



## MANAGING WORKLOAD AND LECTURERS EFFECTIVENESS IN SOUTHWEST NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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### ABSTRACTS

*This study ascertained the extent to which components of workload management predict lecturers' effectiveness of university lecturers in Southwest, Nigeria. Descriptive research of survey design was adopted for the study. A sample of 600 university lecturers was selected for the study through purposive sampling technique. Two instruments namely "Managing Workload Questionnaire (MWLQ)" and "Lecturers' Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ)" were used for data collection. The face and content validities of the instruments were established. The two instruments were validated by the experts through face and content validity. The reliability of the instruments was done using test-re-test method with MWLQ and LEQ yielding the reliability coefficients of 0.88 and 0.85 respectively. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. Results showed that: teaching a large class, supervising more than five students' theses/dissertations, and projects in a semester, handling more than five courses in a semester among others are the factors that constitute workload in university system. It was also revealed that the strategies to manage workload such as: manage time appropriately, Prioritise the various works, always taking a short break in whatever work one does, appointment of lecturers into various offices should be well distributed, analysis of one's responsibilities adequately, adequate payment of overtime allowance to lecturers to enhance health checkups, earned academic allowance should be regularly paid to lecturers, lecturers who already occupied in a position should not be engaged in more other appointments, efforts to employ more lecturers to avoid one lecturer teaching very large classes, lecturers should learn to say no when they are to face with so many works jointly contribute to lecturers' effectiveness in Southwest Nigerian Universities. Based on the findings of the study, recommendations were made among which is that; government should*



*ensure that universities in Southwest Nigeria are adequately staffed to reduce the level of workload on university lecturers.*

**KEYWORDS:** Workload, Teaching, Effectiveness, University Lecturers,

## **INTRODUCTION**

Workloads are the duties or all the tasks carried out by workers in the course of their activities in their work place. Relating it to the lecturers, workloads are professional and non-professional duties carried out by the lecturers in the course of their activities in the instruction of students. Lecturers are the greatest assets as well as the major stakeholders in the university industry. Their main work is to teach and bring up the young generation of students to acquire skills and knowledge for growth and development. Teaching is a difficult task and demands serious commitment to be effective. Teaching involves adequate preparation of what to be taught through researches, regularity and punctuality to the class to implement what had been prepared. Teaching extends to evaluating the students through test, assignments and examinations, and particularly teaching extends to marking of examination scripts and production of results.

When it comes to student learning and achievement the lecturers are at the centre stage. Though other factors like student emotional stability and poor infrastructural facilities play their roles against students' achievement, the roles of the teachers matter a lot. It was observed that the poor performance of students in their examinations, leading to students engaging in examination malpractice to get their ways out of the school is a testimony that enough has not been done by the lecturers.

It appears lecturers are not really drilling the students the way it ought to be, which could pose menace in the university system. It seems lecturers do not attend to students as required which might be due to rampant sicknesses and sudden deaths among lecturers especially in university which could be as a result of much workload on their parts and attendants stress. A lot needs to be done to manage this problem of workload in university system so that lecturers would work and live to work another day. Observation has shown that lecturers are teaching very large classes as against NUC recommendation of 12 students to 1 lecturer (ASUU, 2010).



Most often these additional works tend to enlarge the workload of lecturers and make the load excessive. The resultant effect is the accompanying stress with its attendant health problems. The extent of lecturers efficiency and effectiveness in their primary responsibility most often may not be guaranteed in the face of all these workload and their accompany stress. Though it is not entirely possible to rule stress out of any work yet, much stress could be caused by much work load and this can lead to so many dangers. In fact according to the American Psychological Association (2002), one of the things that cause stress among workers is overwork (excess work load).

Today researchers have proven that job related stress has negative effect on the individual. Stress has been proven to be a major contributor to some diseases that can impede the individual from achieving work effectiveness such as cardiac arrest, mental disorder, and hypertension. It was observed that the various deaths among lecturers could be as a result of stressful situations arising from workload of lecturers. The need therefore to minimize this ugly trend in the system cannot be over emphasized. Effective management of workload could go a long way in reducing stress and its attendant's health problems thereby making the lecturers effective in attending to their responsibilities.

One thing is to work and the other is to achieve effectiveness in such a work. Ordinarily when there is a normal workload, there is the tendency that a worker would achieve, but when the workload is much or excess in quantity and quality there is the likelihood that the worker may not perform well. No wonder Ignarson, Klemlewz, Bearis, Barrick, Carthy & Wilikinan (2005) reported that almost all teachers describe their workload as heavy and that at certain peak periods when their workload exceeds their capacity to manage their teaching effectiveness and efficiency are negatively affected. In fact according to them, excess workload leading to stress causes lack of concentration which in turn affects level of effectiveness. According to Ekechukwu & Isiguzo (2016), who opined that stress and excess workload leads to inefficiency and death.

Frustration is expressed with the additional demands on time outside work which impinges on family and personal life (Muchinsly, 2003). That most often workers carry over official duties to the home which also result to work / family conflict. So balancing them according to Orluwene (2013) leads to frustration.



A frustrated person cannot be effective. When the home front is affected, the lecturer is insecure and on the verge of burnout. Ekechukwu (2016) Overload of work can also lead to development of deviant behaviour among workers. According to Porath (2000) such deviant behaviours include lateness, absenteeism, poor decision making, bad judgment, nagging, sleeping on duty, insults, threats, sabotage, physical violence, and burnout. Too much work in quantity and quality that demand thinking can also lead to restlessness and sleeplessness in the bid to accomplish the tasks. It may also lead to role conflict, frustration, emotional exhaustion, cynicism and poor personal accomplishment, which are symptoms of burnout (Ekechukwu, 2010). Therefore, the study intends to investigate the strategies to manage workload among university lecturers so as to enhance effectiveness in university system.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to examine the relationship between managing workload and lecturers' effectiveness in Southwest Nigerian universities. Specifically the study is to investigate:

- i. the level of lecturers' effectiveness in Southwest Nigeria?
- ii. the factors that constitute workload among lecturers in Southwest Nigerian Universities
- iii. the strategies to manage workload among lecturers

### **Research Questions**

- i. What is the level of lecturers' effectiveness in Southwest Nigeria?
- ii. What are the factors that constitute workload among lecturers in Southwest Nigerian Universities?
- iii. What are the strategies to manage workload in Southwest Nigerian Universities?

### **Hypotheses**

The following hypotheses were formulated for the study:

- i. There is no significant relationship between workload and lecturers' effectiveness in Southwest Nigerian Universities?



- ii. There is no significant relationship between the factors that constitute workload and lecturers' Effectiveness in Southwest Nigerian Universities?
- iii. There is no significant relationship between the strategies to manage workload in Southwest Nigerian Universities.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted the descriptive research design of the survey type. The population of the study comprised all the 11,282 lecturers in public universities in Southwest Nigeria. The sample for this study consisted of 600 respondents. Multi-stage procedure which involved, simple random, and purposive sampling techniques was used to select sample for the study. First stage involved the use of simple random sampling techniques to select 3 states out of the six states in Southwest Nigeria. Second stage involved the use of Purposive sampling technique to select 6 universities (3 state owned universities, 3 federal owned universities). The third stage involved the use of simple random sampling technique to select 100 lecturers from each of the selected universities making a total of 600 respondents. Two set of instruments tagged "Managing Workload Questionnaire (MWLQ)" and "Lecturers' Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ)" were used for the study. The two instruments were validated by experts through face and content validity. The reliability of the instruments was done using test-re-test method with MWLQ and LEQ yielding the reliability coefficients of 0.88 and 0.85 respectively. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. All the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Discussions of the findings were presented at the end of the analysis.

### **Research Question 1**

What is the level of lecturers' effectiveness in universities in Southwest Nigeria?

In answering this question, scores on lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria were used. Mean score, frequency counts and percentages were used to illustrate the responses to items 1- 40 in Section B of "Lecturers' Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ)". To determine the level of lecturers' effectiveness in Southwest



Nigeria (low, moderate and high), the mean score and standard deviation of the responses on lecturers were used.

The low level of lecturers' effectiveness in Southwest Nigeria was determined by subtracting the standard deviation score from the mean score ( $115.70 - 17.04 = 98.66$ ). The moderate level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria was determined by the mean score of the responses on academic staff effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria (115.70) while high level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria was determined by adding the standard deviation score to the mean score ( $115.70 + 17.04 = 132.74$ ). Therefore, the low level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria starts from 40.00-98.66; the moderate level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria starts from 98.67- 132.73 and the high level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria is from 132.74 –200.00. The level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria

Level of lecturers' effectiveness	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low (40.00 – 98.66)	90	15.0
Moderate (98.67 – 132.73)	450	75.0
High (132.74 –200.00)	60	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 1 shows the level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria. The result shows that 90 respondents representing 15.0% of the total sample had low level of effectiveness. Those who had moderate level of effectiveness were 450 representing 75.0% while those with high level of effectiveness were 60 representing 10.0%. This shows that the level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria was moderate.



## Research Question 2

What are the factors that constitute workload in Southwest Nigerian Universities?

In answering the question, responses on Items 1-11 of factors that constitute workload in Southwest Nigerian Universities were obtained and subjected to statistical analysis using frequency counts, percentages and mean scores. The result is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2:** The factors that constitute workload in public universities in Southwest Nigeria

S/N	Items	Yes		No		Mean	S/D	Rank
		N	%	N	%			
1	Teaching a large class constitutes workload	416	69.3	184	30.7	1.69	0.461	1 <sup>st</sup>
2	Supervising more than five students' theses, dissertations and projects constitutes workload	267	44.5	333	55.5	1.44	0.497	4 <sup>th</sup>
3	Lecturers handling more than five courses in a semester is excess work	272	45.3	328	54.7	1.45	0.498	3 <sup>rd</sup>
4	Involving lecturers in different committees of the university constitutes workload	322	53.7	278	46.3	1.54	0.499	2 <sup>nd</sup>
5	Attending various university committee meetings constitutes workload	243	40.5	357	59.5	1.41	0.491	5 <sup>th</sup>
6	Involvement of lecturers in adjunct lecturing contributes to workload	204	34.0	396	66.0	1.34	0.474	6 <sup>th</sup>
7	Making publication of articles in reputable journals a criterion for promotion could constitutes workload	183	30.5	417	69.5	1.31	0.461	9 <sup>th</sup>
8	Teaching sandwich/part-time students contributes to lecturers workload	195	32.5	405	67.5	1.32	0.469	8 <sup>th</sup>
9	Supervision of exams and marking of too many exams scripts contribute to lecturers' workload	192	32.0	408	68.0	1.32	0.467	7 <sup>th</sup>
10	Attending department/faculty board meetings contributes to lecturers' workload	184	30.7	416	69.3	1.31	0.461	9 <sup>th</sup>
11	Lecturers acting as students' academic advisors contribute to workload	165	27.5	435	72.5	1.28	0.447	11 <sup>th</sup>
	<b>Average</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>1.50</b>	<b>0.475</b>	

Table 2 shows the factors that constitute workload in Southwest Nigerian Universities. The result shows that 69.3% of the total sample indicated teaching a large class constitutes



workload 44.5% reported lecturers are supervising more than five students' theses/dissertations and projects constitutes workload while 45.3% indicated lecturers handling more than five courses in a semester is excess work. Other factors in terms of workload include: involving lecturer in different committees of the university constitutes workload (53.7%), attending various university committee meetings constitutes workload (40.5%), involvement of lecturers in adjunct lecturing contributes to workload (34%), Making publication of articles in reputable journals a criterion for promotion could constitutes workload (30.5%), Teaching sandwich/part-time students contributes to lecturers workload (32.5%), Supervision of exams and marking of too many exams scripts contribute to lecturers' workload (32%), Attending department/faculty board meetings contributes to lecturers' workload (30.7%) and Lecturers acting as students' academic advisors contribute to workload (27.5%).

Using a cut off mean score of 1.50 for the rating scale, only items 1 and 4 had mean scores above the cut off point. This implies that teaching a class of more than thirty undergraduate students, supervising more than five students' theses, dissertations, and projects, lecturers handling more than five courses in a semester, involving lecturers in different committees of the university, attending various university committee meetings, teaching sandwich/part-time students, supervision of exams and marking of too many exams scripts, and lecturers acting as students' advisors constitute workload among university lecturers.

### **Research Question 3**

What are the strategies to manage workload in Southwest Nigerian Universities?

In answering the question, responses on Items 12-20 of were obtained and subjected to statistical analysis involving frequency counts, percentages and mean scores. The result is presented in Table 3.





iv. **Table 3:** The Strategies to Manage Workload in Southwest Nigerian Universities?

S/N	Items	Agree		Strongly Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		Mean
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Managing time appropriately	116	19.3	206	34.3	142	23.7	136	22.7	2.50
2	Prioritizing the various works,	57	9.5	150	25.0	204	34.0	189	31.5	2.12
3	Always taking a short break in whatever work one does,	66	11.0	124	20.7	200	33.3	210	35.0	2.08
4	Appointment of lecturers into various offices should be well distributed,	67	11.2	111	18.5	220	36.7	202	33.7	2.07
5	Analysis of one's responsibilities adequately	73	12.2	103	17.2	178	29.7	246	41.0	2.01
6	Adequate payment of overtime allowance to lecturers to enhance health checkups	58	9.7	97	16.2	192	32.0	253	42.2	1.93
7	Earned academic allowance should be regularly paid to lecturers,	53	8.8	107	17.8	213	35.5	227	37.8	1.98
8	Lecturers who already occupy a position should not be engaged in other appointments	35	5.8	116	19.3	245	40.8	204	34.0	1.97
9	Efforts to employ more lecturers to avoid one lecturer teaching very large number of students.	64	10.7	109	18.2	189	31.5	238	39.7	2.00
	<b>Average</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>10.9</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>20.8</b>	<b>198</b>	<b>33.0</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>35.3</b>	<b>2.07</b>



Table 3 shows that the lecturers agreed with all the items as strategies to cope with workload. This implies that lecturers' effectiveness can be enhanced if workload is properly managed in public universities in Southwest Nigeria.

## Testing of Hypotheses

### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between workload and Lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to workload and staff effectiveness were computed using items in Managing Workload Questionnaire (MWLQ) and Lecturers' Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ) and subjected to statistical analysis involving Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The result is presented in Table 1.

**Table 4:** Managing Workload and Lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria

Variable	N	Mean	SD	$r_{cal}$	$r_{table}$
Workload	600	113.15	22.72	0.549*	0.062
Lecturer' effectiveness	600	115.70	17.04		

\* $p > 0.05$

Table 4 shows that  $r_{cal}(0.549)$  is greater than  $r_{table}(0.062)$  at 0.05 level of significance. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between Managing Workload and lectures' effectiveness. The relationship between Workload and lecturers' effectiveness is moderate and statistically significant in a positive direction.



## Hypothesis 2

**Table 5:** The Factors that Constitute Workload and Lecturers' Effectiveness

Variable	N	Mean	SD	$r_{cal}$	$r_{table}$
Managing workload	600	18.66	6.18	0.433*	0.062
Lecturers effectiveness	600	115.70	17.04		

\* $p < 0.05$

There is no significant relationship between the factors that constitute workload and lecturers' effectiveness in public universities in Southwest Nigeria.

In order to test the hypothesis, scores relating to the factors that constitute workload and lecturers' effectiveness were computed using items in Managing workload (MWLQ) and Lecturers' Effectiveness Questionnaire (LEQ) and subjected to statistical analysis involving Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The result is presented in Table 4.

**Table 6:** Capacity for the use of ICT and Lecturers' Effectiveness

Variable	N	Mean	SD	$r_{cal}$	$r_{table}$
Capacity for the use of ICT	600	18.66	6.18	0.433*	0.062
Lecturers' effectiveness	600	115.70	17.04		

\* $p > 0.05$

Table 9 shows that  $r_{cal}(0.433)$  is greater  $r_{table}(0.062)$  at 0.05 level of significance.

The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between the factors that constitute workload and lecturers' effectiveness. The relationship between the factors that constitute workload and lecturers' effectiveness is moderate and statistically significant in a positive direction.

## DISCUSSION

The study showed that the level of lecturers' effectiveness in public universities southwest Nigeria was moderate. It implies that teaching, research and community services are good enough to enhance effective teaching/learning process. It could be that both



government and other stakeholders are making concerted efforts to ensure that the lecturers' effectiveness in the universities is enhanced for teaching, research and community services. This was supported with Amadi (2011) who posits that job should be redesigned and rotated so that the duties will be limited for effective performance. It also in line with the finding of Sarmiento (2002) who posits that one way of coping with stress arising from workload is to regularly engage in biofeedback which involves monitoring one's body functions so as to improve one's general health.

The study revealed that lecturers engage in various factors that constitute workloads such as; teaching very large classes, conducting test and examination for large number of classes, Invigilating students examinations under tension due to poor accommodation, producing students' results within limited time, attending to staff meetings on regular basis, Attending seminars for students, supervising undergraduate's projects within limited time, Supervising post graduate projects within limited time, attending to project proposal defence on regular basis , attending to project final defence on regular basis, attending to project final defence on regular basis, attending workshops and conferences regularly, supervising students on community service, Serves as a coordinator of any programme, serves as a director of a programme, serves as examination officer, Serves as student's advisers, Serves as a member of any committee, Continuous writing for publishing. This implies that lecturers are faced with diversities of work that could affect their effectiveness. Ejiogu & Aderounmu in Njoku (2014) noted that academic staffs devote more attention to interacting with others, meetings, meeting deadline pressures and schedules, this backfires on their health.

The results showed that the lecturers agreed with all the items as strategies to cope with workload. The result also agrees with Mayo (2016) who also posits that coping with job related stress includes; organizing time properly, learning to say no, taking a vacation, listening to music among others. It also agrees with Orluwene (2014) who reported that to cope with workload workers should make use of short breaks to take a walk or take a short break for lunch and refreshment and also creating a balanced schedule of responsibilities and daily tasks so that one is not burnout. It also agrees with Susic (2009) who posits that the use of break to step away from work for some time is very essential because it gives the body soul and spirit a period of relaxation.



## CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that there are factors that constitute workload which could hinder lecturers' effectiveness in Southwest Nigerian universities. It was also concluded that lectures are likely to display greater efforts, initiate change and discharge their duties effectively if workload is properly managed.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Sequel to the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Government should pay adequate overtime allowance to lecturers to enhance regular health checkups to stay healthy.
2. Universities should make efforts to employ more lecturers to avoid excess workload among lectures.
3. Lecturers should learn to take short break or vacation from time to time for enhanced effectiveness on the job

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