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Workload Policy and its Intricacies in the Academic Profession: Implications for Higher Education Institutions in Uganda

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ABSTRACT

This research investigated how workload policies in higher education institutions in Uganda affected the academic profession and institutions in general. Components of workload, workload estimation and computation for academic staff in higher education institutions (HEIs) were considered. This deliberate effort aimed to establish a more equitable estimation, the actual assignment and evaluation of the academic professionals and how it affects their teaching, third mission, research, general motivation and their retention. Further, the study sought to establish the intricate of computation of workload, examined its implication on the academic profession in higher education institutions (HEIs) in Uganda. More specifically it addressed the following questions (1) what is the relationship between workload policy and research output in HEIs in Uganda? (2) How does workload policy affect productivity of the academic staff in HEIs in Uganda? (3) What implication does workload policy have on quality of delivery in HEIs in Uganda? (4) To what extent does workload policy influence knowledge sharing in HEIs in Uganda? And (5) To what extent has workload computation affected motivation of academic staff in HEIs in Uganda? The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approaches with the use of cross-sectional design to establish workload intricacies in the academic profession. The study comprised four randomly selected universities and one other degree awarding institution purposively selected. Weiner's (1974) Theory of Attribution and Adam's (1963) Equity Theories were adopted to explain implications of workload policy for the academic profession. The study revealed that workload policy had serious negative implications on research output, staff productivity, quality of delivery, knowledge sharing and motivation of academic staff. The study concluded thus, with the emerging trends, competition, accountability and demand of value for money by stakeholders in HEIs, there was no way but rather to enforce workload policy in form of results oriented performance management, for sustainability and to remain competitive. However, this workload policy was found to diminish other mandates of the institutions including staff motivation. The study recommended that workload policies in these institutions should be reviewed in consultation with key stakeholders who are the implementers and should address other activities critical in the academic profession such as research, supervision, participation on institutional committees, meetings, workshops, administration and leadership; and other activities considered critical in the academic profession in order to sustain equity.

Key Words: academic profession, attribution theory, equity theory, higher education institutions, workload computation, workload policy

1.0 Introduction

This research explored implications of workload policy on the academic profession. Specifically, the study explored the content of these policies, how workload was computed and

overall workload justification. In support of the researchers' concerns, Gappa, Austin & Trice (2007) found that HEIs were faced with absenteeism, abscondment and dual employment, which actually affected productivity, quality output of academic staff and over all quality of the institutions.   Expressing the same concern, Albert, (2003) found that workload challenges were exacerbated by increased demand for higher education in today's world that has seen enrolment students' numbers triple in the last two decades. Albert expressed that this expansion requires the development of more efficient mechanisms of performance- related pay, for more globally competitive service delivery, in order to make these institutions more student- and outcome oriented. If we follow Albert's line of thinking, institutions will change their traditional systems of management based on self-regulation to systems that require more accountability to stakeholders, particularly in spending public finances and also privately generated income (Beryl Lieff Benderly, 2014).

In determining the workload policies, HEIs, are benchmarking the finding of Enders, 2004; McLendon, Hearn, and Deaton, 2006; that found how one of the largest parts of expenditures of HEIs is the remuneration of the academic personnel. Indeed, it is crucial to discern the real situation in order to ably discuss the determination, computation and distribution of the academic workload. On this Barrett & Barrett (2006), advises institutions to conduct job evaluations and situational analyses before making final recommendations. They argue that this step is extremely helpful for more productive and fair allocation of the faculty time. Further, NCHE, 2005; Mamdan, 2007, found that innovations, research initiatives, activities and outputs were on the decline in most HEIs whereas more and more professors have opted to teach in more than two institutions and the youthful academicians were "job-hopping" to make ends meet. This trend has been found by (Burgess, Lewis & Mobbs, 2003) not only to affect quality of HEIs, but also, institutional profiling, their web-ranking, succession planning and overall staffing.   Although scholars (e.g Barrett & Barrett, 2006; Burnett & Krause, 2009) have found among other things, large classes to affect productivity, Business Council of Australia (2011) found that effective monitoring and evaluation of academics' performance played a great role in ensuring quality, productivity and competitiveness. Hence, institutions that are results-oriented had no option but adopt and enforce workload policies. This has led teaching staff expectations to include an appropriate and fair share of the pedagogical work of the university whereas the

institutions expect value for money (Heppner, 2007).

Gappa, Austin, & Trice (2007) found that the issue of workload for the academic professionals has continued to be a controversial and troubling question in HEIs. They argue that it becomes even more enigmatic with increased expectations that come with higher statuses which raises the problem of equity and equality. So then, how can higher education managers ensure fairness in the assignment and evaluation of work and duties performed by the academia? Gappa, Austin, & Trice, (2007) reiterate how faculty are dissatisfied with the traditional means of evaluating their work and more critical of how their inputs are rewarded. Expressing his fears, Furfaro (2014) found that this workload mystery has remained looming for decades and might cause devastating impacts in HEIs. Hence, although HEIs have long examined workloads and documented what is considered academic work, it has left the academic professionals in total doubts and dismay because it has been difficult quantifying the work accomplished by academics (Gullatt & Weaver and Sue, 1995). Hence, workloads become even more complicated as those who are responsible for imparting knowledge embrace many activities into their roles of teaching, research, and consultancy and community service. They include; supervision, attendance of meetings, administration and leadership, attending workshops and conferences etc.. Expressing their concerns, Zilli, and Trunk-Širca (2009) found that presentations at professional meetings which usually outnumbers all other types of scholarly activity, including publications, was the most common form of scholarship that was unfortunately never often reported in literature, or even captured as a workload component to account for the academics' contribution. Hence, there are countless complexities in the computation of workload in the academic profession that have left may institutions puzzled (Gill and Stone, 2010). On trying to summarise what actually Teaching Load is all about, Levin, Pocknee & Pretto, 2010; Mulryan-Kyne, 2010; Orrell, 2011, categorized basic teaching load as both formally assigned courses – group instruction in the form of lectures, laboratory and experiments, research, discussion moderations, seminars and conferences, field courses, and other teaching duties appropriate to the discipline, such as advising and individual instruction and mentoring activities - including supervision of dissertations, theses, and independent studies. However, Guerrero, Andersen, and Afifi (2007 explain how the dynamics of the actual academic profession, (eg. time spent preparing for lectures, meeting with students, institutional baraza and other related meetings, time marking

students' scripts, chairing and/or membership on newly constituted committees, and many others) are often disregarded while computing workload just because many policies do not consider them part of the workload.

Further, workload intricacies have been exacerbated by the global financial situation over the last two decades, accountability and demand of value for money which have seen institutions of higher learning adopting workload policies as the only way to gauge results oriented performance management, which has led many governments to re-examine the nature and extent of the funding they provide to higher education (Levin, Pocknee, & Pretto, 2010). Hence, while in some countries, leaders are pledging to sustain funding levels, in many other countries leaders have significantly reduced the funding to higher education. In addition to a reduction in funding, many countries are moving apace to have many more of their citizens educated at the tertiary level (Mulryan-Kyne, 2010; Orrell, 2011). The challenge for many tertiary-level institutions is that they are expected to deliver the same quality of education to greater student populations with less financial resources. According Victoria University report (2012), workload challenges exist in many countries and require strategic thinking and planning specifically to respond to the challenges of reduced funding. Yet, many institutions have embarked on cost-cutting measures, including reduction in human resources and revised workload policies (Gullatt and Weaver, 2001) which translate in more work for those that remain. Like in many countries therefore, the changing workload policies are likely to significantly impact both administrative and academic staff as well as overall performance of Ugandan institutions.

1.1 The context of the academic professional

Holiday or no holiday, leave or no leave, vacation or no vacation, where they are academicians are ever in the race to keep up with the latest knowledge (Menahem, 2007). Therefore, behind classroom teaching, there are numerous academic related work that include; research, supervision, attending viva voce examinations and proposal defense, organizing seminars, reaching the community, assessing students, participating on institutional committees, preparing for classes; and many others. These academic roles are more complicated by marking and assessing of courseworks, tests, examinations and dissertations, which Wissenschaftsrat, 2006;

Yonezawa and Kim, 2008 said was not a "cup of tea" for many academicians. To say the least, marking is considered the most undesirable activity in the academic profession. It becomes even worse when the academician combines teaching with administration (e.g. dean, head of department, duty officer, examinations' officer, course manager, module leader etc..) and always involved in meetings, seminars, workshops and which in the least do not attract any workload - after all this, workload is calculated on the basis of class work, Rosenwald (2006) disappointedly notes. Yet, given that an academician is more nurtured, pampered and well irrigated, one would imagine that it should lead to social, economic and academic gratification (Menahem, 2007; Tansel, 2002). Regrettably though, actual sense, workload computation leaves a lot to be desired in terms of workload computation and equitable compensation. Yet, once academicians live a gratifying life in an institution, they should leave behind a legacy after retirement, empowered successors and mentees through various ways of knowledge sharing. More surprising, Kay, Russell, & Standfield (2010) found that although one of the avenues that lead to upward mobility for academic professionals, was research and publication the research votes were the least in institutions. They found that this challenge has diminished many academicians' dreams of moving to the highest rank in the academic profession, given that the major requirement for one to become a full professor, for example, *"You either publish or Perish"*! This is because; academic work is made up of several categories of activity. Real work begins as soon as secure a teaching vacancy at a university (writing countless papers, books, teaching, consultancy, supervision, examining etc..).

It is important to note that because of the lifestyle and perks that professors enjoy, teaching positions are perceived highly coveted. The journey begins at the lowest for example, teaching assistant, to assistant lecturer, to lecturer, to senior lecturer through to Associate Professor and finally to full professor (Kay, Russell & Standfield, 2010). Indeed, becoming a full professor requires the engagement of all the human faculties (i.e. mentally, psychologically, emotionally, ethically and physically). Martin (2009) equates the steps of becoming a professor to the process applied to the building a "Titanic Ship". Whereas in the corporate world, working experience and possibly some extra paper qualifications might push you to the next level of the organization. On the other hand, the academic world requires much more than just experience and paper qualification (Jega-Attahiru, 2008). Regardless of superior requirements at entry level, the multiple

tasks performed in the academic profession, the hectic and the long hours while teaching, researching, supervising and providing guidance to the community and the long promotional procedure, their compensation has not been palatable to the nature of work they do (Meyer, 1998). Gullatt & Weaver, (2001) found that teaching has boosted university budgets, in terms of tuition paid, yet, little attention has been paid to the particularity and peculiarity of the work of the academic profession. Not surprising therefore, many academicians in these institutions have resorted to multiple activities. According to (Mamdani, 2007), this trend is threatening the quality of service delivery – leave alone productivity. Hence, workload intricacies have resulted in many resorting to classroom teaching as opposed to research and publishing, which has partly affected institutional visibility (Katunguka, 2010). This research therefore attempted to contribute to the ongoing debate on workload policy, workload computation and workload consideration that seem to pose serious implications for HEIs in Uganda.

1.2 Research Problem and Objectives

The value that teaching staff brings to higher education institutions cannot be overemphasized. The requirements of one to teach in a university are fit for the purpose as supported by the Mujaju report (1988) and the White Paper (1992). NCHE (2005) too emphasizes quality of teaching staff. The McGregor Report (2007) found challenges in respect to the computation that guided remuneration of a university professor and made recommendations to that effect. Whereas the issue of inadequate staff compensation may be a challenge across the continent (Burnett & Krause, 2009) harmonization of salary scales and workload estimation and computation still pose serious challenges in HEIs in Uganda. This state of affair may be the contributory factor to ineffective service delivery, quality of service, dwindling knowledge sharing and retention challenges in many higher education institutions in Uganda. This situation therefore called for an investigation to explain the intricacies in workload policy and computation in HEIs in Uganda. The purpose of the study was to show the discrepancies and problems in academic workload distribution as provided by policies in Ugandan HEIs. Therefore, in order to investigate the intricacies in the academic profession and their

implications to HEIs in Uganda, the research used five study objectives.

1) To establish the relationship between workload policy and research output in HEIs in Uganda

2) To find out how   workload policy affects academicians' productivity in HEIs in Uganda

3) To examine the how workload policy influences quality of service delivery in HEIs in Uganda

4) To assess the extent to which workload policy influences knowledge sharing in HEIs in Uganda

5) To analyze how workload computation affects retention of academic staff in HEIs in Uganda?

2.0 Theoretical Explanations and Literature Review

The study was guided by attribution theory by Weiner (1974) and The Equity Theory by Adam Stancy (1965). Both theories were perceived relevant to explain the failure of those manning HEIs to recognize numerous efforts of academicians with multiple roles, and also the manner in which academicians perceive unfairness in the way workload is computed. The Attribution theory is concerned with how individuals interpret events and how this relates to their thinking and behavior. The psychological theory of attribution was coined by Weiner, 1974, who developed a theoretical framework that has become a major research paradigm of social psychology. Attribution theory assumes that people try to determine why people do what they do, i.e., attribute causes to behavior. A person seeking to understand why another person did something may attribute one or more causes to that behavior. A three-stage process underlies an attribution: (1) the person must perceive or observe the behavior (2) then the person must believe that the behavior was intentionally performed, and (3) then the person must determine if they believe the other person was forced to perform the behavior (in which case the cause is attributed to the situation) or not (in which case the cause is attributed to the other person). Weiner focused his attribution theory on achievement and identified ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck as the most important factors affecting attributions for achievement. Attributions are classified along

three causal dimensions: locus of control, stability, and controllability. The locus of control dimension has two poles: internal versus external locus of control. The stability dimension captures whether causes change over time or not. For instance, ability can be classified as a stable, internal cause, and effort classified as unstable and internal. Controllability contrasts causes one can control, such as skill/efficacy, from causes one cannot control, such as aptitude, mood, others' actions, and luck. Attribution theory has been used to explain the difference in motivation between high and low achievers. According to attribution theory, high achievers will approach rather than avoid tasks related to succeeding because they believe success is due to high ability and effort which they are confident of. Failure is thought to be caused by bad luck and not their fault. Thus, failure doesn't affect their self-esteem but success builds pride and confidence. On the other hand, low achievers avoid success-related chores because they tend to (a) doubt their ability and/or (b) assume success is related to luck or to "who you know" or to other factors beyond their control. Thus, even when successful, it isn't as rewarding to the low achiever because he/she doesn't feel responsible, i.e., it doesn't increase his/her pride and confidence. On the other hand, the Equity theory by Adam J. Stacy (1963) attempts to explain relational satisfaction in terms of perceptions of fair/unfair distributions of resources within interpersonal relationships (Gill and Stone, 2010). Equity Theory is considered one of the justice theories. The theory explains how employees seek to maintain equity between the inputs that they bring to a job and the outcomes that they receive from it against the perceived inputs and outcomes of others (Adams, 1965). The belief is that people value fair treatment which cause them to be motivated to keep the fairness maintained within the relationships of their co-workers and the organization. The structure of equity in the workplace is based on the ratio of inputs to outcomes. Inputs are the contributions made by the employee for the organization. Hence, Adams' Equity Theory calls for a fair balance to be struck between an employee's inputs (hard work, skill level, tolerance, enthusiasm, and so on) and an employee's outputs (salary, benefits, intangibles such as recognition, and so on). According to the theory, finding this fair balance serves to ensure a strong and productive relationship is achieved with the employee, with the overall result being contented, motivated employees. The theory is built-on the belief that employees become de-motivated, both in relation to their job and their employer, if they feel as though their inputs are greater than the outputs (Guerrero, Andersen, and Afifi, 2007). Employees can be expected to respond to this is different ways, including de-motivation

(generally to the extent the employee perceives the disparity between the inputs and the outputs exist), reduced effort, becoming disgruntled, or, in more extreme cases, perhaps even disruptive. It is important to also consider the Adams' Equity Theory factors when striving to improve an employee's job satisfaction, motivation level, etc., and what can be done to promote higher levels of each. To do this, consider the balance or imbalance that currently exists between your employee's inputs and outputs (Gill and Stone, 2010).

2.1 **The intricacies of the academic profession**

Whereas many shy away from pursuing an academic career, it is one of the most popular and competitive professions out there – and the authors found that this was a "hard-to-get" profession. Although, a teaching profession may not get you rich; the perks of teaching in a HEI are awfully sweet and as Cope (2004) reiterates, the academic career is the best career that there is on this globe. Although, the journey to a fulfilled academician is frustrating and often the end of the journey quite somber. Cope *ibid* reiterates that the beauty of the academic career is spending the vast majority of your time researching something that you love. He passionately expresses how academicians become veritable experts in their field, and are paid to produce scholarly works and studies on subjects that simply fascinate them! Academicians spend most of their time sharing their passion with students. Much as this sounds interesting, the invisible stricture before delivery, and while in the field gathering what to teach, in the laboratory rehearsing how impart knowledge, is what makes the profession an enigma one! This however, explains how the profession requires the passion, love and interest of an individual. Although some individuals find this profession a fascinating one, Martin (2005) fails to comprehend why many spend sleepless nights upgrading their skills, furthering their studies and writing endless applications to join the academic profession. Martin *ibid* found the journey to this profession full of ups and downs, potholes and steep slopes, jungles and dangerous mountains – and most uninteresting was braving winters preparing for early morning classes. I must say that the highest academic title sounds "sweet but hard to attain". After all this hustle, the workload issue becomes a contentious one. Is the long search for knowledge, the sleepless nights spent in preparation, the moments of social sacrifice recognized worth it? In fact, what makes the profession more complex, it requires superior qualities in terms of academic qualification,

interest, integrity, commitment and serenity (Joel, 2003). It also takes a lot of time and real hard work to meet the requirements to reach the top of the profession (Professor). Although Yoram (2002) found teaching university students very interesting and rewarding in terms of knowledge sharing, skill and experience gained, the reward in return is often daunting.

Emphasizing the importance of the academic profession, Albert (2003) recommends that activities of academicians should be rewarded with tenure, promotions, and salary increments because they are issues of central concerns. On this point, Batty, 2005; Barrett and Barrett; 2006 reiterate that there are few professions as diverse in their activities as that of the academicians given their wide range of academic activities. Burnett & Krause (2009) explain how traditionally, every faculty function falls into one of three general areas: teaching, research, and service or consultancy. As regards teaching, they explain how it consists of far more than what takes place during the few hours a week that academicians and students actually spend in their classrooms; many other tasks, such as class design, preparation, grading, and meeting with students, make teaching a complex process. Regarding research activities, usually involves field research, library research and writing. Research is not a *process* but a *product,* which is why publication is crucial (Bowen and Schuster, 2006). The products of original research, published books and articles, become teaching tools and extend an institution's mission beyond the campus. Hence, teaching and research can be considered, in effect, two aspects of the same activity. Research is, in a sense, a subcategory of teaching in which the students are one's professional colleagues—perhaps the most demanding of all student audiences. On the other hand, academicians provide service to community which falls into two categories; institutional and professional. Institutional service includes administrative duties, committee work, and student advising. Professional service usually refers to work done in support of one's academic discipline and involves such activities as serving on committees and boards of professional organizations, organizing or chairing sessions at national or international meetings, editing or reading manuscripts for professional journals, or participating in on-site program evaluations, external examination and many others. Therefore, the relation among teaching, research, and service activities can be complex and demanding. Often an academician's day consists of a series of loosely related and extremely different activities, the balancing of which requires frequent and substantial mental shifts. Academicians require uninterrupted periods of time for concentration and reflection, such a hurried and varied schedule can produce frustration, stress and

inefficiency. Therefore, in academia, the distinction between work and leisure is inevitably fuzzy (Bowen and Schuster. 2003). Academicians continue their professional reading, research, and class preparation all year long. With this dynamism in the academic profession, it is only teaching that counts while computing workload. Hence, Mancing (2001 found that the concept of workload is a controversial one! First and foremost, it begins with those who determine what comprises workload, secondly, there is a challenge in extracting information from those responsible for compiling workload, thirdly, there is the recording of activities that comprise workload. In fact, Mancing (2001) attributes this complexity to the fact that academicians often isolate themselves when preparing lectures and materials, and no one witnesses this kind of energy that they devote to original scholarship. Academicians spend lots of time in preparation including desk research in order to deliver lessons which, unfortunately does not translate into workload. Traditionally, the assignment of workload of academics has been largely based on the number of contact hours or credit hours taught. While the kind of basis for assignment may be suitable for administrators, Bruneau and Turk 2004 discovered that it was inadequate because it fails to reflect the wide variation of fluctuation in time required to teach different types of courses. Although Magna (2001) found that contact hours might be a better indication of work time than credit hours, they still oversimplify workload and do not reflect the complexity of all the responsibilities in the academic profession. On this complexity, Yuker's (1994) revelation was that a credit hour was not a reliable index of total load and in fact some studies showed that the total number of hours taught varied from about two to eight. On the other hand, Bibby, 2009, found no difference in workload. This revelation contradicts Hammons and Schade's (1999) finding, where, calculation of workload based on credit hours was an obsolete practice which should be retired to a museum of higher education. Yet, despite the evidence that workload calculation for teaching staff using credit hours was an unsuitable measure of academic workload, many institutions continue to use them as a basis for estimating work done. Scholars (e.g. Mancing, Yuker, and Hanck, 2004) suggest numerous factors that should determine workload. Such factors should include size of the class, the number of topics taught, the experience of teaching staff with particular courses, as well as their general experiences (Burnett & Krause, 2009). On the other hand, Burgess, Lewis & Mobbs (2003) found that whether the class was small or big, efforts, energy and quality of information required and the time it takes is the same. Whereas some scholars (e.g. Copes, Gilbert and Hannah, 2008) propose academic

qualification as a measure to determine the number of hours one should teach, Gregory (2005) opposes this suggestion and instead suggests that researchers who double as academicians should have their workload reduced. Conversely, the Business Council of Australia, (2011) found that academicians should be compensated for innovations such as developing academic programs, research initiatives, collaborations and representation on professional bodies. It was challenged by various scholers (e.g. Coaldrake, Lawrence, 1999; Enders, 2004 and Furfaro, 2014), however, that the vast of literature was concerned with research and experience to determine workload, leaving out supervision activities and the level of the candidates being supervised which should be a strong determinant of workload computation. In fact, research (Gullatt & Weaver, 1995) on the impact of workload on research activities reveals that not only has workload affected productivity of staff, but also stagnation in terms of career growth. The bulk of research on workload has been limited to the nursing profession in literature and only a handful on the academic profession. But even then, the literature lacks a comparison of nurse faculty workload with that of faculty from other disciplines. There is no study that comprehensively compares workload across disciplines that sheds light on the workload inequity hypothesis. For this matter, Hugo Graeme (2005) found other than medical workload, the normal teaching workloads are often times meant to represent levels that are designed to ensure that faculty members can devote adequate time to their research and service activities. Whereas research on workload has concentrated on visible implications, Johnsrud & Rosser (2002) discovered how competition for workload destroyed teamwork and work relationship in institutions. They found that once there is insufficient work for everyone, cliques and segregation will emerge. Although Meyer,1998; Zilli &Trunk-Širca, 2009 found the same challenge the support the usage of workload policy for compliancy and accountability. As more studies are conducted to unravel implications of workload policies, numerous challenges have been established. For example, Victoria University; 2011; Walshe; 2008; and World Bank, 2008 found that the teaching component has affected other activities e.g. research, innovation and community work, which has in the long run diminished visibility of higher education institutions.

3.0 Methodology

The researchers employed both quantitative and qualitative approaches. These approaches were supplemented by a descriptive design that was complemented by a cross-sectional survey. The study used a questionnaire to collect data from academic staff in five HEIs as well as prompt questions. Given the wide scope of the study, Amin (2005) recommends this approach because of its effectiveness in terms of time and cost. To access in-depth information regarding challenges of workload policy, interviews were employed on Human Resource Directors, Bursars, Deans and Heads of department. Borg (1994) provides the benefits of this method in order to access key information. On the other hand, documents that included workload policies in the different institutions, workload registers, students' evaluation reports from the quality assurance units, the HRM manuals. Detailed workload schemes were analyzed; their major features, similarities and differences were assessed and major activities of academic staff workload were analyzed. Further, timetables were examined to determine workload allocation for academic staff and the frequency of occurrence of major activities as well as their components and sub-components were examined and lastly, analysed time allocated to each major activity. A sample of the employment contract agreements. The contract agreements were useful because of their comprehensiveness of the job description. The study was carried out in Makerere University as a public institution, Uganda Management Institute as a Management Development Institute, Ndejje University, Islamic University in Uganda, Kampala International University and Bugema University. This composition targeted different philosophical orientations as well as sources of funding. Both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics as well as thematic and content analyses concurrently in order to investigate the intricacies of workload policies and their implication on the academic profession in Uganda. It covered a period of 3years (i.e. 2009 – 2012) when the philosophy of "Value for Money" and accountability in HEIs hit the academic arena.

4.0 Results and Discussion

A lot has been said, a lot has been written and a lot has gone on in higher education institutions that required a second eye, a second thought and a second feel! Workload has been an issue

worth an effort of investigation because of a number of factors. Among them was the competition in higher education which has considerably increased in the past two decades (Kasozi, 2006), and in order to respond to these challenges HEIs have had to use numerous approaches to attract students, develop academic programs, devise different delivery strategies and performance and; merit related pay for both teaching and non-teaching staff. Although HEIs have given preference to the recruitment of more qualified academic staff, the most efficient use of academic staff resources has been ignored, yet, this category is more critical to cope with such unprecedented changes in HEIs (Walshe, 2008). To investigate the intricacies of workload policy and their implications to the academic profession in HEIs in Uganda, the research used five study objectives; to assess the relationship between workload computation policy and research output; to analyze the influence of workload policy on productivity; to examine the influence of workload policy on quality of delivery; to assess the influence of workload policy on knowledge sharing; and, to examine the influence of workload computation and motivation and retention of academic staff in HEIs in Uganda. Preliminary as well as empirical findings have been overwhelmingly consistent and supported by the theories and previous studies regarding workload policy, workload considerations and workload computation. First and foremost, gaps in literature, have remained gaps in practice in terms of what is considered as workload and what actually is workload in higher education institutions (HEIs).

Table One: Name of the institution and the frequency of responses of the various higher education institutions that participated in the study.

Institution Name	Frequency	Percentage
Uganda Management Institute	3	2.3
Makerere University	9	6.9
Kampala International University (KIU)	30	23.1
Ndejje University	19	14.6
Bugema University	30	23.1
Islamic University in Uganda	39	30.0

Total	130	100

Results on the above item indicated that most respondents were from Islamic University in Uganda with 39 respondents (30.0%), followed by Kampala International University and Bugema University with (23.1%) each, then Ndejje University (14.6%), Makerere University (6.9%) and Uganda Management Institute (2.3%) with the least number of respondents. This implies that the study was well distributed among the higher institutions of learning in Uganda and findings could be generalized in any higher education situation. It was established that institutions with a clear policy on workload highly participated because many had been affected.

On the other hand, findings on gender indicated that majority of respondents were males with (freq. 88, 69.8%) as opposed to females with (freq. 38, 30.2%). These findings show that there is gender disparity among the academic staff in the higher institutions of learning studied. Inequalities in gender is these institutions was supported by Zilli and Trunk-Širca (2009) who found that gender was often an impending factor to workload compliance. On the other hand, research on gender by Victoria University (2011) did not find any significant difference between male and female regarding workload issues. However, considering that at a later age, where promotional systems are functional, older academics are usually at higher ranks which does not necessary strain them in terms of workload. Hence, beyond 50years, most academic staff are at the rank of associate and full professors, which meant less workload and assisted by research assistants (Barrett and Barrett, 2006).   Although workload policy affects both male and female, given the nature of responsibilities male have in society, they were more keen in participating in the study. On this finding, Ridgeway, and Correll (2004) provided an explanation regarding the inherent inequalities in gender in higher education. In the same vain, an analysis by Grove (2012) and Thomson (2011) showed startling levels of gender inequality in research-intensive universities across the world. They affirm that the gap persists not just in emerging nations but also in some of the world's most highly developed countries - where the fight for women's rights and equality has gone on for decades. However, although this disparity was not the major concern of this study, it explained inequities and a number of challenges therein. This study

confirmed findings by other scholars (e.g. Levin, Pocknee & Pretto, 2010). The age of the respondents under study was classified into groups and the respondents were asked to indicate their age group. This enabled the researcher to understand the variety of experiences according to the different age groups.

Fig 1: **Age of the respondents**
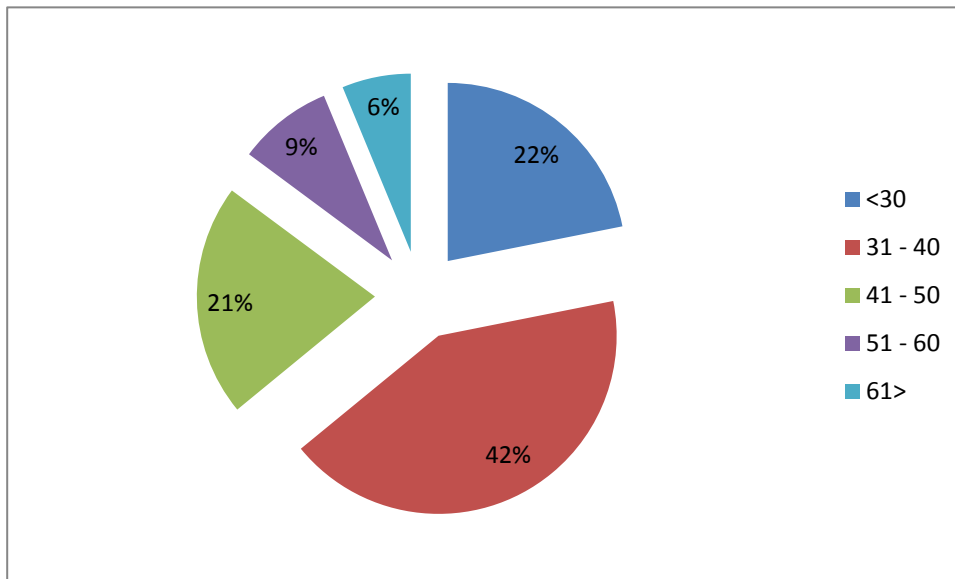
The minimal participation of aged academic professionals is a result of the mandatory retirement age of 60 years in Uganda and also these are people care less about workload computation. Other studies have found the same situation. On the issue of disparity in age of the workforce, Yakoboski and Conley (2013) explains how HEIs have been faced with a host of challenges of baby boomers nearing retirement age, longer life spans, and shifting workforce characteristics, among others. Findings on the composition of staff in terms of age revealed that majority of staff were lecturers and senior lecturers as opposed to associate and full professors. This discrepancy is explained by, Furfaro (2014), on how middle-level tenure-track positions representing over 70% of staff do so much yet paid the least. On the other hand, Benderly (2014), found that in the past, tenured professors were not easy to displace due to the long held belief and benefits that came along with this status. However, studies found that this category did not care about workload but rather, work life balance and quality of instruction (Burnett & Krause, 2009;

Chalmers, 2003 and Coaldrake & Lawrence1999). This therefore explains the cause of the fewer numbers at the top in the current study. Worth noting, the current study found similarity with many institutions across the globe who were finding it difficult to attract and retain high level academicians. For example, researches such as Yakoboski & Conley, 2013; Walshe, 2008; World Bank. 2008 found that institutions were struggling with how to fairly compensate faculty under tight budget constraints controlled by state governments and those privately run, and; how to compute workload. Hence, the length of time in service is relevant because the number of years in service show the experience gained at work which has a bearing on the way workload policies are conceptualized. One component institutions have ignored in workload computation is designation of the academics. Yet, designation of the respondent is considered very critical because the position held by staff in the education institutions determines the decisions they make as regards workload computation. Hence, The findings revealed that most of the respondents were middle level teaching staff with majority of 47.3% leaving 53% for the rest four categories. Given that these are the chore staff that do all the donkey work, Heppner, 2007; Mulryan-Kyne, 2010; Patrick, Peach & Pocknee, 2009 explained that this is the category greatly affected by the workload policy.

Figure 2 Challenges faced at work

Results in figure 4.2 indicate major challenges related to workload to include limited time for research, followed by poor pay. This confirms that inability to carry out research limits ones growth in terms of career prospects. On the other hand, as Adam Stancy argues, these academicians feel that the outcome of their efforts does not match the input (experience, qualification, hard work). Further, it could also be explained by lack of rewards attached to research activities.

Results on the question whether there was a workload policy or, an overwhelming number of 90% agreed that the policy was in place, 5.3% were not sure whereas 4.7 said there was no policy. Since in all institutions there were such responses, it implied that this could be a matter ignorance by staff or lack of dissemination of such information to staff on the part of management.

Hence, given anecdotal information on workload compensation of the academic profession, this study attempts to provide explanations on the workload computation by adopting some of the existing literature, in order to seek a consensus and direction on how best institutions in question can adopt and implement workload policy without much ado. Theories such as the human capital theory, the theory of intellectual capital and the equity theory have been advanced in other studies (Bruneau and Turk 2004; Barrett and Barrett, 2006; Burgess, Lewis and Mobbs,

2003), to explain workload consideration challenges. This study took a slight diversion by adopting the attribution theory and combined it with the equity theory to explain the attribution academicians attach to workload computation and perceived inequity. In this regard, scholars such as Hearn and Deaton, 2006; Meyer; 998 and Enders, 2004 struggled to reach a more equitable estimation, assignment and evaluation of academic workload but with little success. The general public, legislators and payroll managers have long believed that teaching staff have an easy job because they only look at the number of teaching hours. However, scholars such as Winkler (1992), Yuker (2006) and Mancing (1991) have found that workload entails more than classroom teaching and teaching involves preparation, consultation with students and evaluation of their work, which adds up to far more time than the two hours spent in class (Correll, 2004). The complexity of this is that those in charge of making decisions regarding workload issues, may not be aware of the time the teacher spends preparing –at home, in the laboratory, in the field and in office. Therefore, there are a myriad of questions that this research attempted to answer on workload computation. As evidenced in the table, majority of the respondents (109) recognized the importance of the workload policy in their institutions that the intention was to maximize efficiency and minimize waste. This was followed by accountability (56) which also indicates that staff were appreciating the existence of the policy. Still, a good number (52) recognized the importance of the policy as part of results oriented performance management. On the other hand, an average number considers the policy to determine payment of extra workload. However, only two institutions were found this response to be part of the intention for the policy.

Clearly, results in the table indicate that majority of the respondents considered workload to comprise teaching or contact hours in class with students which actually, makes this study extremely pertinent. In an interview with one of the academic staff, this is what was said *"…You cannot believe at this level, lecturers are expected to be confined in class to show that we are working….there is something wrong in this institution because workload used to include research activities, conference attendance and publishing….however, I do not know for some reason, these were scrapped…very confusing.."* On the same question, one of the officials had this to say *"…actually we realized that the institution was rewarding staff twice with the same effort….for example, one of the promotional criteria considers research and publication and at the same time used it as workload…this was double payment…"* The investigators found this

controversial because the staff allege that actually even promotion does not exist in this institution. The study reveals that the number of years served, number of publications, contribution to the community, meeting minimum workload are the majors reasons that have attracted promotion among the academic staff in higher institutions of learning.

**Fig. 3 Reasons for no promotion at work**
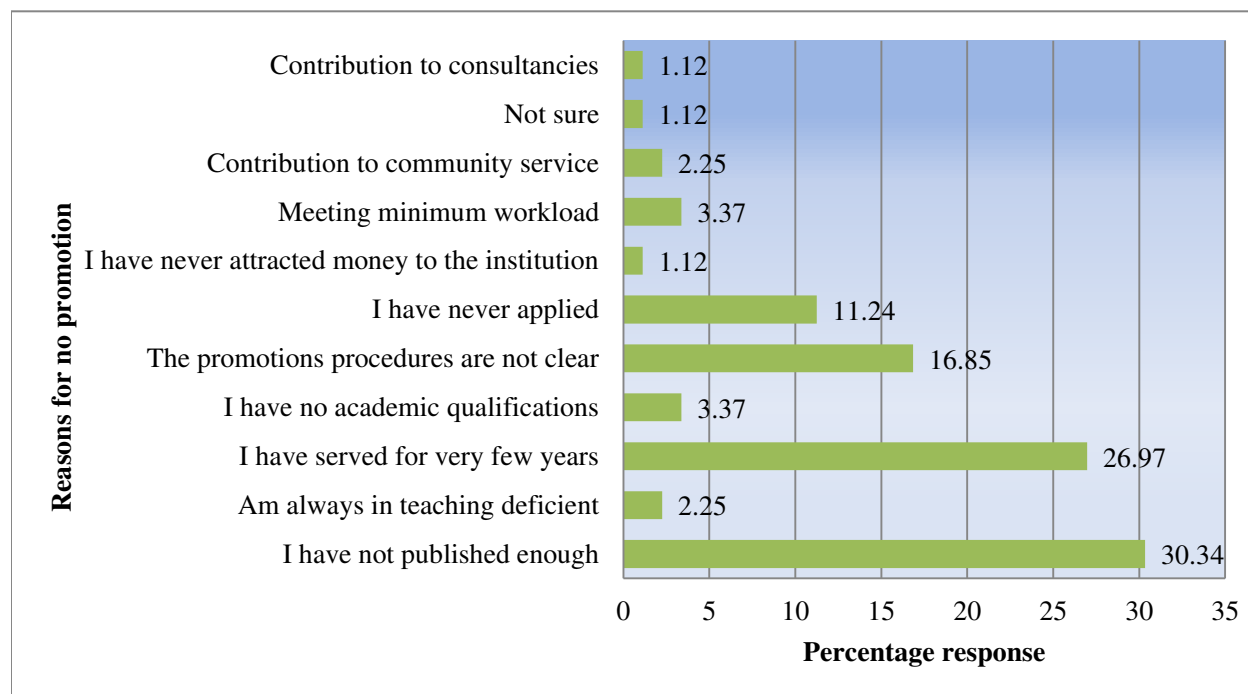
The main reason for not getting promotion was failure to publish enough representing a share of 30.34% of the responses. This was followed by serving for very few years (26.97%) , unclear promotion procedures (16.85%) and having never applied (11.24%). One respondent had this to say "…*I have served this institution for eight years of dedicated work… I came with my doctorate and started as a lecturer, to-date, I am still serving a lecturer..*"

The findings found that equity and transparency were lacking yet, critical to achieve optimal distribution of workload between academic staff. On this issues, one respondent had this to say "…*to achieve equitable workload as well as promotion, this university needs first of all to work out workload systems in collaboration with academic staff, reduce intake figures, and .. I must say, this issue of workload distribution/allocation has eroded teamwork, motivation to conduct research, not forgetting quality…*" Another one said, "..*this institution has a fund for research,*

but we do not have time for it! Even when we finish collecting data, sitting down to analyze and do the actual writing is a real challenge!. What is the meaning it?.... *You research but no immediate benefits and that's why majority prefer to teach and accumulate workload hours through teaching rather than doing research. The standards are set but I can assure you, very few can achieve or meet them...now you understand why visibility is hard to achieve in this institution".*

Fig 4 Community service hours required per year
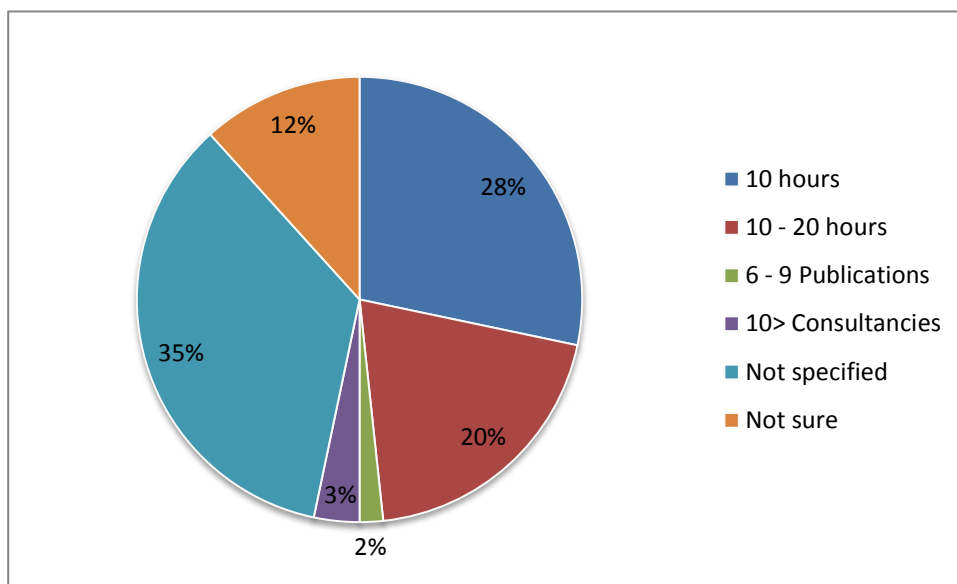
This implies that community service is not a priority to the higher institutions. One respondent had this to say *".. Service to community has become a black sheep in this institution..*One respondent commented. *"..Yet..it should be the focus on serving their respective communities across the country. Now our primary emphasis has shifted to the mission of undergraduate education.."*

Fig. 5 Number of consultancies per year
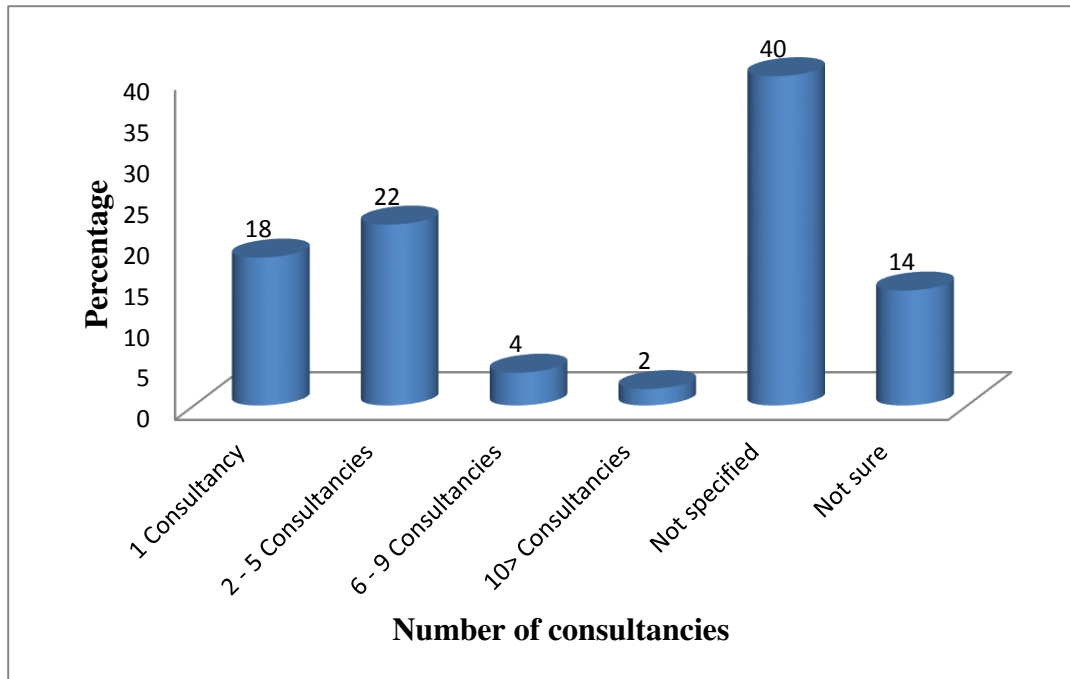
This implies that a greater part of the respondents do not have a specific number of consultancies required from them. This finding can be explaining by the different "*third arm*" or "*third mission*" in these institutions. This finding can be explained by both the attribution and equity theories in terms of perceptions and feeing of inequities.

One respondent has this to say "*...what can people do to meet the minimum workload? Each one for himself! This policy has actually forced people to teach outside their expertise....with payment of extra workload, it has become even worse...quality might slowly be eroded..*" On this question, one respondent had this to say "*...for me I paid more attention to supervision of graduate students trying to make an impact on lives of people not knowing that does not count in workload computation....actually, I have never met the minimum load since I joint this institution. I am considering tendering in my resignation before I am shown the exit..*" Another respondent had this to say "*...this institution is funny, even when they give you permission to travel.. the system demands workload....even when you are on sick leave... workload is demanded...*"

Fig. 6 Major implications for not meeting the minimum workload
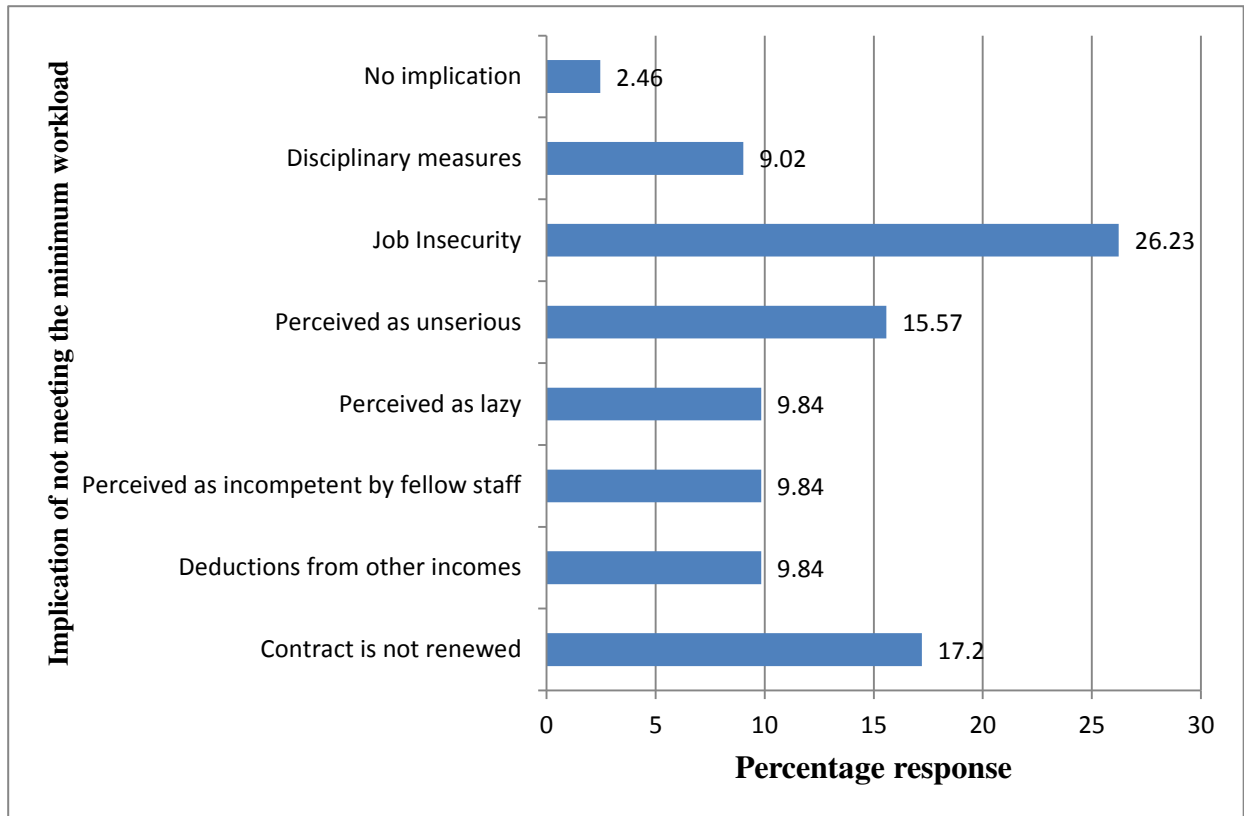
This implies that the productivity of the academic staff is not fully utilized as a result of their current workload policy. Following this finding, one key informant had this to say "…*we are not a charitable organization….we want students, we must show cause, people want jobs, they must work for it…no compromise….if anyone does not want to work, let them look for jobs elsewhere and get free money..*"

One of the key informants had this to say, *"..some people work excessively hard when under pressure and expects some benefits out of hard work…I am not very sure of quality, but certainly performance increases and targets are met.."*

One of the respondents remarked *"…I joined this institution when I was healthy and very strong, but work overload has affected my health (… what can I say, I am always stressed, I have developed high blood pressure, I have lost my eye sight.. I am even becoming very forgetful….by the way, I am not alone.."*

On the question of the relationship between workload computation policy and research output, results on the relationship between workload computation policy and research output, was on a scale of 1-5 indicating respondents' perception about the workload management practices and

research output. The rating for "Strongly Agree and Agree" was considered as Agree; while for "Disagree and Strongly Disagree" were considered as disagreed. The findings on this question shows that 50.9% of the respondents agreed that the work load policy recognizes the scholar work of academic staff while 33.1% disagreed and 16.1% were not sure. This implies that majority of the respondents in institutions studied agreed that the workload policy recognizes their scholar work which is important in the management of workload.

The first and most significant question was of the implication of workload policy on research output. Results were overwhelmingly consistent with previous studies (e.g Gappa, Austin & Trice, 2007; Gullatt & Weaver, 1995; McLendon, Hearn and Deaton, 2006) on how work overload negatively affects research output. This finding is further supported by existing research (e.g Ridgeway and Correll, 2004; Rose, 2006; Rosenwald, 2006 and Zilli, 2009) who found that the distribution of time amongst the components of the faculty work – teaching, research and service to community varied very much from one institution to another. Whereas some institutions considered time for research more rewarding, others encouraged the third arm (Hugo Graeme. 2005; Jega Attahiru, 2008). Hence, tere have been consistencies in this areas of community service in literature across the globe (e.g Sutherland, 2004; Tettey, 2006; and Sanderson, Phua, & Herda; 2000). Although faculty workload is the sum of these three components. These findings are supported by Schwartz and Mare, 2005; Rosser, 2004; and Scott, 2006, among other scholars. Although this was an unresolved challenge globally, it is shocking considering that institutional profiling and visibility are derived from research activities and research outputs, yet collaborative evidence found that research did not form part of the workload attribute. The study also found that workload policy had serious implications on research output since this activity did not attract workload, yet it was the basis for determining productivity. This finding was also espoused by Yonezawa and Kim (2008), This finding is supported by scholars such as Howells and Roberts, 2000; Paterson, 1999; and Larédo & Mustar, 2001, regarding research output. He argues that in a globalised world, given the rapid growth of both technology and the world population, the spread of knowledge and its application in particular contexts is exponentially mushrooming. He found that ultimately, knowledge drives and sustains power and the notion of the knowledge economy, where economic growth and prosperity are determined by the exploitable knowledge that a nation produces, is elevated in

importance. Although the current study found that research was valued by all the institutions studied, it remained unclear why research never attracted workload hours, save for a few institutions.

Most respondents (66.7%) agreed that Computation of workload in their institutions negatively affects the motivation of staff to do research and then, 19.5% disagreed and 13.8% were not sure. On whether workload computation in their institution takes care of research, majority of the respondents (55.2%) disagreed while 27.2% agreed and 17.6% were not sure. This further indicates that computation of workload does not take care of research which inhibits research in most institutions.   On whether there have been reviews of the workload policy aimed at giving research more prominence, 48.4% disagreed while 17.3% agreed and 34.4% were not sure. This further shows the reason as why there is low research output in the higher institutions of in Uganda. A bigger percentage of respondents (38.2%) agreed that many staff who received research funding take long to complete projects due to too much teaching load yet 35.0% were not sure and 26.8% disagreed. Very few respondents (9.0%) have been asked to refund the money after the given deadline although a bigger percentage of the respondents (48.4%) were not sure and 42.6% disagreed. The computation of workload is influenced by the philosophy of the institution as indicated by a bigger percentage of respondents (48.4%) yet 22.1% are in disagreement with the view and 29.5% were not sure. On this point, Howells and Roberts (2000) found that for the advanced industrialized countries, knowledge is becoming the only resource capable of offering competitive advantage and continued growth and prosperity, and this can be generated through research activities and dissemination. This is because, according to Paterson, 1999; Larédo & Mustar, (2001), universities had a proud history of research and were therefore well positioned to generate knowledge. They furthermore had the human competence and mandate to sustain knowledge generation, hence, university research was regarded as a competitive strength by developed countries.

The highest number of respondents (59.7%) agreed that if computation policy is not reviewed, their institutions are going to remain invisible while 18.5% disagreed and 21.8% were not sure. This implies that failure to review the workload computation policy; the institutions are going to remain invisible.   On whether web ranking of institutions is affected by the way research efforts

are rewarded, most respondents (68.0%) were in agreement with the statement which shows that improvement in the research rewards has a positive effect on the research output. Very few respondents 10.70% disagreed while 21.3% were not sure. Most respondents (52.5%) agreed that the workload policy was formulated by people who did not value research at the time although 17.2% disagreed and 30.3% were not sure. 42.7% disagreed that even if the computation is revised since teaching dominates research, there would be no difference. This means that revision of the workload computation will have a positive impact towards improving research outs in the higher institutions of learning.39.5% agreed while 17.7% were not sure.

The study further showed that majority of the respondents (59.2%) disagreed to have never received any promotion since they joined their institution because of lack of sufficient publications while 29.1% agreed to the statement and 11.7% were not sure. With most respondents 41.8% in agreement with the statement that, given lack of sufficient time, even the research output in their institution is substandard. Therefore time has a significant effect on the standard of research output. 37.8% disagreed with the statement while 20.5% were not sure. However, majority of the respondents agreed that staff lack the motivation to do research because it does not have direct benefits while a small percentage (29.8%) disagreed and very few (10.7%) were not sure. A bigger percentage of the respondents (49.6%) are not even able to write journal articles due to workload issues yet few respondents 39.0% disagreed and very few (11.4%) were not sure. On whether research workload is better coordinated, most of the respondents 58.0% disagreed while few respondents 25.2% and very few 16.8% were not sure. Research workload is not well distributed as noted by most respondents (56.9%) yet few respondents 23.6% agreed and 23.6% were not sure. The researcher also set out to assess the relationship between workload computation policy and research output in HEIs in Uganda. In order to measure the strength and direction between workload computation policy and research output, Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis and regression were used.

The workload management practices and teaching was measured on a five (5) Likert scale represented by 5, strongly agree, 4 agree, 3 either agree or disagree, 2 disagree and 1 strongly disagree. The question on workload management practices on teaching above shows that most respondents (82.9%) agreed that teaching is given more weight than research while a small percentage (9.7%) disagreed and very few respondents (7.3%) were not sure. Majority of the

respondent 66.7% agreed that teaching is much more remunerated in terms of extra workload fees than research yet only 16.3% disagreed and then 17.1% were not sure. The findings show that bigger percentage of respondents 43.4% disagreed that the teaching workload requirements were realistic although 40.8% agreed and very few respondents (15.8%) were not sure. On whether the teaching workload demand is too unrealistic that one hardly finds time for research, majority of the respondents disagreed 44.7% yet only 43.9% agreed and very few 11.4% were not sure. Majority of the respondents agreed that teaching workload is better coordinated in one office yet 38.2% disagreed and very few 18.7% were not sure. With most respondents 46.4% having disagreed that there is too much bureaucracy in teaching workload issues, only a small percentage 33.3% agreed and 20.3% were not sure. The findings further revealed that 54.5% (majority) of the respondents disagreed that teaching workload is poorly managed even though 32.3% agreed and very few 13.2% were not sure. Many respondents 55.2% disagreed that due to unrealistic workload, facilitators/ lecturers dodge classes yet a few 24.4% were not sure and 20.4% disagreed. The question of whether workload management practices had an effect on quality of delivery, results revealed that most respondents 58.5% agreed that workload demands have seriously affected their

The majority of the respondents 53.3% disagreed that on whether the teaching timetable is not widely spread to give opportunity to competent academic staff to participate in teaching yet few 28.7% disagreed 18.0% and very few were not sure. On this issue, one respondent had this to say *"...the system here is scratch my back, I scratch yours...you never get to see these timetables...you only hear people talking of a module beginning and ending.....what happens in between, God knows..but I attribute all this on unreasonable workload considerations.."*

The question on whether workload management practices had an effect on knowledge sharing, results indicated Actually one of the respondent had this to say: "*…what we have are mafias not colleagues because of this so called workload….you cannot believe what is happening here. Even when people have no knowledge or any expertise, they will go to class because they want to earn workload"*. Another respondent had this to say*: " we are even scared of sharing our notes because someone will completely overshadow you using your efforts and knowledge.."* This implies that there are conflicting views on what actually community service is all about. Whereas some institutions call it community service, others call it consultancy work. Hence, an

explanation that both consultancy work and community work are used sometimes interchangeably, and may or may not attract workload, depending on the institution.

One respondent had this to say *"..no matter how much effort you put in, meeting minimum requirement needs some science of some sort…..you know what I mean..sometimes it beats my understanding when someone claims to have exceeded their minimum load say by 100%...isn't that crazy?....it means one working during the day, night and weekend ….none stop…and what does that actually mean to the institution?* This means that the institutions need to revisit their workload policies to address issues of quality, equality, equity and participation. Findings of staff productivity were shocking and this is because, what these institutions considered productivity were found to be only a small fraction of what an academician. The study found a high correlation between excessive workload and work productivity. For example, Bruneau and Turk 2004; Barrett and Barrett, 2006; Burgess, Lewis and Mobbs, 2003 found that work overload resulted into stress and in some cases, depression. The study found that lecturers were expected to teach more hours that senior lecturers, associate professors and professors. Actually the study found that this category was more affected by workload policy more than any other category in these HEIs because they almost at operational level and doing almost everything i.e. preparing lessons for teaching, supervision, setting and marking, conducting seminars, attending proposal defense, moderating viva voce examinations, carrying out research, attending conference, attending to the community and disseminating their findings. This challenge is in line with Furfaro, 2014; Burke, 2008; Burnett & Krause; 2009; and Chalmers, 2003 who explained the issue of workload and increased responsibility. They found that senior academics were more or mentors or playing the supervisory roles. Therefore, it is quite unfortunate that workload schemes do not capture the whole range and complexity of activity undertaken by academics and only considered formal teaching time. In fact, Levin, Pocknee, & Pretto (2010) discouraged schemes that focused workload only on teaching hours and neglecting research and service. The argue, that this type of scheme is not perceived as equitable and do not result in the most effective use of staff. Faculty must do more than just teach and do research work in order to successfully fulfill their roles and obligations of teaching, research and providing service to the community.   Krause (2009) found that this mix was more gratifying to the academician than the routine, monotonous and tedious teaching activity.

Findings on quality of service delivery, confirmed that actually workload policy was affecting every aspect of quality; ranging from teaching, supervision and preparedness for class. They argued that work overload deterred staff from exploiting their full potential or even doing a good job, as they are either fatigued, disorientated or sick (Heppner, 2007). Certainly, they affirm, a confused or perpetually sick person can never be productive. In contrast to Larédo & Mustar's (2001) study, Wissing, Du Toit and Rothmann (2002) found that stress out of work overload affects health, and productivity of academics. He argues that role overload with conflicting expectations and the conflict between teaching, research and service delivery not only affected the morale but also productivity. This was also found in studies done Kay, Russell,. & Standfield, 2010) regarding staff productivity. Unfortunately the current study did not find a normal distribution of workload across the teaching staff. Scholars found a combination of factors, such as stress, work overload, and decreased motivation all affected quality. Aside ignored research component in these institutions, the study also found an overwhelming ration of supervisor-supervisee which actually consumed most of the time for academic staff, yet interaction with supervisee is not considered as workload. The study found similarities in other institutions across the globe in terms of penalties for failure to meet the required workload. But, most threatening was the contract renewal, which actually researchers such as Burnett & Krause, 2009; Chalmers, 2003; and Enders, 2004 found to have negative implications. They said, this fear of losing ones job has led to fraudulence, teaching outside ones expertise, soured faculty collegiality, quality of teaching, sabotaging colleagues ..among other things. Although these implications need to be paid attention to, Kay, Russell, & Standfield, (2010) provide the rationale basing on McGreggor's theory X and Y where without setting the minimum workload, most employees would just appear and disappear, and get paid a salary at the end of the month.

The study also found that workload policy affected staff motivation, and this was overwhelmingly supported by the existing literature. For example, Levin, Pocknee, & Pretto, 2010; Mulryan-Kyne, 2010; Orrell, 2011 found that staff who had been seriously demoralized by teaching overload even failed to carry out research, yet, when it comes to promotion, this carries substantial marks. This finding is collaborated by Horace (2006), in his Jamaican experience. Studies elsewhere, (e.g. Burnett & Krause, 2009; Chalmers, 2003; Enders, 2004) results have shown that it has been recognized that the University would not be able to compete

with the private sector. These studies show that because the economy has been stagnant for the past twenty (20) years, many HEIs have shifted their focus to more economically beneficial activities such as attracting students at undergraduate levels and redirecting efforts to teaching. Whereas a number of respondents acknowledged the importance of research, they did not appreciate its linkage to promotion. Studies (e.g Burnett & Krause, 2009; Chalmers, 2003, Coaldrake 1999 and Enders, 2004). In this regard, there was an issue of equity and organisational justice affecting the motivation of staff. Kipkebut (2010) contend that distributive justice is concerned with fairness in the allocation of outcomes such as pay and promotions. Distributive justice is grounded on Adams (1965) equity theory which hold that employees brings inputs into the organization such as education, effort experience among others and in return, expect to receive fair outcomes from the organization such as pay, promotions, accurate and timely feedback or recognition among others. Daly et al, 2006 found that actually perceptions of unfairness lead to frustrations and resentment resulting in loss of productivity, loyalty and attachment to the organization. Studies (e.g Lambert, 2003, Lambert et al, 2007, Haar and Spell, 2009 in Kipkebut, 2010) found distributive justice to affect commitment and job satisfaction of staff and turnover intentions. Hence the determinism and distribution of workload among academic staff and how the computation is done affects academic staff in any institution.

On the question of whether teaching overload affected staff motivation, the study found overwhelming evidence that staff who had been seriously demoralized by teaching overload that they even failed to carry out research, yet, when it comes to promotion, this carries substantial marks. This finding is collaborated by Horace (2006), in his Jamaican experience. Studies elsewhere, (e.g. Burnett & Krause, 2009; Chalmers, 2003; Enders, 2004 have shown that It has been recognized that the University would not be able to compete with the private sector. These studies show that because the economy has been stagnant for the past two (2) decades, many HEIs have shifted their focus to more economically beneficial activities such as attracting students at undergraduate levels and redirecting efforts to teaching. Whereas a number of respondents acknowledged the importance of research, they did not appreciate its linkage to promotion. Studies (e.g Burnett & Krause, 2009; Chalmers, 2003, Coaldrake 1999 and Enders, 2004). In this regard, there was an issue of equity and organisational justice affecting the motivation of staff. Kipkebut (2010) contend that since distributive justice is concerned with

fairness in the allocation of outcomes such as pay and promotions, its absence would greatly affect staff motivation. Distributive justice is grounded on Adams (1965) equity theory which hold that employees brings inputs into the organization such as education, effort experience among others and in return, expect to receive fair outcomes from the organization such as pay, promotions, accurate and timely feedback or recognition among others. Daly et al, 2006 found that actually perceptions of unfairness lead to frustrations and resentment resulting in loss of productivity, loyalty and attachment to the organization. Studies (e.g Lambert, 2003, Lambert et al, 2007, Haar and Spell, 2009 in Kipkebut, 2010) found distributive justice to affect commitment and job satisfaction of staff and turnover intentions. Hence the determinism and distribution of workload among academic staff and how the computation is done affects academic staff in any institution.

On the linkage between promotion and retention of staff, the study found that all the preceding factors, affected promotion and studies (e.g. Wissenschaftsrat, 2006; Yonezawa and Kim, 2008), found overwhelming evidence of how workload was found to affect promotional opportunities of academic staff. On this, researchers (e.g Tettey, , 2006; 2009; Sutherland (2004; Dockel, 2003) support this finding and found that majority of this caliber of staff quit their jobs citing work overload and lack of chances to grow and be promoted within the institutions. Hence, many academic staff whose job expectations were not fulfilled because of work overload were reported to quit or decide to stay and become unproductive. While this study found retention of academic staff to be very challenging in these Ugandan institutions, the situation seemed to cut across most African countries, and beyond (Hugo, 2005; Metcalf et al., 2005; Smolentseva, 2003; Thewlis, 2003). Researchers found a significant relationship between work overload and promotional opportunities and this was found to have serious impact on retention on staff. This finding was collaborated for example by Dockel, 2003; Tettey, 2006; Kipkebut, 2010, Amutuhaire, 2009 in HEIs. Majorly, promotion for academic staff is dependent on teaching, research and publications. However, due to financial constraints, non - prioritization of research by the governments and sometimes these institutions, have led to inadequate research activities and publishing, time for writing in order to publish in of refereed journals have become a monumental challenge for Ugandan academics.

On this, Tibarimbasa (2010) established that promotional procedures in Ugandan Universities were long, stressful and cumbersome, while the requirements were unreasonable, for example possession of a doctorate as a prerequisite for promotion beyond the position of a lecturer. Although this was intended for quality purposes, this hard work and required qualifications sometimes did not match the rewards. Hence, scholars such as Baer, 2005; Batty, 2005; Beach, 2005; Bibby, 2009; and Bruneau and Turk, 2004 found reasons why academic staff quit their teaching jobs because many were not in position to meet the workload requirement, thus not deserving promotion. Setting minimum standards for teaching in form of workload to this finding, scholars such as Hines and Higham; 1996; Gullatt and Weaver, 2001, found this method working very well in privately funded institutions, where without this measure, attraction and retention of students is next to impossible and at the same time, sustainability would be a mayhem. This finding is collaborated by Barkhuizen, (2012), who found a significant relationship between work overload and stress among academic staff in South African Higher Education Institutions. Barkhuizen wonders how institutions expect quality before considering health of their staff. This near-to balanced numbers of attitudes of respondents can be explained by both employers (HEIs) managers and the employees of academic staff. In a different twist however, Yousaf, (2010) found that there was a section of staff in every institution that had the drive and commitment. He asserts, that so long as there are structures and systems in place, and that so long as procedures were transparent, objective and equitable, work overload would have no problem. A number of measures, have been put in place in these institutions to effectively compute workload. Elsewhere, (e.g. Shannon and Kidd; 2001; Shavit, Ayalon, Chachasvili-Bolotin and Menahem, 2007; Tansel, 2002 and Wissenschaftsrat, 2006) studies found that most institutions used registers whereas others used students' evaluation while others used duty officers to verify workload claims. These findings are overwhelmingly in line with e.g. Baer, 2005; Batty, 2005; Beach, 2005; Bibby, 2009; Bruneau, and Turk, 2004 regarding measures put in place for workload computation.

5.0   Conclusion

This research found a paradox of what constituted workload and the basis for career growth. Although Teaching was found to constitute the major part of workload computation, its major components were not considered while computing workload, yet, teaching is much more than

only the hours spent in class or in the auditorium during lectures and seminars. Most institutions have downplayed the complexity of teaching and its multiparty tasks. Although teaching includes the preparation of syllabi, group consultations, preparation of lectures, assembling of teaching materials, testing, assessment and evaluation these multiparty tasks that include individual consultations of students, guidance of all categories of students (e.g. undergraduate research papers, master's and doctor's thesis) which actually demand not only the time, but also the patience, love of this job and existence of adequate competencies are never put into consideration. The computation of workload did not include research initiatives, creative endeavours, community involvement, professional service, and academic decision making which is carried out each day by the academic staff were never considered part of the workload, and this affected not only staff motivation, but also, productivity, institutional profiling, and retention of staff. Low research output and productivity were affected by the emphasis of workload, yet they greatly contributed to career growth which was diminishing in these institutions. Therefore, because workload schemes do not capture the whole range and complexity of activities undertaken by academics and only formal teaching time is implicated under academic workload, many academics have not been keen on research activities. Indeed, focusing workload only on teaching hours and neglecting research and service had affected web ranking of these institutions. Finally, with increased demand for value for money, accountability and results driven performance, institutions had no other means for measuring results for immediate decision making than to use a clear and measurable indicator of performance which was teaching load. The workload initiative was further driven by the need for efficiency in terms of staff-student ratios (doing more with less staff) which has increased workload for the few staff available. Hence, given this inflexibility, lack of work-life balance and diminishing opportunities for career growth retention of academic staff has been on the increase for more flexible work, promotional opportunities and better remuneration.

5.1. Recommendations

Since an all-inclusive equation to calculate research productivity in this broad sense is not feasible, the concerned staff should form part of the team to decide on what actually comprises workload. Further, HEIs should regulate workload to pave way for research activities which will lead to institutional profiling, make them more visible, and at the same time lead to academic and professional growth of these academicians. This can be done by reducing the

minimum load considering that there are so many activities that precede classroom interaction. In order to assist HEIs and staff s in planning equitable workload distribution; the entire spectrum of academic staff activities should be incorporated, the workload scheme of a HEI should be relevant to the common workload structure and research activities should be incorporated. Therefore, all three core activities as well as their components and sub-components need to be reflected in the policy. Further the schemes or systems should recognize more than just the teaching activity to incorporate innovations, research initiatives and consultancy/community service in order to successfully fulfill their job obligations. This is because, academicians need sufficient time to develop better professional competencies through other areas considered critical in the academic profession. To curb stressful situations, more teaching staff with the right competencies should be brought on board. The study further recommends that institutions should link all the three arms of HEIs to promotion and equitable rewards in order to retain their critical resources. This should emphasize quality rather than quantity to enable minimum workload to include other aspects critical for the academic profession. Therefore, institutions should review the existing policies through intensive consultations with the academicians to ensure that the workload policy comprises all aspects important for the academic profession. Finally, as these institutions struggle for results oriented performance, which is the way to go these days, they should give serious attention to the motivation and wellbeing of staff in order to retain them for continuity and succession planning.

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