



# COMBINING PART-TIME STUDY & EMPLOYMENT: MOTIVATORS & IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL LIVES

DANIELLE BREEZE 1507865 DR. ANNETTE JORGENSEN

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to explore motivators and impact studying part-time whilst working full-time has on individuals lives in Ireland. The information was conducted using a qualitative research method and data collected through semi-structured interviews to develop themes. The results confirmed career progression as the main motivation to study part-time, along with issues students face. Additionally, emotional influence on lives was noted, as was the overall positive experience the sample experienced. Competition between students in Ireland was made known to the researcher. This is an area that needs to be developed as evidence suggests that certain disciplines share this attitude of competition over others.

## INTRODUCTION

In Ireland, it is recorded that there are many institutions providing part-time courses to benefit the working population, more than before. An increase in part-time study is also evident globally from the United States, the United Kingdom to Australia. This study intends to investigate motivators to study part-time and the physical and emotional impact it has on individuals lives in Ireland. Similarities in motivators internationally were related to career progression and personal development. Problems encountered were coping with balancing life and time. Financial implications of studying in the United States and Australia was the main reason for failure. Support was emphasised as an important requirement to part-time students, both at home and work. As a result, it was important to not only analyse current literature, but to investigate these topics from an Irish perspective. Previous literature was useful to identify discrepancies that had not been studied in detail. Therefore, the research focused on motivators in Ireland and what impact Irish society has on part-time students, their thoughts on support and the emotional impact experienced.



## METHODOLOGY

This project benefited with the use of **Qualitative Research Methods**, through semi-structured interviews to collect data..

Interviews were recorded with participant consent by a digital voice recorder. Interviews were then transcribed verbatim and pseudonyms were used to provide **Confidentiality** for the interviewee's. NVivo10 was used to aid and construct data analysis.

The participants consisted of five males and one female, all of which have experience studying part-time while in full-time employment. These individuals were accessed through **Snowball Sampling**.

This research was explored through **Thematic Analysis** to decipher information independently in a subjective, focused manner to the topic and ultimately extracting common themes.

## RESULTS

Findings were obtained using participant accounts with themes.

1. **Personal & Professional Motivators.** Why study part-time?
2. **Barriers of Part-Time Study.** Challenges encountered.
3. **Support Systems.** How part-time students receive support.
4. **Emotional Impact relating to Part-Time Study.** Positive and negative feelings that impact part-time students and families.
5. **Outcome & Experience of Part-Time Study.** An overall positive experience was portrayed by the participants.
6. **Nature of Competition in Irish Society.** Competition was evident between part-time students and related to the current state of Irish economic society.

## DISCUSSION

This research sought to discover what motivates Irish people to enrol in further education and the feelings and emotions displayed by participants relating to impact on daily life and support systems. The conclusion represented the main motivator as career progression. Although previous literature describes the impacts negatively effecting students performance, for example, financial reasons, results showed that ambitions for better future prospects took precedence over the sacrifices made by Irish students. The findings of this research could be used to examine the competitive environment unveiled amongst part-time students in Ireland. The strength of the research lies in the influence individuals feelings and emotions have on attitude and the necessary requirement of employer support.

## REFERENCES

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