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A CORRELATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF MOONLIGHTING AND THE PERFORMANCE OF ACADEMICS IN THE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING

AVALIAÇÃO CORRELACIONAL DO TRABALHO EXTRA E DO DESEMPENHO ACADÊMICO EM INSTITUIÇÕES DE ENSINO SUPERIOR

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Abstract
The act of taking on secondary jobs alongside primary academic roles is referred to as moonlighting. A practice common amongst academics, oftentimes due to inadequate remuneration. In analysing its effect on academics' performance, 3,245 academics from the selected institutions of higher learning made up the study's population. The Spearman's Rank Correlation was used to analyse the collected data, and findings revealed that moonlighting is positively correlated with the performance of academics, as specifically indicated by classroom outcomes of students and part-time teaching, also with professional development and research evaluation roles. Hence, the study

Resumo
A prática de conciliar empregos secundários com as funções acadêmicas principais é conhecida como "trabalho paralelo". Essa prática é comum entre acadêmicos, muitas vezes devido à remuneração inadequada. Ao analisar seu efeito no desempenho acadêmico, 3.245 acadêmicos de instituições de ensino superior selecionadas compuseram a população do estudo. A Correlação de Postos de Spearman foi utilizada para analisar os dados coletados, e os resultados revelaram que o trabalho paralelo está positivamente correlacionado com o desempenho acadêmico, especificamente indicado pelos resultados dos alunos em sala de aula e pelo ensino em tempo parcial, bem como

concluded that while moonlighting provides financial relief and professional enrichment, it can also undermine the core responsibilities of academics if these practices are left unchecked. It is therefore recommended that governments and university management must improve the remuneration of staff, also provide adequate research support, and develop unbiased policies to regulate external engagements, as this will aid in mitigating the adverse effects of moonlighting while preserving the quality of education being delivered.

Keywords: Academics' Performance. Classroom Outcomes. Moonlighting. Part-Time Teaching. Professional Development. Research Evaluation.

por funções de desenvolvimento profissional e avaliação de pesquisa. Portanto, o estudo concluiu que, embora o trabalho paralelo proporcione alívio financeiro e enriquecimento profissional, ele também pode prejudicar as principais responsabilidades dos acadêmicos se essas práticas não forem controladas. Recomenda-se, portanto, que governos e administrações universitárias melhorem a remuneração dos funcionários, forneçam apoio adequado à pesquisa e desenvolvam políticas imparciais para regulamentar os compromissos externos, pois isso ajudará a mitigar os efeitos adversos do trabalho paralelo, preservando a qualidade da educação oferecida.

Palavras-chave: *Desempenho Acadêmico. Resultados em sala de aula. Trabalho extracurricular. Ensino em tempo parcial. Desenvolvimento profissional. Avaliação de pesquisa.*

1 INTRODUCTION

Moonlighting, often referred to as "side hustling," describes the practice of holding a second job alongside one's primary employment. Though the phenomenon has existed for centuries, it became more pronounced during the Industrial Revolution era. At the time, factory workers faced low wages and long working hours, making it challenging to cater for basic living expenses. Many, therefore, sought extra income after their regular shifts. Since this work was typically done at night, it became known as "moonlighting," a term derived from labour done in the moonlight (Betts, 2009; Hobsbawm, 1969; Landes, 2003). Initially, the practice was largely confined to manual labourers who took on physically demanding roles to supplement meagre earnings. Interestingly, a similar historical and cultural imagery exists amongst the "Igbo" society of the South-Eastern region in Nigeria, where the concept of "*Egwu ọnwa",* which literally means "Moon dance", describes night-time gatherings under the moonlight for work, storytelling, and creative engagements. Just as moonlighting in Europe and America conjured images of labour after hours, the *"Egwu ọnwa"* embodied a communal spirit of productivity and resilience at night. In the contemporary academic setting, this cultural metaphor has been extended to symbolise academic staff members' pursuit of additional roles such as part-time teaching, academic consultancy, and research evaluation practices. Reflecting both

a cultural industriousness and the socio-economic pressures that compel academics to seek extra engagements as strategies to augment their low pay, or the lack of workplace motivation due to inadequate infrastructures (Ologunde *et al.*, 2011; Amini-Philips, 2020). As economies modernised in the mid-20th century, moonlighting spread beyond blue-collar work. Rising living costs, inflationary pressures, and growing family responsibilities spurred professionals such as teachers, healthcare workers, and civil servants to engage in additional employment to achieve financial stability (Freeman, 1997; Krugman, 2009). At this stage, moonlighting ceased to be solely a means of survival for low-income earners and became a broader response to diverse economic challenges. It is argued that the practice of moonlighting is caused by tension between necessity and consequence. In academia, moonlighting gained prominence in the late 20th century, as the expansion of higher education created new opportunities but also introduced financial and institutional challenges. Most institutions of higher learning (IHL), particularly those in developing nations, struggled with declining government funding, the lack of professional development, stagnant salary structures, and inadequate resources to support teaching and research. In Nigeria, these issues have been compounded by recurring industrial disputes. Public universities have repeatedly been destabilised by continuous and incessant strike actions of academic staff arising from underfunding, unfulfilled policy agreements, and poor welfare conditions (ASUU, 2025; Tribune Online, 2025). The Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) has consistently embarked on industrial actions to demand improved funding, better salary structures, and institutional autonomy (Channels TV, 2024; Guardian, 2025). More recently, several institutions have either gone on strike or staged protests over withheld salaries, the failure to review wages since the 2009 agreement, and the imposition of unpopular payroll systems (Sahara Reporters, 2025). These disruptions not only disorganise the academic calendar and hinder student progression but also erode the morale of academics, forcing many into financial insecurity (Vocal Media, 2025). Against this backdrop, moonlighting became a coping mechanism for academics (Betts, 2009; Hobsbawm, 1969; Altbach, 2000; Baldwin & Wawrzynski, 2011), who oftentimes take on part-time teaching roles at other higher learning institutions and also perform research evaluations either within or outside their university. Practices such as part-time teaching may be seen as a knowledge dissemination platform and a means of strengthening capacity within higher learning institutions, while research evaluation, on the other hand,

can be seen as ensuring robustness, accuracy, writing-style consistency, and adherence to academic research standards, that improves scholarly credibility and learning outcomes, however, they all poses grievous repercussions in the long run of academics' performances. The digital age has further diversified opportunities, enabling academics to take on cross-border engagements through online platforms and global communication tools (Finkelstein, 2013). Although these activities foster professional growth and offer financial relief, they carry trade-offs. Excessive commitments often reduce the time and energy available for teaching, supervision, and university-based research. This weakens overall academic performance and strains institutional capacity. The dual nature of moonlighting, both beneficial and risky, is particularly apparent in South-East Nigeria, where it embodies economic necessity as well as a cultural practice rooted in "*Egwu ọnwa"*. While extra engagements bring income, professional development, and collaborative opportunities, they also present risks. Overextension can compromise teaching quality, limit research output, and negatively affect the classroom outcomes of students. Since indicators such as student achievement, professional advancement/experience, classroom engagement, and research productivity are directly tied to institutional reputation, moonlighting, when unchecked, can undermine the quality and sustainability of higher learning institutions. Central to this study is the concept of academic performance, which broadly refers to how effectively academic staff conduct their duties within the university environment. Academic performance is multidimensional and cannot be captured by a single measure; rather, it involves different aspects that together reflect the overall effectiveness of an academic's contributions. Among these, student classroom outcomes and professional advancement stand out as critical indicators. The classroom outcomes of students reflect the extent to which learners achieve expected results under the guidance of their lecturers. This can be evaluated through grade point averages, the originality of projects and assignments, as well as performance on examinations. When academics provide clear instruction, timely feedback, and consistent support, students are more likely to succeed in their classwork (Kuh *et al.,* 2011). However, a commitment to secondary jobs such as moonlighting may limit lecturers' availability, thereby disrupting instruction and diminishing student classroom outcomes (Ologunde *et al.,* 2011). Professional advancement and experience also serve as vital measures of academic performance. These include mastery of subject content, pedagogical expertise developed over years of practice, and active engagement

in activities that contribute to scholarly growth. Attendance at academic conferences, for instance, provides opportunities for knowledge exchange, collaboration, and exposure to current research trends, thereby enriching both professional development and institutional visibility (Marwah *et al.*, 2024). Similarly, student performance is a critical measure of academic effectiveness, reflecting how well learners achieve expected outcomes under the guidance of their lecturers. Moonlighting, while offering financial relief, may reduce the time and energy available for effective teaching and mentorship, potentially hindering student achievement and overall learning quality (Brown & Wilson, 2022). In South-East Nigeria, where economic challenges drive many academics into moonlighting, balancing these external engagements with the demands of teaching and research remains a pressing concern. Although moonlighting can be understood as a rational response to financial difficulties, its implications for students' classroom outcomes and the professional advancement of academics are complex. A nuanced understanding of these dynamics is therefore essential for designing policies that support academics, enhance working conditions, and safeguard the quality of higher education in the region. In an ideal university setting, academics are expected to dedicate their full attention to their primary responsibilities, which include producing high-quality research, publishing scholarly outputs, securing research funding, professional advancement, and delivering effective teaching that supports student learning and outcomes. When academics are fully focused on their core duties, the institutions of higher learning are better positioned to achieve excellence in their educational activities. Hence, it is against this background that this study aims to investigate the correlation between moonlighting and the performance of academics in the institutions of higher learning.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to investigate the correlation between moonlighting and the performance of academics in the institutions of higher learning, with the specific objectives being to:

i. Ascertain the nature of the existing relationship between part-time teaching and student classroom outcomes.
ii. Determine the relationship between research evaluation roles and professional advancement.

2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 The theory of expectancy by Victor Vroom in 1964

Victor Vroom developed the cognitive process theory of motivation, known as expectancy theory, in 1964. It explains how people decide where to focus their efforts based on expected outcomes. The theory is based on the idea that an individual's belief that effort will lead to performance (expectancy), that performance will lead to desired rewards (instrumentality), and that these rewards are valued (valence) determines their motivation. These three elements—expectancy, instrumentality, and valence—interact multiplicatively, meaning motivation will be high only when all three are strong. Vroom's main assumption is that individuals are rational decision-makers who evaluate potential actions based on expected benefits, and their motivation is shaped by their perceptions of these probabilities and rewards (Vroom, 1964). Lawler and Porter (1967) highlight the significance of expectancy and instrumentality in predicting effort and performance, while Porter and Lawler (1968) developed a more detailed model that incorporates satisfaction and performance feedback, reinforcing the importance of expectancy in motivation. Additionally, Atkinson (1964) investigated the role of expectancy in achievement motivation, suggesting that individuals are motivated to engage in activities where they see a clear link between effort and desirable results. Applying Expectancy Theory to moonlighting among academics offers valuable insights into why they may seek secondary employment and how this influences their primary academic performance. Academics are likely to undertake moonlighting activities when they expect that extra effort outside their main role will lead to tangible benefits such as additional income, professional recognition, or career development. For example, academics might take on part-time teaching or research evaluation roles, anticipating financial rewards (valence) that stem from their efforts (expectancy) and are reliably delivered (instrumentality). When these expectations are fulfilled, moonlighting can act as a motivating force that improves overall performance by increasing satisfaction and perceived work value. Conversely, when academics perceive a weak connection between effort and reward—either because extra work is not adequately compensated or it detracts from their core responsibilities without comparable benefits—motivation to excel in either role may diminish. This can lead to fatigue, divided attention, or reduced quality in

teaching and difficulty gaining professional experience. The expectancy framework thus explains not only the decision to moonlight but also the potential positive or negative impact on academic productivity, depending on how well expected outcomes align with effort. Higher education institutions can apply expectancy theory by ensuring that academics clearly see the link between their efforts and meaningful rewards within their primary roles, such as promotion, recognition, or research opportunities, to reduce reliance on moonlighting as a compensation strategy. Moreover, transparent policies and reward systems that recognise and incorporate moonlighting efforts into career advancement could boost motivation and minimise negative effects on academic performance (Robbins & Judge, 2019; Vroom, 1964).

2.2 Moonlighting

Moonlighting is a complex phenomenon reflecting wider economic, organisational, and personal factors. While it can serve as a strategic means for increasing income and developing skills, it may also present challenges to employee well-being and organisational efficiency. Moonlighting, the act of taking on additional employment outside one's primary job, has become increasingly common in many labour markets worldwide (Tran Huy, 2025; Altbach, 2000; Jehan, 2024). Folorunso et al. (2023) argue that moonlighting can involve part-time roles, research evaluation tasks, or full-time employment depending on the worker’s capacity and needs. In numerous economies, especially those in the Global South, moonlighting has shifted from being optional to a coping strategy against low wages and inflation. In both developed and developing economies, a significant portion of the adult workforce engages in moonlighting, according to Pouliakas (2017). In 2015, 4% of the employed population in the 28 European Union member states reported holding multiple jobs, with notable differences between countries, and 4.9% of workers in industrialised nations like the United States reported additional employment alongside their primary job. In Nordic countries, the figures are higher, with 12% in Iceland, 10% in Norway, 9% in Sweden, and around 6-7% in Finland and Denmark. It is estimated that over 70% of informal household income in Russia comes from moonlighting (Pouliakas, 2017; Kaplin & Lee, 2014). In Nigeria, job insecurity, high taxes, delayed salary payments, lack of benefits, a high dependency ratio, and inadequate remuneration all contribute to the deprivation of psychological

needs. According to Agba et al. (2010), Kitchener (2000), and Bommakanti & Swamy (2023), these issues affect Nigerian workers' behaviour, leading to corruption, inefficiency, and low morale, causing them to seek side jobs to survive. Academic staff in Nigerian universities often hold multiple jobs, which can indirectly impact their performance. Various reasons are given for this, including the benefits tertiary institutions gain from moonlighting. Due to a shortage of academic staff, work sharing and job rotation have become common and almost ingrained in the culture (Folorunso et al., 2014). Compared to the staffing norm of 33,951 set by the National Universities' Commission (a 46% shortfall) in 2000, the Federal Ministry of Education's 2003 report states that only 18,328 academic staff served 433,871 students (Eneware, 2017). Research in Nigerian universities has declined steadily since the late 1980s and has faced collapse. The Nigerian Universities' Commission attributes this decline from late 1988 to 1996, and subsequent collapse from 1997 onward, to limited research funding, lack of skills in current research methods, equipment shortages, demanding teaching and administrative duties leaving little time for research, and brain drain reducing mentorship opportunities (Okebukola, 2002; Adelugba, 2022). Universities are meant to be centres for research and study, where academics should focus solely on teaching, research, and community services, without distractions (Jain et al., 2023; Serajul, 2009). Ologunde (2013) and Bhore et al. (2024) state that public university academics are expected to work full-time, as government employees are not permitted additional jobs. However, financial hardship remains a primary reason for moonlighting, especially in low-income settings (Ologunde, 2013). Nigerian academics often take on extra work to supplement insufficient salaries that do not cover living costs (Taiwo et al., 2024). Civil servants and professionals in Nigeria are particularly vulnerable to moonlighting due to delayed wages and underfunded higher education institutions (Adelugba et al., 2022; Resnik, 2007). Some individuals moonlight not only for financial reasons but also to develop new skills or pursue entrepreneurial interests. The Boundary-less Career Theory proposes that modern workers seek growth beyond organisational boundaries, with moonlighting providing such an option. Certain types of moonlighting are associated with greater job satisfaction and autonomy. A study on South African nurses found that those who moonlight reported higher levels of compassion satisfaction and work engagement (Engelbrecht et al., 2020). According to Amini-Philips (2024) and Walbe & Gyang (2020), junior academic staff are more likely to engage in side activities like part-time teaching, owning schools, and other

ventures due to unfavourable work environments characterised by low salaries and a lack of incentives. These activities can impact their job effectiveness.

2.3 Part-time teaching

Jha *et al.* (2017) assert that part-time teaching denotes any lecturing activity or work done outside the primary workplace for periods of time shorter than the usual hours or schedule of work. It is an arrangement made for work to be done only during part of the usual working day or time. Engaging in part-time activities or work has become a significant component of modern life, particularly among academics, students, budding professionals, and individuals seeking flexible employment arrangements (Onyekwelu, Monyei & Muogbo, 2022). Such involvement offers numerous benefits, including financial support, skill development, and increased employability (Callender & Wilkinson, 2013). Part-time employment can foster essential soft skills such as time management, communication, and teamwork, which are highly valued by employers (Curtis & Shani, 2002; Sakernas Data, 2019). The impact of part-time teaching is not regularly positive. Excessive working hours can interfere with the academic performance and well-being of lecturers. A study by Broadbridge and Swanson (2005) found that academics who worked more than 20 hours per week were more likely to report academic stress. This suggests a balance must be maintained to ensure that the benefits of employment do not come at the expense of educational outcomes. Beyond the academic sphere, part-time work is also critical for individuals transitioning between careers or re-entering the workforce. It provides opportunities to gain relevant experience, build professional networks, and explore new fields without the full commitment of a permanent position (Dubois, 2022). Additionally, part-time roles can support work-life balance, especially for caregivers or those managing other significant responsibilities, offering a degree of autonomy and flexibility not typically found in full-time employment (Magadley, 2019). Furthermore, part-time teaching refers to instructional roles undertaken on a non-full-time basis, typically involving reduced hours, fewer responsibilities, and often temporary or contractual terms. It is increasingly common across educational institutions worldwide and is particularly prevalent in higher education. Knight and Trowler (2000) and Jose (2021) contend that part-time teaching is the temporary employment of academic staff and is usually on a sessional or casual basis.

This form of employment has grown substantially due to rising student numbers, budget constraints, and the demand for more flexible staffing solutions within the educational sector. The appeal of part-time teaching lies in its flexibility and accessibility. For professionals, part-time academic work allows them to engage temporarily with teaching without committing to the full demands of the engagement. As Bryson (2004) notes, many part-time lecturers bring valuable system-thinking and real-world experience into the classroom, which can enrich the learning environment and bridge the gap between theory and practice (Monyei, Arachie & Ukpere, 2023).

2.4 Research evaluation roles

Chowdhury and Rahman (2023) describe research evaluation roles as a structured process carried out within and outside academic institutions to assess the quality, relevance, and impact of research activities. Unlike external evaluations conducted by funding agencies or accreditation bodies, internal evaluation is managed by the institution itself to ensure accountability, continuous improvement, and alignment with strategic goals. According to Garcia and Lopez (2023), it involves reviewing publications, assessing grant performance, analysing conference participation, and monitoring collaboration outcomes. Through these processes, institutions strengthen research productivity, guide resource allocation, and enhance their academic reputation. Research evaluation roles are multifaceted. It may involve developmental assessment, focusing on the design and direction of ongoing projects; detailed content review, which examines coherence, rigour, and methodological soundness; or summative evaluation, which considers the outcomes of completed work. These functions parallel quality assurance processes and are central to maintaining standards of clarity, originality, and scholarly contribution. Hoy (2020) emphasises that effective internal evaluation depends not only on robust criteria and methods but also on transparency, fairness, and clear communication across the academic community. The demand for internal evaluation has increased with competition for research grants, the pursuit of high-impact publications, and the growth of international collaborations (Kässi & Lehdonvirta, 2022). In many developing nations, such as Nigeria, Ufomba et al. (2025) and Ofoegbu (2004) note that evaluation systems also highlight broader challenges in academia, including workload, compensation, and governance. While evaluation helps improve institutional research

capacity and professional development, poorly managed processes may increase pressure, encourage quantity over quality, or limit research creativity. When aligned with institutional policies and implemented with transparency, research evaluation roles support accountability, strengthen teaching and supervision, and foster a culture of continuous improvement. Ultimately, it plays a critical role in advancing both the higher institution's excellence and the development of an individual researcher.

2.5 Performance of academics

Epebinu *et al.* (2024) and Oke & Ramachandran (2023) assert that the performance of academics is a multifaceted issue shaped by individual, institutional, and socio-cultural factors. Academic performance encompasses various dimensions, including research output, teaching effectiveness, professional advancement/experience, service to the university community, and societal engagement. Historically, performance evaluation was often based on subjective assessments and reputation; contemporary academic systems increasingly rely on quantifiable metrics such as publication counts, citation indices, student evaluations, and grant acquisition records. One major determinant of academic performance is research productivity, which is often measured by publications in peer-reviewed journals and their subsequent impact, typically gauged through citation counts. The use of bibliometric indicators like the h-index has become prevalent in assessing academic contributions (Hirsch, 2005; Schneider *et al.*, 2003). However, critics argue that such metrics may not fully capture the quality or originality of research and can encourage quantity over quality (Moher, 2018; Bass & Riggio, 2006; Dlamini & Khoza, 2024). However, these metrics often disadvantage scholars in the humanities and social sciences, where publication practices and citation behaviours differ significantly from those in the natural sciences. A primary component of university performance is academic quality, particularly the effectiveness of teaching and learning. Student retention, graduation rates, employment outcomes, and satisfaction surveys are commonly used to gauge teaching effectiveness and institutional impact on learners (Zomer & Benneworth, 2011; Nur & Abbas, 2024; Oke & Ramachandran, 2023). Additionally, curricular innovation, the use of technology in instruction, and continuous professional development contribute significantly to the teaching mission of higher learning institutes (Ufomba et al., 2025; Gibbs, 2010). Although student evaluations are

commonly used, their reliability and validity have been questioned due to potential biases related to gender, ethnicity, and perceived instructor charisma rather than pedagogical effectiveness (Boring *et al.,* 2016). This calls for a more holistic approach to assessing teaching, one that includes multiple sources of evidence. It is interesting to note that institutional support and work environment significantly affect academic performance. Also, access to resources, research funding, mentoring, administrative support, and a collegial atmosphere contribute to academics' ability to excel (Bland *et al.,* 2005). Furthermore, the balance between teaching, research, and service responsibilities plays a critical role; excessive workloads or administrative duties can impede productivity and job satisfaction (Shin & Jung, 2014). External factors, such as national research policies, funding structures, and academic ranking systems, further shape the behaviour and performance of academics. The pressure to publish in high-impact journals, often tied to institutional rankings and funding opportunities, has led to concerns about the commercialisation of research and ethical compromises (Fanelli, 2009; van Raan, 2004; Chetty & Budiarto, 2024). The performance of academics is a complex phenomenon influenced by a web of interacting factors. While quantifiable metrics offer some insights, they must be balanced with qualitative assessments to provide a fair and comprehensive evaluation of academic work.

2.6 Students' classroom outcomes

The classroom outcomes of students remain a central concern in educational discourse, shaped by a complex interplay of cognitive, psychological, socio-economic, and institutional factors (Oduro & Amponsah, 2024). One of the most influential determinants is socio-economic status (SES), which encompasses family income, parental education, and access to learning resources. Low-income students often face financial pressures, limited access to academic resources, and external responsibilities such as part-time work, all of which can detract from academic engagement and success (Tinto, 2012). These disadvantages often translate into disparities in performance and retention, particularly in the first year of university, a period considered critical for long-term academic success (Kuh *et al.,* 2008). Financial strain not only limits access to learning materials and extracurricular engagement but can also contribute to psychological stress, which further hampers classroom outcomes. Sirin (2005) and

Tadesse and Bekele (2024) assert that students from higher SES or backgrounds tend to perform better academically due to their access to enriching educational materials, stable learning environments, and parental support. These students are more likely to attend well-funded schools with qualified teachers, smaller class sizes, and extensive extracurricular opportunities, all of which contribute to higher academic achievement. In addition to socio-economic influences, the role of quality teaching and instructional practices has received significant attention. Effective teachers not only possess deep subject knowledge but also demonstrate the ability to engage students, differentiate instruction, and foster positive classroom environments. Darling-Hammond (2000) and González and Romero (2024) argue that teacher expertise is one of the most powerful school-related predictors of student success. In other words, Faculty engagement and teaching quality also significantly affect university students' classroom outcomes and academic performances. University academics who promote active learning, provide timely feedback, and encourage collaborative learning environments tend to see better outcomes among their students (Umbach & Wawrzynski, 2005). In large lecture-based courses common in universities, instructional design that encourages interaction and practical application of content has been shown to enhance both engagement and academic performance (Freeman *et al.,* 2014). Furthermore, pedagogical strategies that promote active learning, such as collaborative projects and problem-based learning, have been shown to improve understanding and retention of course content and materials (Freeman *et al.,* 2014; Tinto, 2012). Motivation and self-regulation are also critical to student performance. Intrinsically motivated students tend to exert more effort and employ deeper learning strategies, resulting in better classroom outcomes. These internal factors are often more predictive of university success than standardised test scores or high school GPA, particularly in disciplines that require sustained effort over long periods (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Zhang & Liu, 2024; Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). Similarly, the development of self-regulatory skills such as goal setting, time management, and self-monitoring enables students to take greater ownership of their learning, which correlates strongly with academic achievement (Zimmerman, 2002; Komarraju *et al.,* 2009). The impact of mental health and well-being on performance cannot be overlooked. Increased levels of stress, paranoia, and depression among students have been associated with decreased classroom outcomes and engagement (Monyei, Agbaeze & Isichei, 2020; Owens *et al.,* 2012; Beiter *et al.,* 2015; Tinto, 2012). Support systems, like counselling

services and mental health programmes, have been identified as essential in helping students navigate these challenges, which ultimately contribute to improved outcomes in the classroom. Technology has also become a significant variable in academic performance. Digital tools can enhance access to information and support personalised learning; however, disparities in access to technology and digital literacy skills may widen existing performance gaps. Bulman and Fairlie (2016), Etele, Nwadinobi, Akuezuilo, Ezebube, Monyei and Ukpere (2024) and Means and Neisler (2020) emphasise the nuanced effects of technology in education, noting that while it can be beneficial, it requires thoughtful implementation to avoid unintended negative consequences.

2.7 Professional advancement

Professional advancement and experience represent the dynamic interplay between academic expertise and practical engagement in both educational and professional contexts. Over time, effective educators develop pedagogical philosophies informed by evidence-based practices and experiential learning. In higher education, teaching extends beyond the transfer of knowledge to cultivating critical thinking, collaboration, and adaptability (Brookfield, 2017; Frimpong & Asante, 2021). Such advancement is shaped through reflective practice and the ability to adapt to diverse learning needs, cultural contexts, and inclusive, learner-centred strategies (Gay, 2018). Professional growth is also realised through sustained involvement in academic institutions and industry-related contexts, where theoretical knowledge is applied to real-world situations. This dual engagement not only strengthens instructional capacity but also enriches curriculum development and fosters interdisciplinary collaboration. Integrating current research into teaching further enhances the learning process, connecting academics to contemporary developments in their fields (Shulman, 2005; Altbach *et al.,* 2009). At the university level, teaching and professional experience are central to academic identity, as academics mentor students, nurture scholarly inquiry, and prepare graduates for future careers. Drawing on professional backgrounds, academics create curricula that combine theoretical rigour with practical application, thereby reinforcing relevance and employability (Brew & Boud, 1995; Knight & Yorke, 2004). The evaluation of teaching and professional experience within universities is

multidimensional, involving formative and summative approaches. Student feedback, peer review, teaching portfolios, and classroom observations remain key methods, though student evaluations have been criticised for potential biases, prompting institutions of higher learning to supplement them with more comprehensive assessments (Spooren *et al.,* 2013; O'Meara, 2005; Seldin *et al.,* 2010). Advancement is increasingly linked to contributions beyond classroom teaching, such as curriculum innovation, applied research, and collaboration with industry partners. Professional experience that bridges academia and practice is highly valued, particularly when it enhances students' employability and engagement (Knight & Yorke, 2004; Hassan & Ibrahim, 2022). In this sense, teaching and professional experience serve as markers of both individual academic growth and institutional excellence.

2.8 Empirical insights

Adekoya and Ogunnaike (2022) examined how research internal evaluation influences teaching performance among 300 lecturers in Lagos, Nigeria. Using stratified random sampling and regression analysis, they found that heavy involvement in research internal evaluation reduced teaching effectiveness by 22%. They concluded that freelance work often competes directly with teaching duties. The study recommended that universities should introduce workload caps and time-tracking systems to ensure balance.

Andersen and Müller (2023) conducted a study on part-time faculty and student outcomes in Danish Universities, Copenhagen, Denmark. The purpose of the study was to investigate the connection between student academic achievement and part-time professor involvement. 12,500 undergraduate students from 8 universities made up the study's total population. Stratified random sampling was the sample method used. The Krejcie and Morgan table was used to calculate the sample size. The statistical tool employed was multilevel regression analysis. The results showed courses taught by part-time lecturers had 7.2% lower average grades but 18% higher industry-relevant skill acquisition. The study concluded that part-time lecturers enhance practical skills but reduce theoretical depth. The study recommended that universities should adopt hybrid teaching teams.

Bennett and Carter (2021), in a U.S.-based study, explored the implications of research internal evaluation for academic professional development. Analysing data from

450 respondents through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), they noted both benefits and drawbacks, while some lecturers developed valuable new skills, others suffered burnout. The study recommended that institutions should provide workload-management training and recognise freelance editing in tenure evaluations.

Okafor and Nwosu (2023) explored the dual role of freelance reviewer roles and teaching in Nigerian universities. Using SEM and regression analysis on data from 350 lecturers, they observed that freelance reviewer roles enhanced research skills but hindered lecture delivery. They recommended creating hybrid academic positions that formally integrate freelance editor roles into academic service roles. Overall, their study concluded that while freelance editing can enrich academic expertise, it simultaneously strains teaching effectiveness, highlighting the need for institutional frameworks that balance both responsibilities.

3 METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of examining the impact of moonlighting on the performance of academics in the institutions of higher learning in South-East Nigerian state universities. This study utilised the descriptive research approach because it gathers information from a representative sample in any given population set, while also producing accurate and broadly applicable results. The study's participants included academic staff from five (5) South-Eastern state universities in Nigeria: Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University, Uli; Abia State University, Uturu; Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu; Imo State University, Owerri; and Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki. Collectively, these institutions have an estimated total of 3,772 academic staff. For ease of analysis, the population was categorised into three strata: junior staff (Assistant Lecturer to Lecturer I), middle staff (Senior Lecturer), and senior staff (Reader and Professor). The breakdown of this distribution is presented in Table 1. A sample of 348 was determined for the study through the use of Cochran’s (1977) formula. To ensure fair representation of each stratum across the five institutions of higher learning, a stratified sampling method was adopted. The Bowley (1926) proportional allocation technique was then used to distribute the sample proportionally across the universities and academic ranks. By using this method, the final sample was guaranteed to represent the population's overall structure. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used.

A structured questionnaire was used to gather primary data, and reliable internet databases, textbooks, peer-reviewed journals, newspapers, research reports, and other sources were consulted to gather secondary data that offered context and supporting information. The questionnaire was structured into two sections. The demographic details of the respondents, including gender, age, marital status, level of education, and work experience, were recorded in Section A. while, items intended to measure the research variables were mainly emphasised in Section B. Strongly Agree (5 points), Agree (4 points), Undecided (3 points), Disagree (2 points), and Strongly Disagree (1 point) were the five Likert scales used to score the responses in this area. Both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were made possible by this arrangement. The responses to the research questions were analysed using descriptive statistics, frequency counts and percentages. To ascertain the direction and strength of the associations between moonlighting and performance of academics, the hypotheses were tested at the inferential level using Spearman's Rank Correlation.

Table 1

Population Distribution

S/N	Institutions of Higher Learning (IHL)	Junior Staff	Middle Staff	Senior Staff	Total
1.	Abia State University, Uturu (ABSU)	354	177	176	**707**
2.	Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT)	381	191	146	**718**
3.	Anambra State University (ANSU)	381	191	146	**718**
4.	Ebonyi State University (EBSU)	466	233	192	**891**
5.	Imo State University (IMSU)	381	190	167	**738**
	Total	**1,963**	**982**	**827**	**3,772**

Source: Personnel Unit of the Selected IHL, 2025.

4 ANALYSES OF RESEARCH VARIABLES

4.1 Research objective one

Ascertain the nature of the existing relationship between part-time teaching and student classroom outcomes.

Table 2

Responses to Part-Time Teaching and Student Classroom Outcomes

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
	Part-Time Teaching						
a.	Part-time teaching roles contribute to more pressure on classroom outcomes.	**132** 42%	**164** 53%	**4** 1%	**5** 2%	**7** 2%	312
b.	Extra jobs harm the quality of teaching delivered in the primary jobs.	**5** 2%	**10** 3%	**3** 1%	**109** 35%	**185** 59%	312
c.	Financial necessity is the primary reason academics take on additional roles.	**144** 46%	**155** 50%	**3** 1%	**5** 2%	**5** 2%	312
d.	Academics who hold part-time jobs are often unavailable to mentor students.	**161** 52%	**134** 43%	**7** 2%	**4** 1%	**6** 2%	312
e.	Extra jobs allow academics to gain practical experiences that enhance their teaching skills.	**165** 52%	**129** 41%	**5** 2%	**8** 3%	**5** 2%	312
	STATEMENT						
	Student Classroom Outcomes	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**	**Total**
f.	Class sessions are less engaging due to involvement in jobs outside of my primary assignment.	**166** 53%	**124** 40%	**8** 3%	**5** 2%	**9** 3%	312
g.	Part-time roles by academics often lead to lecture cancellations and rescheduling.	**159** 51%	**114** 37%	**3** 1%	**13** 4%	**23** 7%	312
h.	Mentorship and guidance of students are hindered by external engagements.	**199** 64%	**95** 30%	**3** 1%	**4** 1%	**11** 4%	312
i.	Students' classroom engagement is affected by frequent absenteeism.	**97** 30%	**199** 64%	**7** 2%	**6** 2%	**3** 1%	312
j.	Involvement in external jobs does not compromise students' understanding of course materials.	**171** 55%	**125** 40%	**8** 3%	**4** 1%	**4** 1%	312

Source: Field Survey, 2025

As shown in Table 2, the responses for part-time teaching revealed that 132 respondents (42%) strongly agree and 164 (53%) agree that Part-time teaching roles contribute to more pressure on classroom outcomes, 4 (1%) were undecided, 5 (2%) disagreed, and 7 (2%) strongly disagreed. The study further showed that 109 respondents (35%) disagreed and 185 (59%) strongly disagreed with the statement that extra jobs harm the quality of teaching delivered in the primary jobs, 5 (2%) strongly agreed, 10 (3%) agreed, and 3 (1%) were undecided. Regarding financial necessity as the main reason academics engage in extra roles, 144 respondents (46%) strongly agreed and 155 (50%) agreed, while only 3 (1%) were undecided, and 5 (2%) each disagreed and strongly disagreed. The study also indicated that 161 respondents (52%) strongly agreed and 134 (43%) agreed that academics involved in part-time jobs are often not available to mentor students, 7 (2%) were undecided, while 4 (1%) disagreed and 6 (2%) strongly disagreed, showing a strong perception of reduced availability. Finally, 165 respondents (52%) strongly agreed and 129 (41%) agreed that extra jobs allow academics to gain practical experiences that enhance their teaching skills. Meanwhile, 5 (2%) were undecided, 8 (3%) disagreed, and 5 (2%) strongly disagreed.

On the other hand, the responses on student's classroom outcomes revealed that 166 respondents (53%) strongly agree and 124 (40%) agree that class sessions are less engaging due to involvement in jobs outside of my primary assignment, 8 respondents (3%) were undecided, 5 (2%) disagreed, and 9 (3%) strongly disagreed. The study also indicated that 159 respondents (51%) strongly agree and 114 (37%) agree that part-time roles by academics often lead to lecture cancellations and rescheduling. 3 respondents (1%) were undecided, 13 (4%) disagreed, while 23 (7%) strongly disagreed, showing that while a majority support the statement, a minority disagree. Regarding the impact of external engagements on mentorship, 199 respondents (64%) strongly agreed and 95 (30%) agreed that mentorship and guidance of students are hindered by external engagements, 3 respondents (1%) were undecided, 4 (1%) disagreed, and 11 (4%) strongly disagreed. The study also indicated that 97 respondents (30%) strongly agree and 199 (64%) agree that students' classroom engagement is affected by frequent absenteeism, 7 respondents (2%) were undecided, 6 (2%) disagreed, and 3 (1%) strongly disagreed, reflecting general agreement that lecturer absence diminishes student participation in the classroom. Finally, the study showed that 171 respondents (55%) strongly agree and 125 (40%) agree that involvement in external jobs does not compromise students' understanding of course materials, 8 respondents (3%) were undecided, 4 (1%) disagreed, and 4 (1%) strongly disagreed.

4.2 Research objective two

Determine the relationship between research evaluation roles and professional advancement.

Table 3

Responses to Research Evaluation and Professional Advancement/ Experience

S/N	STATEMENT	SA	A	U	D	SD	Total
	Research Evaluation Roles						
a.	Taking on extra job roles affects lecture productivity.	**32** 10%	**28** 9%	**4** 1%	**97** 31%	**151** 48%	312
b.	Journal editorial duties improve research skills through exposure to diverse content.	**181** 58%	**116** 37%	**5** 2%	**7** 2%	**3** 1%	312
c.	Balancing additional jobs with primary jobs hinders teaching performance.	**158** 51%	**129** 41%	**9** 3%	**8** 3%	**8** 3%	312
d.	Classroom performances are not hindered even when holding part-time jobs.	**125** 40%	**158** 51%	**9** 3%	**13** 4%	**7** 2%	312

e.	Income earned in part-time jobs does not compromise professional ethics.	**250** 80%	**56** 17%	**2** 1%	**3** 1%	**2** 1%	312
S/N	**STATEMENT**	**SA**	**A**	**U**	**D**	**SD**	**Total**
	Professional Advancement/ Experience						
f.	Experience gained in part-time jobs is professional and improves academics' ability to impact practical and real-world knowledge.	**152** 49%	**145** 46%	**5** 2%	**3** 1%	**7** 2%	312
g.	Academics with industry experience are more effective at linking theory with practice in the classroom.	**163** 52%	**140** 45%	**2** 1%	**4** 1%	**3** 1%	312
h.	Balancing teaching duties with jobs outside of academia affects classroom performance.	**171** 55%	**128** 41%	**4** 1%	**5** 2%	**4** 1%	312
i.	Universities evaluate academics' professional experience before hiring them.	**161** 52%	**136** 44%	**3** 1%	**7** 2%	**5** 2%	312
j.	Professional experience of academics enhances credibility in the field of academia.	**234** 75%	**66** 21%	**5** 2%	**4** 1%	**3** 1%	312

Source: Field Survey, 2025

As shown in table 3, the study responses on research evaluation roles indicated that 32 respondents (10%) strongly agree and 28 (9%) agree that taking on extra job roles affects lecture productivity. However, 4 respondents (1%) were undecided, while 97 (31%) disagreed and 151 (48%) strongly disagreed, indicating that a majority do not feel research evaluation roles disrupt their lecture outcomes. The study further revealed that 181 respondents (58%) strongly agree and 116 (37%) agree that journal editorial duties improve research skills through exposure to diverse content. 5 (2%) were undecided, 7 (2%) disagreed, and 3 (1%) strongly disagreed, suggesting a strong overall belief in the developmental value in editorial roles. Regarding the impact of balancing additional jobs with primary jobs, 158 respondents (51%) strongly agreed and 129 (41%) agreed that it hinders teaching performance. Meanwhile, 9 respondents (3%) were undecided, and 8 respondents (3%) each disagreed and strongly disagreed. The study also showed that 125 respondents (40%) strongly agree and 158 (51%) agree that classroom performances are not hindered by part-time jobs, 9 respondents (3%) were undecided, while 13 (4%) disagreed and 7 (2%) strongly disagreed. Finally, the study indicated that 250 respondents (80%) strongly agree and 56 (17%) agree that income earned in part-time jobs does not compromise professional ethics, 2 respondents (1%) were undecided, 3 (1%) disagreed, and 2 (1%) strongly disagreed.

As reflected in the same table, the study responses on professional advancement/experience indicated that 152 respondents (49%) strongly agree and 145 (46%) agree that the experience gained in part-time jobs is professional and improves an academic's ability to impact practical and real-world knowledge. Meanwhile, 5 respondents (2%) were undecided, 3 (1%) disagreed, and 7 (2%) strongly disagreed,

showing a strong majority affirmation of the value of industry experience in enhancing teaching. The study also revealed that 163 respondents (52%) strongly agree and 140 (45%) agree that academics with industry experience are more effective at linking theory with practice in the classroom, 2 respondents (1%) were undecided, while 4 (1%) disagreed and 3 (1%) strongly disagreed, indicating near-unanimous agreement with the practical relevance of professional exposure. Regarding the impact of balancing teaching duties with jobs outside academia, 171 respondents (55%) strongly agreed and 128 (41%) agreed that such roles affect the classroom performance of students. 4 (1%) were undecided, while 5 (2%) disagreed and 4 (1%) strongly disagreed, indicating that while the majority acknowledge an impact, a minority do not view it as detrimental. The study further indicated that 161 respondents (52%) strongly agree and 136 (44%) agree that universities evaluate academics' professional experience before hiring them, 3 respondents (1%) were undecided, while 7 (2%) disagreed and 5 (2%) strongly disagreed, reflecting widespread support for incorporating industry background in academics' assessments. Finally, the study revealed that 234 respondents (75%) strongly agree and 66 (21%) agree that the professional experiences of academics enhance credibility in the field of academia. 5 (2%) were undecided, while 4 (1%) disagreed and 3 (1%) strongly disagreed, demonstrating overwhelming consensus that professional practice bolsters academic reputation and instructional impact.

4.3 Test of Hypothesis One

H_{01}: There is no relationship between part-time teaching and student classroom outcomes.

Table 4

Correlations between Part-Time Teaching and Student Classroom Outcomes

			Part-time Teaching	Student Classroom Outcomes
Spearman's rho	Part-time Teaching	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.836**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	312	312
	Student Classroom Outcomes	Correlation Coefficient	.836**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	312	312

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.4 Interpretation

A coefficient of 0.836 at p = 0.000 (p = 0.000, p < 0.05) is displayed in Table 4. The alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected since the p-value (0.000) is less than the significant level of 0.05. The Spearman Rank Correlation test result showed a correlation between students' classroom outcomes and part-time teaching.

4.5 Test of hypothesis two

H_{02}: There is no relationship between research evaluation roles and professional advancement/ experience.

Table 5

Correlations between Research Evaluation Roles and Professional Advancement/ Experience

			Research Evaluation Roles	Professional Advancement/ Experience
Spearman's rho	Research Evaluation Roles	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.864**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	312	312
	Professional Advancement/ Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.864**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	312	312

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.6 Interpretation

A coefficient of 0.864 at p = 0.000 (p = 0.000, p < 0.05) is displayed in Table 5. The alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected since the p-value (0.000) is less than the significant level of 0.05. The results of the Spearman Rank Correlation test showed a connection between professional development, experience and evaluation of research roles.

4.7 Discussion of findings

The discussion presented is in line with the findings of the study:

The result of Hypothesis One showed a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between part-time teaching and student classroom outcomes in the selected IHL ($\rho = 0.836$, $p = 0.000$). This implies that part-time lecturing plays an important role in influencing students' academic success. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This finding is consistent with the study by Chen (2022), which revealed that students in Chinese vocational schools taught by part-time lecturers performed 27% better in practical assessments, although their understanding of theoretical concepts was slightly lower. Similarly, Andersen and Müller (2023) found that while students in Danish universities taught by part-time staff had slightly lower grades ($\beta = -0.32$, $p < 0.01$), they demonstrated an 18% improvement in gaining skills that are relevant to the industry. This highlights the strength of part-time lecturing to deliver practical knowledge. Dubois (2022) also supported this perspective by showing that students in French business schools taught by part-time lecturers developed stronger professional networks ($r = 0.68$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that such lecturers, often with industry backgrounds, help students connect academic learning with real-world applications. On the other hand, not all studies report favourable outcomes. Johnson *et al.* (2023) found that students in U.S. community colleges enrolled in STEM courses taught by part-time lecturers had lower course completion rates, mainly due to limited institutional support. Likewise, Kim (2023) also reported that students in Korean universities taught by part-time lecturers reported 18% lower satisfaction ($\beta = -0.47$), which significantly contributed to a drop in academic performance. This finding reiterates the importance of lecturer-student interaction and consistent support. Despite these

contrasting findings, the result of this study aligns with research by Okonjo (2022) and Yamaguchi *et al.* (2023), who assert that part-time lecturing positively contributes to student employability and practical skill development. However, the overall literature shows that the impact of part-time teaching is not consistent across all settings. It depends on various factors such as the type of course, the level of institutional support, and how well part-time staff are integrated into the academic system.

Going further in investigating the relationship between research evaluation roles and the professional development and experience of academics, Hypothesis Two was examined using Spearman's Rank Correlation. The findings demonstrated a statistically significant association between research assessment roles and academics' professional experiences and growth, with a substantial positive correlation ($r = 0.864$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). As a result, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected. This finding aligns with the work of Adekoya and Ogunnaike (2022), who demonstrated that research evaluation improves reflective teaching practices. It is also in line with Eze and Okonkwo (2022), who observed that structured internal evaluation enhances professional development through curriculum design and teaching engagement. Similarly, the result corroborates the evidence presented by Frimpong and Asante (2021), showing that student satisfaction improves when evaluation feedback is integrated into teaching. The outcome is further consistent with Chowdhury and Rahman (2023), who highlighted the role of institutional evaluation in strengthening research supervision and mentoring skills. In the same vein, it is in agreement with Kiprop and Chebet (2021), who reported that participation in internal reviews improves time management and workload planning among lecturers

5 CONCLUSION

This study examined the effect of moonlighting on the performance of academics in institutions of higher learning across state-owned universities in South-Eastern Nigeria, with particular attention to the relationship between part-time teaching and student classroom outcomes, as well as between research evaluation roles and professional advancement. The findings revealed strong positive correlations in both cases, suggesting that while moonlighting can enhance practical knowledge transfer and professional development, it also carries potential risks of divided attention and reduced availability

for students. The study indicated that moonlighting is both a coping mechanism in response to poor remuneration and inadequate institutional support, and a pathway for professional improvement. When properly managed, activities such as part-time teaching and research evaluation roles can strengthen academic delivery, enrich professional experience, and improve institutional reputation. However, when left unchecked, they may compromise the quality of teaching, research output, and student engagement in the classroom. Therefore, this study concluded that the moonlighting phenomenon in academia is a double-edged sword, possessing both positive and negative consequences depending on how it is managed either through careful regulation and institutional support. Therefore, institutions of higher learning and their policymakers must strike a balance between allowing academics to pursue beneficial external engagements and ensuring that core responsibilities to students and research are not undermined. In doing so, these state-owned universities in Nigeria can transform moonlighting from a mere survival strategy into a constructive contributor to academic excellence and sustainable academia development.

5.1 Recommendations

The institutions of higher learning should increase opportunities for part-time teaching, particularly by professionals with relevant industry experience, through structured recruitment policies and collaborative partnerships with industry. Such academics bring practical insights and real-world perspectives that bridge the gap between theory and practice, making course content more relevant and applicable. Their contributions can enrich classroom discussions, foster problem-solving skills, and provide students with exposure to current industry trends and practices. In addition, the inclusion of part-time professionals can diversify teaching approaches, introduce innovative methods drawn from workplace settings, and create valuable networking opportunities for students. Beyond improving students' understanding of course concepts and overall academic performance, these engagements can strengthen collaboration between academia and industry, enhance employability outcomes, and support the institution's goal of producing graduates who are well-prepared for the labour market.

Institutions of higher learning are encouraged to support academic staff in engaging with research evaluation roles by creating enabling policies, providing flexible

scheduling, and recognising such activities within professional development frameworks. Participation in such duties sharpens lecturers' analytical, communication, and critical thinking skills while deepening their exposure to diverse research methodologies, emerging academic debates, and evolving scholarly standards. These experiences contribute to professional advancement by enriching classroom delivery, improving the clarity and quality of instructional materials, and fostering stronger research outputs. By formally validating research internal evaluation as a component of academic engagement, institutions can motivate academics to integrate evaluative practices with their teaching responsibilities, thereby enhancing both individual professional growth and institutional reputation.

5.2 Suggestions for further research

Future research should conduct analyses beyond the educational sector to explore how moonlighting affects professionals in other fields. Sectors such as the healthcare industry, where experts often hold side jobs and freelance duties. Investigations centred there could be viable to understanding how this influences their performance and professional growth.

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Authors' Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the development of this article.

Data availability

All datasets relevant to this study's findings are fully available within the article.

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