



MASTER THESIS

**HOW INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS CAN
MANAGE STUDIES AND WORK TOGETHER:
UNDER WHICH CONDITIONS ONLINE LABOUR
PLATFORMS MAY IMPROVE OR HINDER
STUDENTS' LIFE.**

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Summary

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Introduction

In the last years a rising number of people choose to study at a university abroad (Healey, 2008; Russell, Rosenthal, & Thomson, 2010). Around 3.3 million students over the last 3 years, 2016-19, studied abroad (European Commission report), a number that according to the European Commission will grow in the next years (2021-2027). The allocation of over € 30 bln by the ERASMUS+ education program will allow up to 12 million people to have a learning experience abroad (Erasmus+ Annual Report overview factsheets).

In this context a country that attracts more and more international students is the Netherlands which, with 85,955 international students enrolled during 2018-19, has become a central reference point in the academic field at European level (NUFFIC, 2019). A number that is 11.5% of the total of the enrolled students at universities and that in the previous year was just 10.5%.

These international students, when arrive in a new context, may experience a "cultural shock" when the host university's educational method, behaviours and expectations are different from those of the student culture (Rienties, Tempelaar, 2012). Students need to integrate into this new university environment and Baker and Siryk (1999) identified four concepts in academic integration: academic-, social-, personal- & emotional adjustment that lead the students to fit in the new study context.

It is difficult attending education at a foreign university, fit into new classes and face study methods different than ones in their home universities. Several studies have addressed this important topic (Tinto 1998, Baker and Siryk 1999; Russell et al. 2010; Tempelaar, Rienties, & Gijssels, 2007; Rienties, Tempelaar, 2012), highlighting the problems that these students have encountered.

Besides adjusting to a new educational environment, foreign students also may want (or have) to work for generating an income in different labour market (compared to their home country) with its own norms and rules. Rienties et al., (2011) found that International students are less likely to work beside their studies on the contrary of local students that are more likely to become member of a student fraternity and work part-time. Moreover, different authors (Van Walsum, 2011; De Lange, Oomes, Gons & Spanikova, 2019) found that there are also barriers as language ability, cultural differences, lack of 'soft skills' and stereotyping by employers that pose a challenge to international students/workers to obtain work in the Netherlands.

Taking into account these factors we focus on the online Labour platforms (OLPs) as a "tool" for international students to reconcile study and work because, primarily reduce barriers as language, stereotyping and lack of soft skills that students faced when they seek jobs in local labor markets but they also offer the autonomy/flexibility to balance study- and work-life.

Changing the traditional concept of worker, platforms allowed the workers to be directly connected with the consumer, without going through third parties (Frenken et al., 2018). These workers recognize the autonomy over the when, where and how long they worked and therefore a positive aspect of online labor platforms (Goods, Veen and Barratt, 2019).

The platforms enter the market as an intermediary rather than as direct producers of services. In fact, their function is to organize the market connecting supply and demand (Frenken et al., 2018) and they use workers to carry out activities at the local level (i.e. food delivery, transport), customers pay for that services and organizations maintaining a percentage of the exchange (De Stefano, 2016).

However past researchers also found negative aspects of the platforms that do not guarantee autonomy for workers who are tied to the economic realities, have low levels of wages and can also adversely affect the health of workers who have faced a high level of stress (Kenney & Zysman, 2016; Broughton et al., 2018; Wood, Lehdonvirta, & Graham, 2018; Goods, Veen and Barratt, 2019).

In this context arise this research; as we said above some international students, that faced with different adaptation problems, would like or need to work during their study path. The online labor platforms help the students to avoid the local labor barriers and given to them the possibility to be hired to complete “hyper-flexible tasks” (Friedman, 2014). However, the characteristic of the platform may influence negatively these students because, according to the previous studies, they could be tied to working hours and also without being protected by the platforms that exploit them.

Considering the influence of the new university environment, the local labor barriers and the positive and negative aspects related to the platforms the aim of this study is investigate how these students/workers, through the OLPs, can balance the study- and work-life and understand if platforms actually could improve or make things worse for a student who is living abroad. Hence the research question:

How International Students can balance study- and work-life together: Under which conditions online labour platforms may improve or hinder students' life?

To respond at this research question, we draw upon qualitative interviews with students-workers that work with different types of online labor platforms: we choose Uber Eats and Deliveroo because are major players in the growth of the "gig economy" and food delivery (Kässi & Lehdonvirta, 2018; Katz & Krueger, 2019) and for the presence of a large number of students/workers. Moreover, due the COVID-19 crisis we focused also on other types of online virtual labor platforms to extend the type of respondents and also to have the possibility to analyse safely these platforms from the inside through an ethnographic account.

By answering the research question this study gives a focus on a student/worker point of view regarding the interaction of the study-work life and although the presence of countless publications regarding labour platforms, this aspect has not yet been analysed in any of these previous studies.

In a practical way this study could help also needy students who have difficulty finding work in a foreign country by giving an alternative point of view on the functioning of online labor platforms in balancing study and work. This paper is structured as follows. In the next section a literature review will be carried out to define the variables at stake and highlight the theoretical reference criteria that will be used. This is followed by the outline of the case study methodology. After presenting the results, we conclude with the discussion implications and limitations of this work.

Theoretical background

Adaptation of international students that studying abroad

Studying abroad is an increasingly important topic given the numbers of students involved. Many students face difficulties when they are in a different context. Europe, date a strong linguistic diversity, very different national educational systems and cultural heterogeneity is an exceptional case in order to compare the impact of cultural diversity (Rienties, Tempelaar, 2012).

Tinto (1975, 1998), with his interaction student attrition model, considered that students, before they enter into higher education, have different educational experiences, abilities and skills, values as well as family and community backgrounds. These Individual and social attributes influence the student's integration and results (Rienties, Tempelaar, 2012). In line with this model, Baker and Siryk (1999) detected academic integration to be influential on study performance. They distinguish four concepts in academic integration: academic-, social-, personal- & emotional adjustment.

Academic adjustment refers to a student's ability to cope with motivation, application, performance and satisfaction with the academic environment. *Social adjustment* describes how students relate to studying, friendship, being part of social activities or working in a team. The *personal and emotional adjustment scale* indicates the level of psychological and physical discomfort of the student while adapting to the local academic lifestyle. In a large number of studies their studies Baker and Siryk (1999) found that the four concepts of academic adjustment are positively related with study progress and study performance.

Substantial cultural differences exist even within small geographic areas, such as Europe (Tempelaar, Rienties, Giesbers, & Schim van der Loeff, 2012; Joy & Kolb, 2009). In addition, there are differences in the dominant educational formats, and pedagogical models in Europe (Kivinen & Nurmi, 2003). For example, for German students, which have a more traditional approach, that moving to the Netherlands, which has a more student-centred approach to learning in secondary and higher education, may require a different learning style and approach (Rienties, Tempelaar, 2012). Depending on the similarities and differences of cultures, some international students may find it easier to adjust and adapt to the culture of the host institute. Other groups may experience more adaptation issues, which may affect academic performance (Rienties, Tempelaar, 2012)

Russell et al. (2010), in their study, found that factors as homesickness, cultural shocks, or perceived discrimination increased the level of stress of 41% of the international students. Moreover Rienties et al., (2011) found that local students are more likely to become member of a student fraternity or work part-time and that international students (due to Dutch language barriers in that case) are less likely to work beside their studies. The online labor platforms with the own characteristics could mediate this problem.

Work abroad: Difficulties and challenges

Foreign students also may want or have to work to generate an income but in a different labour market compared to their home country. However, working in different countries, with its own norms and rules, could be difficult for students/migrants. Many studies focused on this argument trying to understand which factors influence the possibility to work abroad.

The language forms an obstacle, foreign diplomas could be not recognized and moreover, racism, as well as language and other barriers, block migrants' access to better jobs (Van Walsum, 2011; Van der Raad, 2015). De Lange, Oomes, Gons & Spanikova (2019), in their study in the Netherlands, found that barriers could be classified into different categories: Dutch language ability, cultural differences and lack of 'soft skills' appropriate to Dutch culture and stereotyping by employers ('statistical discrimination'). Regarding the language ability the authors conducted interviews with migrants and representatives of companies confirming that employer expectations about language is the major barrier to the integration. Maliepaard, Witkamp & Jennissen (2017) argues that language ability is the most important part of human capital that contributes to successful integration.

The second barrier highlighted by De Lange et al. (2019) is about 'cultural differences' or lack of 'soft skills': employers say that sometimes it is difficult to work with migrants due to their work culture, different than Dutch one. Soft skills examples are: ability to work independently, to take initiative, speak up, feel/show responsibility for your area of work, and the Dutch 'work ethic'.

The lack of soft skills among unemployed migrants was also found in a study based on surveys and interviews conducted with migrants and companies in Rotterdam area (THP, 2015) where, foreign workers, seemed to lack 'flexibility', 'cooperation' and 'creativity'.

Negative stereotypes, the belief about an individual or a group that displays them in a way not normally representative of the real situation, are the last factor that according to De Lange et al. (2019) influence the possibility to work abroad. Foreign workers that have the right profile, and write a substantiated application letter in a time of economic prosperity, have more difficulties in find a job than native applicants.

In their study, Andriessen, Nievers, Faulk & Dagevos (SCP, 2010) found that prejudices about ethnic origins influence the selection of job applicants by Dutch employers: a non-Western ethnic origin (suggested by the name used in the CV) may be reason enough not to become a potentially suitable candidate for a job interview. Some of these employers, to justify the distinction made among job applicants with different ethnic origins, asserted the existence of a 'customer discrimination' (in jobs with customer contact) that influenced them.

International student may want or have to work in a foreign country to generate an income but all these factors influence their possibility to work abroad.

The online labor platforms and gig workers

In this context, given all the facts mentioned above, the online Labour platforms could be a useful means of achieving students' purpose of studying and working. Indeed, digital platforms changed the traditional concept of worker. These, with marketing campaigns, attracts workers with promises of flexibility, autonomy and freedom (Kuhn & Maleki, 2017).

A gig worker is a freelancer that get paid per task and works through platform that produces less long-term jobs because people are hired to complete hyper-flexible tasks (Friedman, 2014). Gig workers operate to complete tasks for a defined and short period of time and often with low commitment with the different organizations (Friedman, 2014; Harvey et al., 2017). Moreover, workers can choose when to work and they can also operate on more than one platform simultaneously (Meijerink, J.G., Keegan, A.E. & Bondarouk, T.V., 2019). These characteristics could be considered fundamental by students who are faced with the difficulties previously shown.

These platforms are called peer-to-peer (a decentralized sharing system on internet) its meanings a local network that works in a way that each of the connected computers has access to common resources like all the others (Garzanti Linguistica, Treccani).

Work agreements are traditionally classified as "subordinate work" or "contract work". Kuhn (2016) categorized the gig work in employment classifications literature as a "hybrid of contingent work types".

Platforms work on digital marketplaces and they enable the exchange goods and services among two or more sides (Frenken et al., 2018). Four basic characteristics are identified from Stewart and Stanford (2017): work schedules are based on customer demand; workers providing some or all capital (i.e. mobile phone or bikes); work is paid at a piece rate; and the work is organized and/or facilitated through platforms.

According to Frenken & Schor, (2017) three main types can be distinguished: there are platforms where second hand items are sold (i.e. Ebay), platforms where you can rent items ("sharing economy"), and platforms that offer personal service, like taxi rides, cleaning jobs and tutoring ("gig economy"). De Stefano (2016), introduces also different variants of gig work: capital platform work, crowd-work and app-work. With the first type you can rent items as the "sharing economy" of Frenken & Schor (2017). Through the second type of digital platforms, crowd-work (i.e. Amazon Mechanical Turk and Fiverr), remotely workers complete tasks, it is virtual work, it does not involve the physical movement of the worker. Regarding App-work (application) workers are used to perform tasks locally (e.g. transport, food-delivery), serve customers who pay for these services and this comport a physical effort, deliveries are made in person, with the organisation retaining a percentage of the exchange (De Stefano, 2016). The differences between these types are that in app-work, an algorithm identifies and offers labour to one person; in the other two types is the customer or requester who decides and selects whose services to pay for (Duggan, J., Sherman, U., Carbery, R., McDonnell, A., 2019).

The function of the platforms is to organize the market made up of various companies which are the direct producers of goods and services. This technology enters the market as an intermediary rather than as direct producers of services. (Frenken et al., 2018).

There were a lot of discourse around work in the gig economy; Friedman (2014) and Stewart & Stanford (2017) focused on the autonomy and flexibility provided to workers. Moreover, they have criticised the platform because lower costs and erode employment standards and labour regulation.

indeed unions, which try to protect precarious workers, perceive platforms as illegitimate and governments fight with platforms that don't enforce government regulations and the tax obligations (Frenken et al., 2017). Yet, while governments and unions are critical, the public at large seems to consider platforms as legitimate, as witnessed by their growing popularity among consumers (Frenken et al., 2018).

Goods, Veen and Barratt (2019) found in their research that platforms are viewed positively by workers for autonomy compared to when, where and for how long you can work and therefore as a positive aspect of delivery work. From these results it can be seen that the riders considered the ability to choose the time and position of the work as a positive aspect; however, this form of autonomy was limited by economic realities. The job is completely dependent on customer demand and restaurant opening hours, which means that despite the flexibility declared by the platforms, it is largely tied to social preferences and restaurant hours. (Goods, Veen and Barratt, 2019).

Moreover, platforms determine price and wage that can be raise or decreased by algorithms based on the demand; gig workers earnings are often below the minimum wage and they don't receive social benefits (Kenney & Zysman, 2016). These workers are influenced by the platforms' rating systems: based on the rating given by the clients the "best" workers receive more- and better-paying jobs. Workers can also feel socially isolated given the lack of communication in this type of jobs. All these factors could influence the students/workers emotional well-being, they could perceive higher level of stress, and then influence their health (Broughton et al., 2018; Wood, Lehdonvirta, & Graham, 2018) and university results.

Balance study- and work-life through Online labor platforms

Trying to combine study and work and all the other factors that influence our life is part of the Work-life balance. This is a broad concept and an important area of human resource management that indicates the ability to balance work (career and professional ambition) and private life (family, leisure, fun) in a balanced way; over the years, governments, academic researchers, management and practitioners increased the attention on this argument (De Cieri, Holmes, Abbott, & Pettit, 2005; McPherson & Reed, 2007) because there are evidence that reduction of organizational turnover, the attraction and retention of the workers are factors influenced by their work-life balance (De Cieri et al, 2005).

The "right" amount of work-life balance is a personal decision that differs among the people but different studies highlighted that an imbalance can cause stress, burnout, fatigue and depression (Chapman, 2004; Pocock & Clarke, 2005; Williamson, 2007).

In recent years the literature on the work-life balance has focused on a wider range of groups, including students that combining full-time study with part-time employment; Ang (2008), in her study in New Zealand, found that students had difficult when they have to balance study, work and social activities. These students faced different health problems, missed lectures, stress, and lack of sleep.

The results showed that social activities are the easiest to renounce when students have to balance study and work (Ang T., 2008). Moreover, other studies showed that when the work pressure continuing to growth the students exchange study time with working time and they accepted lower grades, take longer to complete their studies (or they convert to part-time study), failing courses or discontinuing their studies (Hall, 2010; Richardson, Evans & Gbadamosi, 2014).

In this context arise this research with the aim of understand how international students can balance their studies and work, in particular whether platforms can improve or hinder students' life and if they can help them in that purpose. As we have seen above, an international student is influenced by several factors when he is in a new university context and is also forced (or wants) to work.

These students must try to adapt to the new environment and Baker and Siryk (1999) have identified four concepts of academic integration composed by academic-, social-, personal- & emotional adjustment that are positively related with study progress and study performance. Moreover, Rienties et al., (2011) stated that international students are less likely to work beside their studies. In fact, the first hypothesis of this study is that the ability to adapt to this new university context positively influences the student's results and the will / opportunity to work. The second variable that influences the possibility of combining study and work are the characteristics of a foreign labor market: as has been highlighted above, numerous studies have identified several barriers that hinder the possibility of working in a country other than one's own. Language ability, cultural differences, lack of 'soft skills' and stereotyping by employers that pose a challenge to international students/workers to obtain work (Van Walsum, 2011; De Lange et al., 2019). Moreover, as seen at the beginning of this paragraph, the work itself can negatively influence students in balancing study and work and in achieving their primary purpose, that is to study and obtain good results in the university environment.

For that reasons we assume that the characteristics of the platforms could positively influence the possibility of working to overcome these barriers; given the possibility to complete hyper-flexible tasks (Friedman, 2014) students can find autonomy / flexibility through these platforms. The autonomy compared to when, where and for how long you can work is a positive aspect that influence the students. Indeed, the possibility to choose the time and position of the work could help the students not to be tied to fixed working hours and to have more freedom of choice on how to manage their day between study and work.

However, as highlighted before, the platforms could also negatively influence students by binding them to working hours of the restaurants or the economic reality. Moreover, these platforms could influence their study life, their health, earning below the minimum wage, without social benefits and determining price and wage that can be raise or decreased by algorithms based on the demand. (Kenney & Zysman, 2016; Goods, Veen and Barratt, 2019).

In fact, if on the one hand the platforms could help international students to avoid the barriers of foreign work, on the other they could worsen their student conditions and see their university results worsen.

These factors could be a problem for students that have as primary goal to achieve a good university result. The purpose of this study is understanding it, how international students can balance study- and work-life together and which it is the role of the platforms in that balance.

Methodology

To understand the effect of the online labor platform on international student life we conducted in-depth interviews in the Dutch context with different type of virtual labour platforms; we focus on Uber Eats and Deliveroo, which are major players in the growth of the "gig economy" and food delivery (Kässi & Lehdonvirta, 2018; Katz & Krueger, 2019). The choice of these two platforms was made for two main reasons. Deliveroo and Uber Eats fit our definition of online labour platforms as they link freelance 'gig workers' to requesters that wish to outsource meal delivery activities. Second, the presence of different international students that work for these two platforms and that participated in the interviews. Moreover, we taking into account other type of digital labor platform in order to increase the number of respondents and to have a broad point of view regarding the functioning of these platform in the balance of study and work life. Indeed, the first author of this research worked with different type of these platform as Amazon Mechanical Turk, Clickworker, Neevo.definedcrowd, Fiverr, Freelancer.com, and Microworkers. This different type of platform offers digital tasks that require human intelligence, how to identify an object within a video or a photo, search for some details and particulars, or the transcription of audio files, writing and translation. These types of platforms allow potential employers to post jobs and freelancers can bid or choose from several alternatives. Moreover, due the COVID-19 crisis, these types of virtual platform permit to work in a different and safe context.

Data collection

The empirical study was carried out between May and June 2020, and relied on 7 semi-structured interviews (for a total of 9 hours of transcriptions) with the international students that work for the platforms to collect data from actors involved. Interviews helps you to understand, explain and explore research subjects' assumptions, behavior, experiences, circumstances. In particular, in a semi-structured interview the interviewer does not follow a formal list of questions. During this type of interviews, the questions are open-ended which allow a discussion with the interlocutor rather than a simple question and answer. The

international students were selected in Italy and in the Netherlands with an experience of study and working in Dutch cities. According to Crouch & McKenzie (2006), this number of interviews enhance the validity of in-depth inquiry and the respondents were selected through different social platform. Respondents were adequately informed of the content of the research and the interviews were conducted in videoconference recorded and transcribed with their permission. In addition, the same transcripts were sent back to the student workers to be approved.

Moreover, some of these interviews, when possible, were carried out jointly with other students of the University of Twente who have investigated OLPs from different points of view for other topics. One author studied them to understand the value capture and value creation of HR practices on these platforms, while the other student wanted to understand if they could be a useful tool regarding multiple job holding (when you have multiple jobs at the same time).

In order to increase the validity of research, triangulation method was used, collecting data through ethnographic accounts of real-life gig work activities conducted between online platforms. An ethnographic accounts has provided additional insights, not gained from the interviews, regarding the balance of work and study life and regarding the function of the platforms: in fact, from the interviews it emerged that the students manage these two factors in a different way, the fieldwork gave me the opportunity to grasp further positive and negative aspects of these platforms and a point of view on how to reconcile study and work. However, given the Covid19 emergency, it was not possible to have a direct work experience through the Uber eats and Deliveroo platforms, the main author worked through other types of online platforms listed previously to have direct experience on these. Students are increasingly making use of this different type of OLPs to work as it allows them to accept jobs while staying at home or wherever they prefer.

The interviews with the Deliveroo and Uber Eats students/workers provided information on the different problems and challenges they face during their studies and works and how they balance work-study life.

The ethnographic accounts served to understand how manage time to work and study and the functioning of platforms process. This supplemented the information gathered from the interviews and permitted first-hand experience in this field and to fill in gaps resulting from interviewee recollections and reports. Besides providing an understanding of the balancing of the study and work life, these ethnographic accounts also serve to understand how platform characteristics more generally could impact this balance.

The ethnographic accounts involved signing up as a gig worker, taking part in the onboarding process, carrying out tests for technical skills (grammar and listening) and making use of the mobile application for assignment to and performance online tasks. Screenshots and notes of the mobile application were made to capture data on these processes.

Coding

The transcripts of the interviews were uploaded and analysed to the Atlas.ti software. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) suggested a coding strategy creating codes based on the categories and subcategories of the previous

theoretical framework. After reading the interviews and applying the previously mentioned codes, the uncoded data were analysed again to understand if they could be used in one of the categories. However, Hsieh and Shannon (2005) highlighted that this strategy could have limitations because the code scheme could reduce the objectivity of the researcher. In fact, the contextual aspects may not be taken into consideration and the authors could focus in pursuit evidence that support the research.

For these reasons to increase the trustworthiness and avoid the bias an audit review was carried out, moreover both the supervisor and the co-supervisor examined and reviewed the research, the description of the operationalization of the variables and the collection of the codes used (Appendix 3, 4, 5 and 6) has been provided.

Operationalization of the variables

Academic Integration (AI), identified by the four concepts previously shown is the ability of the students in integration into a new university environment. They are described and coded as follows:

- Academic adjustment (AA): it is the student's ability to cope with motivation, application, performance and satisfaction with the academic environment in the host country
- Social adjustment (SA): The student's ability to engage in social activities and build relationships with others in the host country
- Personal and emotional adjustment (PEA): the level of psychological and physical discomfort of the student while adapting to the local academic lifestyle

Labor Characteristics (LC): International labor market with own norms and rules, that has barriers for students/migrants identified by the subcategories previously shown.

- Work Abroad (WA): Difficulties found when work abroad in the new context.
- Language ability (LA): Foreign language ability contributes to successful integration.
- Cultural differences and lack of 'soft skills' (CD): Different work culture between nations as work independently, take initiative, work ethic.
- Stereotyping (ST): belief about an individual or a group that displays them in a way not normally representative of the real situation

Online Labor Platforms Characteristics (PC): The platforms enter the market as an intermediary connecting supply and demand.

- Positive aspects (PA): Flexibility, Autonomy, freedom; complete tasks for a defined and short period of time. Aspects that could help student in balance studies and work.
- Negative aspects (NA): freedom limited to the economic realities, earnings are often below the minimum wage, higher level of stress. Factors that can hinder the student's life

Balance between study and work life through online labor platforms (SWL): a student is focused on the academic field but at the same time, by will or necessity, he also finds time to explore the world of work through online work platforms.

- OLP's Help (HELP) or hinder (HIN) the international students in the balance between study and work life (SWL).

Results

The following results were extrapolated starting from the variables highlighted in the theoretical framework in order to answer the research question *"How International Students can balance study- and work-life together: Under which conditions online labour platforms may improve or hinder students' life?"*.

These students, in the new country, are faced with various adaptation difficulties both at university level and also at work level as these students may need to have a source of income. The purpose of this study was precisely to understand how these students manage to combine study work factors, in particular whether Online Labor platforms can improve or hinder students' life and if they can help them in that purpose.

Regarding the **Academic Integration**, that is positively related with study progress and study performance, what emerges immediately by analysing the data is that the *academic adjustment* of students in the new environment of the host country is the factor that most influences their integration. Whether we are talking about European or non-European countries, when students arrive in the new Dutch context, they find notable differences regarding teaching methods, study, structures and organization of courses. These factors naturally influence the student's adaptation in the new context, facing various difficulties: the most decisive factor is the different way of carrying out the lessons, the different relationship with the teachers and the way of working in the classroom. Language skills also play an important role as the impact with a course of study in a totally different language could cause discomfort. Moreover, the way of studying is different and many of the interviewees have found pressure on the deadlines of the different subjects, naturally different from the place of belonging. The presence of different work groups made up of different types of students influences, together with other factors, the ability to integrate into the new university environment. However, all the interviewees claimed that after a more or less long period of acclimatization they managed to achieve good results also highlighting the high level of the university structures:

"The first impact was hard, different language different lessons with tutorials, group work, weekly papers to read for each subject 3 courses to follow ... When you are used to a method it is difficult to change totally and in a short time, you are not ready. I invested more time in my studies, often even whole days to get the job done before the deathliness. In the end I did it but it wasn't easy". Interviewee No. 5. Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"...the way of learning it was a little bit hard for me I had a lots group work and stuff here because in my country I never did a lot of group work, I first came here to learn how to learning in my pre- master. How do the work group, how work on the same document, that was a little bit hard to adjust because there are different kinds of availability and different types of people: some people are

dominant, some people are free-riders, so the group works are the most challenging " Interviewee No.4. Azerbaijani student, studying in The Netherlands.

"I had to adapt to the new environment to meet new people and the language also influenced this adaptation but let's say I found myself well... At the level of structures in Italy we are slightly behind. In Holland there are campuses where all universities are gathered, it is different from us". Interviewee No. 3. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

Another factor influencing students' Academic Integration is the *Social adjustment*, the student's ability to engage in social activities and build relationships with others in the host country. In the new context the student is alone, far from affections and friendships and the first period is necessary to adapt and integrate. International students seem facilitated in integration by meeting other students in the same situation with which they relate; there are different associations, student initiatives within the university, study and sports groups play an important role in the integration:

"I think that this is the greatest part of my experience because here I was able to have a lot of friends from different countries. I was part of different kinds of associations such as connecting students from different universities and I also attended different workshops from other associations. I also have a big Indian family that I met here because my roommate is Indian so thanks to here, I got to know a lot of people and culture, so this helps me a lot to adjust to new cultures and new social life here. " interviewee n°4. Azerbaijani student, studying in The Netherlands.

"I joined some different small groups regarding several topics in example running, groups to help to develop some applications with some culture of the world. I was involved in a lot of activities ..." interviewee n°2. Peruvian student, studying in The Netherlands.

However, some of the interviewees did not have very positive experiences, indicating how the differences between courses (bachelor and master's studies) create some social discomfort and how cultural differences can be an obstacle in integration. We still talk about personal experiences, however differences between nations in ways of living, relating and also language barriers can be the cause of these difficulties.

"I'm not really enjoying the social environment. I think because it is a master course and we are all "old" students; maybe someone has already a group of friends, a job or other things to do. It is different from the bachelor study where students have good times, drink too much, and party. My social life, in my perspective, was terrible ". interviewee n ° 5, Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"In the Netherlands people are more closed, shy. They tend to relate to each other and not to integrate foreign students too much. Probably because we weren't many in our course so they preferred to choose something safe. In fact, in the end I made friends even with Dutch guys and we have a lot of fun. " interviewee n ° 7, Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

A final factor influencing Academic Integration is the *Personal and emotional adjustment*, the level of psychological and physical discomfort of the student while adapting to the local academic lifestyle. The distance from their loved ones, the difficulties in the new context, have influenced the students more on a psychological level; it is not easy for new students to arrive in a country without any kind of knowledge and also to face all the new difficulties of the new university environment. New lessons, new relationships, different ways of living could cause different problems in the first period of adaptation in the new context:

"The difficulties that I faced at the beginning in the adaptation were hard to metabolize on a psychological level. I had some difficulties; I thought I was unable to complete the course and, in any case, to obtain good results and therefore I had also thought about leaving. Physical difficulties not particular, however, studying a lot even until late at night it is heavy and therefore, I had that kind of difficulty. Tiredness". Interviewed n ° 6. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"Yes, I had some problems in the new environment. Leaving your comfort zone is not easy, therefore, amid a thousand difficulties in the new environment, it was particularly difficult on a psychological level. But slowly I was better and I also built several friendships...". Interviewed n ° 2. Peruvian student, studying in The Netherlands.

Therefore, as we have seen above, numerous factors influence the adaptation of international students when they are in a new country to study. The first element naturally concerns the differences in the academic sphere; in particular the different teaching-study methods and language, deadlines, relating with other people are factors that most influence the possibility and the success in the academic adaptation of these students in the new context. Social adjustment also plays a fundamental role in this situation: new students find themselves in a new context, far from their own affections and facing different difficulties. Student associations and sports/study groups seem to help these students in integration and help them to overcome physical and psychological difficulties as they adapt to the local academic lifestyle. Of course, each student reacts differently and is faced with more or less difficulties, but what emerges from the data is that regardless of geographic origin, the university-level difficulties encountered by students in the host nation inevitably influence their academic adaptation, their university results and the possibility to work.

Work integration. Alongside academic adaptation the second variable that influences international students refers to Labor Characteristics; as has been highlighted in the theoretical section, international students may need to work in the new international context and the job market could hinder these students. In fact, being in a new country with its own laws and customs it may not be easy to have a job especially for a student focused primarily on studying. What emerges from the results is that the students found different difficulties when it came to looking for work. They, compared to other workers, already have a "first job" which is that of a student who can hardly be combined with a normal job: having to respect working hours and days at the same time as university problems is already an obstacle to the possibility of working. Given the initial academic problems, students only looked for a job after a period of adaptation to the new context and of these interviewees only two found work thanks to personal friendships. The main difficulties concern language skills, not knowing the functioning of the labor market and the problem of also having international educational qualifications, not of the host nation.

"It was difficult for me already to think of finding work. My first concern was always trying to pass the exams and conclude the experience here abroad. So, looking for and combining a job was very difficult because I had to think about university, lessons, deadlines and combining a job with schedules could be a big problem." Interviewee n°7. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"...Then, after the first period of adaptation at university level, I tried to look for a job but finding myself in a foreign country different from mine, however, it is already difficult to find something suitable for my characteristics, my skills. Also considering that I spoke only

English many restaurants or various workplaces, asked Dutch as a language that is a big limitation". interviewee n°6. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"... It is actually harder, in my country I already had the job after my bachelor but I left the job when I received the accepted letter from University of Twente, so in my country is easier find job in my field rather than here because also I have the degree, my native language, extra languages but here I don't have the native language and it is a big disadvantage. " interviewee n°4. Azerbaijani student, studying in The Netherlands.

Language skills play a very important role both in university integration and above all at work level. In fact, despite the ability to speak English in a highly developed nation like the Netherlands, many jobs require the primary ability to speak fluent Dutch and is an obstacle found in all the interviews done during this study:

"I sent some applications but most of them required a fluent Dutch so I lost a lot of opportunities because of that but now with coronavirus there are few applications, I hope that I'll find a job in one or two months." interviewee n°2 Peruvian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"... there is a large language barrier. If you do not speak Dutch most occupations unfortunately do not hire you. I speak a little bit of Dutch, enough to speak with people but if you don't speak Dutch it is impossible to find a job. I found a job at Casino through a friend ... In the Netherlands the Dutch language plays an important role wherever you go, mostly regarding the work environment. " interviewee n°5, Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands.

With regard to *cultural differences and the lack of "soft skills"*, it can be noted that there are profound differences regarding times, customs and ways of working. Of course, the main differences concern mealtimes, closing and opening of shops, differences between cultures but also on a working level in other countries there are often other types of undeclared work or upon recommendation, who are looking for staff even with little experience to work.

"There are more possibilities to work in my country. You know different people, different way to work but most of the jobs are recommended jobs or illegal jobs but here I don't know; I'm searching on my own and it's a little bit tricky, It's different from my country, different rules, different way to work; Here it is difficult find an illegal job for example, also for this reason it's more difficult." interviewee n°2. Peruvian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"the major differences mainly concern culture and ways of living. In Holland they totally have a different culture on food they eat at different times also the premises the shops close first. In Italy we are used to having the shops that close very late instead we say that there is only one day here in Holland where they stay open more. The shops for 6 pm are closed while maybe at 8 pm they are still open ... Then on a level other differences, maybe with the ways of doing, to relate, we are more we are more open, more revellers. " interviewee n°6 Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

Stereotypes regarding belief about an individual or a group that displays them in a way not normally representative of the real situation do not seem to be encountered; probably this result is influenced by the low participation of the interviewees in the world of work, only one of the interviewees had experiences and said this:

"The Netherland is a very open country, however stereotypes about people from other countries are still there, at least there are. For example, the Italians have the same story: pizza, mafia, pasta, good morning. The idea that Italians are slackers, even if you have a chance to find work abroad because you have a good preparation. "interviewee n ° 6. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

As for the *Work Integration* of the international students, what emerges from the interviews is that there are many difficulties in finding a job; the characteristics of the job itself already seem to be a major obstacle for students whose primary objective is to obtain satisfactory results at university level. Indeed, respecting schedules and working days in an already difficult situation is a great challenge for students. However, many of the interviewees, after a period of adaptation, tried to look for a job by encountering language barriers, where despite the ability to speak English, the employer's request for Dutch-speaking staff remains. Moreover, previous educational qualifications and personal skills do not particularly help to find work abroad compared to one's country of origin. There are also cultural differences, as regards meals, the closing and opening of shops, but also at the level of work, in fact, in other countries, there are often other types of undeclared work or on recommendation, which also seek staff with little work experience. Therefore, as regards the Work Integration, there are numerous obstacles which make it difficult or in most cases prevent students from finding a job in the host country. In this context, we introduce online labor platforms.

Online Labor Platforms Characteristics. With their own characteristics, the OLPs, could be a useful means of achieving students' purpose of studying and working. Indeed, digital platforms changed the traditional concept of worker offering flexibility, autonomy and freedom which are fundamental factors for students to be able to work alongside their studies.

From the analysis carried out there are positive and negative aspects that distinguish them from a normal job; regarding the positive aspects, the first factor that is common to all respondents is that these platforms give anyone the opportunity to work, in fact, as highlighted during an interview, there are numerous international students who thanks to these platforms have managed to find a job for achieve their goals. Their main purpose remains to study, so these platforms can help by not binding them to a fixed job. In particular, flexibility is the positive factor that most seems to be common to all students / workers, in fact, compared to a job at fixed times that must be respected, the platforms offer flexibility to students who manage the available time in different ways, working when they need it or there are particular promotions or not working when they have to study:

"... working in the restaurant is bad so you have a fixed time from 8 to 12 and you are forced to be four hours there. While with a job like this you can be Deliveroo or Uber if you don't want to work anymore turn off the application, the weather doesn't allow it? You don't work. You manage it yourself ... I would never have done Deliveroo or Uber if I hadn't had the opportunity to manage and earn when necessary. When I have time and need money, I decide whether to work ". interviewee n°1 Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"flexibility played a huge role. I have a lot of pressure in my studies so I was not able to do this all the time. Because I could manage my time while working with this promotion. You can do whatever you want. You can work wherever you want. You don't have to answer to a person. You can go drunk and high and no one will judge you. That is cool. " interviewee n°2, Peruvian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"I decided for this platform because of the flexibility that to work for these platforms. Being a student, my main concern is studying, so first I dedicated myself to that, then when I had greater availability in terms of time, I tried to earn something for support myself". interviewee n°3. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"Primarily I think that the best benefit is how I manage my time. I can choose when to work. I have one hour now, I can work and earn some money, if I have energy. I think is the most important factor for individuals that want to schedule their time in a flexible way. Depends on your lifestyle". interviewee n°5. Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands.

Of course, the economic factor also plays a fundamental role as many of these students that need to work. The remuneration is considered sufficient by most of the interviewees which helps them maintain themselves during their studies. Furthermore, by managing to combine two platforms, both food delivery platforms (Uber Eats and Deliveroo) and other types of Online Labor platforms (Italki and Neevo.definedcrowd), they have even more flexibility but also job opportunities and therefore to earn more money:

"... I think the remuneration it was the main purpose because without it. Without a good remuneration I would not work so much." interviewee n°5. Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"... I needed to do this and with that money I could have had a small profit which helped me. Because I see that I can have more money with two platforms instead of one (Uber Eats and Deliveroo). In these two platforms there are 2 different pick hours and if you have both you can earn more money and if you only have one you are forced to work in specific hours." interviewee n°2 Peruvian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"I needed to make extra money for myself ...!m over 20 years old so you don't feel comfortable to get a lot of money from your parents. it will be nice to her some extra money from yourself. This is the main reason because I work for multiple platforms" (Italki and Neevo.definedcrowd). interviewee n°4. Azerbaijani student, studying in The Netherlands.

During the interview's other positive factors of these platforms were highlighted; one of these is the characteristic of not managing liquidity, in fact the transactions take place totally online once the activity has been completed and the worker immediately obtains compensation without being dependent on anyone. This is actually another positive aspect that emerged during the interviews, the students are much freer than not having a boss to rely on. Moreover, the application is seen as a big simplification because the worker decides to go online at any time and with a few simple touches:

"One of the things I like most is autonomy. I interface with the application; I don't have a boss with whom I have to rely and on which I must depend. Within the application, I take the order, I deliver, I have no one to tell me what to do". Interviewee n°3. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands

"...one of the advantages is a simple and timely payment and the search for customers, you are also not allowed to issue money, the company does it, it pays you". interviewee n°4. Azerbaijani student, studying in The Netherlands.

"I like that everything goes online, you don't have to meet someone if you really don't want to do that, it is good for antisocial people...". interviewee n ° 5, Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands

Going beyond food delivery platforms and focusing on other types of online labor platforms another positive factor, that emerged during interviews and during ethnographic account, is the possibility of doing jobs online

from anywhere in the world while staying at home or in other places. During the Covid-19 crisis, this type of platform allowed me to do online jobs to understand how they work, in total safety and from my home. The works done for these platforms are online, the physical presence of the worker is not necessary and therefore you have an additional advantage that helps some students. In fact, you save the cost of moving to the city or sustenance away from home, even simply by subscribing to the platform, compared to your skills you can find different types of work such as transcriptions, translations, activities of all kinds with hundreds of thousands of freelance jobs offers. The competition is high but if you have different skills you have more chances to work, you also have the possibility to be registered on different platforms, in order to further increase them. This type of online work platforms connecting supply and demand also have significant advantages:

"First of all it is online and this help me a lot because if you have to go in a company this means extra expensive as travel costs, eating outside and so on, but when you work from home it is easier and more accessible and other than that as I told I was not able to find something suitable for myself in Enschede and I did not want to work in another city as well because my house was here and other cities quite far so that's why I started to look for these platforms and starting to working for them ... What I like about it, it is convenient to find clients there, because people can see your profile and the company takes commission to your payment to promote you socially, in the media, website and so on and for this reason it is easier to find students or clients ..." interviewee n°4. Azerbaijani student, studying in The Netherlands.

"The biggest advantage is that I can decide to work where I want, it is not always easy to find something, but it is a great advantage for me since I do not have the opportunity to move to find a job. I work through multiple online platforms such as Fiver, Nevo and freelancer to increase the possibilities, to search for more activities". interviewee n°7. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

However, what emerges from this research is that there are also negative aspects encountered by international students working for Online Labor Platforms; as regards working hours, there is a dependence on workers who are bound to the opening hours of restaurants and to the customer's request. Workers must remain available especially in these hours to earn money. However, regarding this topic, many of the interviewees found problems in finding orders or time slots available to work and also the problem of not being sure of earning what is necessary as it depends on the orders that are executed by the worker. This issue was also found in my work as a platform worker as the possibility of working and therefore earning depends on the availability of requests or jobs:

"I'm a bit tied to restaurant hours, it's a problem because they close at 10pm but here in Holland they have dinner very early. For opening hours, I try to organize myself to be free during those time slots. Clearly there is more work, more than it is in my interest to keep me free for those time slots ... If today I am free 3 hours to work it can happen that sometimes I earn 5 euros and sometimes 50. This is a problem. While with the restaurant the wages are fixed, these platforms don't both have security. " interviewee n ° 1. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"I don't like that sometimes they have few orders; I think that they should increase, they should improve their algorithms in order to assign or in order to allow each driver to work". Interviewee n°2, Peruvian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"Flexibility is a big advantage, but you don't receive constant orders, so it can happen that in an hour you don't receive orders as if you could receive four of them". Interviewee n°7. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

Each online work platform subjected me to grammar and listening tests to demonstrate my skills and competences. However, these do not guarantee immediate work, the search for a job is very complex. Other negative factors concern the excessive distances travelled that cause physical fatigue for students / workers and also the meteorological conditions between wind and rain are not particularly useful in this sense. In fact, greater attention is required in order to avoid excessive distances travelled:

"...they should work on the algorithm on calculate the distance because sometimes you get assign 1 trip of 5 kilometres but are 5 km in one way and also to going back because there is only one restaurant in the area so that are 10 km already and if you get a another trip on the same distance and you do not have like an electric bike or a motorbike you will be very tired. You are not allowed to drive 20 km in one hour". interviewee n°2, Peruvian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"On a physical level it is also hard. After two hours of deliveries, when the third arrives you are destroyed. The weather also affects deliveries, raining a lot increases the difficulty and energy expenditure. Despite the raincoat you get a lot of wet." interviewee n°3. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

These students also have to divide between study and work find it difficult to find availability to get free time:

"Personally I need to work so I dedicate most of my time for doing that but I personally wasn't affected too much because it is work I'm not familiar with leisure time. I used to have three times mostly on the summer and during the Year location on my stuff. Sometimes I go in the club but I don't practice sport or something like that. Free time is not that much". interviewee n ° 5, Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands.

Furthermore, being the platform managed totally online, you do not have the possibility to instantly solve a possible problem, you must contact customer service, wait for a reply and then resolve it:

"Sometimes working via app can give some technical issues. Sometimes you can have mistaken in your order and there is no one that is going to fix it immediately so you have to contact the app and this is annoying. "interviewee n°5, Croatian student.

"If you have any problem you have to write an email and wait for an answer. It is not immediate as a thing. This is normally not a problem but when something unexpected occurs you don't know how to behave. You can also call an operator but it is not very immediate as an aid ". interviewee n ° 6 Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

This research, through interviews and field research, also highlighted "the other side of the coin" of the other types of OLPs, not only of the delivery food platforms. In fact, in addition to that previously mentioned of the limited availability of jobs, problems were also found concerning the commissions that the platforms take from the worker. In the Italki platform, for example, the commissions that the platform holds to the worker is 15% of the budget, instead in the Frelancer.com platform to promote your profile you have to pay the platform:

"That was the reason why I left: commission. Italki, the platform to find the students, would take 15% commission from each student's payment and it was really a lot, that was the reason because I left the platform and worked on my own so I could receive all money on my own but it's hard to find students without the company. " interviewee n ° 4. Azerbaijani student, studying in The Netherlands.

"anyone can work for these platforms, the competition is very high, you can't always find available jobs. if you pay some platforms, for example Frelancer.com, they highlight your profile, but it doesn't give you the certainty of working". interviewee n ° 7, Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

Therefore, these platforms seem to have advantages and disadvantages which, with varying intensity, influence student-workers. The most evident positive aspect is the ease of access to the "work world", in fact through the OLPs it is possible to avoid all the initial barriers that numerous international students have been faced and they have managed to find a job to achieve their goals. Another positive aspect regards the flexibility that this type of work can give; deciding when to work, or out of necessity or convenience, is a factor that is universally found in all the students interviewed and is considered an advantage over a job with fixed hours as it allows you to manage yourself even in intense periods of study. On an economic level, most of the interviewees considered the profit sufficient and, in many cases, to further increase it, they managed to combine multiple platforms thanks to the characteristics that distinguish them.

Other positive factors such as ease of access to application and job selection, independence from a boss and punctuality of compensation were found during this study.

We also focused on online job platforms other than Uber Eat or Deliveroo, trying to understand how they work directly with an ethnographic account and also to see if they help students find a job. In particular, the possibility of carrying out work from anywhere and in total safety seems to be another positive factor that adds to those listed above. Travel and maintenance costs are also saved and there is no physical effort to distinguish home delivery jobs.

However, the negative aspects of each type of platform also emerged from these interviews; the flexibility indicated above is influenced by the opening hours of the restaurant and by customer requests, moreover there is not always the certainty of obtaining a job that therefore influences the students' earnings. Many respondents found physical fatigue and difficulties due to weather conditions and in case of technical problems the lack of immediate help from the platform. Furthermore, with respect to the other types of OLPs, there are also problems related to the high commissions and the costs of the platform to highlight the profile of the worker.

Fieldwork allowed me to highlight this type of problem and the difficulty of finding a job online for a new subscriber to the platform. Language tests (grammar and listening) are required in each platform to demonstrate your skills and you must also provide proof of your past work, but all of these things do not guarantee a job. The competition on some types of online labor platforms is worldwide, while for platforms like Uber and Deliveroo this is limited locally.

However, considering these positive and negative aspects, these platforms employ needy international students, but how do they balance study and work? Do platforms help or hinder them?

Balance between study and work life through online labor platforms.

The need to work could cause students difficulties in balancing study and working life. In this context, what emerged from this research is that platforms can be a valid tool for students who need to work to maintain themselves economically. In fact, in addition to giving the opportunity to work, the flexibility that these platforms give allows students to choose when to study or work. Many students have highlighted that, during intense periods of study, they can decide not to work or to work limitedly to their possibilities. Students use the platforms to balance work-study life in different ways, based on the need they are facing. University lectures, group projects, exams are factors that push the student to study, however promotions on the platform or economic needs could attract the student-worker and therefore the work aspect prevails over the university aspect. In fact, OLPs play an important role in balancing these two factors. They could implement promotions or special offers that attract workers and thus shift the student's attention to the job side. What emerges is that these two factors can coexist or there is a possibility of giving priority to one factor over the other:

"Sometimes I was giving priority to my studies when I was having the exams coming or I had to prepare the presentation for some reports but as well sometimes when there were promotions or a lot of orders I said" it is ok I will not score a 10 at my exam but I want to earn some money. Sometimes I was giving priority but sometimes I gave priority to the other one, in that way I'm balancing." interviewee n ° 2, Peruvian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"It actually helps me, it allows me to combine these two factors mainly because I can decide when to go online or offline, I am the manager of myself. Let's say I am a student and my primary job is therefore to study. I have always considered work as something more...I think it's a great help; do I have an exam tomorrow? I don't work and I dedicate myself to studying, it's very positive from that point of view...". " interviewee n ° 1. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"It definitely helps, not hinder, in balancing and maintaining a more disciplined work life balance I think because you can shift your work hour, maybe work one hour more or less. Financially too, maybe you need to earn money fast and you can start to work". interviewee n ° 5, Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"When I am under examination, I prefer to devote myself more to studying. For example, this week, having an exam soon I kept myself free and I am not working. On normal days, in the more peaceful periods I study before and after the working hours before or after, depending on when I work. For example, I study in the afternoon, from 15 to 20 before working at dinner time. " interviewee n ° 6. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

Students choose according to their needs which factor to give greater importance. The balance is not framed in something that is high or low, it also depends on the individual preference and on the influence of the platform on how successful students are in balance. However, these students recognized the usefulness of these platforms and argued that a permanent job at a company could be counterproductive for a student as there is the need to respect working hours and you do not have the possibility to decide for yourself when to work; often times, platforms are portrayed as the 'bad guys', but other companies can be the same:

"Once working in the restaurant, I happened to feel bad and I asked not to go to work. I had a stomach ache and could give me problems. Despite this, the employer told me that I had to go to work." interviewee n ° 1. Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

"I think the platform is a good assistant, I never considered it as a primary occupation because I have the other work, but the casino for example is not beneficial for my study life. Because I work all night when I go. For example, it is difficult to study after 8 hours of work, I have to sleep, eat and I'm very tired. " interviewee n ° 5, Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands.

From what emerges from this study the platforms seem to be a means that helps students, the negative aspects that we have discovered seem not to be an impediment for them. One of the students who needs to work in order to continue studying abroad has highlighted how difficult it is to combine stable work with student life but he also combines work on the Uber platform thanks to its characteristics.:

The problem is that I need to work, so after several hours of work it is difficult to totally dedicate myself to studying. It was very difficult primarily because the casino job is in the night so you have late working hours. maybe you start at 11 p.m. and you finish at 6 a.m. And it was really difficult to manage with the university life because yeah you need to sleep a little bit before going to the lesson and sometimes was not possible to rest enough. It was really hard to have only the morning to study and do Uber. " interviewee n ° 5, Croatian student, studying in The Netherlands.

More problems seem to appear when going beyond food delivery platforms. In fact, the other type of OLPs, as Italki, Airlanguagehub, Fiver, seem to cause students some problems in balancing study and work. The interviewees underlined how flexibility is limited in some situations since, in the particular example with the Italki platform, when the worker gets a job (English sign) and does not have the possibility to change the time or day, the worker is bound. In case of problems, you are forced to work so as not to risk receiving a negative review which affects the future possibility of having customers. Less flexibility also highlighted in specific platforms for online jobs; in Nevo if you accept a job you have deadlines to meet in order to deliver the job and in those situations, you have less time to devote to studying or other activities.

"... if you find students by yourself, without platform, you can manage, you can negotiate if you are busy or have a plan: you can call the student and say" today I'm busy, can we do the lesson tomorrow? But if you work for the platform you have to set your time and you can't change that. Students make an appointment and they have costs and if you want to change you have some problems such as less payment or bad review. So, this type of company gives you less flexibility. Moreover, this commission was very high and why if there are students that want to pay, I cannot have the total amount of money? " interviewee n ° 4. Azerbaijani student, studying in The Netherlands.

"In Neevo.definedcrowd, the problem is that when you accept a project you have a time limit to complete the job, you cannot postpone it. You have to respect certain standards and the rules that are given to you by the one who offers the job. This, however, is not a good thing when you have an exam or deadline in the following days. " interviewee n ° 7, Italian student, studying in The Netherlands.

These latter problems were also highlighted during my work as a platform worker. I have worked on several platforms noting some of these difficulties. In fact, when you accept a job, your client provides guidelines to follow and respect in a predetermined period of time that is longer than a delivery. The flexibility that from this type of work is lower compared to platforms like uber where the worker decides when to be online or offline allows you to manage your time according to your needs. The autonomy and ease with which you work are less, but this type of OPL allows you to work and study at the same time.

Therefore, what emerges is that online work platforms actually help students, do not hinder, to study and work simultaneously. It also emerges that the balance of these two factors depends on the needs and will of the students themselves and on the characteristics of the platforms for which they work. Students may prefer to work on the study (rather than balance them), but only for a few moments, in certain periods they can set aside the work for the study or carry out the two activities simultaneously. In the most demanding periods of study, students try to focus more on the university by leaving out work. Many of them try to work on weekends or for good promotions. Others, on the other hand, being in a strategic position, are also able to work during the study by taking a break and resuming immediately after giving birth. The platform tool helps the student to work and despite having limits on the platform, this does not translate into a study-work imbalance thanks to the flexibility they give. As highlighted above, the different types of platforms have different characteristics. By working through Uber Eats or Deliveroo your competition is limited to where you are but the catchment area and simplicity of work limited to food delivery allow you to work. Focusing on other types of OLPs such as Italki, Airlanguagehub, Fiver and Neevo, what emerges from the research is that there seems to be a more limited flexibility compared to food delivery platforms; this difference is due both to the different way of working and to the competition. In fact, to get a job, workers have to compete globally, and more skills and positive feedback mean more opportunities to work. The students showed greater difficulty and less flexibility but still manage to work and study at the same time; here too there are those who prefer to concentrate their appointments-online and work on the weekend, to have more time to devote to study and those who prefer to balance the two factors at the same time.

Discussion

This research investigated how international students use online labor platforms to combine work and study. The goal was to understand if and how they could balance these two factors and if indeed the platforms could be a useful tool for this purpose or if it were an obstacle for them.

Starting from the difficulties of the students, both at the academic and at the work level highlighted by the previous literature, empirical research was conducted through different types of OLPs in order to understand how the students can balance these two factors. In addition, an ethnographic account was also carried out with the aim of having a broader point of view and expanding the literature relating to the functioning of these platforms.

Implications for theory and practice

Given the growing importance of the topic, many studies have investigated the problems international students face when studying in a foreign country. In fact, in recent years more and more students have decided to attend a course of study in a country other than their own.

Tinto (1998) considered that students have different educational experiences, abilities and skills, values as well as family and community backgrounds that influence the student's integration and results.

In line with that study, Baker and Siryk (1999) detected academic integration to be influential on study performance and students' adaptation. They distinguish four concepts in academic integration: academic-, social-, personal- & emotional adjustment. *Academic adjustment* refers to a student's ability to cope with motivation, application, performance, and satisfaction with the academic environment. *Social adjustment* describes how students relate to studying, friendship, being part of social activities or working in a team. The *personal and emotional adjustment scale* indicates the level of psychological and physical discomfort of the student while adapting to the local academic lifestyle.

This study confirms past research, the factor that most influences these students today is academic adaptation because in the new Dutch context they find significant differences: the most decisive are the different way of carrying out the lessons, the different relationships with the teachers and the way to work in the classroom. Language skills play an important role as the impact with a course of study in a totally different language could cause discomfort. Furthermore, the way of studying is different and many of the interviewees have found pressure on the deadlines of the different subjects, naturally different from the place of belonging. These are the factors that most influence the possibility and success in the academic adaptation of these students in the new context.

Social adjustment also plays a fundamental role in this situation because the new students arrive in a new context, far from their own affections and facing different difficulties. Student associations and sports/study groups seem to help these students in integration and help them to overcome physical and psychological difficulties as they adapt to the local academic lifestyle.

Rienties, Tempelaar (2012), found that the adaptation and academic performance could be influenced by the similarities and differences of cultures, some international students may find it easier to adjust and adapt to the culture of the host institute. Of course, each student reacts differently and is faced with more or less difficulties, but what emerges from the data is that regardless of geographic origin, the university-level difficulties encountered by students in the host nation inevitably influence their academic adaptation, their university results and the possibility to work.

In fact, Rienties et al., (2011) found that local students are more likely to become member of a student fraternity or work part-time and that international students (due to Dutch language barriers in that case) are less likely to work beside their studies.

What emerges from the interviews is that these students had difficulties but, after a period of adaptation to the new situation, they started looking for a job. Thanks to these platforms they managed to obtain it because, as regards the adaptation of the work, previous studies had shown that the ability in the Dutch language, the cultural differences, the lack of "soft skills" appropriate to Dutch culture and the stereotypes of the employers could constitute obstacles to job opportunities (De Lange et al., 2019).

From our results, this is partially confirmed because most of the students surveyed did not find work except the platforms. The characteristics of the job itself already seem to be a major obstacle for students whose

primary objective is to obtain satisfactory results at university level. Moreover, despite the ability to speak English, the employer's request is for Dutch-speaking staff. Previous educational qualifications and personal skills do not particularly help to find work abroad compared to one's country of origin. There are also cultural differences, as regards meals, the closing and opening of shops, but also at the level of work, in fact, in other countries, there are often other types of undeclared work or on recommendation, which also seek staff with little work experience.

Therefore, beyond the barriers highlighted by De Lange et al. (2019), there are numerous obstacles that make it difficult or in most cases prevent students from finding work in the host country.

In this context, online job platforms have been of help to international students. Past research has focused on their characteristics and has shown how these have changed the traditional concept of worker.

Several positive aspects have emerged from past research: Goods, Veen and Barratt (2019) found that platforms are viewed positively by workers for autonomy compared to when, where and for how long you can work.

The results of this research confirmed this and went further, discovering that the most highlighted positive aspect is that it is possible to avoid all the initial barriers that many international students have had to face and have managed to find a job to achieve their goals. Flexibility, autonomy and freedom in deciding when to work are factors that are universally found in all the students interviewed and are considered an advantage over a work with fixed hours as they allow you to manage yourself even in intense periods of study.

We add other positive factors such as ease of access to application and job selection, independence from a boss and punctuality of compensation that we were found during this study.

Regarding the other types of online platforms, an important aspect is the possibility of carrying out work from anywhere and in total safety that we add to those listed above. Travel and maintenance costs are also saved and there is no physical effort on the contrary of the delivery food jobs.

However, negative factors were also found regarding these platforms, in fact, Goods, Veen and Barratt (2019) found that the job is completely dependent on customer demand and restaurant opening hours, which means that despite the flexibility declared by the platforms, it is largely tied to social preferences and restaurant hours. Moreover, Friedman (2014) and Stewart & Stanford (2017) have criticised the platform because lower costs and erode employment standards and labour regulation.

These variables have been partially confirmed, in fact many of the interviewees found this characteristic in the platforms; there are times when it is easier to find work at meals as the demand is greater but regarding this factor many students try to organize their day in order to earn money.

In addition, another negative aspect is that there is not always the certainty of obtaining a job because there are timeslots in which there is greater competition. Many respondents found physical fatigue and difficulties due to weather conditions that are related to this type of work and the atmospheric characteristics of the host nation.

Hard competition has also been observed in other types of platforms where workers are located globally and there are difficulties in finding work. Also, in some platforms, there are costs related to the commissions that are deducted and other costs to highlight the profile of the worker.

Flexibility and the ability to work might seem linked to these negative aspects listed above; having to work during restaurant hours, job insecurity, etc. which could create more stress than having a stable job. However, these aspects do not seem to negatively affect international students in being able to combine study and work. In fact, they balance these two aspects according to the availability they have, giving greater importance to study and if there is the possibility and time, they insert the work. Some interviewees reported that in case of economic needs, by combining multiple platforms, they are able to have greater possibilities to work and therefore avoid the negative aspects of a platform.

But how do students balance the factors that influence their life? Trying to combine study and work and all the other factors that influence our life is part of the Work-life balance. Williamson (2007) found that the "right" amount of work-life balance is a personal decision that differs among the people. According to Ang (2008), students had difficulty when they have to balance study, work and social activities. These students faced different health problems, missed lectures, stress, and lack of sleep and they renounce the social activities when they have to balance study and work. Moreover, other studies showed that when the work pressure continues to grow the students exchange study time with working time and they accepted lower grades, take longer to complete their studies (or they convert to part-time study), failing courses or discontinuing their studies (Richardson et al., 2014).

This study confirms that the "right" amount of work-life balance is a personal decision that differs among the people; however, the most surprising thing is that our research shows that these students do not face health problems, physical or mental when they have to combine study and work. We also add new theoretical insights into platforms issue and work-study life balance: each of the students decides how to balance these two factors and the OLPs are considered an excellent tool to combine them, in fact during intense periods of study, they can decide not to work or to work limitedly to their possibilities. On the contrary, in case of convenience due to the presence of offers or schedules with a lot of availability, they can decide to focus more on the job. What emerges is that these two factors can coexist or there is a possibility of giving priority to one factor over the other.

One might have expected an imbalance between the two factors due to the characteristics of the work that takes time away from studying and therefore could influence students. However, this has not been found, because platforms seem to be a very useful tool for the purpose: deciding when and how to work allows students to choose what to do. Regarding working hours, the students highlighted how they manage to study before these time slots and resume later, or in case of imminent university deadlines not to focus on work. Thanks to the flexibility, there is no need to sacrifice one aspect over another. The student decides how to combine them and from the interviews there are no particular problems thanks to the choice they have.

These students recognized the usefulness of these platforms and argued that a permanent job at a company could be counterproductive for a student as it is necessary to respect working hours and you do not have the opportunity to decide for yourself when to work.

By analysing the other types of online platforms there seems to be less independence for the student who is more tied to the job as he has to meet deadlines or online lessons with clients. However, even these platforms seem to help students who manage to limit the negative sides of work and therefore not be influenced. In the example of the Italki platform, the interviewee highlighted problems concerning the constraints that arise when accepting a job without having the possibility to change the appointment. Or in platforms like Fiver it has been seen that once a job is accepted there are set deadlines that must be met and therefore in these cases the flexibility is reduced. However, students manage to avoid these problems by trying to concentrate their work in free time or on weekends in order to have greater availability. As for the greater difficulties in finding work compared to uber or Deliveroo they manage to compensate by registering on different platforms where they can look for clients or apply for work.

What emerges from our study is that these platforms are a valid tool for students who need to work and study at the same time and that above all this double figure of student-worker has not affected the university results which remain the primary objective. Through the OLP, in addition to avoiding all the initial barriers, one can choose when and how to work, there are no obligations or constraints; on the contrary, a stable job brings greater disadvantages because it does not give these possibilities.

From this point of view, in practice, this research can help international students by providing advice and a valid alternative to full-time job giving a unique flexibility. In fact, occasional or part-time jobs limit workers who must respect, even if short, binding working hours. With platforms, on the other hand, you can work just for one delivery, without being bound to fixed hours.

This research can also have a practical value both from the student-worker point of view, providing advice and a valid alternative to full-time work and for the platforms themselves.

In the first place, it can help international students looking for work to understand the functioning of these platforms and also to help them choose one type of platform over the other. In fact, all the features, both positive and negative, that can provide useful information to them have been exposed.

They can choose platforms such as Uber or Deliveroo if they prefer a more physical job like transporting food or if they prefer a more "mental" job choose other types of platforms where they can search for customers or promote themselves. This research brought to light the different positive and negative aspects of the different OLPs that could help students in choosing the type of platform to rely on.

In addition, tips and tricks were also provided that could be useful regarding the simultaneous use of platforms with different characteristics or different working hours, optimal for managing the work without affecting the study. Many students prefer to avoid work in order not to create problems for the study,

however this research has shown that platforms are not negative for them, they are able to make these two aspects coexist without compromising one or the other.

Similar results were also shown in the research by Angelucci (2020 in progress) interested in the Multiple job holding who found that sometimes the platforms are so flexible as to give the possibility to carry out different jobs at the same time and therefore also combine study and work as if they were different work professions. In fact, these platforms, thanks to the promise of flexibility, push workers to work with them and therefore to enter this world.

From a platform perspective, this work can help them as they could focus on an increasingly growing category of workers, the students. By understanding the needs of these students, advertising campaigns or special incentives could be created which could attract new workforce and which could benefit both parties. Companies could incentivize students by explaining the characteristics of platforms that help and do not hinder university life by showing the direct experience of colleagues. In fact, even Barbonetti (2020 in progress) in its research concerning the HRM practices that permit value creation and capture of OLPs has found some problems regarding these practices. In fact, from those results it emerges that after recruitment there is no Selection and training and development are not used by the platforms efficiently. By focusing more on these shortcomings, platforms could improve and create greater value for themselves and be an even more efficient tool for workers.

Limitations and directions for future research

Like many studies, this research also has some limitations which, if overcome, could make the research more relevant: the first of these was given by the Covid-19 crisis because it was not possible to carry out interviews with student-workers in the first person and therefore they were conducted through video calls which increases the difficulty of interview because I did not have direct contact and it is much more challenging to understand and interact with them.

The number of respondents was not very high; finding, contacting and convincing the students was not easy because in this emergency situation both I and other students returned to their country and therefore it was not possible to find a lot of student to interview on the field. Precisely for this reason my ethnographic work has also been subject to limitations. In fact, to preserve my safety I have not been able to do work on food delivery platforms such as Uber eats or Deliveroo which would have helped me to better understand these platforms and I would have had the opportunity to meet and interview other students in my own situation. Still regarding my work on other types of online platforms there were limitations since I could have increased the number of works on this type of platforms that would have helped me understand even more how they work, especially the differences between a type of job purely physical (with bike deliveries) than a more mental one. It could also be possible to investigate food delivery platforms first-hand in order to grasp the difficulties and challenges facing a student.

Future research could fill these gaps to get an even more specific picture of the OLPs that helps international students who need to work.

Conclusions

Given the growing importance of the topic in this paper I have focused on the adaptation difficulties of international students moving to a new country who also have to work as well as study. Specifically, how they manage to balance these two factors by working on different types of online labor platforms (OLPs). When these students arrive in the new university context, they encounter various problems of both academic integration and work integration. The major differences relate to teaching-study and language methods, deadlines and social adaptation, which all together influence the possibility and success in academic adaptation. In the workplace, beyond the characteristics of work that are already an obstacle, we found that language barriers (Dutch-speaking staff), previous educational qualifications, personal skills and cultural differences do not particularly help to find work abroad compared to one's country of origin. In this context the online labor platforms seem to be a useful tool for students to achieve the purpose of studying and working: in fact, through these platforms, students are easier to work, encounter less difficulties. However, the purpose of this research was to understand how these two aspects coexist without giving up one or the other. To understand this, interviews were carried out with international students studying and working in the Netherlands through delivery food platforms such as Deliveroo, Uber eats and OLPs such as Italki, Airlanguagehub, Fiver and Neevo.definedcrowd. In addition, I also carried out an ethnographic account through the Amazon Mechanical Turk, Clickworker, Neevo.definedcrowd, Fiverr, Freelancer.com and Microworkers platforms to understand first-hand how to balance study and work and to gather even more information on this topic. What emerged from the data is that these platforms have both positive and negative aspects that can affect student-workers, however, these OLPs avoid the initial job barriers that many international students faced and managed to find a job to achieve their goals. Flexibility, autonomy and freedom in deciding when to work are factors that are considered an advantage over working at fixed hours as they allow you to manage yourself even in intense periods of study. Ultimately, these platforms help students, not hinder, both by giving the opportunity to work, and therefore to avoid all the barriers of work, and to decide when and where to do it based on their availability and needs. Indeed, what emerges from this research is that platforms help students, but that there is no universal balance, everyone decides when and how to make one factor prevail over the other. In fact, based on university deadlines, or economic needs, they decide whether to work more or less. Competition is high, especially on platforms other than delivery food, where users from all over the world work, however, thanks to the characteristics of the OLP, students can study and work at the same time. The most surprising thing is that the respondents' university results were not influenced by the platforms; different negative aspects were found such as restaurant hours, competition, fatigue and weather conditions. However, these variables do not affect students who, on the contrary, are able, thanks to the characteristics of these platforms, to decide when to give more space to one

factor over the other. These students recognized the usefulness of these platforms and argued that a permanent job at a company could be counterproductive for a student as it is necessary to respect working hours and you do not have the opportunity to decide for yourself when to work. So, in conclusion, this research has highlighted how these online work platforms, despite some negative aspects, are a great tool to help students balance study and work. Furthermore, a focus was given on the differences between different platforms that can be useful to users in choosing the most suitable for their characteristics.

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Appendix

Appendix 1; Operationalisation of variables and interviews questions

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Subcategories</i>	<i>Code</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Interview question</i>
<p>Academic Integration (AI)</p> <p>Students need to integrate into a new university environment</p>	Academic adjustment	AA	student's ability to cope with motivation, application, performance and satisfaction with the academic environment in the host country	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What impact did you have at the university level in the new context? Is it different? 2. Have you had a lot of difficulty adapting to this? If so, why? 3. How able are/were you to adjust to the new university and study program? 4. Are you satisfied with the results obtained and with regard to the academic environment?
	Social adjustment	SA	The student's ability to engage in social activities and build relationships with others in the host country	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. How able are you to engage in social activities in the country where you now study? Why? 6. How able are you to build relationships with others in the country where you now study? Why?
	Personal and emotional adjustment	PEA	level of psychological and physical discomfort of the student while adapting to the local academic lifestyle	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Did you experience any psychological discomfort when studying abroad? If so, which? Why? 8. Did you experience any physical discomfort when studying abroad? If so, which? Why?
<p>Labor Characteristics (LC)</p> <p>International labor market with own norms and rules, that has barriers for students/migrants.</p>	Work Abroad	WA	Difficulties found when work abroad	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Have you tried to look for work in the host country where you study before starting to work for the platform? 10. Is it more easy/difficult to find work in the host country where you now study than in your home country? Why? 11. How easy or difficult was it to find work in the country where you now study? Why? 12. What made you decide to work for platform XXX?
	Language ability	LA	Foreign language ability contributes to successful integration.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 13. What role do your language abilities play in integrating into the host country where you now study? 14. What role do your language abilities play in performing your work as a platform worker? 15. What role do your language abilities play in your life as a student?
	Cultural differences and lack of 'soft skills'	CD	Different work culture between nations: work independently, take initiative, work ethic	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 16. What are the biggest differences and similarities in the culture of your home and host country?
	Stereotyping	ST	belief about an individual or a group that displays them in a way not normally representative of the real situation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 17. Have you had an experience or do you think stereotypes influenced your opportunity to work?

Appendix 2; Operationalisation of variables and interviews questions

Variables	Subcategories	Definition	Interview question
Online Labor Platforms (OLPs)	Platforms Characteristics (PC)	The platforms enter the market as an intermediary rather than as direct producers of services. They connect supply and demand	18. Why did you choose to work for these platforms? 19. How long have you been working on the platform? 20. How did you choose this platform X?
	Positive aspects (PA)	Flexibility, Autonomy, freedom: complete tasks for a defined and short period of time	21. What do you like about working for platform XXX? 22. What benefits/advantages does work for the platform offer?
	Negative aspects (NA)	- freedom limited to the economic realities - earnings are often below the minimum wage - higher level of stress	23. What do you dislike about working for platform XXX? Why? 24. What drawbacks does work for the platform offer? Why?
Balance between study and work life through online labor platforms (SWL)	a student is focused on the academic field but at the same time, by will or necessity, he also finds time to explore the world of work through online work platforms		25. In what way does platform work enable / hinder you to combine study and working life in the host country? Why? 26. How do you balance the time you spend on your study and work activities? Is this also a result of you work as a platform worker? How? 27. How much time do you spend on work and study? How do you manage your day? 28. Do you experience a disbalance in time spend on work or study activities? Why? Did this also influence your university results? Is this also a result of you work as a platform worker? How? 29. Do you think another type of job could have offered a better balance between your work and study life?

Appendix 3; Codebook Academic Integration

Subcategories	Code	Definition	Example
Academic adjustment	AA	student's ability to cope with motivation, application, performance and satisfaction with the academic environment in the host country	<p><i>"...the way of learning it was a little bit hard for me I had a lots group work and stuff here because in my country I never did a lot of group work, I first came here to learn how to learning in my pre-master".</i></p> <p><i>"I had to adapt to the new environment to meet new people and the language also influenced this adaptation but let's say I found myself well"</i></p>
Social adjustment	SA	The student's ability to engage in social activities and build relationships with others in the host country	<p><i>"I think that this is the greatest part of my experience because here I was able to have a lot of friends from different countries.</i></p> <p><i>"I joined some different small groups regarding several topics in example running, groups to help to develop some applications with some culture of the world. I was involved in a lot of activities ..."</i></p> <p><i>"I'm not really enjoying the social environment. I think because it is a master course and we are all" old "students; maybe someone has already a group of friends, a job or other things to do. It is different from the bachelor study where students have good times, drink too much, and party. My social life, in my perspective, was terrible</i></p>
Personal and emotional adjustment	PEA	level of psychological and physical discomfort of the student while adapting to the local academic lifestyle	<p><i>The difficulties that I faced at the beginning in the adaptation were hard to metabolize on a psychological level. I had some difficulties; I thought I was unable to complete the course and, in any case, to obtain good results and therefore I had also thought about leaving.</i></p> <p><i>Physical difficulties not particular, however, studying a lot even until late at night it is heavy and therefore, I had that kind of difficulty. Tiredness</i></p>

Appendix 4; Codebook Labor Characteristics

Subcategories	Code	Definition	Example
Work Abroad	WA	Difficulties found when work abroad	<p><i>"Then I tried to look for work but finding myself in a foreign country different from mine, however, it is already difficult to find something suitable for my characteristics, my skills. Also considering that I spoke only English many restaurants or various workplaces, asked Dutch as a language that is a big limitation"</i></p> <p><i>"It is actually harder; in my country I already had the job after my bachelor but I left the job when I received the accepted letter from University of Twente"</i></p>
Language ability	LA	Foreign language ability contributes to successful integration.	<p><i>"I sent some applications but most of them required a fluent Dutch so I lost a lot of opportunities because of that but now with coronavirus there are few applications, I hope that I'll find a job in one or two months."</i></p> <p><i>"... there is a large language barrier. If you do not speak Dutch most occupations unfortunately do not hire you. I speak a little bit of Dutch, enough to speak with people but if you don't speak Dutch it is impossible to find a job."</i></p>
Cultural differences and lack of 'soft skills'	CD	Different work culture between nations: work independently, take initiative, work ethic	<p><i>"There are more possibilities to work in my country but most of the jobs are recommended jobs or illegal jobs but here I don't know; I'm searching on my own and it's a little bit tricky."</i></p> <p><i>"the major differences mainly concern culture and ways of living. In Holland they totally have a different culture on food they eat at different times also the premises the shops close first"</i></p>
Stereotyping	ST	belief about an individual or a group that displays them in a way not normally representative of the real situation	<p><i>"The Netherland is a very open country, however stereotypes about people from other countries are still there, at least there are. For example, the Italians have the same story: pizza, mafia, pasta, good morning."</i></p>

Appendix 5; Codebook Online Labor Platforms

Subcategories	Code	Definition	Example
Platforms Characteristics	PC	The platforms enter the market as an intermediary rather than as direct producers of services. They connect supply and demand	<p><i>working in the restaurant is bad so you have a fixed time from 8 to 12 and you are forced to be four hours there. While with a job like this you can be Deliveroo or Uber if you don't want to work anymore turn off the application, the weather doesn't allow it? You don't work. You manage it yourself ... I would never have done Deliveroo or Uber if I hadn't had the opportunity to manage and earn when necessary. When I have time and need money, I decide whether to work "</i></p> <p><i>"flexibility played a huge role. I have a lot of pressure in my studies so I was not able to do this all the time. Because I could manage my time while working with this promotion. You can do whatever you want. You can work wherever you want. You don't have to answer to a person. You can go drunk and high and no one will judge you. That is cool. "</i></p>
Positive aspects	PA	Flexibility, Autonomy, freedom: complete tasks for a defined and short period of time	<p><i>"I decided for this platform because of the flexibility that to work for these platforms. Being a student, my main concern is studying, so first I dedicated myself to that, then when I had greater availability in terms of time, I tried to earn something for support myself".</i></p> <p><i>"Primarily I think that the best benefit is how I manage my time. I can choose when to work. I have one hour now, I can work and earn some money, if I have energy. I think is the most important factor for individuals that want to schedule their time in a flexible way. Depends on your lifestyle"</i></p> <p><i>"First of all it is online and this help me a lot because if you have to go in a company this means extra expensive as travel costs, eating outside and so on..."</i></p>
Negative aspects	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - freedom limited to the economic realities - earnings are often below the minimum wage - higher level of stress 	<p><i>"I'm a bit tied to restaurant hours, it's a problem because they close at 10pm but here in Holland they have dinner very early. "</i></p> <p><i>"Sometimes working via app can give some technical issues. Sometimes you can have mistaken in your order and there is no one that is going to fix it immediately so you have to contact the app and this is annoying. "</i></p> <p><i>"If you have any problem you have to write an email and wait for an answer. It is not immediate as a thing</i></p>

Appendix 6; Codebook Balance between study and work life through online labor platforms

Subcategories	Code	Definition	Example
Help the students to balance study and work	HELP	The characteristic of the platforms helps the students to balance work and study activities	<p><i>"Sometimes I was giving priority to my studies when I was having the exams coming or I had to prepare the presentation for some reports but as well sometimes when there were promotions or a lot of orders I said" it is ok I will not score a 10 at my exam but I want to earn some money. "Sometimes I was giving priority but sometimes I gave priority to the other one, in that way I'm balancing."</i></p> <p><i>"It actually helps me, it allows me to combine these two factors mainly because I can decide when to go online or offline, I am the manager of myself. Let's say I am a student and my primary job is therefore to study. I have always considered work as something more...I think it's a great help; do I have an exam tomorrow? I don't work and I dedicate myself to studying, it's very positive from that point of view..."</i></p>
Hinder the students to balance study and work	HI	The characteristic of the platforms hinders the students to balance work and study activities	<p><i>"... if you find students by yourself you can manage, you can negotiate if you are busy or have a plan but if you work for the platform you have to set your time and you can't change that. Students make an appointment and they have costs and if you want to change you have some problems such as less payment or bad review. So, this type of company gives you less flexibility. Moreover, this commission was very high and why if there are students that want to pay, I cannot have the total amount of money? "</i></p> <p><i>"The problem is that when you accept a project you have a time limit to complete the job, you cannot postpone it. You have to respect certain standards and the rules that are given to you by the one who offers the job. This, however, is not a good thing when you have an exam or deadline in the following days."</i></p>

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