

EFFECT OF EXCESS WORKLOAD ON ACADEMIC STAFF PERFORMANCE OF STATE COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN SOUTH EAST NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this seminar is to examine the effect of excess workload on the academic staff performance of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria. This study is conducted to determine the extent of effect excess workload has on the performance of academic staff. This study adopted descriptive survey research design with the use of questionnaires in data collection. The population for the study was 705 academic staff in the five States Colleges of Education in the South-East Nigeria. Whereas the sample size stood at 255 after applying Taro Yammene formular. This study found that teaching above minimum lecturer/student ratio significantly effects negatively on the teaching quality of the academic staff of State Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria. It is also revealed that teaching above minimum courses per semester significantly effects negatively on the teaching quality of the academic staff of State Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria. It is also revealed that handling many administrative tasks significantly effects negatively on the teaching quality of the academic staff of State Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria. While the hypotheses reveals that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of the male and female respondents of the academic staff of the State Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria for the three variables considered in this work. The researcher made the following recommendations in order to address the effects of excess workload on the academic staff performance. Administrators of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria should be acknowledging and rewarding outstanding performance to motivate academic staff who are teaching above minimum lecturer to student ratio. Administrators of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria should conduct audit on task assignment to academic staff to reduce excess workload and its attendant consequences on academic staff that are teaching above minimum number of courses per semester. Institutions can delegate administrative tasks to support staff or administrators to save time for academic staff who are handling many administrative tasks so as to engage more in teaching and learning activities among other things.

Keywords: Effect, Excess Workload, Academic Staff, Performance, Colleges of Education.

Introduction

In the context of higher education, Academic Staff in State Colleges of Education are not immune to the pressures and demands of their roles. The academic environment is inherently stressful, with staff facing multiple responsibilities, including teaching, supervision of student projects, pressure to publish research work, and administrative tasks. Work-related stress

arises where work demands of various types and combinations exceed the person's capacity and capability to cope (Cooper, 2011).

Ifelunni (2017) opined that excess workload could be referred to as the total energy output of a system, particularly of a person performing a strenuous task over time. In some institutions a number of the workers suffers a lot of excess work load due to under staffing, this ranges from increasing duration of teaching hours, number of courses handled by an individual, pressure to work for longer hours and among others (Agbo, 2017). Excess workload (such as heavy teaching schedule for lecturers), large class size, attendance for administrative duties, incessant strikes, school interruptions, students' delinquencies, obnoxious institutional policies, and poor working environment could be other unfavourable conditions contributing to stress and attempts to impede the performance.

A person with too many obligations and poor organizational skill could find himself exhibiting stress symptoms. On the other hand, excess workload could also have severe implications for academic staff's physical, psychological and mental health. Effect of teaching above minimum lecturer/student ratio could bring both negative and positive result. This is because it results to presenting diverse perspectives and experience to the classroom. It could also result to economies of scale, this is because handling large classes could be cost effective for the institutions. There is no doubt that there are negative effects also. This negative effect includes decreased individual attention. Okocha (2022) argues that teaching many students makes instructors struggles to provide individualize attention. This could have negative effect on the teaching quality of the instructor or lecturer.

Also, Bakker, Demorouti and Verbeke (2014) agrees that teaching above the minimum courses per semester have both negative and positive effect on teaching quality of academic staff. This is because it could provide lecturers with variety and challenge, potentially increasing their engagement and motivation. However, Bland and Schmitz (2014) states that one of the major negative effect is overload and burnout. Teaching above the minimum courses per semester could lead to instructor overload and burnout, potentially affecting teaching quality leading to student poor academic performance.

On the other hand, handling many administrative tasks also have both negative and positive effect. Bakker, Demorouti and Verbeke (2014) opines that it leads to accountability. This is because administrative tasks could provide the sense of accountability helping instructors stay on track and meet deadlines. Nonetheless, the negative effect of handling many

administrative tasks could not be over-emphasized as it reduces teaching time, preparation and student engagement and interaction making students lose out on the main educational set goals.

Academic staff performance is a multifaceted concept that encompasses various aspects of their roles, including teaching, research, and community service. Several factors influence their performance, which can be evaluated through different lenses. Here's a breakdown of key points:

Teaching Performance: This refers to the effectiveness in delivering lectures, student engagement, and assessment methods. **Research Performance:** This refers that quality and quantity of research output, publications, and grants secured. **Community Service:** This also refers to the contributions to the community, professional service, and engagement with industry partners by the academic staff.

Objective to the Study

The broad objective of this study is to determine the degree of effect of Excess Workload on the Academic Staff Performance of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

The specific objectives to the study are to:

1. Ascertain the extent of effect of teaching above the minimum lecturer/student ratio on the teaching quality of Academic Staff Performance of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.
2. Determine the extent of effect of teaching above the minimum courses per semester on the teaching quality of the Academic Staff Performance of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.
3. Ascertain the extent of effect of handling many administrative tasks on the teaching quality of the Academic Staff Performance of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

Research Questions

1. What extent of effect has teaching above the minimum lecturer/student ratio on the teaching quality of Academic Staff Performance of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria?

2. What extent of effect has teaching above the minimum courses per semester on the teaching quality of the Academic Staff Performance of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria?
3. What extent of effect has handling many administrative tasks on the teaching quality of the Academic Staff Performance of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria?

Methodology

This work adopted descriptive survey design. Descriptive survey design is the plan of study which enables the researcher to collect data from a well-defined population and systematically selected segments of the population in order to determine the attribute of the population. This definition is in line with Nworgu cited in Okocha (2022) who defined descriptive surveys as those studies concerned with collecting data on, and describing in a systematic manner, the characteristic features or facts about a given population. Thus, the researcher deems it necessary to adopt descriptive survey design in carrying out this research work as it would help to illustrate the effect of excess workload on the performance of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria. That is, it investigates already established situation and no variable was manipulated in the course of this research.

Area of the Study

The research was carried out in five (5) State Colleges of Education which includes: Abia State College of Education (Technical) Arochukwu, Abia State; Nwafor Orizu College of Education Nsugbe, Anambra State; Ebonyi State College of Education, Ikwo, Ebonyi State; Enugu State College of Education (Technical) Enugu, Enugu State; and Imo State College of Education Ihitte-Oboma, Imo State. The South East Zone is composed of Abia State, Anambra State, Ebonyi State, Enugu State and Imo State. There are three (3) Senatorial Zones in each of the State accounting for 15 Senatorial Zones in the South East Zone.

Population for the Study

The population for this study is seven hundred and five (705) academic staff in State Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria. According to statistics, there were 705 academic staff comprising of 358 males and 347 females academic staff (Student Affairs Unit, Provost, Deans, HODs, etc) in State Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria. These figures were based on available records of academic staff as provided by the personnel unit of the five States Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria (Source: Personnel Unit of the Five States Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample for the study is 255 respondents made up of 129 males and 126 females academic staff. The above sample was arrived at using Taro Yamane formular for finite population.

Taro Yamane Statistical Formula.

Taro Yamane Formula for Finite Population

$$\begin{aligned}
 n &= \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \\
 &= \frac{705}{1+705 \times (0.05)^2} \\
 &= \frac{705}{1+1.7625} \\
 &= \frac{705}{2.7625} \\
 &= 255.2 \\
 &= 255
 \end{aligned}$$

That is to say that the sample population for this study is 255 academic staff respondents.

Instrument for data collection

Structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents.

This is presented on a 4-point Rating Scale of Very High Extent (VHE) (4 point), High Extent (HE) (3 points). Low Extent (LE) (2 points), and Very Low Extent (VLE) (1 point) for all research items. In testing the hypotheses, t-test statistics was used. If t-calculated value is lower than the t-critical value of 1.96, the null hypotheses was upheld in that regard.

Validation of the Instrument

The instrument was face validated by three (3) experts: two experts in the Department of Business Administration and one expert in the Department of Science Education (Measurement and Evaluation) all from the Faculty of Education, Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. These experts were requested to review the items in terms of their clarity, the appropriateness of the language and expression to ensure unambiguity and the relevance of the items to the problem under investigation. The experts made corrections and the corrections shaped the modification of the instrument into the final copy.

The instrument would be administered and retrieved by the researcher with the help of five (5) research assistants who were briefed on modalities of administering and retrieval of the questionnaire. The total of two hundred and fifty-five (255) copies of the questionnaire would be administered to both male and female academic staff of the Five (5) State Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria, which would as well be collected.

Method of Data Analysis

Research questions 1-3 were answered on individual item basis using mean. A mean (\bar{x}) of 2.50 was the cut off point for the research question.

In testing the hypotheses, t-test statistics was used. If t-calculated value is lower than the t-critical value of 1.96, the null hypotheses was upheld in that regard. On the other hand if t-calculated value is higher than t-critical value of 1.96, then the H_0 was rejected for that item.

Results

Table 1: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent of effect of teaching above the minimum lecturer/student ratio on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

ITEMS		N	\bar{X}	D
1.	Poor students sitting arrangement results in poor teaching quality	255	2.85	Agree
2.	Over-crowded classroom leads to students poor attention	255	3.06	Agree
3.	Over-crowded classroom hinders quality teaching and learning	255	3.10	Agree
4.	Over-crowded classroom leads to distraction and failures	255	3.17	Agree
5.	Over-crowded classroom is difficult to manage resulting to poor teaching outcome	255	2.85	Agree
6.	Over-crowded classroom reduces educational goal attainments	255	3.17	Agree
Grand Mean			3.03	

Ogbaga Fidelis. O. 2025 Field Work: N – Number; \bar{X} – Mean; D - Decision

In table 1, the study revealed that responses of the respondents in Items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 with mean scores of 2.85, 3.06, 3.10, 3.17, 2.85, 3.17, agreed that teaching above the minimum lecturer/student ratio significantly affected negatively on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria. Based on the results, the grand mean stood at 3.03 which was above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, it was agreed that teaching above the minimum lecturer/student ratio significantly affected negatively on the Performance of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria

Table 2: Mean ratings of respondents on the extent of effect of teaching above the minimum courses per semester on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria?

S/N	ITEMS	N	\bar{X}	D
7.	Inability to cover all course content leads to student poor performance	255	3.59	Agree
8.	Students are rushed through lectures leading to low grades	255	3.23	Agree
9.	Lecturers operates under tight schedules leading to burnout	255	3.29	Agree
10.	Lecturers are usually overwhelmed leading to poor performance	255	3.43	Agree
11.	Lecturers delivers unprepared lectures leading to students poor understanding	255	3.45	Agree
12.	Lecturers get confused dealing with overwork leading to low performance	255	2.74	Agree
Grand Mean			3.3	

The result presented in table 2 showed the mean ratings of respondents on the teaching above the minimum courses per semester on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria. Items 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12 with mean scores of 3.59, 3.23, 3.29, 3.43, 3.45 and 2.74, revealed that teaching above the minimum courses per semester by academic staff significantly affects negatively the Performance of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria. Based on the results, the grand mean stood at 3.3 which were above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, it was agreed that teaching above the minimum courses per semester by academic staff significantly affects

negatively the Performance of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

Table 3: Mean ratings of responses on the extent of effect of handling many administrative tasks on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria?

S/N	ITEMS	N	\bar{X}	D
13.	Time for lectures are usually sacrificed leading to loss of educational objectives	255	3.32	Agree
14.	Students suffers losses of time leading to loss of interest	255	3.33	Agree
15.	Students suffers losses of lecturers leading to poor academic performance	255	3.15	Agree
16.	Students usually come out of school half-baked	255	3.02	Agree
17.	The lecturers come to lectures ill-prepared leading to poor lecture delivery	255	3.19	Agree
Grand Mean			3.2	

In table 3, the study revealed that responses of the respondents in Items 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 with the mean scores of 3.32, 3.33, 3.15, 3.02, 3.19 and 2.87 agreed that handling many administrative tasks significantly affected negatively on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria. Based on the results, the grand mean stood at 3.2 which were above the criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, it was agreed that handling many administrative tasks significantly affected negatively on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

Hypotheses

Table 4: summary of t-test of difference in the mean responses of male and female academic staff on effect of teaching above the minimum lecturer/student ratio on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

Items	Category of	N	\bar{X}	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	D
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Respondents							
1.	Male	129	2.845	253	-0.23	1.96	Not significant
	Female	126	2.873				
2.	Male	129	2.992	253	-1.64	1.96	Not significant
	Female	126	3.142				
3.	Male	129	2.922	253	-4.28	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	126	3.285				
4.	Male	129	3.062	253	-2.33	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	126	3.296				
5.	Male	129	2.790	253	-1.37	1.96	Not significant
	Female	126	2.912				
6.	Male	129	3.100	253	-1.62	1.96	Not significant
	Female	126	3.246				
	Grand Mean				-11.47	1.96	Not significant

Items – Item number in the instrument; N – Number; \bar{X} – Mean; DF – Degree of Freedom; t-cal – t-calculated value; t-crit – t-table value; D - Decision

From table 4 above, the t-test analysis showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female respondents as it relates to the effect of teaching above the minimum lecturer/student ratio on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

Table 5: summary of t-test of difference in the mean responses of male and female academic staff on the effect of teaching above the minimum courses per semester on the teaching quality of academic staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

Items	Category of Respondents	N	\bar{X}	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	D
7.	Male	129	3.480	253	-2.16	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	126	3.698				
8.	Male	129	3.248	253	0.31	1.96	Not significant

	Female	126	3.222				
9.	Male	129	3.232	253	-1.51	1.96	Not significant
	Female	126	3.349				
10.	Male	129	3.503	253	3.43	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	126	3.357				
11.	Male	129	3.379	253	-1.58	1.96	Not significant
	Female	126	3.531				
12.	Male	129	2.488	253	-5.02	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	126	3.000				
	Grand Mean				-2.6	1.96	Not significant

The result of the t-test analysis presented in Table 5 indicated that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff on the effect of teaching above the minimum courses per semester on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

Table 6: summary of t-test of difference in the mean responses of male and female academic staff on the effect of handling many administrative tasks on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

Items	Category of Respondents	N	\bar{X}	Df	t-cal	t-crit.	D
13.	Male	129	3.178	253	-3.64	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	126	3.476				
14.	Male	129	3.224	253	-2.87	1.96	Not Significant
	Female	126	3.452				
15.	Male	129	3.085	253	-1.59	1.96	Not significant
	Female	126	3.230				
16.	Male	129	2.969	253	-1.35	1.96	Not significant
	Female	126	3.079				
17.	Male	129	3.131	253	-1.37	1.96	Not significant
	Female	126	3.261				
							Not Significant

Grand Mean

-2.2

1.96

Fro

m table 6 above, the t-test analysis showed that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings of male and female academic staff respondents as it relates to the effect of handling many administrative tasks on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria.

Discussion

This research work points to the fact that poor students sitting arrangement results in poor teaching quality, over-crowded classroom leads to students poor attention, over-crowded classroom hinders quality teaching and learning, over-crowded classroom leads to distraction and failures, over-crowded classroom is difficult to manage resulting to poor teaching outcome, over-crowded classroom reduces educational goal attainments combined to effect negatively on the performance of academic staff of State Colleges of Education in South East Nigeria.

In agreement with the findings above, (Okocha, 2022) agreed that teaching above the minimum lecturer/student ratio leads to higher stress levels which can result in burnout impeding performance. He further stated that work related stress is a growing problem around the world that affects not only the health and well-being of employees but also the productivity of the organizations.

Further, this research also revealed that inability to cover all course content leads to student poor performance, students are rushed through lectures leading to low grades, lecturers operates under tight schedules leading to burnout, lecturers are usually overwhelmed leading to poor performance, lecturers delivers unprepared lectures leading to students poor understanding and lecturers get confused dealing with overwork leading to low performance these combined to affect negatively the performance of academic staff of State Colleges of Education of South-East Nigeria. In harmony with above findings, Boulton (2019) affirms that one of the major negative effect is overload and burnout. Teaching above the minimum courses per semester could lead to instructor overload and burnout, significantly affecting teaching quality thereby ruining their performance.

Finally, this study revealed that time for lectures are usually sacrificed leading to loss of educational objectives, students suffers losses of time leading to loss of interest, students

suffers losses of lecturers leading to poor academic performance, students usually come out of school half-baked, the lecturers come to lectures ill-prepared leading to poor lecture delivery.

In consonance with the findings, Harris and Hartman (2012) pointed out that the negative impact of handling many administrative tasks could not be overemphasized as it reduces teaching time, preparation and student engagement and interaction making students lose out on the main educational set goals of State Colleges of Education of South-East Nigeria.

Conclusion

This research focused on the effect of excess workload on the performance of academic staff of State Colleges of Education of South-East Nigeria. Based on the findings and discussions, the researcher made the following conclusions that there is a significantly negative effect of teaching above the minimum lecturer/student ratio on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria resulting in poor academic performance of the institutions and inability to achieve its set objectives. In the same vein, the study also uncovered that there is a significantly negative effect of teaching above the minimum courses per semester on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria and also there is a significantly negative effect of handling many administrative tasks on the teaching quality of Academic Staff of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria leading to student poor academic performance.

Recommendations

The researcher made the following recommendations in order to address the effects of excess workload on the academic staff performance.

1. Administrators of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria should be acknowledging and rewarding outstanding performance to motivate academic staff who are teaching above minimum lecturer to student ratio.
2. Administrators of State Colleges of Education in South-East Nigeria should conduct audit on task assignment to academic staff to reduce excess workload and its attendant consequences on academic staff that are teaching above minimum number of courses per semester.

3. Institutions can delegate administrative tasks to support staff or administrators to save time for academic staff who are handling many administrative tasks so as to engage more in teaching and learning activities among other things.

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