



Interinstitutional Lecturers' Teaching Workload Challenge in Kenya

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Abstract: Part-time lecturing is a familiar engagement that many lecturers in Kenya undertake. Lecturers are assigned lectures in multiple independent learning institutions in an unregulated manner. Commission for University Education has set guidelines on the maximum lecturer workload but has no way to ensure its adherence. There's the need to monitor lecturers teaching workload all across Kenya. A scrutiny of available literature associated to lecturers' workload management was conducted to establish the gap to be filled by a lecturer's teaching workload monitoring solution. The concurrent triangulation methodology was adopted by this study. The research questions were answered by engaging stakeholders through focus groups. During focus groups, participants acknowledged the need to monitor lecturers' workload to help in policy formulation and ultimately improve lecturers' competency. Further research should be undertaken to help develop and implement a model for monitoring inter institution lecturer's teaching workload in institutions of higher learning in Kenya.

Keywords: limit, model, monitor, policy, stakeholders, teaching workload.

1. Introduction

Recently, there has been an emergence of new higher learning institutions and also for the already established academic institutions, opening branch campuses in every major town is now a norm (Munene, Ishmael, 2016). The percentage of students going for post-secondary education is on a steep rise, superseding the supply of qualified lecturers. This has led to the emergence of part-time lecturing where a single lecturer is assigned lecturers in multiple independent learning institutions (Munene, Ishmael, 2016). Commission for University Education is meant to address the need to regulate, coordinate and assure quality in



university education as a result of growth and expansion of the university sub sector in Kenya (Commission for University Education, 2017).

The United Kingdom Government (Department for Education, 2015), acknowledges the importance of monitoring teachers' workload and they conduct biannual surveys to track teacher workload so that action can be taken if needed. John (Roberts, 2016) highlights the need for technology to reduce a teacher's workload. Commission for University Education has set guidelines on the maximum workload a university should assign to its lectures (Commission for University Education, 2014). Unfortunately, Commission for University Education has no established means that it employs to monitor lecturer's teaching workload. Therefore, there is a need for Commission for University Education to have an avenue to help them monitor the lecturers' teaching workload across the nation. Individual universities should also be provided an avenue which they can use to check the potential lecturer's lessons assigned before employment and also to check monitor the workload of their current lecturer.

2. The Problem

Kenya has become a centre of academics with many university campus branches, colleges and technical institutions setting base within many counties and sub-counties. These institutions offer both full-time and part-time programs. Lectures offer teaching services to all these institutions in an unregulated manner and too often they end up biting more than they can chew in terms of the number of teaching sessions they commit to in a quest to increase their earnings. Workload management enables effective job distribution and facilitates the employees to attain best performance and efficiency levels. Unmonitored inter institution lecturers' teaching workload may lead to conflict of commitment, conflict of interest, fewer publications, fewer supervised students, substandard quality of lecture delivery, family conflict and stress. These and many other adverse effects which unmonitored inter institution lecturer's teaching workload has on a lecturer's overall competency highlights the need for inter-institution lecturers' teaching workload management. Unfortunately, there is no solution whether technological or not that's currently in use by Commission for University Education to monitor the number of lecture hours taken up by any individual lecturer in an academic semester in Kenya.

3. Objectives

The main objective of this research paper was to contribute to the development of a solution to monitoring inter institution lecturers' teaching workload in Kenyan institutions of higher learning". This solution would help monitor each individual lecturer's teaching workload within all the university campuses in Kenya by Commission for University Education. The specific objectives that contribute achieve this main objective were as follows: -

- 1) To scrutinize available literature that exemplify the lecturers' teaching workload problem in Kenyan Institutions of higher learning.
- 2) To determine the effects of excessive lecturer's teaching workload in Kenyan Institutions of higher learning.
- 3) To identify quantitative factors that may be used to evaluate a lecturer's teaching workload in Kenyan Institutions of higher learning.



4. Literature Review

4.1 Excessive Teaching Workload Among Lecturers

Too often, lectures overload themselves or get overloaded by their employer's demands. A basic lecturer's work description includes delivering lectures, seminars and tutorials; designing, preparing and developing teaching materials; developing and implementing new methods of teaching to reflect changes in research; assessing students' coursework; setting and marking examinations; undertaking personal research projects; writing up research and preparing it for publication; supervising students' research activities; completing continuous professional development; representing the institution at professional conferences and seminars (AGCAS Editors, 2015). John Tully, a senior faculty manager at the University of East Anglia describes teaching workload as the time-tabled delivery of a lecture (Tully, 2016). This study focused on lecturers' teaching workload and uses the number of lecture sessions and hours per academic semester to quantify the teaching workload.

An Institution of higher learning is any educational institution that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting commission, or if not so accredited, it has been granted pre-accreditation status by such a commission that has been recognized by the Secretary for the granting of pre-accreditation status, and the Secretary has determined that there is satisfactory assurance that the institution will meet the accreditation standards of such a commission within a reasonable time (U.S Const, amend 2008). In Kenya, the accrediting commission for universities is CUE (Commission for University Education) (KE Const, 2012). Due to the growth and expansion of the university sub sector in Kenya, Commission for University Education was established to address the need to regulate, coordinate and assure quality in university education (Commission for University Education, 2017).

Kenya has been struggling to match university rising enrolments with teaching staff. Commission for University Education points out that those lecturers who engaged in inter institution tutoring experienced increased lecturer workloads and this in turn was hurting their ability to supervise postgraduate students. The number of professors in Kenyan public universities rose by a meagre 11% (238 to 265) over a period of three years (2012-2015) while student numbers soared up by 56% (140,000 to 300,000) over a five-year period (2010-2015). The overall teaching workforce in Kenya's public universities grew by a negligible 8% (4,800 to 5,189) over a three-year period (2012-2015) (Ng'ang'a, 2015). While the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural agency (UNESCO) recommends a ratio of 1:45, the average lecturer to student ratio stood at 1:500 as at 2015. In some instances, the ratio rises to 1:900 students. This shortfall in the number of lecturers instigates some lecturers to take up extra teaching jobs in more than one campus (Wesangula, 2015). This means that one lecturer may teach several units in different university campuses. Workload management enables effective job distribution and facilitates the employees to attain best performance and efficiency levels (Field Promax, 2014).

CUE university standards and guidelines states that "the maximum lecturer workload shall be 40 hours per week and shall include teaching; preparation of examination papers; marking of examination scripts; tutorials; preparation of teaching; supervision of academic work; administrative work; laboratory and laboratory preparation; and research/research assignments" (Commission for University Education, 2014). This policy is the only discernible score that Commission for University Education has racked up in an effort to regulate lecturers' workload. Commission for University Education hasn't gone a step further to devise a way in which they can monitor each individual lecturer's workload across several campuses. Commission for University Education has also no means to keep



track of a lecturer teaching in multiple university campuses due to the lack of an inter institution information sharing platform. Having more administrative and off-the-class duties affects a lecturer's overall workload. In a survey conducted by UCU (University and College Union, 2016), workload protection was found to be an issue for staff across the higher learning institutions sub-sector in the United Kingdom. As resources are reduced, the demand on staff to perform and perform well was increasing. The report highlighted five key findings: -

- 1) Staff in higher education institutions are working an average of more than an extra two days every week.
- 2) Workload is unmanageable and unsustainable for the majority of academic staff and lecturers.
- 3) Staff are taking on more responsibilities and administration duties.
- 4) Students' expectations and consultations have increased.
- 5) Professional and career development is suffering as a result of increasing workload pressures.

In a response report to the workload challenge, the United Kingdom Government (Department for Education, 2015), stated "It will be important to track teacher workload over the coming years through biannual surveys so that action can be taken if needed".

4.2 Moonlighting Among Lecturers

Engaging moonlighting in different institutions is a common practice in developed and developing countries in both skilled and unskilled labour force. The teaching profession has one of the highest numbers of cross-institutional part-time employment. Many employees venture into part-time work to earn additional income. Prof Theuri M. M. (Theuri, 2012) points out that, lecturers engaging in inter institution tutoring is one of the implications of inadequate lecturer remunerations. Some lecturers start engaging in part-time tutoring activities as a hobby only to later realize they can turn their pastime into a lucrative, supplemental income. Inter institution moonlighting a chronic problem, one that has hurt the efficiency of public services. Most employers agree that having their full-time employees venturing into moonlighting or undertaking re-training during periods of leave for example rather than resting is an unacceptable situation which could have an adverse impact on their businesses (Adedoyin, Richard, & Wasiu, 2013).

According to a study by (Ballout, 2009), inter institution moonlighting causes adverse effects to both employer and employee. Health problems may affect the employee due to the alternate use of resting time to venture into other income generating activities. The lack of enough resting time may in turn affect his/her competency thus affecting the employer-employee relationship. Inter institution engagement by lecturers may also lead to a conflict of interest or conflict of commitment (Euben, 2004). Duke University (Duke University, 2016) describes a conflict of commitment to exist when a member of the University community has an outside relationship that requires a commitment of time or effort to non-University activities, such that an individual, either implicitly or directly, cannot meet her/his obligations to the University. In addition, the distribution of a faculty member's effort among, for example, research, teaching, committee responsibilities, and outside consulting may raise issues of conflict of commitment. They also point out a conflict of interest to exist when a member of the University community (including her/his immediate family member(s)) has a relationship with an outside entity such that her/his activities on behalf of the University could be biased by that relationship in a direction that would ultimately provide direct financial benefit to the individual or the family member.



A study by Adedoyin et al., (2013) to evaluate the performance of lecturers who teach in more than one university vis-à-vis those who do not in the south-western Nigeria revealed the following: -

- 1) The higher the number of universities in which a lecturer lectures, the higher the number of students' project to be supervised which may have significant negative impact on performance thus the lower the number of paper publications they had.
- 2) The higher the number of universities in which a lecturer lectures in, the lower the number of lecturing hours per week in each of their parent universities.

These among other findings inferred that if lecturers teach in more than one university, their performance as academician and tutor will be significantly affected negatively. The study points out that universities are established with the sole objective of advancing the propagation and dissemination of knowledge for the benefit of humanity with a view to producing middle and high-level manpower for the rapid growth and development of nations. Human resource is the most critical of the varied factors that contribute to the attainment of the above objectives. The study concluded that efforts that ignore the human resource management implications of moonlighting among lecturers may miss critical issues in understanding the forces underpinning the performance of lecturers in Nigerian universities. It further highlighted that any effort aiming at improving the lecturers' competency in a university must be directed at identifying the appropriate educational policies.

5. Methodology

5.1 Argumentative Literature Review

This form of literature review was used to examine literature in order to support the argument, deeply imbedded assumption, or philosophical problem already established. The purpose was to develop a body of literature that established a contrarian viewpoint. Given the value-laden nature of some social science research e.g. educational reform, argumentative approaches to analysing the literature can be a legitimate and important form of discourse.

5.2 Experiment Research Design

This study used a design called Triangulation. In this design, there was a single data collection phase, during which both quantitative and qualitative data was collected. Quantitative research was useful in quantifying the lecturer teaching workload monitoring problem by generating numerical data or data transformable into usable statistics. Quantitative research helped this study to quantify behaviours and generalize results from a larger sample population (Slevich, 2011). This design method helped develop a more complete understanding of monitoring lecturer's teaching workload and also helped to cross-validate and corroborate qualitative and quantitative findings.

5.3 Location, Participants and Duration

A focus group is a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive, non-threatening environment (Krueger, 1988). Focus Groups helped collect participants opinions and observations on the challenge of lecturers inter institution teaching workload (Freitas, Oliveira, Jenkins, & Popjoy, 1998). The subjects represent the industry experts and the concerned population. This study used four



of the eleven university campuses recognized by Commission for University Education within this study's geographical sampling frame (Commission for University Education, 2016). This study conducted four focus groups in universities and one focus group at Commission for University Education totalling to five focus groups. All the subjects in the experiment participated in focus groups after their validation exercise. Each focus group discussion was about thirty minutes long and each had five participants. Participants comprised of both part-time and full-time lecturers, and participants with administrative roles at their institutions. The study was conducted in a three-month period of April, May and June 2018. This study was not be performed with the purpose to lay blame for inefficiency, incompetence, or carelessness but was rather be done for the purpose of improvement, by identifying specific areas that needed change for the better.

6. Results

6.1 Effects of Excessive Lecturer's Teaching Workload in Kenyan Institutions of Higher Learning.

Excessive lecturers' teaching workload was found to have major adverse effects to the lecturer, university, students and the higher education sector as a whole. The major cause for excessive teaching workload among lecturers was found to be the practice of moonlighting. Some of the major detrimental effects of this are: -

- 1) **Fatigued lecturers:** Fatigue is the mental state of being tired and weak. Mental and physical fatigue occur simultaneously or one leads to the other. If a lecturer is physically exhausted for long a period he will definitely become mentally tired. In moonlighting a lecturer employed in two or more universities feels mentally and physically tired and exhausted. This in turn affects his performance as the lecturer becomes distracted, unproductive and neglect job responsibilities because of physical fatigue. This may also result in lack of appropriate sleep and it may create health hazards to the lecturer in the long run.
- 2) **Augmented commuting challenges:** Having to commute from one institution to the next is a main hurdle for moonlighting lecturers. It becomes very chaotic and troublesome to be in time at both work places. Setbacks while commuting from institution to institution contributes to hasty performance which causes loss to any or both of the workplaces.
- 3) **Poor lecturer conscientiousness:** When a lecturer has to perform various duties at various universities because of multiple job commitments, it may create low level of attention and poor distraction. This may lead to memory lapse and weak recollection of events and ultimately it affects his/her organization level.
- 4) **Conflict of commitment/ and conflict of interest:** Working in various university institutions may give employees the opportunity to divulge trade secrets if they are working in positions which may pose a conflict. Lecturers need to understand the importance of maintaining confidential information that could benefit a competing university.
- 5) **Adverse effects on lecturers' health:** Poor diet, lack of sleep and exercise can impact the lecturers' health. Holding multiple jobs will can not only detract from job responsibilities but also on personal responsibilities such as maintaining good eating habits and rest and that may cause detrimental effects on lecturer health.
- 6) **Adverse use of Company Resources:** Lecturers working in more than one institution are bound to use university resources for their other side job which may increase



operating expenses to the initial institution. This may include, stationery, vehicles and other infrastructure.

- 7) **Mediocre performance by lecturer:** The accomplishment of a lecturer in a given task is measured against known standard of accuracy, completeness, efficiency and speed. A lecturer who has excessive workload is not able to fulfil their obligation towards each organization or class of students. When a lecturer has excessive workload, more is required from him by the employer and accomplishing hi/her tasks in a complete, accurate and efficient way while hustling and juggling between multiple jobs he has to perform daily is difficult. This position is not good for organization

6.2 Quantitative Factors That May Be Used to Evaluate A Lecturer’s Teaching Workload in Kenyan Institutions of Higher Learning.

The participants discussed and gave their feedback on the quantifying attributes they deemed should be considered when quantifying a lecturer’s teaching workload. The most profound quantifying attributes pointed out were the course total lecture hours, the number of students per class and the number of universities that a lecturer teaches in as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Quantitative attributes that may be used to evaluate a lecturer’s teaching workload

#	Quantifying Attribute	Frequency	Percentage
1	Cumulative Course Lecture duration	10	40
2	Number of students per class	5	20
3	Type of course taught	2	8
4	Number of universities a lecturer teaches	3	12
5	Lecturer’s years of experience	0	0
6	Other Attributes	5	20
	Total	25	100

Reducing class sizes that a faculty member is responsible for teaching will lead to significant improvements in student outcomes (James & Robert, 2010). The higher the number of students the higher the workload as the lecturer strives to cater for each student’s needs. Some courses were also considered more laborious to teach than others. A practical course delivered in a laboratory may not present the same workload to a lecturer when compared to a pure theoretical course.

6.3 Challenges Expected in Adoption of a Technological Solution to Monitor Lecturers’ Teaching Workload

Management, human and technical challenges are expected to be faced in the implementation of Information Systems (Almalki, Al-fleit, & Zafar, 2017). Resistance to change by stakeholders is one of the expected human challenges. The most profound concerns that lecturers had on a MIS to monitor their teaching workload is the apprehension of intrusion to privacy and potential policy changes as a result of data collected. Some lecturers perceived the sharing of their lecture commitments with universities and Commission for University Education as an intrusion to their privacy. Universities may introduce caps on the maximum units that their lecturers may commit to at any instance as a measure to limit their workload. The effects that a lecturer’s resistance to the



implementation of a MIS solution to monitor their teaching workload may include; colluding with university administration to falsify or skim over session entries or skim over. Strict regulations from CUE will help mitigate against this. Challenges anticipated by CUE and universities in the adoption of a MIS solution to monitor interinstitutional lecturers teaching workload were 71% human, 17% management and 12% technical as demonstrated in Figure 1 below.

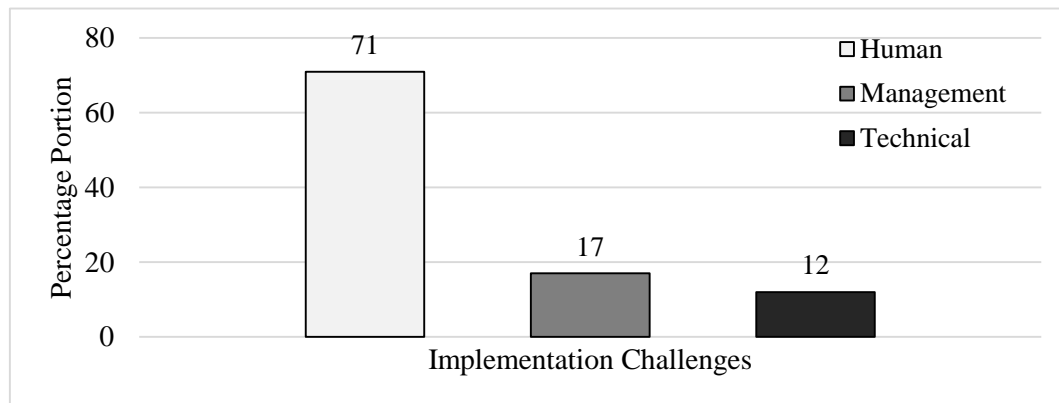


Figure 1: Expected Implementation Challenges Clustered by Challenge Kind

7. Recommendations and Areas for further study

7.1 Recommendations

- 1) The designing and determining a suitable policy to develop MIS in Kenyan Universities. To do this, the Information Communication Technology Authority in collaboration with Commission for University Education should develop and provide required guidelines especially in terms of what data and in what form the data should be made available to various stakeholders by various universities.
- 2) Fostering a fine relationship between CUE, Universities and other stakeholders. More effort should be put in cultivating a good alliance between CUE and universities and thus diffuse the current narrative that CUE is the master while universities taking the rebellious stance. This may be done through having various stakeholder sensitization conferences and trainings.
- 3) Integrating any teachers' workload monitoring solution with the currently used systems by universities. Any proposed solution aimed at monitoring lecturers teaching workload in Kenyan institutions of higher learning should be integrated with other existing management information systems that the universities and CUE have already adopted. This will prevent duplication of efforts e.g. multiple similar data entry operations. Integration with existing systems may also augment the MIs capabilities and thus improve the solution's user acceptance.
- 4) Adoption of technological solutions by stakeholder institutions in the management of lecturers' workload. The development of the culture of using computer and information systems is necessary in public and private universities and CUE. Thus, the managers of these organizations should adopt technological solutions available to improve on their collection, storage and transmission of lecturer's data. There should be adequate preparation of staff to improve their literacy level in ICT. This will help to create in them the willingness to embrace the challenges of integrating into an ICT solution. Orientation workshops for university staff by ICT departments would serve as a step towards actualizing this (Murgor, 2015).



7.2 Advancement of this study

This is an area with a gap available for further research. Areas for additional research encountered in the course of this study which were beyond this study's scope include:

- 1) Development of an inter-institution lecturer's teaching workload monitoring tool using the total lecture hours, number of students taught by the lecturer and also the type of course(s) as the quantifiers. Quantification of a lecturer's teaching workload by the use of the total tutoring hours is effective but can be corroborated by the use of the total number of students taught by the lecturer, years of lecturing experience and type of course(s) which the lecturer teaches. Lectures pointed out that novice lecturers in the industry find it very difficult to handle lectures unlike their more experienced lecturers. Lecturer in the wee years of their career also aren't as efficient in handling lectures. This will help develop a more robust model.
- 2) Development of University MIS framework for Inter University Data Sharing. The reluctance by universities in sharing the data about their lecturers with any other stakeholder prompted this topic. Information sharing is essential in the development of the education sector. The guidelines should dictate; Which specific data they should share to any other stakeholder, how each of the stakeholders will use the shared data and the restrictions accompanying their shared data, what data are they in return entitled to get from other universities and from CUE, in what standard form and platform should the data be availed and when exactly and at what intervals should updated data be provided.
- 3) Development of a model to monitor the feasibility of part-time lecturing in relation to distance from one university to the next and duration from the end of one lecture to the commencement of the next. Examining the effect that the geographical distance between one university to the another has on the competency of a moonlighting part-time lecturer was prompted by a review of previous literature. A research on this area will help universities in examining how feasible is it for lecturers to offer tutoring services to several universities considering the geographical distance between the institutions and the time lapse from one lecture to the next. A study to provide technological solution to lecturer's workload management in view of the said commuting distances is recommended.

8. Conclusions

Lecturers take up multiple teaching jobs for several reasons which essentially include; earning extra income, proving their capabilities in different job profiles, non-recognition by employers, utilizing spare time, enjoyment of the second job and for job security. Universities on the other hand allow lecturers to take up teaching jobs in other institutions so that lecturers may learn new skills, retaining employees by making them feel comfortable, have less burden of benefits and is more affordable. During this study, the stakeholders unanimously acknowledged the need to monitor inter institution lecturers teaching workload. While chief part of the participants agreed that an MIS solution would be efficient in monitoring lecturers teaching workload, universities preferred monitoring lecturer's workload themselves and expressed their disapproval of having CUE monitoring their lecturer's workload. They deemed Commission for University Education's involvement as a potential encroachment to their independence.

Quantification of lecturers teaching workload by the use of his/her total tutoring hours would be effective. The use of tutoring hours to quantify a lecturer's workload may be



complemented by using the total number of students taught by the lecturer and also the type of course(s) which the lecturer teaches amongst many more properties. Concurrently using these properties to corroborate in lecturer's teaching workload quantification will help develop a more robust model.

The successful adoption of a lecturers teaching workload solution is strongly hinged upon the support and co-operation of various stakeholders. Management, human and technical challenges are expected during the adoption phase. Human challenges are expected to be the major obstacle amongst these. There's the need to conduct consultations, stakeholder sensitizations and an advanced pilot study while developing and implementing an inter institution lecturers' teaching workload monitoring MIS. MIS play a vital role of providing a range of streamlined options from which the management and decision-makers are able to make their preferred choices. This ensures that whatever choices are made by decision makers, the outcome, more often than not, becomes positive. This, in point of fact, is the reason why many decision makers tend to prefer using MIS tools when making tough organizational choices. Having good decision choices guarantees viable decisions by organizations (Vittal & Shivraj, 2008). If adopted, a MIS will provide a platform with which Commission for University Education and universities will impeccably monitor lecturers teaching workload. They would then use the data collected to help formulate policies and make organizational decisions that will ultimately help benefit the higher education sector in Kenya. A MIS can impact decision-making procedures: including and up to the point where many of the current procedures become inadequate and then require a new regulatory framework.

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