



Workload of University Professors: On the Example of Accounting Program

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Abstract. The workload of university professors is not only an economic indicator of their performance but also one of the major factors influencing the quality and effectiveness of their professional activities. For this reason, we have conducted a survey on the adequacy of the workload of the higher education institution professors. The survey covers 21 professors from 2 state-owned universities. The questionnaire are based on the regulations and performance indicators of the professors. Based on our findings, some 76.2% of professors teach 3–5 types of courses per year and overtime courses are increasing year by year with an average 50%. We conclude that the workload of university professors exceeds the normal amount of hours and makes it impossible for them to conduct research studies which negatively affect the quality of knowledge they render.

Keywords: Professor's workload · quality of education · higher education

1 Introduction

Internationally, universities focus on the improvement of the quality of teaching programs together with the increase of the productivity of professors. The value of personnel is an important issue in all areas of business and economic research [4]. Since the early 2000s, the Mongolian Government has been pursuing a policy of improving the quality and competitiveness of higher education institutions and bringing them closer to the mainstream of international standards. For this reason, the Government is directing its focus on strengthening and regulating the existing higher education system [10].

Researchers have found that the higher the workload of professors, the lower the quality of education. It is known that the credit-hour-system is used to estimate the workload of university professors both internationally and in Mongolia as well [4]. In addition, some Mongolian academicians in universities often have to undertake administrative posts besides their usual job responsibilities. These additional working hours are increasing their workload [6].

The workload system management has increasingly been an important factor in recent years in terms of contract negotiations and collective employee agreement areas (2014). Besides, the state-owned universities we surveyed have set themselves a goal of becoming research universities and one of the best universities in the world.

The main driving forces for achieving the above-mentioned goals are school teachers and educators. The quality of their work will be measured by the professionalism and knowledge of the future staff that will determine the future of the country.

In this study, we aimed to conduct a survey on the workload of professors in universities that train specialists in the field of accounting. We hope the information we provide could be used to make decisions on the quality of higher education, as well as at the policy level.

2 Data Collection and Methods

There are two main state-owned institutions that train accountants in Mongolia: the National University of Mongolia and the Mongolian University of Live Sciences. The survey data were collected using traditional research methods such as quantitative analysis, questionnaires, and interviews. According to a survey among the world’s top 500 universities, the number of students per teacher at these universities ranges between 10–14. And, the average classroom time is 300–400 h per year [4, 9]. It provides professors with full opportunity to conduct innovative research and update their teaching materials. On the other hand, it allows students to receive up-to-date and useful information and keep pace with the changing social, economic and technological development while meeting the needs of the employers. It is a great incentive to train qualified professionals.

The Table 1 shows that the amount of academic hours is higher than the average amount of the research universities (mentioned in the previous section) that aspire to achieve the future of their respective universities. However, this is only a normative indicator. The teacher-workload of the schools surveyed in terms of annual performances are given in Table 2.

The table shows that the performance of professors’ workload increased in both universities. The overtime workload is increasing year by year with an average 50% of their normatives. We consider it to be against the provisions of the Law on Labor as the professors are not only involved in training activities, but also in research and other university social events.

This table shows, that the percentage of overtime “A” hours is the highest and has increased in recent years (Table 3).

Table 1. Professors’ Workload According to The Regulations of State-Owned Schools, 2022

Position	NUM’s Credit Hours				MULS Credit Hours			
	A	Academic hour/for A/	B	V	A	Academic hour /for A/	B,V	
Professor	12	256	10	4	14	304	11	
Associate Professor	13	288	8	5	15	320	10	
Senior teacher	15	320	6	5	16	352	9	
Teacher	16	352	5	5	17	368	8	
Trainee teacher	13	288	4	7	16	352	7 + 2	

Table 2. Teacher Performance in 2016–2021

Characteristics	2016–2017		2017–2018		2018–2019		2019–2020		2020–2021	
	NUM	MULS	NUM	MULS	NUM	MULS	NUM	MULS	NUM	MULS
According to regulation										
Total credit hours	689	240	686.3	250	602.3	196	331.5	225	387.5	275
A	384	202	386.9	168	342.3	119	240.1	147	277	180
B	176	38	171.4	82	146.5	77	52.7	78	64	95
V	129		128		113.5		38.7		46.5	
Performance										
Total credit hours	910.6	312.34	907.1	364.83	874.7	370.55	612.1	378.83	590.6	448.71
A	461.6	251.97	457.9	241.48	444.8	249.12	407	262.69	388.4	293.43
B	276.8	60.37	267.1	123.35	238.2	121.43	138.6	116.14	119.7	155.28
V	172.2		182.1		191.7		66.5		82.5	
Difference	221.6	72.34	220.8	114.83	272.4	174.55	280.6	153.8	203.1	173.7

Table 3. Percentage of Credit Hours A, B and V in Overtime

Academic years	2016–2017		2017–2018		2018–2019		2019–2020		2020–2021	
	NUM	MULS	NUM	MULS	NUM	MULS	NUM	MULS	NUM	MULS
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
A	35	69.08	32,1	69.08	37,6	74.55	59,5	75.21	55,1	65.3
B	45,4	30.92	43,3	30.92	33,5	25.45	30,6	24.79	27,5	34.7
V	19,6		24,6		28,9		9,9		17,4	

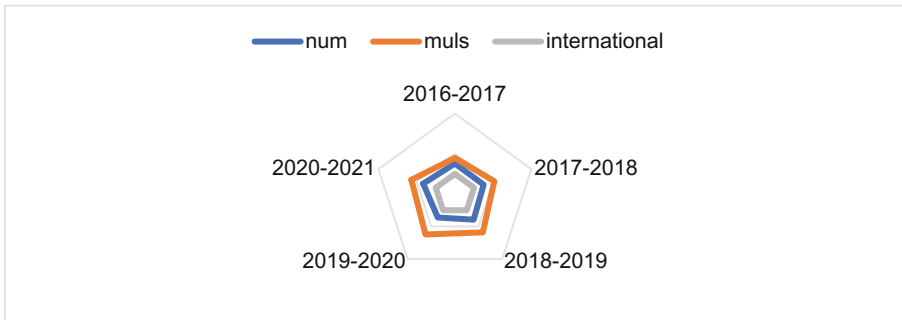


Fig. 1. Average Academic Hour Per Teacher

From the Fig. 1, we can see that the academic hours of Mongolian university professors are higher than the normative of international universities (Fig. 1).

In order to calculate the workload, a survey was conducted by professors from two universities. The survey covered 72.4% or 21 of the 29 professors. The reliability of the survey results was 90% with 10% error margin. The general information of the professors involved in the study is given Table 4.

Respondents in this study are classified according to gender, work experience, academic degree and work position as presented in Table 4.

Out of the 19 questionnaires distributed, 5 questionnaires were general. The questionnaire distribution process was carried out from April to May 2022. About 52.4% of the teachers surveyed were accounting teachers from the NUM and 47.6% from the MULS. In addition, 61.6% had more than 16 years of teaching experience. In terms of the position, 34% were professors and associate professors, while the remaining 66.6% were senior lecturers and teachers. In terms of the academic degree, 38.1% had doctorate degrees. This shows that 1/3 of the teachers surveyed had a doctorate degree and were professors.

Teachers spend minimum 16 and maximum 90 percent of their working hours on teaching, 10–50% on research, and up to 80% on other activities.

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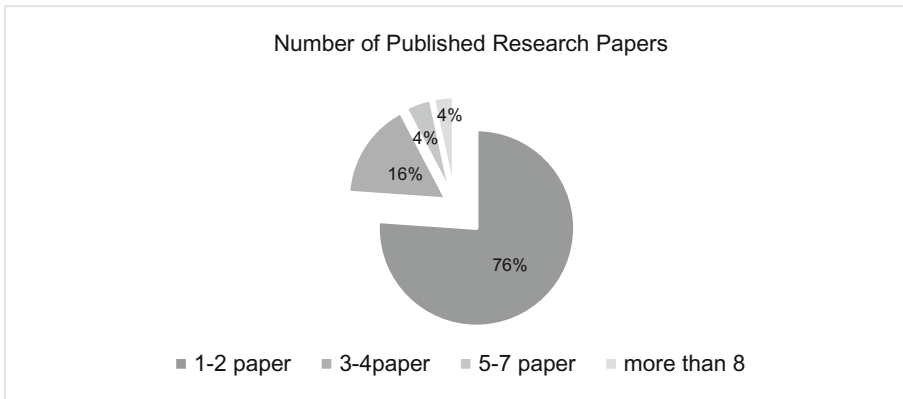
In addition, 43.1% of the professors had an average attendance of about 200 students, 47.8%- 200–400 students, and the remaining 9.1% had an attendance of more than 400 undergraduate students. Of the 14 senior teachers, 21.4% had more than 50 students (Table 3).

Table 4. Characteristics of Respondents

Size	Item	Number	Percentage (%)
University	NUM	11	52.4
	MULS	10	47.6
Gender	Female	15	71.4
	Male	6	28.6
Experience (year)	Up to 5 year	2	9.5
	5–10 year	3	14.3
	11–15 year	4	19
	16–20 year	7	33.3
	Over 21 year	5	23.8
Work position	Professor	1	5
	Associate Professor	6	29
	Senior teacher	7	33
	Teacher	7	33
Academic degree	Master	13	62
	Ph.D	8	38

Table 5. Performance of Teachers' Research Work

	In number	Percentage
Training activities:		
Up to 50%	5	23.8%
50–75%	9	42.8%
More than 75%	7	33.4%
Research work:		
0–10%	10	47.6%
10–20%	6	28.6%
20–30%	3	14.2%
30–50%	2	9.6%
Other social works:		
0–20%	15	71.2%
20–40%	4	19.2%
40–80%	2	9.6%

**Fig. 2.** The Percentage of Teachers, by The Number of Research Papers

In terms of research performance:

The graph shows that 9.5% of professors teach 1–2 subjects, 76.2%- 3–5 subjects, and 14.3%- up to 10 different subjects per year (Fig. 2). In one academic year, 23.9% of professors publish more than 3 research articles. The remaining 76.1% publish 1–2 international and local articles and 52.3% give up to 2 presentation or papers at scientific conferences.

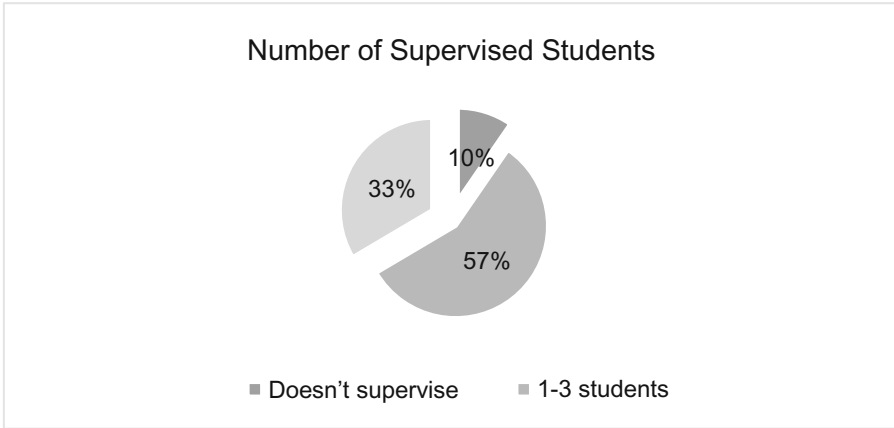


Fig. 3. The Percentage of Professors by Number of Students Supervised

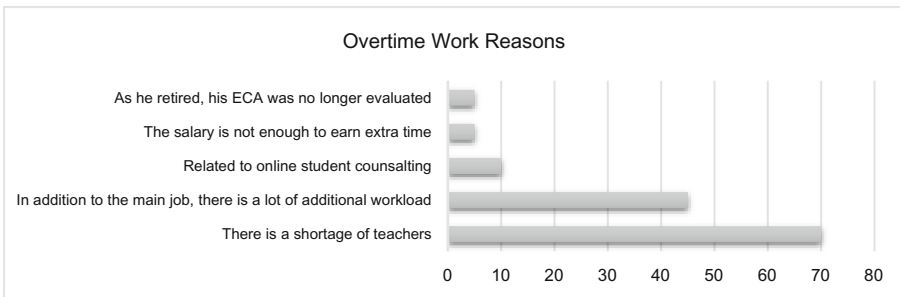


Fig. 4. The Percentage of Professors, by Reasons of Engaging in Overtime Work

One of the main parts of a professor’s job is to work with students and supervise.

Professors spend much time supervising student research works. The majority or 57% of professors supervises the research of 1–3 students, and 33.5% supervise the research of more than 4 students per academic year (Fig. 3).

Some 70% of the teachers surveyed (in duplicate) replied that the workload was too high due to a shortage of teachers and some forty-five percent said that the extra workload involved out-of-duty jobs (Fig. 4).

The following answer was given to explain why teachers are still working despite the excessive workload.

A total of 90% of teachers say that they work as teachers because they like their job, and 35% say that they work because they have a good reputation at the school, a good community atmosphere, and a long summer vacation. But no one chose the answer that wages were good and social welfare was appropriate (Fig. 5).

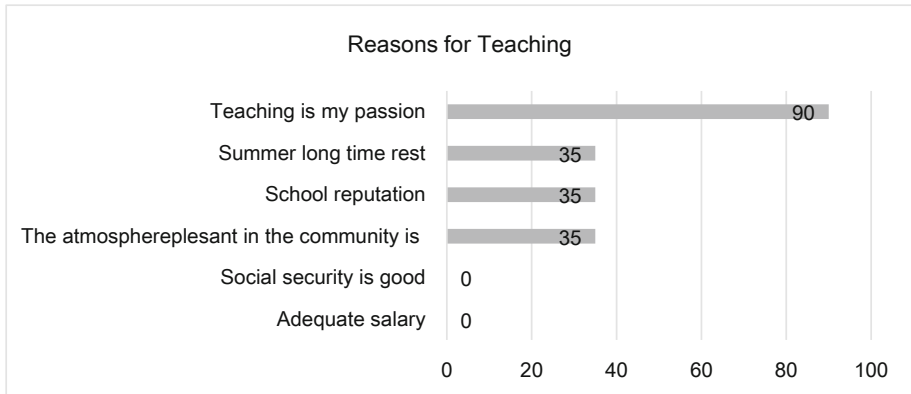


Fig. 5. Reasons of Working as Professors

3 Conclusion

Our research was designed to estimate the workload of state-owned university accounting teachers. Based on our findings, we concluded that professors at state-owned universities work overtime due to a lack of teaching staff. The workload should be kept within the norms set out in the university curricula and should be brought closer to the standards of the world's top universities. To do this, it is necessary to increase professors' wages and increase the value of their work. Additionally, it could be concluded that university teaching is recognized by the professional community as a time-consuming and labor-intensive process for teacher self-study and career advancement.

Finally, we conclude that overcrowding of professionals in the field of accounting market makes specialists monotonous professionals who are moving away from the latest advances in technology, global trends, and practical challenges thus reducing competitiveness.

4 Discussion

At the international level, it is believed that the workload of university professors will have the following negative consequences which are proved by the reality in our practice:

- Classroom activities without practice will negatively affect the knowledge and skills of the future professionals;
- Knowledge and skills acquired would not meet the requirements of the labor market and employers.
- Due to the lack of students' ability to acquire knowledge, teachers will have a role of transmitters of information, which will further increase the workload of the classroom.
- Dismissing teachers of retirement age, even if they are capable to work, is not the right solution. And it is detrimental for both teachers who have lost their jobs and teachers who are working overtime.

- Overcrowded classes reduce the time designated for teachers for the completion of their research, which, in turn, negatively affects the achievement of the goal of becoming a research institution.
- Considering the international experience of solving the problem of teacher workload:
- In many countries around the world, research methods are used to conduct research by students during the course;
- Some schools have research staff. The teacher only teaches the lesson;
- The professional training process is lagging behind the rapid development of technology and new professional needs. Therefore, the learner needs the ability to acquire new knowledge on their own.

Not only all university administrations, but also the education authorities need to develop and implement a visionary policy for the future in the current situation. Otherwise, the education system will not be able to develop in the right direction, which will negatively affect the country's development. Educated people are the future of the country.

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