part-time.

Since at least the 1950s, social scientists have argued that phenomenological experiences can be separated into alternative life domains (e.g., Lewin, 1951), and that internal characteristics and situational forces drive behavior in different domains of life (e.g., Mischel, 1968; Mischel & Shoda, 1995). In the organizational sciences, this interest has manifested in the investigation of mechanisms linking work and non-work domains (see Edwards & Rothbard, 2000, for a review), with a predominant emphasis on within- and cross-domain relations between work and family (see Amstad, Meier, Fasel, Elfering, & Semmer, 2011, for a meta-analytic review). This view of employee life, in which demands and resources from the work and home domains engender outcomes both within their domain of origin and across the work/non-work boundary (ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012; see Ashforth, Kreiner, & Fugate, 2000), allows for the complex consideration of alternative predictors of well-being and performance in work and non-work domains. However, extant investigations have focused largely on full-time working adults striving to balance work and family demands (Grzywacz & Carlson, 2007), with much less attention given to salient alternative domains of life in non-full-time working populations, such as students attempting to balance work and school demands (Cheng & McCarthy, 2013).

Importantly, applied psychology researchers have generated limited knowledge of how within- and cross-domain demands and resources simultaneously contribute to the work well-being and performance of students who work, despite evidence that this sizable segment of the workforce perceive inter-role conflict between their work and school life that leaves them tired and fatigued

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(Park & Sprung, 2015), dissatisfied (Cheng & McCarthy, 2013), and struggling to maintain their academic performance (Butler, 2007; Markel & Frone, 1998). As such, organizations have little empirical work to draw on in determining effective strategies to manage and maintain the occupational health and performance of students who work, while educators remain unsure how best to support students who work while enrolled in school. This lack of research attention is particularly troubling when factoring in the large number of college students who work. In the United States alone, Kena et al. (2016) estimate that over 40% of full-time students work while in college. Similar rates of student employment have been observed in other countries. For example, estimated rates of term-time employment were above 40% in over half of the 29 European countries participating in the Eurostudent project (Eurostudent, 2015), a multinational initiative to gather data on social dimensions underlying student experiences in higher education. Accordingly, it is critical to advance understanding of the processes through which demands and resources spillover from school-to-work life so that researchers and practitioners can maximize the work-related well-being and success of students who work.

As such, the primary goal of the current study is to examine how within- and cross-domain demands and resources influence student well-being and performance at work. In doing so, we offer three significant contributions to research at the work/school interface. First, while more general models of the work/non-work interface typically emphasize bidirectional spillover processes (e.g. Frone, Russell, & Cooper, 1992; Netemeyer, Boles, & McMurrian, 1996), there has been a predominant focus on the cross-domain transmission of demands and resources from work-to-school in existing research at the work/school interface (e.g., Barling, Rogers, & Kelloway, 1995; Butler, 2007; Creed, French, & Hood, 2015; Hammes & Haller, 1983; Markel & Frone, 1998; Nagengast, Marsh, Chiorri, & Hau, 2014; Steinberg, Greenberger, Garduque, & McAuliffe, 1982; Taylor, Lokes, Gagnon, Kwan, & Koestner, 2012; Wang, Kong, Shan, & Vong, 2010). We instead focus our investigation on the transmission of demands and resources from *school-to-work* to address this gap in the literature, marking the first attempt, to our knowledge, to investigate how school demands and resources affect work outcomes.

Second, when considering the range of non-academic outcomes that have been explored in samples of students who work, there have been efforts to model the influence of part-time work experiences on psychological well-being (Broadbridge & Swanson, 2005). However, very little attention has been given to determinants of the work performance of students who work (cf. McNall & Michel, 2011). To address this limitation, we utilize both self-reports of well-being and supervisor ratings of task performance in the current investigation in an effort to expand the criterion space surrounding spillover between school and work life.

Third, we integrate two theoretical perspectives that frame our efforts to evaluate the within- and cross-domain influences of work and school demands and resources on this expanded range of work outcomes. The first—the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001)—represents the dominant approach for evaluating the within-domain contributions of job demands and resources to work outcomes. The second—the Work-Home Resources model (WH-R; ten Brummelhuis & Bakker, 2012)—extends the logic of the JD-R to incorporate how demands and resources from work *and* non-work sources exhibit cross-domain effects. In applying the tenets of these models to the work/school interface, we aim to extend the theoretical underpinnings of research on spillover processes to encompass both within-domain (i.e., work) and cross-domain (i.e., school) demands and resources as predictors of work outcomes. This more integrated approach to demands and resources advances the literature beyond the typical approach of placing primary emphasis on cross-domain effects when analyzing spillover processes at the work/school interface (e.g., Butler, 2007).

1. Extant research at the work/school interface

When considering the long-standing recognition that employees frequently make role transitions between work and non-work domains of life (Ashforth et al., 2000) and that demands and resources can span the work/non-work boundary (Voydanoff, 2005), it is surprising that there have been no studies in which the cross-domain effects of school demands and resources on work outcomes have been modeled. Instead, extant research on the work/school interface has largely emphasized how part-time work demands impede students' academic performance (e.g., Bachman, Safron, Sy, & Schulenberg, 2003; Barling et al., 1995; Markel & Frone, 1998; Nagengast et al., 2014; Steinberg et al., 1982). However, this negative view of part-time work has been far from equivocal. Indeed, part-time work has been argued to yield negative and positive spillover effects to the school domain (Broadbridge & Swanson, 2005), with evidence to suggest that students who work part-time have the chance to expand their professional and social support networks (Hammes & Haller, 1983; Wang et al., 2010), develop leadership skills (Salisbury, Pascarella, Padgett, & Blaich, 2012), and gain practical knowledge that may be beneficial in their careers (Steinberg et al., 1982). Building on this potential for both positive and negative spillover at the work/school interface, Wang et al. (2010) observed that the quality of part-time work had important implications for the nature and magnitude of relationships between work experiences and academic performance outcomes. Subsequent researchers have built on this observation. For example, Taylor et al. (2012) found that weekly work hours were related to elevated dropout intentions, but that students who were working part-time and had supportive managers actually exhibited *lower* dropout intentions.

Although these investigations have effectively integrated the widely recognized potential for negative and positive spillover effects (e.g., Grzywacz & Marks, 2000) into research at the work/school interface, they have been hampered by a tendency to focus only on cross-domain effects in the work-to-school direction, with no consideration of the potential transmission of mutually draining, mutually enriching, or off-setting demands and resources from school-to-work. This means that an incomplete view exists of the transmission of demands and resources at the work/school interface. For instance, Butler (2007) proposed a model of work-school conflict and work-school facilitation that forms the foundation of contemporary efforts to explore interconnections between work and school life (e.g., Cheng & McCarthy, 2013; Creed et al., 2015; McNall & Michel, 2011; Olson, 2014; Park & Sprung, 2013; Park & Sprung, 2015; Taylor et al., 2012). In this model, some aspects of part-time work are argued to be depleting, while other

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