



## **Excess Workload of Lecturers: Implication for Quality Service Delivery in Universities in South-South Geo-Political Zone of Nigeria**

**John, Augustine Etim & Prof. Chinyere Amini-Philips**

**Department of Educational Management  
Faculty of Education  
University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Nigeria**

### **ABSTRACT**

This paper investigated excess workload of lecturers for quality service delivery in universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. Two research questions and two hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The descriptive research design was adopted for the study. A sample size of 689 lecturers were drawn from a population of 6,892 using the proportionate stratified and simple random sampling techniques. A 12-item instrument was used to collect data for the study. The instrument was titled “Implications of Excess Workload of Lecturers for Quality Service Delivery in Universities Questionnaire (QEWLQSDU)”. The research questions were analyzed using mean ( $\bar{x}$ ), Standard Deviation (SD) and rank order, while the hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance. The study revealed that excess workload on lecturer’s results in poor service delivery to the students, that there is no significant difference between the mean score of Heads of Department and other lecturers on the factors that constitute excess workload. The study concluded that excess workload could lead to anxiety, physiological reactions and cardiovascular diseases. However, the study recommended that university managers and administrators should adhere strictly to the carrying capacity and set criteria for allocating work to lecturers in the university in order to avoid breakdown in health of lecturers.

**Keywords:** Excess Workload, Lecturers’, Service Delivery, Universities.

### **INTRODUCTION**

University education is one of the most important aspect of human life. This level of education clearly defines the direction and the destiny of human life. The society solidly depends on the university lecturers to carry out this enormous task that hence, the university lecturers are vested with three basic functions of teaching and learning, research and learning (FRN, 1979). Though, in FRN (2014, 2017), entrepreneurship was added as part of lecturers’ functions in the university. Perhaps, this is the reason why most universities establish entrepreneurship centres for acquisition of skills. Mean while, to the researcher, the restricting of the community service function, since community service has to do with skill acquisition, community life, corporate service responsibility and self reliance of the university graduates. It is upon these functions that the aim of the universities awarding “certificates in character and in learning” is completed.

However, the university lecturers do more than teaching, research and community service. It appears that the university work schedule design is complex and multi-dimensional. It is in the light of the multiplicity of functions in the university that Perks (2013) exclaims that the university senior managers have no idea of how members of the academic staff in their institutions spend their time, and that the common complaint from the academic is that the ‘centre’ does not understand the huge amount of different tasks they have to contend within a day.

Looking at which constitutes lecturers workload, it is very clear that lecturers are involved in multiple activities on daily basis. Therefore, it is important to examine the activities of lecturers in the university; to ascertain the volume of workload, whether it is excess or not. From the observation of the researcher as a student of the university, it is observed that lecturers are involved in teaching of the students, supervision of students' projects, dissertations and theses. They are also involved in supervision of students' internship programmes, administrative activities such as directors of centres, coordinators of units/programmes, Heads of departments, Deans of faculties, Provost of schools or Colleges, the Deputy vice chancellors and the Vice chancellors. The aforementioned administrative functions are managed by lecturers.

The lecturers are also involved in membership of panels and committees in the universities and many others. It is very obvious that, in one way or the other, the administrative functions of lecturers must coincide with the primary function of teaching and learning. It is at this point, it is worthy to examine the volume of workload of lecturers in line with the quality of service rendered to students in the university.

Service delivery according to the researcher is the act of rendering a professional or skillful service to a person or group of persons with a view to giving satisfaction in the service(s) rendered. Osaat and Ekechukwu (2017) resolves that lecturers workload in the university involves both professional and non-professional duties done by lecturers in the course of discharging their primary responsibilities to the students in the university. However, there is an existing relationship between the workload of employees and quality of service rendered to any organization. Services rendered by employees could be poor or good, effective or ineffective, efficient or inefficient. When employees are placed under the circumstances of workload debt and workload debt cascade, there is bound to be poor, ineffective or inefficient service delivery. This is a situation where employees are given excess workload, which results in carrying over of tasks and continuous accumulation of carried over tasks. This situation puts the employees at the risk of being involved in workplace accident, errors at work, aggressiveness, pressure, anxiety, depression and many more. It is important to have a proper mix of the workload and the service, in order to have a balanced and qualities service delivery.

However, in the university, the National Universities Commission sets up the criteria for workload allocation to lecturers and what constitutes excess workload of lecturers in the universities. According to National Universities Commission in Gogora (2017), the weight of workload for grading of test and examination scripts of students is given as 8 scripts a lecturer marks, as an equivalent of one credit hour. However, a case of excess workload occurs whenever a lecturer marks more than twice the student-teacher ratio ( $2 * STR$ ). This means two times the student teacher ratio of the class. It has been observed that most of the classes in government owned universities are always more than 100 students per class for example, Education, Humanities, Management Sciences etc and sometimes up to 400 students per class, mostly at the undergraduate levels. This is why it is necessary to find out if the scenario has changed or not, and how it affects service delivery in the university.

It is quite unfortunate that there is no standard criterion for a very important aspect of teaching like the planning and preparation of lecture notes. A well planned and prepared lecture note gives smooth and systematic delivery to students. Also, it fosters comprehension. On the other hand, where the lecturer does not have the time to plan and prepare for the lectures, excuses or postponement of lecture is inevitable. Most times, lecturers may sound like the "Priest on the altar" taking psalms or hymns before the sermon, if the lecturer forces himself to teach without proper preparation for the lecture. It will be very difficult for the students to comprehend the concepts and the philosophy behind the concept. It is true that the regulatory body is silent about weighing, planning and preparation of lecture notes. However, it could be assumed that such provision is made under research. It is very difficult to determine excess workload for researches done by university lecturers since researches are carried out at undeterminable period of time and locations. However, it is recommended that various institutions should determine the extent of research work by lecturers, and compensate accordingly where necessary. Meanwhile, Ogbu in Dogora (2017) suggests that credit should be given to preparation of courses taught in excess of the normal teaching load of a lecturer.

In the case of project supervision, excess workload is determined as 2 hours per week per project, up to a maximum of 5 projects, which is equivalent of 150 hours per semester. In the case of administrative and management functions performed by faculty members, section 6.3 (ix) of the 1992 FGN – ASUU agreement in Dogora (2017) did not determine the quantity of workload, rather it gave

credence to responsibility allowances to Deputy Vice Chancellors, Provosts, Deans, Directors, Sub-deans and HODs. Surprisingly such allowances did not include such coordinating functions as time tabling, chart, student registration, course and departmental examination coordination. It is a good thing and it is highly commendable that lecturers are given honoraria and allowances for extra work done in the university. According to the researcher of this study, the extra pay will definitely solve some material and economic problems for lecturers, but it will not reduce the workload, neither will it remove the problem of stress and other health challenges. This study is so concerned about the general wellbeing of lecturers given a certain amount of workload and the quality of their service delivery to the students, the university and the society at large.

The issue of excess workload in Nigerian universities seems to be inevitable and inescapable. Therefore, in Chinua Achebe, "Things Fall Apart" Eneke the bird decried that since men have learned to shoot without missing, he has learned to fly without perching. It is important to identify such strategies that can build a strong resistance to workload-related challenges among university lectures. It is believed that there are no problems without solutions. Studies have shown that stress and other health challenges that are related to workload can be managed to enable lecturers cope with the level of workload in the universities. The study believes that with proper management of workload and all the attendant challenges, lecturers can still perform their duties effectively and achieve the set goals of university education. There are indications that if lecturers that have heavy loaded with work especially the professors get assistants to assist them in some of their work, there will be a reduction in the level of stress suffered by them. In the universities, lecturers are graded into graduate assistant, lecturer II, lecturer I, senior lecturer, associate professor or reader and professor. However, if work schedules are graded according to lecturers' cadre, certain responsibilities supposed to go to junior lecturers in order to reduce the workload of the senior ones. More so, regular medical checkups, vacation trips/tours, rest, sleep and relaxation and physical exercises are few strategies that can help the lecturers manage heavy workloads.

The study went further to examine the impact of excess workload on the service delivery of lecturers in the university. The excess workload may show either positive or negative impact or both. These according to Orluwene (2013), include: lecturer's burnout, poor performance/productivity, reduced lifespan of personnel, frequent breakdown of health structure of lecturers, reduction in cost of service, acquisition of diverse experiences and brain drain. It is noticed that the excess workload has economic importance to both the organization and the employees in a way.

According to Orluwene (2013), speaking in affirmation to this proposition, that burnout involves prolonged exposure to physical, social and psychological stress, which renders the individual physically and emotionally exhausted. However, the state of any lecturer under this condition will definitely reduce the productivity and decrease the quality of service delivery. Hence, it is worthy to state that burnout can lead to mental retardation, physical weakness, vulnerabilities to sicknesses, etc. According to Smith, Segal, Robinson and Segal (2018:14), burnout could show the following symptoms are; feeling tired and drained always, frequent headaches and/or muscle pain, lowered immunity and frequent sickness, change in appetite and sleep habit, sense of failure and self doubt, feeling helpless and trapped, loss of motivation, decreased satisfaction and loss of sense of accomplishment, isolation and withdrawal from people; and living on drugs, alcohol, etc, as a coping strategy.

Nnabuike, Onyeizugbe and Onwuka (2012) recommended that burnout individuals can deal with burnout in the following ways: reaching out to those closest to them for help, developing sociable tendencies among the colleagues, setting aside time for sleep, sports, recreation and relaxation, and engaging in physical exercise. In a nutshell, job burnout emanates from one's work. However, anyone who feels overworked or undervalued is at the risk of burnout. And the primary effect of burnout is to reduce the level of productivity and drain energy meant for productive activities.

Heavy workload if prolonged is usually detrimental to the physical, mental and emotional well-being of employees. However, whenever the employees are affected health wise, it will be impossible to render optimum service. In a Viarson, Kleinhenz, Beavis, Barwick Cadfthy and Wilikinson in Orluwene (2013:141) reports that "almost all teachers described their workload as heavy, and that at certain peak periods when their workload exceeds their capacity to manage, their teaching effectiveness and efficiencies are negatively affected due to stress associated with their works". Therefore, experts have asserted that prolonged heavy workload on staff could cause depression,

pressure, anxiety, etc to employees; thereby leading to ineffectiveness and inefficiency in their work. In all, the performance and the productivity of that particular lecturer will be very low and poor.

Excess workload is highly detrimental to health and life span of employees. In previous sections, it was cited that heavy workload have the tendencies of causing stress, depression, absent-mindedness and pressure, which are tantamount to causing severe consequences in the lives of lecturers such as aggression, anxiety, high blood pressure, breakdown of immune system (Omoniyi, 2013). According to Marcellinus (2018) , the lecturer is a coach, a mentor and a facilitator, and the presence of the lecturer in the class is highly needed to facilitate the task of learning and character building.

It is a clear term and a well-known fact that lecturers, and generally employees prefers favourable, comfortable and peaceful working environments and conditions. Aside the intrinsic motivational factors, most employees are highly motivated by the extrinsic factors. Therefore, a highly tensioned and pressured environment will certainly detest most employees, which may lead to mobility to other sectors or other organizations (Akobundu, 2017). The researcher posits that, in most universities, due to shortage of staff or the management decision to minimize cost, most lecturers may be overloaded with more courses, engaged in several programmes and having contacts with more number of students, this is typically a case of excess workload.

In order to strike a balance, it is important to note that excess workload is not completely on the negative narrative, but it also poses some advantages to both the organization and the individual. However, most organizations may see the habit of overloading staff with works as a blessing in disguise. It is believed that the practice will minimize cost, while revenue and profit will be maximized. Ogubonnaya (2012) therefore advises that higher educational institutions should not focus on profit maximization at the expense of quality education since education is a social service. Meanwhile, the social demand approach (SDA) views education as a social service that is demanded by the public or community, just like any other social amenities provided from the public fund; hence, the cost of education is referred to as a social cost (Ebong, 2006).

It could also be seen as beneficial for the sake of diverse wealth of experience on different aspects of jobs. For instance, lecturers who are appointed into various directorates and committees in the university are bound to gain exposure and ideas in the new tasks. In most cases, most lecturers get extra pay for undertaking an extra task. This makes it very juicy and also boosts morale for doing the job. However, the long run resultant effect could be very grievous. Contrary to the theory of division of labour and specializations postulated by Adams Smith in 1776 published in his book “The Wealth of Nations”, where an individual is supposed to specialize and concentrate on one type or aspect of job, but lecturers are so engaged in different aspects of job schedules in the university.

### **Statement of the Problem**

There is a general observation that sometimes lecturers are absent in their classes. Sometimes, information comes to the students that the lecturer is indisposed; either he is engaged in other administrative activities in the university or he is receiving medical treatment in the hospital. Lecturers are often seen so stressed and worn-out and they experience premature aging, frequent breakdown and lots more. It is also very tragic to see lecturers slump frequently in classes or meeting halls, some are stroked and suffer paralysis, and eventually may suffer untimely deaths. In most cases, when these happen, according to African belief, accusing fingers are always pointed to perceived enemies, witches and wizards. Far from this, experts and studies have shown that heavy workloads could cause serious danger on health of employees. According to Thompson (2016) and American Psychological Association in Osaat and Ekechukwu (2017), heavy workloads can have negative impacts on the health and general wellbeing of employees, which can lead to stress, high blood pressure, frustration, anxiety, cardiovascular diseases and many more. In a situation where the employees are not in a stable state of mind, poor health conditions, poor physical fitness, the quality of services rendered will be reduced, ineffectiveness will set in and the clients (students) will not be properly treated and served. In the same vein, excess workload among lecturers in the universities can generate stress and other health challenges that lead to poor delivery of the primary functions of lecturers to the students in the universities.

Perhaps, this is one of the reasons why we have mechanical engineers from Nigerian universities, who cannot change the plug or engine oil of their cars and such similar tendencies from various fields of study across Nigerian universities. This could also be the reason why there is high rate of examination malpractices among students in tertiary institutions. It is these observed outcomes that poise the

curiosity of this study to query the modus operandi' of the university in terms of workload allocation. Why are lecturers loaded with so many responsibilities alongside the responsibility of teaching and learning in the universities to the extent that such loads weigh down the quality of services rendered to the students? Therefore, the problem of the study is to investigate the implication of excess workload of lecturers on quality service delivery in universities in the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria.

#### **Aim and Objectives of the Study**

The aim of this study was to investigate the implication of excess workload of lecturers for quality service delivery in universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. identify the factors that constitutes excess workload to lecturers in Universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria.
2. determine the challenges posed by excess workload to quality service delivery in Universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria.

#### **Research Questions**

1. What constitutes excess workload to lecturers in Universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria?
2. What are the challenges posed by excess workload to quality service delivery in Universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria?

#### **Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

- HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of HOD and lecturers on the factors that constitute excess workload of lecturers in Universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria
- HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of HOD and other lecturers on the challenge posed by excess workload to quality service delivery in Universities in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria

#### **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted the descriptive survey research design. The population of this study referred to all lecturers in the identified institutions in the South-South Geo-political Zone. From the available data, there are seven federal universities in the region, which are Federal University, Otuoke, Bayelsa State (FUO); Federal University of Petroleum Resources, Effurun, Delta State, (FUPRE); Nigerian Maritime University, Gbaramatu, Delta State (NMUG); University of Benin, Benin, Edo State; University of Calabar, Calabar, Cross River State (UNICAL), University of Port Harcourt, Port Harcourt, Rivers State (UNIPOINT) and University of Uyo, Uyo (UNIUYO). The population for this study is 6,892 made up of 5096 males and 1796 females in the six accessible universities. While the sample for this study was six hundred and eighty-nine (689) lecturers drawn out from the population using the proportionate sampling technique. Out of the 6,892 lecturers, 475 of them were Heads of Departments (HODs). Since the number of HODs were not large enough, the whole population of the HOD was used as sample size. Therefore, out 689 sample, HODs were 475.

The instrument used for data collection is titled "Questionnaire for Excess Workload of Lecturers for Quality Service Delivery in Universities (QEWLQSDU)". A 12-item instrument was validated by two other experts in Educational Management, Measurement and Evaluation. The reliability was tested using the Cronbach Alpha Statistics with alpha coefficient of 0.75. The instruments were administered directly to the respondents. They were retrieved after filling and used for the analysis. The data collected was analyzed using the mean, standard deviation and rank order for research questions while the hypotheses were tested using z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance, while the questionnaire items were accepted at 2.5 mean score.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Research Question 1:** *What constitutes excess workload to lecturers in universities in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria?*

**Table 1: Mean rating on what constitute workload to lecturers in the universities**

S/N	Questionnaire items	HODs			Lecturers				Remark	
		$\sum fx$	$\bar{x}$	SD	Rank order	$\sum fx$	$\bar{x}$	SD		Rank order
1	A class that exceeds 50:1 ratio of student-teacher ratio	1327	2.79	1.10	5 <sup>th</sup>	592	2.77	1.03	4 <sup>th</sup>	Accepted
2	Course allocation to lecturers that exceeds 8-credit hours and 12-credit hours per week per semester for non-science and science departments respectively	1386	2.92	0.93	3 <sup>rd</sup>	611	2.86	0.99	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Accepted
3	Grading/marking of students' scripts that exceeds 2 times the STR/class size	1371	2.88	1.06	4 <sup>th</sup>	611	2.86	0.98	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Accepted
4	Supervision of students' projects that exceeds 5 students per week per semester	1407	2.96	0.93	2 <sup>nd</sup>	607	2.84	0.97	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Accepted
5	Allocation of same courses to same lecturers in regular, part-time and distant learning programmes	1298	2.73	0.95	6 <sup>th</sup>	607	2.84	0.89	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Accepted
6	A combination of teaching and administrative responsibilities for same lecturers amount to heavy workload	1415	2.98	0.92	1 <sup>st</sup>	622	2.91	1.00	1 <sup>st</sup>	Accepted
<b>Mean of mean &amp; SD</b>		<b>2.88 0.98</b>			<b>2.85 0.98</b>					

Table 1 analyzed research question 5 on what factors that constitute excess workload to quality service delivery of lecturers in the universities. Item 25 had a mean of 2.79 and a SD of 1.10 for Heads of Departments, while lecturers had a mean of 2.77 and SD of 1.03. Item 26 had a mean of 2.92 and SD of 0.93 for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean of 2.86 and SD of 0.99. Item 27 had a mean of 2.88 and SD of 1.06 for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean of 2.96 and SD of 0.93 for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean of 2.84 with SD of 0.97. Item 29 had a mean of 2.73 and SD of 0.95 for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean of 2.84 and SD of 0.89. Item 30 had a mean of 2.98 and SD of 0.92 for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean of 2.91 and SD of 1.00. The mean of mean for HODs is 2.88 while that of Lecturers is 2.85. All the items on the table were accepted by the respondents as to what constitute excess workload for lecturers in the universities in South-South geopolitical zone

**Research Question 2:** *What are the challenges posed by excess workload to quality service delivery in universities in south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria?*

**Table 2: Mean rating of respondents on challenges of excess workload to quality service delivery in universities**

S/N	Questionnaire items	HODs				Lecturers				Remark
		$\sum fx$	$\bar{x}$	SD	Rank order	$\sum fx$	$\bar{x}$	SD	Rank order	
7	Lecturer's burnout could result in poor performance and low productivity of lecturers	1397	2.94	0.88	2nd	609	2.85	1.03	2nd	Accepted
8	Frequent breakdown of the health and physical fitness, and reduced lifespan and sudden demise of lecturers	1335	2.81	0.94	6th	624	2.92	0.99	1st	Accepted
9	Brain drain of lecturers to institution/countries with more favourable conditions of service	1417	2.98	0.93	1st	624	2.92	0.87	1st	Accepted
10	Poor academic performance of students at internal, international and professional examinations	1373	2.89	0.86	3rd	586	2.74	1.08	3rd	Accepted
11	Production of half-baked, unskilled and unemployable graduates	1345	2.83	0.89	4th	541	2.53	1.02	5th	Accepted
12	Inability of the lecturers to write and publish quality research paper for knowledge development	1341	2.85	0.96	5th	549	2.57	1.04	4th	Accepted
<b>Mean of mean &amp; SD</b>			<b>2.88</b>	<b>0.91</b>			<b>2.76</b>	<b>1.01</b>		

Table 2 was used to analyze research question 6 on the challenges posed by excess workload as where the head of departments and lecturers were respondents. Item 31 had a mean of 2.94 and SD of 0.88 for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean of 2.85 and SD of 1.03. Item 32 had a mean of 2.81 and SD of 0.94 for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean of 2.92 and SD of 0.99. Item 33 had a mean score of 2.98 and 0.93 as SD for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean of 2.92 and SD of 0.87. Item 34 had a mean of 2.89 and SD of 0.86 for HODs, while Lecturers has a mean of 2.74 and SD of 1.08. Item 35 had a mean of 2.83 and SD of 0.89 for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean score of 2.59 and SD of 1.02. Item 36 had a mean score of 2.82 and SD of 0.96 for HODs, while Lecturers had a mean score of 2.57 and SD of 1.04. The mean of mean for HODs is 2.88 while that of the Lecturers is 2.76. A further analysis based on the mean of mean shows that both the HODs and Lecturers accepted all the items.

**Test of Hypotheses**

The null hypotheses were tested with the z-test statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance.

**Hypothesis One**

**HO<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of Heads of Departments and lecturers on the factors that constitute excess workload of lecturers in the universities in the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria.

**Table 3: z-test analysis of HODs and Lecturers on what constitute excess workload of lecturers in the universities**

Variable	Category	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Std error	Df	Level of sig	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Factors that constitute excess workload	HODs	475	2.88	0.98	0.08	687	0.05	0.37	$\pm 1.96$	Ho5 Accepted
	Lecturers	214	2.85	0.98						Not significant

Table 3 shows that the z-test calculated value is 0.37 while the critical or table value is  $\pm 1.96$  at 687 degree of freedom at 0.05 level of significance, with a standard error of 0.08. Therefore, since the z-

test calculated is less than the table value, the null hypothesis equally stands accepted. This revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of HODs and Lecturers on the factors that constitute excess workload of lecturers in the universities in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

**Hypothesis Two**

**HO<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant difference between the mean rating of Heads of Departments and lecturers on the challenges posed by excess workload to quality service delivery in the universities in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

**Table 4: z-test analysis of HODs and Lecturers on the challenges of excess workload to quality service delivery in the universities**

Variable	Category	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	Std error	Df	Level of sig	z-cal	z-crit	Decision
Challenges posed by excess workload	HODs	475	2.88	0.91	0.08	687	0.05	1.48	$\pm 1.96$	Ho <sub>6</sub> Accepted
	Lecturers	214	2.76	1.01						Not significant

Table 4 tested hypothesis 2 on the significant difference between HODs and Lecturers on the challenges posed by excess workload on quality service delivery in the universities in the south-south geopolitical zone. The table revealed that the z-test calculated is 1.48 at 0.5 level of significance, which was less than the table value  $\pm 1.96$  at 687 degree of freedom with a standard error of 0.08. Since the z-test calculated is less than the table value, the null hypothesis is accepted. This therefore implies that there is no significant difference between the mean rating between Heads of Departments and lecturers on the challenges posed by excess workload to quality service delivery in universities in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

**DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

After a statistical analysis of the study, the following findings are discussed under the following sub-headings:

**The factors that constitute excess workload to lecturers in the universities**

This study used research question 1 and hypothesis 1 to analyze the factors that constitute excess workload to lecturers in the universities and the finding revealed thus: that when class size exceed 50:1 students-teacher ratio, the respondents believed that it is excess workload, course allocation that exceeds 8-credit hours and 12-credit hours per week per semester for non-science and science courses respectively, also amounts to excess workload. The grading and marking of students’ scripts that exceeds 2 times the class size is also excess workload. Equally, supervision of students’ projects that exceeds 5 students per week per semester is also excess workload. The allocation of courses to the same lecturers in regular, part-time and distance learning programme amount to excess workload. According to the respondents, they also opined that a combination of teaching and administrative responsibilities for some lecturers amount to heavy workload. The factors that constitute excess workload to lecturers was analyzed in table 1 and 3 using the Heads of Departments and lecturers as respondents, where the hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance using z-test statistical tool. The result shows that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of HODs and Lecturers on the factors that constitute excess workload of lecturers in universities in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria.

**The challenges posed by excess workload to quality service delivery in universities**

Responses to research question 2 as shown on table 2, where the respondents revealed the challenges posed by excess workload as lecturers’ burnout which could result to poor performance and low productivity, frequent breakdown of health and physical fitness, reduction of life span and sudden death of lecturers. To them also, excess workload could cause brain drain to institution and countries with more favourable condition of service, the challenges include poor academic performance of students at internal, international and professional examinations. The challenges also included the production of half-baked, unskilled and unemployable graduates from the universities. There is also the inability of the lecturers to write and publish quality research papers for knowledge development.



The challenges posed by excess workload on lecturers are numerous. These were however the opinions of both heads of department and lecturers. This is further demonstrated from the findings of hypothesis 2, which revealed that there is no significant difference between the mean rating of HODs and Lecturers on the challenges posed by excess workload to quality service delivery in the universities in the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria.

## **CONCLUSION**

The problem of managing increased students' enrollment that are not equated to the recruitment of staff strength. This in turns, result in heavy workload on the existing workforce which brings about poor quality of educational output and overcrowded research and other non-teaching activities. This could also lead to anxiety, physiological reactions such as fatigue, backache, headache, etc. This could pose different challenges to quality service delivery in the universities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The paper put forward the following recommendations:

1. The effects of excess workload can equally be seen from poor academic performance of students. IT is hereby recommended that universities develop workload allocation model which must be accessible to all the lecturers and strict adherence to the workload model so developed. Hence, HODs and lecturers should know the carrying capacity of their various departments to avoid breakdown of the health and physical fitness of lecturers.
2. Non compliance with workload criteria and excess workload have been revealed as to reducing the life span and causing sudden demise of lecturers. It is therefore important, that lecturers must regularly engage in physical exercises, vacations and recreational activities.
3. Lecturers whose workload are heavy or more should be able to delegate certain duties to the subordinates and help to mentor others under them, this will facilitate quality service delivery.

## **REFERENCES**

- Ahukannah, L. I. (2017). *Commerce for senior secondary schools*. African-feb Publishers.
- Akobundu, J.N. (2017). *Workplace stress of female librarians in national library of Nigeria, Abuja*. <https://scholargoogle.com>.
- Dogora, B. (2017). *Excess workload computation for Nigerian university system*. A paper presentation at Usman Dan Fodiyo University, Sokoto. <https://www.nwri.gov.ng>.
- Ebong, J. M. (2006). *Understanding economics of education*. Eagle Lithograph Press.
- Ekanem, E. E. (2016). Average class size distribution effects on students' social well-being in University teacher education programmes in Cross River State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Education Research*, 4(3), 23-31.
- Emenalo, F.C. (2016) Towards sustainability of higher education in Nigeria. In C.M. Uche, S.C. Anyamele, L. Nwikina and J.N.O. Meenyinikor (Eds), *Administration and organization of higher education: Theories, tasks and techniques*. Port Harcourt: University of Port Harcourt Press.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2014). *The prospectus/course credit system for undergraduate students*. Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2017a). *The role of SERVICOM in Nigerian universities*. National Universities Commission.
- Federal Republic of Nigeria (2017b). *National policy on Education*. Nigeria Educational Research and Development Council (NERDC).
- Federal Republic of Nigeria, (1979). The University of Port Harcourt. Decree 84, section 1(3a) – (3c).
- Jaiyeoba, A.O. & Ademola, A.I (2008). Re-engineering tertiary education (university) for sustainable development in Nigeria. In J.B. Babalola, L. Popoola, A. Onuka, S. Oni, W. Olatokun and R. Agolador (Eds). *Reforming higher education in Africa*. Higher Education Research and Policy Network.
- Marcellinus, F. (2018). *The totality of a teacher*. Aba: Goodway ventures.

- Nnabuiife, E. Onyeizugbe, C. & Onwuka, E. (2012). Stress management and occupational performance among female lecturers in Nigeria. *African Journal of Social Sciences*, 2(3), 166-174.
- Ogbonnaya, N. (2012). *Foundations of education finance*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Onitsha: Hallman publishers.
- Ogbu, F.A. (2000). A mathematical model for excess workload allowance in Nigerian Universities. *Global Journal of Pure and Applied Sciences*. 6(4),709-712.
- Omoniye, M.B.I. (2013). *Sources of workplace stressors among university lecturers in south west Nigeria: implication for counseling*. 1<sup>st</sup> annual international interdisciplinary conference (conference proceedings) AIIC, Azores, Portugal, 1(1) 24-26.
- Orluwene, G.W. (2013). Teachers' workload and stress management. In J.D. Asodike, J.M. Ebong, S.O. Oluwuo and N.M. Abraham (Eds). *Contemporary administrative and teaching issues in Nigerian schools*. Owerri, Alphabet Nigeria Publishers.
- Osaat, D.S. & Ekechukeu, R. (2017). Managing workload of academic staff for job effectiveness in Nigerian universities: A study of University of Port Harcourt in South-south Geo-political zone of Nigeria. *Internal journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)* 4(12), Pp. 102-108.
- Perks, S. (2013). Academic workload: A model approach. Retrieved from: <https://www.the.gurdain.com>.
- Smith, M., Segal, J., Robinson, L., & Segal, R. (2018). Burnout prevention and treatment: Techniques for dealing with overwhelming stress. HELPGUIDE.OGR-Online publisher. Retrieved from <https://www.helpguide.org>.
- Thompson, S. (2016). *Negative effects of heavy workload*. HEARST Newspaper, 2016. [work.chron.com/10097.html](http://work.chron.com/10097.html).
- Zwalchir, L. & Buenyen, H.N. (2009). Workload management in the school system. In J.B. Babalola and A.O. Ayeni (Eds). *Educational management theories and tasks*. (pp.833-838). MacMillan Nigeria Publishers Ltd.