

Influence of Level of Workload Demand on Family Living Responsibilities among Academic Staff Members of Universities in Kwara State

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Abstract

The study investigated the influence of level of workload on family living responsibilities among academic staff of universities in Kwara State. Three research questions were raised and corresponding hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance. Survey research design was adopted. The population of the study comprised all (1477) academic staff of state and federal universities in Kwara State of Nigeria. Instrument used was questionnaire. Data were analysed using frequencies, percentages, mean, and t-test. Findings reveal that workload demand influenced family living responsibilities of academic university staff moderately, 73% academic staff had moderate family living responsibilities. There is significant difference between male and female academic staff ($P < 0.05$) as regards influence of workload demand on family living responsibilities. Workload affected female academic staff with respect to family living responsibilities. It was recommended, among others were that universities have to insist on the need to balance student intake with available human resources. University management should establish policies and practices that offer support for both work and family demands such as establishing a day care centers or crèches to help women with young children. Women should apply the principles of time management.

Keywords: Workload, Family, Living, Responsibilities, Academic Staff, Universities,

Introduction

Universities are expected to contribute to the economic and social needs of countries. These expectations pose a great deal of challenge to both academic and non-academic staff of universities, placing a demand for increased workload on them. This is likely to have a significant impact on their family life and job

performance. The increase in student population together with the challenges facing Nigerian education system have tended to make the work of the university staff very complex and involving. It may be possible for the academic staff to claim exclusive control over teaching and research activities but, at the same time, it may not be quite easy to combine many

academic and administrative responsibilities with family responsibilities and this could be a source of problems.

Workload demand may be explained in terms of the amount of work assigned to or expected from a university staff in a specified time or period which are allocated to staff members according to levels. The level of workload is the total number of hours spent in teaching, research and job related administrative services. Based on the National Universities Commission's (2016) recommendations, the level of workload for university staff could be normal, light or heavy depending on tasks assigned to and performed by the staff, hours spent on the job and also on staff - student ratio. Normal Workload is for academic staff who is spending 12 hours/week/semester for science-based disciplines and 8 hours/week/semester for art-based disciplines on the job. Light Workload means spending less than 12 hours/week/semester for science-based disciplines and 8 hours/week/semester for art-based disciplines for academic staff. When physical demand requirements are less than those for normal workload. Heavy Workload is spending more than 12 hours/week/semester for science-based disciplines and 8 hours/week/semester for art-based disciplines on the job.. When physical demand requirements are in excess of those for normal workload.

Past research works have reported that excessive work hours, heavy workloads, poor management, staff - student ratios, and pressure to attract external funds, have frequently been reported by academic staff in the universities.(Organization for Economic

Cooperation and Development, 2008). University academic workload include: teaching, research, academic leadership and service.

Workloads are not necessarily negative, but may turn into job stressors when meeting those demands conflicts with family time or demands and may elicit negative responses such as depression, anxiety, fatigue and interpersonal living responsibilities .

Two important focal points of adult life are family and work. The role expectations of these two domains are however not always compatible. They sometimes create conflicting living responsibilities where performance in one role creates an inability to adequately perform in the other role. Work demand if in excess may lead to family conflicting living responsibilities, breakdown in personal relations with family members, low levels of mutual understanding and tolerance, irritability, indecisiveness, poor communication, poor interpersonal skills, feelings of isolation and alienation. Unresolved conflicting family living responsibilities may lead to things like divorce or domestic violence and irreparable damage to a marriage and the entire family.

A family is a unit of interacting persons related by ties of marriage, birth or adoption whose central purpose is to maintain a common culture which promote physical, mental, emotional and social development of each of its members. (Olson, & DeFrain. 2006). The family is best seen as a fabric made of intermeshed relationships and interdependent obligations. These relationships may be threatened if work demand encroach on family time and

might increase risk of conflicting family living responsibilities leading to problems.

Conflicting family living responsibilities is a type of behavior when two or more parties are in opposition as a result of perceived relative deprivation of organizational activities. Conflicting family living responsibilities is a disagreement among family members due to opposition of one person to another, in an attempt to reach an objective different from that of the other person (Evans and Cassells, 2013). For example in a family setting comprising father, mother, children and other relatives, certain category of people might feel they are not being carried along or are neglected by their spouse, parents or guardian as a result of too much attention dedicated to work. This can result into conflicting living responsibilities referred to as work-family conflict. Work - family conflict is a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. (Yang, Chen, Choi, & Zou, 2000).) That is participation in the family role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the work role. Conflicting work family living responsibilities may cause occupational stressors and conflicting living responsibilities between a person's roles as an employee, and being a spouse or a parent. This could become a major threat to quality of family life. For example, conflict might erupt as a result of encroachment of work demand on family time and this might increase the risk of conflicting living responsibilities in the family. and possibly result into job and family distress, poorer health outcome such as tiredness, body pains, and

dissatisfaction with life. Lack of happiness at work and conflicting family living responsibilities at home can lead to the society having more single parents, unhappy children which can lead to social vices, corruptions and immoralities

The researcher's observations in tertiary institutions in Kwara State, have shown extreme workload demands among university staff which might adversely affect the employees' relationship with their family members, and physical health.

Work and family challenge is a key issue facing many workers in Nigeria and other nations of the world. It is common knowledge among university staff that multiple roles are assigned to staff members within the universities system, especially lecturers in universities in kwara state. Earlier study by Ofoegbu and Nwadiani (2006) found that the level of workload among academics was significantly high. Academic job often demands working late, far beyond the normal office hours, in order to complete tasks on schedule and to meet deadlines. Administratively, the lecturers work as counsellors, examination officers, postgraduate coordinators, Deans and Departmental Heads. Can the academic staff cope with many of these non-academic functions and still have time to attend to the major academic responsibility assigned to them without adverse effect on their family life?

With regard to teaching loads, some teach extremely large classes, supervise theses, and project works. Nonetheless, lecturers are expected to publish high-quality research findings in reputable journals to be promoted. Thus, the lecturers work under increased pressure to meet targets set by the university.

In many cases university staff find themselves in a position where work had to be taken home in order to fulfill and sustain professional standard or meet up with deadlines. This reduces the possible opportunity for restorative psychological detachment from the job and can often result to conflicting living responsibilities between spouses leading to family disintegrations, infidelity, or an unexpected marriage failure. The resultant effect of the pressures mounted on staff is the heavy workload that is continually increasing with the associated increase in stress, which appears to be a major threat to the quality of family life and can affect strength, security and family sustainability, as affirmed by Salami, (2015) that if family members do not get along well together socially, they are unlikely to be successful economically or environmentally. The problem statement is whether workload affect family living responsibilities of university staff in Kwara State? This form the baseline of this study. The intent of this study therefore is to determine the influence of the place of workload on family living responsibilities among academic staff of universities in Kwara State.

The findings of the study once published in journals, proceedings, research related reports, religious settings and presented in conferences may be of immense benefit to all stakeholders in family life education namely, families, individuals and communities, organizations, university staff, university administrators, young people, policy makers, researchers, family life educators, and the society.

Purpose of the study: The main purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of level of workload on family living responsibilities among academic staff of the universities in Kwara State. Specifically, the study:

1. established the level of official workload of academic staff of universities in Kwara State;
2. determined the influence of workload demands on family living responsibilities among the academic staff;
3. determined gender differences on the influence of workload demand on family living responsibilities of academic staff.

Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant difference between the mean responses male and female academic staff of Universities in Kwara State on the influence of workload demand on family living responsibilities.

Methodology

Design The study adopted a descriptive survey research method in which the opinions of a representative sample of academic staff in state and federal universities in Kwara State were sought.

Area of Study: The study was carried out in State and Federal universities in Kwara State Nigeria (Kwara State University and University of Ilorin)

Population for the Study: The target population for this study consisted of all academic staff members of the State and Federal Universities in Kwara State. There are 14 faculties and eight faculties in the federal university and Kwara State University respectively¹.

¹**Sources:** Academic Planning Unit, University of Ilorin Annual Report and Registry, Human

Sample for the study: The sample for the study comprised of 204 university academic staff constituting fifteen percent (15%) of the population. Multistage sampling technique was used to select one Federal (University of Ilorin) and State (Kwara State University). Eight and four faculties were randomly selected from Federal and State Universities respectively. Proportionate stratified sampling techniques was used to select respondents from the faculties.

Instrument for Data Collection: Questionnaire was used for data collection. It was comprised two sections A, B and C. Section A was structured to elicit biographical information about the respondents such as gender and university type. Section B and C dealt with the specific objectives of the study. Workload level was assessed in terms of number of hours spent on university related work day/week. Supervision of undergraduate or postgraduate theses/projects, and undergraduate/postgraduate courses taught per session and credit unit / teaching load per week. The questionnaire was rated on a "5-point" Likert type scale ranging from "1" which indicates "never" to "5" which indicates "always". The instrument, was validated by three experts, two experts in Department of Vocational and Technical Education and a statistical analyst in Measurement and Evaluation, all of the university of Benin. Reliability index after pilot testing stood at 0.795.

Resource Division, Kwara State University, Malete, Ilorin. (2015).

Data Collection Techniques: Data was collected from the Academic and non-academic staff of each of the Universities by administering the questionnaires. The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher and three (3) trained research assistants. Completed copies of the questionnaire were collected and checked in order to ensure their completeness by the participants. All the questionnaires were returned showing 100% return rate.

Data Analysis Techniques: Research questions 1 and 2 were analysed using mean, percentages, and standard deviation, The Null Hypothesis formulated in the study was tested with Independent t- test. The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance.

Results of the study

Demographic characteristics of respondents

Data analysis shows that 139 (68.1%) male subjects and 65 (31.9%) female subjects participated in the study comprising 204 (34.75%) Academic staff. The table further revealed that 52 (25.5%) workers were from State Universities while 152 (74.5%) were from Federal Universities. .

Level of Workload

Table 1: Level of Workload of Academic Staff

Workload level	Hours spent on university related work per day	Freq (%)	Hours spent per week
Light workload	4-7 hours	20 (9.80)	20-35 hours
Normal workload	8-12 hours	90 (44.12)	40-60 hours
Heavy Workload	12 hours and above	94 (46.08)	60 hours and above
Total		204 (100)	

Table 1 reveals that 20 (9.80%) of the academic staff had light workload, spends up to 4-7 hours daily/20-35hours per week, on university related work, 90(44.1%) had normal workload, spends 8-12hours per day/40-60 hours per week, while 94(46.1%) had heavy workload, and spends above 12 hours per day /above 60 hours per week on university work. This implied that that majority(90.2%) of the academic staff had heavy workload and work beyond normal work hours. Only 9.80% had light workload.

Light Workload: Less than Normal Workload level/Hours (spends up to 4-7 hours daily/20- 35hours per week, on university related work)

Normal: Normal Workload level/Hours (spends 8-12hours per day/40-60 hours per week)

Heavy Workload: -Excess than Normal Workload level/Hours(spends above 12 hours per day /above 60 hours per week on university work (National Universities Commission, 2016).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Influence of Workload on Family Living responsibilities of Academic Staff

Work Load Level	Family Living responsibilities			Total
	Low	Moderate	High	
Light	9(45.0%)	11(55.0%)	0(0.0%)	20(100%)
Normal	22(24.4%)	59(65.6%)	9 (10.0%)	90(100.0%)
Heavy	8(8.5%)	79(84.04%)	7(7.4%)	94(100.0%)
Total	39(19.1%)	149(73.0%)	16(7.9%)	204(100.0%)

Table 2 reveals that of the 20 respondents with light workload, 9(45.0%) had low family living responsibilities while 11(55.0%) had moderate family living responsibilities . No one had high family living responsibilities among this group. Out of the 90 respondents with normal workload 22(24.4%) had low family living responsibilities , 59(65.6%) had moderate family living responsibilities and 9(10.0%) had high family living responsibilities. Of

the 94 respondents with heavy workload, 8(8.5%) had low living responsibilities, 79(84.04%) had moderate living responsibilities and 7(7.4%) had high family living responsibilities . out of the 204 academic staff 39(19.1%) had low family living responsibilities , 149(73.04%) had moderate family living responsibilities and 16(7.9%) had high family living responsibilities . Showing therefore that most of the people with

heavy workload perform moderately at home and had moderate living responsibilities . This means their work had moderate interference with their family life.

Table 3: Mean ratings and standard deviations of respondents on influence of workload demand on family living responsibilities of academic staff.

S/N	Item Statements	Mean (X)	Standard Deviation	Remark
Family Living responsibilities Scale				
1	I fulfill my family role effectively after spending long and demanding hours at work.	4.09	.92	Agree
2	I am so emotionally drained when I get home from work that it prevents me from contributing to my family obligations	2.69	1.07	Disagree
3	The amount of time my work takes up makes it difficult to fulfill my family responsibilities.	2.67	.94	Disagree
4	I have to make changes to my plans for family activities due to work-related duties.	3.19	.84	Disagree
5	My job keeps me away from my family too much.	2.67	1.01	Disagree
6	The demands of my job make it difficult for me to relax when at home.	2.98	1.06	Disagree
7	After work, I come home too tired to do some of the things I like to do.	2.99	.96	Disagree
8	Due to the demanding nature of my work, I am irritable and in a bad mood at home.	2.18	.96	Disagree
9	My job makes it difficult for me to be a dedicated spouse or parent	2.15	1.06	Disagree
10	I have to put off doing things I like to do at home because of work-related demands.	2.85	1.04	Disagree

Table 3 shows that the mean of the items ranged from 2.15 to 4.09. All of the items had their means below the cut-off point of 3.50 except item 26 with a mean of 4.09 indicating that the respondents agree to fulfilling their family role effectively after spending long and demanding hours at work. This indicated that workload demand had moderate influence on the family living responsibilities of academic staff . The standard deviation of the items ranged from 0.84 to 1.06 indicated that the respondents were close in their responses.

Hypotheses testing

One (1) hypotheses was formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance for this study. The result of the hypothesis is as follows.

Hypothesis One

H0: There is no significant difference between mean responses of male and female academic staff of universities in Kwara State on the influence of workload demand on family living responsibilities.

Table 5: t-test analysis of difference between male and female academic staff of universities in the influence of workload demand on family living responsibilities.

Group	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	df	t	Sig (2tailed)
Male	139	27.52	6.41	202	3.069	.002
Female	65	30.45	6.22			
Total	204					

$\alpha = 0.05$

Table 5 shows a calculated t value of -3.069 which is significant at .002 since the P value of .002 is less than the alpha level ($P < 0.05$) this implies that the observed differences between the mean for male and female academic staff of universities in Kwara State was significant. So the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant difference between male and female academic staff of universities in Kwara State on the influence of workload demand on family living responsibilities was rejected. Consequently, there is a significant difference between male and female academic staff of universities in Kwara State on the influence of workload demand on family living responsibilities. Since there is a difference, the direction of superiority is for the female staff since the mean of the female staff ($\bar{x} = 30.45$) is higher than that of the male staff ($\bar{x} = 27.52$). This showed that workload affected female academic staff with respect to family living responsibilities than their male counterparts.

Discussion of Findings

The study investigated the influence of level of workload demand on family living responsibilities among academic staff of universities in Kwara State. The findings of research question one on the

level of workload of academic staff of universities revealed that university academic staff differs in the allocation of workload level, academic staff had either light, normal and heavy, workload based on hours spent on university work per day /week.

The findings showed that most of the academic staff members at the universities studied worked for more than 40-60 hours per week per semester, which is above the legally recognized number of hours (40hrs) prescribed by the National University Commission (1989) which stated that a full time staff should have a minimum teaching load of 8 credit units per week per semester, including post-graduate teaching.

This result implied that the academic level of workload was high. This finding is in agreement with Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2008) and Chin, Yian, and Yen, (2003) who discovered that on the average, university academics were working 46 to 53 hours per week. The finding is also in consonance with Yucker, & Harold (1994) who stated that, many professors claim they work an average of 55 hours a week.

The result of the second research question on how workload demand influence family living responsibilities among academic staff of universities in

Kwara State, revealed that workload demand influenced academic staff with respect to family living responsibilities moderately showing that most of the academic staff with heavy workload had moderate family living responsibilities .

The findings of Carlson and Kacmar (2000); Baker & Demerouti (2007) agreed with the results of the study as they found out that workload demand is positively related to work/family living responsibilities and that quantitative workload contributed to heightened feelings of work family living responsibilities. Berg, Kalleberg and Appelbaum (2003) also lend credence to this result when they affirmed that workload demands, as measured by hours worked, are perhaps the most consistent predictor of work-family living responsibilities.

Finding on null hypothesis one reveal that there was a significance difference between male and female academic staff of universities in Kwara State on the influence of workload demand on family living responsibilities. Thus, the null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected because the computed significant (p) value (2-tailed test) is less than the alpha value ($p < 0.05$) for academic staff. The result showed that workload affected female's academic staff with respect to family living responsibilities more than the males.

This finding agreed with the views of Simon (1995); Kinman (1996); Reddy (2010); and Copur (2010) who all found that women experienced significantly higher degree of family living responsibilities than men in academics and the job types. The findings of Duxbury and Higgins (2001) who

discovered that working mothers continue to experience greater difficulty balancing work and family than fathers equally corroborate this finding. This finding disagree with Blanchard -fields, Chen and Herbert (1997) and Evans and Bartolome (1984) who all discovered that men and women do not differ on their level of work family living responsibilities .

The findings agreed with Adeoye and Durosaro (2011) who discovered that female lecturers do not have enough time to relax even at home where workers are expected to have opportunities for relaxation and that female lecturers do experience stress from both the work and home arena.

This finding could be attributed to the multiple role stress for working mothers who engage in fulltime office work and whose husbands contribute little to household work and child care.

Simon, (1995) and Salami, and Uwameiye, (2003).also lend credence to this result when they stated that in Nigeria, women view family as their primary obligation and attach more meaning to their parenting role than their work role. They reiterated that females are taught to accept the feminine roles that society assigns them, the feminine attitude, often prevent them from behaving assertively. They are mostly submissive to avoid living responsibilities, which often lead to the women lacking confidence in themselves.

The result could also be because some women do not practice time management. Uko-Aviomoh (2015) explained that careful management of time through time allocation to important activities and cutting down idleness, procrastination, gossiping, and irrelevant activities will

help to make time for professional and personal activities. She reiterated that time management is known to increase productivity at work and at home so women should create time for leisure and rest to prevent stress and family living responsibilities

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concludes that workload influenced family living responsibilities of academic staff of universities in Kwara State. People with heavy workload had moderate conflicting family living responsibilities. Workload affected females academic staff with respect to conflicting family living responsibilities.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made

1. Women should apply the principles of time management through planning, organizing, implementing and evaluating the use of time to accomplish or perform their duties.
2. Women academics should build family ties by seeking help at home, like getting a maid or child care helper, or rely on their spouses if any by asking them to lend a hand to alleviate their suffering.
3. Policies and practices that offer support for both work and family demands should be established such as an on-site day care centers or crèches for infants.
4. Universities should insist on an optimum level of student intake or recruit more staff in quantity and quality to match the annual growth in student enrolment.

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