

## Moonlighting Activities and Lecturers' Wellbeing in Nigerian Universities

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### ABSTRACT

Moonlighting refers to a situation where an employee maintains a primary employment and engages in additional work for pay. It is a social phenomenon which has become prevalent in all countries and walks of life. This paper examines moonlighting activities and lecturers' wellbeing in Nigerian universities. It began by generally reviewing literature on the meaning of moonlighting and zeroed-in on the meaning of moonlighting in the context of universities. Types and reasons for moonlighting were reviewed. The positive relationship between moonlighting and level of education as revealed in literature was highlighted, noting that the same is applicable in Nigerian universities. The study identified a number of factors that influence lecturers' decision to moonlight which include job flexibility, employment type and lecturers' characteristics. Moonlighting activities of lecturers identified include part time/adjunct appointment, ownership of secondary, primary and nursery schools, supermarket, etc. The paper noted that though moonlighting activities has positive consequences like monetary gain, job enrichment and fosters knowledge sharing through collaboration, negative consequences like heavy or excess workload, which impinge or affect wellbeing of lecturers as well as their universities exist. The study concluded that lecturers' moonlighting activities are on the increase in Nigerian universities, that moonlighting activities have both positive and negative consequences for individual moonlighters and their universities. The study suggested among others that lecturers' salaries should be reviewed upwards to discourage excessive moonlighting, universities management should formulate policies aimed at streamlining moonlighting activities, a database of all lecturers in Nigerian universities should be established to check moonlighting.

**Key words:** Moonlighting, lecturers, wellbeing, Nigerian universities.

### INTRODUCTION

All over the world, people cherish and desire to be in a state of top general health and happiness-wellbeing. The state of health of most adult Nigerians including lecturers seems to be very low and unsatisfactory due to stressors in the environment. It is when an individual is healthy and happy that he/she can function effectively and be productive. A state of wellbeing of an individual implies quality life and all-round health. These promote productivity in organizations as employees put in their best having been provided the favorable chance to perform at their full capacity. This is the reason individual employees and managers of organizations need to take wellbeing seriously, because whenever an employee cannot perform at full capacity, there is bound to be inefficiency, which will result in low productivity. Moreover, the economic down turn and hyperinflation which has drastically affected the purchasing power of the Naira has affected the spending power and hence the living standard of the Nigerian worker generally and the university lecturers specifically. Nowadays, most university lecturers find it difficult to pay their children's school charges, assist their dependants and publish papers for promotion purposes. If they must do these, they must engage in extra activities outside their primary jobs to stay at an income level that would

enable them take care of their personal needs and those of their dependants and remain "afloat" until the next salary day.

Unfortunately, many employees especially lecturers are afflicted with many illnesses due to burnout emanating from excess workload brought about by the extra job activities lecturers undertake in a bid to earn more income and remain solvent. In recent times, there is hardly any month that a university in Nigeria does not witness the death of a lecturer. Some persons attribute these deaths mainly to the growing wave of taking up extra activities outside the primary job among academics. These extra activities create a lot of negative stress on lecturers and sometimes cause untimely death which creates a vacuum. The vacuum so created as a result of the death of the lecturers have far reaching impact on universities and society such that while the workload of the colleagues of the deceased increase, the resources of the university at the department, faculty and at central university levels are wasted to give the sick or deceased colleagues family the needed support. This further diminishes the money available to the lecturers as they are made to contribute towards the burial of the departed colleague and hence reduce their finances. This further compounds the issue of lecturers' wellbeing.

Moonlighting as described by Shishko and Rostker in Baah-Boateng, Adjei & Oduro (2013) is a situation where an individual maintains a primary employment and engages in additional work for pay. Banerjee (2012) view moonlighting as the addition of extra work with extra pay with some other employer along with a primary job. Moonlighting in universities refers to a situation where lecturers engage in multiple job-holding in another university or outside the university system. This phenomenon is now prevalent and a mirror of the changing labour market outcome, conditions of service (remuneration), purchasing power of the Naira and the need to remain afloat financially, etc.

University lecturers in Nigeria are underpaid when compared with lecturers in other countries of the world and even in the same country (Nigeria) when compared with workers in the industry with same qualifications. Lecturers therefore, resort to holding more than one job to earn enough to avert or forestall any substantial decline in their living condition.

Despite the seeming negative impact of multiple job-holding on workers generally and lecturers specifically, much remain to be learned about the impact of moonlighting on the wellbeing of university lecturers in Nigeria. Therefore, the paper is an attempt to unravel and highlight the impact of moonlighting activities on their wellbeing and their organization. In doing this, the paper delved into the following: concept of moonlighting, types of moonlighting, reasons for moonlighting and impact of moonlighting on the wellbeing of lecturers and their universities.

### **UNDERSTANDING THE TERM MOONLIGHTING**

Moonlighting, a term synonymous with multiple job-holding is commonly understood as having a second or a third job usually part-time, in addition to primary full-time job (Betts 2006, Baah-Boateng, Adjei and Oduro 2013). However, Shishko and Rostker in Baah-Boateng, Adjei and Oduro (2013) described moonlighting as a situation where an individual keeps a primary employment and engages in additional work for pay. This implies that any form of work an employee engages in for monetary reward other than the primary (full-time) employment falls under moonlighting. Sussan (1998) noted that the United States (US) definition of multiple job holding differs from the Canadian one. Whereas persons with two self-employed jobs, or who were in self-employed job or unpaid family workers in the primary job and held a secondary job as an unpaid family worker are excluded from the US count, such individuals are included in the Canadian one.

Deductions from the foregoing definitions reveals that whenever an individual engages in any paid job other than his/her primary job, that individual is said to be moonlighting and the person can be referred to as a moonlighter.

Banerjee (2012) identified four aspects of moonlighting: Blue moon, Quarter moon Half-moon and Full moonlighting. The blue moon, he noted, has to do with a situation where employees demand from the management an abrupt increase in wages and salaries and the management positively responds. While some employees become satisfied with the raised wages and benefits and adjust their spending with the degree of wages and benefits from time to time, on their own volition, other employees will not be satisfied and they will not take a second job because of lack of the ability to find a job. Such category of employees according to him will have compatibility issues with the organizational wage level structure and will need a second job for additional income and the job will be unavailable to them. As a result, their efforts to generate more income will not yield a positive result. This type of effort and result is termed Blue moonlighting (Banerjee 2012).

Furthermore, the scholar described quarter moonlighting as a situation whereby after completing his academic life, an employee starts his career at a lower level managerial position, spends the period that he has not married comfortably with his salary.

However, as time goes on and he gets a wife and size of his family increases, at some point it becomes difficult to make ends meet with the present salary. He therefore, finds it difficult to spend upon his child's education and other things that make life easier. Then, the employee accepts a part-time job and does it side by side with his present job. This taking up of additional job to complement the family as well as the employee himself due to the increased demand of wealth by the employees is called quarter moonlighting. Half-moonlighting situation as described by Banerjee (2012) is that in which some employees are not satisfied with the present levels of earning in their jobs. They expect a very high salary with respect to their job descriptions, so they take up additional jobs or go for business so that they can buy luxury goods and live comfortably. This category of employees spends fifty percent (half) of their time in the second job rather than their original (primary) job since they have to earn large sufficient amount. This degree of moonlighting is termed half-moonlighting. Another degree of moonlighting called three-quarter moonlighting by employees as stated by Banerjee (2012), has to do with a situation where employees and banks/financial institutions grant loan and advance to entrepreneurs, traders, business people and industrialists. They follow closely the implementation of the project and check the various stages of progress. If the project becomes sick, the borrower becomes unable to repay the loan, and the repaying capacity becomes red, the bank officers apply their minds to recover principles, policies and plan of action of the bank. Hence, they will be in the shoes, suit and mind. If the entrepreneur is skillful and tactful, and if the environment favours him, his project will be successful. The project will provide him regular cash inflow and he makes a fortune with the bank's money. The bank officer himself feels happy for granting him loan. He then thinks of taking up a similar entrepreneurial project along with his existing job, which is at the same time difficult too. This type of situation is responsible for change of values and aspirations of employees for becoming stronger finally with a shock absorber. If the employee fails in his project, then he will be incurring a loss but his current job will act as buffer and a shock absorber. Hence, employees take up other occupations and spend more or less than 75% of their time and resources for their business or industrial units. Second job activity to this extent may be called three-quarter moonlighting.

Yet another variant of moonlighting as presented by Banerjee (2012) is a situation where employees in some occupation have free time whereas some employees feel that their income from their job is too low and does not meet their expectation. Some employees have friends who earn more than them and they are socially at a much higher state. Although the friend might be academically weak but socially from the job, he has, he gets more benefitted through his income. This creates a mental pressure in the employee who realizes this difference in earning capacity. Hence after their realization, these employees start a new venture and spend most of their time and resources in starting, developing, expanding and diversifying their business or entrepreneurial activities. They keep on staying on the job, as it will be useful for them as a shock absorber in times of need. Their financial and social position will almost be determined by their second occupation. This extent of second jobbing is known as full moonlighting by the employee.

### **REASONS FOR MOONLIGHTING**

A review of literature on why employees moonlight revealed so many reasons. The Survey of Work Arrangements (SWA) in Sussman(1998) provided two groups of rationale: non-financial, which include; gain experience, build up business, enjoys the work of the second job and work related. It listed the following likely financial reasons: pay off debts, buy something special, save for the future and other economic reasons. Similarly, Baah-Boateng, Adjei and Oduro(2013) stated that there are various reasons why people engage in moonlighting which include: ensuring continuous employment spells even in times of reduced working hours in the main job, overcoming financial constraints and for the accumulation of skills and expertise in other occupations. In his own view, Owusu in Baah-Boateng, Adjei and Oduro (2013) stated categorically that apart from survival motive, people also engage in multiple economic activities as a means of capital accumulation. In the same vein, Allenin Amuedo-Dorantes and Kimmel (2005) and Krishmanin Baah-Boateng, Adjei and Oduro (2013)noted that workers moonlight in order to balance their job portfolios and supplement incomes under conditions of financial necessity. Amuedo-Dorantes & Kimmel (2005) suggested that workers may choose to moonlight in an effort to stabilize family income during a downturn of the economy when unemployment rates are high and real wages may fall. In the same direction, Conway and Kimmel (2009) adduced two reasons for moonlighting-primary job constraints and job heterogeneity. Boheim and Taylor (2004) expanded Conway and Kimmel's reasons for moonlighting and added two justifications for moonlighting, that is, moonlighting in response to negative financial shock and moonlighting in response to heightened primary job insecurity. To Bell, Hartwright and Hart in Amuedo-Dorantes and Kimmel (2005), the possibility that the workers might take second jobs as a hedge against future unemployment may be the trigger for moonlighting. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Baah-Boateng, Adjei and Oduro (2013), surveys indicate that about 18% of the workers in Ghana were engaged in more than one job in 2005/2006, dropping from 30% in 1998/1999. Furthermore, they stated that in the UK in 1998 10% engaged in more than one job, 10.1% in Russia in 1996, 6.2% in the US in 1989 and 5% in Brazil in 1999. Statistics for Nigeria is not available. This writer believes that these statistics must have quadrupled given the unfavorable economic situation in most countries of the world including Nigeria.

### **MOONLIGHTING AND LEVEL OF EDUCATION**

The fact that multiple job holding (moonlighting) inevitably increases with the level of education attained has been proven empirically. For instance, Foley in Baah-Boateng, Adjei and Oduro (2013) focusing on transitional economies with specific emphasis on Russia shows that education nearly doubles the moonlighting likelihood. Tansel in Baah-Boateng, Adjei &Oduro (2013) confirmed the significant relationship between moonlighting and education with evidence of a strong positive effect of education on moonlighting in Turkey. Casari (2010)

revealed that income from the main job was inadequate even for workers with more schooling, suggesting that multiple job holding necessarily increases with the level of education in Brazil. Owusu (2005) found out that in Ghana, teachers have the highest participation rate in multiple economic activities. Sussman (1998) observed that the highest rates of multiple jobs holding in the United States were for workers whose main job was in educational services, government services or health and social services. In Canada same was true of those working in health and social services, education or the primary industries. Furthermore, the scholar noted that in both the United States and Canada, teachers in colleges and universities as well as those in elementary and secondary schools and workers employed in health assessment and teaching occupations reported high rate of moonlighting. This observation is also true for Nigeria. However, reliable statistics are not available.

### **MOONLIGHTING IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES**

Evidence of moonlighting among lecturers in Nigerian universities abound, although statistics are not readily available. It is speculated that six out of ten university lecturers in Nigeria moonlight. A number of factors that seem to influence lecturers' decision to moonlight include job flexibility, employment type (part time) and lecturer characteristics. Moonlighting activities engaged in by university lecturers include: part-time/adjunct appointment, ownership of secondary, primary and or nursery schools, supermarkets, petrol stations, consultancy services, eateries, laundry, water factories, etc. It is also being speculated that senior lecturers (those on higher ranks, senior lecturers and those in the professorial cadre) tend to moonlight more than the junior ones (those on the lower ranks like assistant lecturer, lecturer 11 and 1). This may stem from the fact that the higher rank lecturers' experience is needed in many relevant areas: the industry, secondary schools, private higher institutions, etc. It is not uncommon to find a professor who holds three or more jobs other than the primary job. Such lecturers may hold adjunct appointment in two or three higher education institutions and still run a private business like ownership of a school, poultry, supermarket, etc. The movement and logistics involved in accomplishing these activities put a lot of stress and strain on the lecturers and take a toll on their physical health and sometimes mental health, which may affect the individuals' families as well as their organizations negatively.

### **MOONLIGHTING AND LECTURERS' WELLBEING IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES**

There is no doubt that lecturers' moonlighting activities have both positive and negative consequences on the individual lecturers' wellbeing as well as the wellbeing of their organizations. Aside monetary gain that accrues to moonlighting lecturers, which helps to cushion financial stress in a period of hard economy, moonlighting enables lecturers acquire new skills which help them perform their jobs better. Most lecturers argue that an adjunct appointment should not be termed moonlighting because such an appointment is temporary and for a specified period. Furthermore, they argue that taking up an appointment on adjunct basis serves to enrich the repertoire of the lecturers and add to their experience as a result of cross fertilization of ideas between various lecturers from different institutions who are on adjunct in a particular university, thereby bringing their varied experiences to bear on colleagues and students. Another positive impact of moonlighting on lecturers is that it serves a job enrichment purpose, in the sense that the boredom that usually accompanies the monotony of performing the same job in the same place over a long period of time since lecturers do not go on transfer is reduced if not entirely removed by undertaking moonlighting activities.

Moonlighting profits universities especially newly established and private ones as they appoint experienced lecturers from other universities on adjunct basis. There is a general belief that most lecturers hired in private universities are unqualified and inexperienced teachers who

are not well versed in pedagogy. It is also speculated that through knowledge sharing (collaboration) with other qualified teachers as a result of interaction during adjunct job placement, that such collaboration can positively rub off on the unqualified teachers as they gain experience from their qualified colleagues during one-on-one interactions, staff meetings, seminars and other academic activities. Students also benefit from their interactions with the experienced teachers. New skills learned by moonlighters benefit also their organizations by improving organizational development and productivity. Moonlighting also benefits universities by improving retention since lecturers can take other jobs in addition to their primary job, although on part-time basis, staff turnover is minimized.

The world over, academic staff of universities carry out many responsibilities that are demanding. Confirming the nature of the duties lecturers in universities undertake, Houston, Mayer and Paewai (2016) observed that academic staff of universities performs complex tasks in an increasingly demanding environment. In Nigerian universities, the core functions of lecturers are teaching, research and dissemination of research findings and community service.

Entrepreneurship was added about a decade ago. Other duties of lecturers include: preparation of lesson plans, invigilating students during tests and examinations, grading scripts and meeting deadlines for submission of examination results, supervision of undergraduate projects and graduate dissertations/theses, board and committee meetings, participation at conferences, seminars and workshops, etc. These are onerous tasks. How much more undertaking such tasks in more than one institution, in addition to other activities.

Moonlighting has several negative impacts on the wellbeing of individual lecturers and universities. Moonlighting becomes a problem if it gives rise to immoderate hours of work. For example, if a lecturer squeezes in two adjuncts and one full-time job, it will result to a heavy workload that cannot be maintained for a long period of time. This heavy workload has given rise to increased levels of stress. Most lecturers who moonlight acknowledge that they are always very busy and under mental strain. This stress and strain if prolonged can result to high blood pressure which may be symptomless until it has taken a toll on the health of the sufferer and if the illness is not well managed can lead to more complications and even death. Scott (2016), Usoro and Etuk (2016) aptly observed that the major effect of excess workload is stress, which subsequently lead to other forms of health challenges such as pressure, anxiety, frustration, mental disorder, dizziness, exhaustion, anger, tension, boredom, fatigue, irritation, hostility, family conflict, workplace accident, etc. Furthermore, they stated that stress causes certain chronic health problems such as cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorder and psychological illness, strokes and can eventually lead to untimely death.

Similarly, Kusi, Mensah and Gyaki (2014) affirmed that the major cause of occupational stress among lecturers is the multiple roles of academic staff within and outside their universities.

Another negative impact of moonlighting on lecturers is that it can cause declining productivity. The multiple jobs that such moonlighters carry out in universities almost simultaneously can affect level of productivity and the lecturers will fail to meet their performance standards. Excess workload carried out by lecturers (moonlighters) can also result in lateness to work. This is because such lecturers do not go to bed early in order to complete their work. The inadequate amount of sleeping time can also cause a lot of illnesses. Conforming to this assertion, Sabron and Hassimn (2016) noted that academic staff who moonlight tend to fall sick more often and arrive late to the office, which inevitably affects productivity negatively. In the same direction, Kisuman and Wambaleka (2017) were of the opinion that moonlighting negatively affects the wellbeing of lecturers due to work overload

which in turn leads to premature aging and decreases life expectancy. No wonder many lecturers are afflicted with many health challenges due to burnout emanating from excess workload. Incidences where lecturers slump in classrooms and offices in Nigerian universities and die or become incapacitated are many and seem to have assumed a worrisome dimension. In recent times there is hardly any month that universities in Nigeria do not witness the demise of a lecturer.

This state of affairs has serious quality implications for universities as they fail to meet performance standard and organizational productivity. It is being speculated that this may be the cause of the much-talked-about declining quality in our institutions of higher education. In recognition of the negative impact of moonlighting, the University of Washington School of Medicine Graduate School of Education (UW School of Medicine, 2013) stated that “regarding moonlighting as an optional activity which neither the school of medicine nor any of its training programmes requires. However, such activities are generally discouraged because training programmes are not fulltime”. Moreover, The Accreditation Council for Medical Education (ACCME) has widely persuaded medical trainees not to moonlight, citing the following reasons: that moonlighting competes with the opportunity to achieve the measure of the educational objectives of the residency and the added time burden takes away from study and reduces opportunities to rest and the ability for a more balanced life style. In the same direction, Bilal, Ali and Ali (2016) observed that insufficient time given to family members by moonlighters may affect family life and result in lack of cohesion which might lead to aggression and cause the family to disintegrate.

### **CONCLUSION**

There is a prevalence of moonlighting activities in Nigerian Universities and lecturers moonlight to a very high extent. Reasons for such activities are many and vary according to individuals. Moonlighting activities increase with the level of education and status. Lecturers in the professorial cadre tend to moonlight more than those on the lower echelon of the university ladder.

Moonlighting activities have many positive and negative impacts on the health of individuals and their organizations. Positive impact of moonlighting include: monetary gains, enables the moonlighter acquire new skills which in turn helps in better job performance, allows cross-fertilization of ideas among lecturers and enriches their job. Moonlighting also benefits organizations (universities) especially newly established and private ones, through knowledge sharing among experienced and less experienced lecturers. Negative impacts of moonlighting include: burnout/stress, resulting from excess workload undertaken by lecturers, reduced productivity as a result of lateness to work, health challenges and reduced life expectancy. Moonlighting has serious implications for individual lecturers and their organizations as it may lead to reduced role performance and organizational productivity.

### **SUGGESTIONS**

1. Lecturers' salaries should be reviewed upwards by their employers as this will discourage moonlighting for economic reasons.
2. Lecturers' moonlighting activities should be streamlined by the controlling agency through formulating policies that discourage moonlighting.
3. A database of all lecturers in Nigerian universities should be established to check and avoid a situation whereby one lecturer is appointed on adjunct basis in more than one university.
4. Health talks to educate lecturers on the negative consequences of excessive workload should be organized at departmental, faculty and central university levels.

5. Facilities for regular health checks should be provided for lecturers to diagnose illnesses at an early stage to forestall premature deaths.

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