

## **Elements of Working Conditions and Retention of Course Tutors in Distance Education in Ghana**

**Moses Segbenya<sup>1</sup>, Nana Yaw Oppong<sup>2</sup> & Isaac Eliot Nyieku<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Business Studies, College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

*E-mail : moses.segbenya@ucc.edu.gh*

<sup>2</sup>Department of Human Resource Management, School of Business, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

*E-mail : noppong@ucc.edu.gh*

<sup>3</sup>Department of Business Studies, College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast, Ghana

*E-mail : inyieku@ucc.edu.gh*

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### **Abstract**

This study examined the relationship between elements of working conditions and retention of course tutors facilitating distance academic programmes in Ghana. The descriptive cross-sectional survey design from the quantitative approach was adopted for the study. A sample of 612 tutors was drawn with the help of simple random and stratified sampling techniques from a study population of 2,700 from two public universities in Ghana—the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba. The study adopted the Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling technique for the analysis of the results. It was found that elements of working conditions, such as compensation, workload and welfare, had a statistically and significant relationship with retention of course tutors. In conclusion, compensation, workload and welfare influence retention of part-time academic staff in distance education programmes in Ghana. Therefore, it was recommended that the management of the two universities should introduce attractive compensation and welfare packages for their course tutors facilitating their distance education programmes. It was also suggested that tutors assist in the enrolment drive for students, since more students lead to better working conditions through the workload as an element of working conditions.

**Keywords:** Working Conditions, Course Tutors, Distance Education, Retention, Ghana

## **Introduction**

The role of education for national development is rooted in the sustainable development goal four guiding the global developmental agenda until 2030 (ILO, 2015). Educational institutions in recent times have resorted to distance education mode to overcome the infrastructural limitation and to make education accessible to both the working and non-working population (Segbenya, Oduro, Peniana & Ghansah, 2019), especially during the COVID19 pandemic and its associated protocols, such as a ban on social gathering and lock-down. To deliver this, educational institutions depend on academic staff who are found closer to the location of the learners. The academic staff category is rapidly changing from full-time permanent to part-time (course tutors) as the full-time and permanent staff of these provider institutions may not be able to travel to and from these various study centres to deliver tuition.

Retention of course tutors (part-time academic staff) is necessary because, apart from being the most valuable asset to an institution, their retention would help reduce the cost of recruiting and hiring new lecturers. Recruiting applicants entails spending time and financial resources to attract applicants. According to Segbenya (2012), hiring a new worker is far expensive, as compared to the cost of maintaining an existing talent. That is, the management of existing workers are very familiar with factors that could induce them to stay with the organisation. Additionally, the repetition of the cost of the employment process and other costs associated with lost talents are avoided whenever existing workers are retained. Thus, costs of lost sales, lost productivity, training cost, and recruitment costs are curtailed when an organisation retains its present workers (Enu-Kwesi, Koomson, Segbenya & Annan Prah, 2014).

Also, tutors with longer tenure are conversant with what their institutions require from them and can better respond to or meet such demands (Enu-Kwesi et al., 2014). According to the authors, it takes some time for individual workers to understand, adapt and trust team members at the workplace. Thus, adjustment problems crop up when an existing talent is replaced with a new one. According to Enu-Kwesi et al. (2014), the rationale for retaining existing talents is due to the crucial role they play in meeting the expectation of creditors, customers, investors, among others.

Lost talents most often leave their organisation with bitter experience and skills acquired as well as organisational secrets. These experiences and organisational secrets are, therefore, taken along and made available to the next place or work or organisations that could serve as competitors of the previous place of work (Klopper & Power, 2014). Existing workers' confidence in their organisations is also affected when work colleagues leave the organisation, which adversely affects the level of output and productivity. Even though educational institutions can benefit from turnover in the short run, in terms of reduced salary expenditure, the lost talent is likely to join competitors with business secrets, policies, and strategies from the current organisation to the new one. Thus, the need to retain the existing valuable employees is more urgent than ever (Klopper & Power, 2014).

Conducive or decent working conditions, as captured under the sustainable development goal eight, target eight, could be a catalyst for retaining this category of academic staff. Working conditions cover a wide scope, including rest periods, hours of work, work schedules, remuneration, physical and mental demands existing in the workplace (International Labour Organisation, 2018). This means that employers of course tutors (part-time academic staff) should strategically direct their efforts at understanding factors that influence the retention of these academic staff and take measures to ensure that these workers remain with their institutions as long as practicable. Several factors that have the propensity to influence the long-term retention of workers have been identified in the literature. Pay and organisational policies have constituted the job context perspective, while interesting job, autonomy, responsibility, challenging tasks characterised the job content aspect of the Herzberg two-factor theory (Segbenya, 2012).

Klopper and Power (2014) identified that teaching workloads play a key role in the retention of academic staff. Also, Bigirimana and Masengu (2016) specifically identified compensation/salaries and welfare as precursors of tutors' retention. All these factors of retention emanate from both the job context and the job content, which is wholly termed as the working conditions of course tutors (ILO, 2018). All the studies by Klopper & Power (2014), Bigirimana and Masengu (2016) and Masanja (2018), among others, have largely been limited to mainstream full-time university lecturers. Studies conducted in Ghana on

retention and working conditions have been limited to job security (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung [FES] Ghana, 2011), and bank workers (Enu-Kwesi et al., 2014)). Other studies in Ghana were on antecedents of occupational stress among health workers at the Salaga Government Hospital, Ghana (Benduri et al., 2019), and how working conditions impact the health of bank workers at the Ghana Commercial Bank Limited in the Ashanti zone (Brobbe, 2016). All these studies were either on academic staff in Ghana but centred on a single institution or were not on working conditions of part-time academic staff (course tutors). Thus, there is a paucity of research in the literature under which course tutors in the distance education programmes of public universities in Ghana work. Additionally, there is a paucity of research on the influence of working conditions on course tutors' (part-time academic staff) retention in Ghana.

Management of the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba continue to experience employee turnover in their distance education programmes. New part-time academic staff are appointed every semester based on vacancies occasioned by employee turnover, among others (Segbenya & Nyieku, 2021). It is not clear what factors could be used by management to retain their valuable part-time academic staff. Thus, the need to examine how compensation, workload and employee welfare could be a launchpad for achieving retention for part-time academic staff is essential.

Meanwhile, other tertiary institutions, such as technical universities and private universities, in Ghana have begun some sort of distance education programmes and the possibility of poaching these experienced course tutors of the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba is very high. Thus, the need to examine the elements of working conditions, such as workload, welfare and compensation of tutors, on the distance academic programmes of the two public universities and how it leads to retention of this category of academic staff has become necessary than ever.

This study, therefore, contributes to the literature on the retention of part-time academic staff by explicitly examining how rewards, welfare, and workload influence the retention of course tutors. These issues are examined across the two premier and largest universities in distance education in Ghana—University of Education, Winneba, and University of Cape Coast—and to have a holistic view of issues considered in this study rather than a single

case study as in previous studies (Segbenya et al., 2019, Osafo, 2017). The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between elements of working conditions and retention of course tutors facilitating distance academic programmes in Ghana. The study is guided by three hypotheses such as:

### *Hypotheses of the Study*

Three hypotheses guiding this study were: Hypothesis

1:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Course tutors' workload has no significant relationship with their retention in distance education programmes of University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba, Ghana.

### Hypothesis 2

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Course tutors' welfare has no significant relationship with their retention in distance education programmes of University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba, Ghana.

### Hypothesis 3

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Course tutors' compensation has no significant relationship with their retention in distance education programmes of University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba, Ghana.

The next section of the paper focuses on the conceptual review on working conditions, theoretical review on working conditions on the distance education mode, methodology, results and discussion and conclusion and recommendations.

## **Literature Review**

### *Conceptual Review*

Work conditions relate to all existing circumstances in the working environment, such as psychological and physical working environment, terms of an employment contract because of the interaction of employees with their organisational climate (Yassin, Ali & Adam, 2013). The four strategic goals of the ILO's decent work framework are remunerative employment, workers' rights, social dialogue and social protection. In this study, indicators of decent

working conditions of course tutors looked at were tutors' workloads, compensation and welfare of course tutors.

Workloads of part-time academic staff (course tutor) on distance education programmes describe the extent to which the tutor is engaged and may constitute teaching, research and administrative duties (Segbenya, 2012). The workload of part-time academic staff on the distance programmes in Ghana has been found by Segbenya and Nyieku (2021) to entail teaching load (i.e., number of courses, classes, and students taught), invigilation and marking of students' assignments/examination scripts. Other components of the course tutors' workload comprised supervising students' projects/research work and teaching practice (Segbenya & Nyieku, 2021).

Compensation comprises tangible and intangible financial and nonfinancial rewards that workers obtain for their services (Segbenya, Aggrey & Peniana, 2019). As used in this study, compensation is limited to only the tangible financial reward or extrinsic reward (allowance) for non-standard academic staff teaching on the distance education mode. According to Segbenya et al. (2019), extrinsic reward plays a dominant role in workers' lives because it is a crucial determinant for workers' decision to stay on a job. One of the employers' most influential motivational tools to influence workers' stay is extrinsic rewards (Armstrong & Murlis, 2007). Sthapit (2014) found that pay growth affects turnover intentions among talented employees' categories, as compared to other categories of staff.

Employee welfare relates to the provision of varied facilities and amenities in and around the workplace for the better life of the employees (Chaubey & Rawat, 2016). These welfare facilities for workers have been found to have a significant influence on the sentiments of the workers. The tendency of a worker to grouse and grumble could easily disappear when workers feel that the employers and the state are interested in their welfare or happiness (Chaubey & Rawat, 2016). Organisations provide welfare facilities to their employees to keep their motivation levels high. As used in this study, the welfare dimension looked at the indirect non-financial entitlement associated with teaching on the distance education mode (Segbenya & Nyienku, 2021). Welfare for non-standard part-time academic staff (course tutors) on the distance education mode cover benefits associated with their engagement, such

as death benefits, hospitalisation or sickness benefits, retirement benefits, and end of service benefits (Segbenya & Nyieku, 2021). Neglect for staff welfare has been found to be able to influence underperformance among workers (Chaubey & Rawat, 2016; Okereke & Amgbare, 2010).

### *Theories Underpinning the Study*

The Herzberg two-factor theory—hygiene factors and motivators—was used to explain both the job content and context of the course tutors' working conditions. The theory argues that the presence of hygiene or maintenance factors in the job context serves to prevent dissatisfaction among workers, but, if absent, it could lead to “no dissatisfaction”. These factors were pay and security, company policy, supervision, interpersonal relationship and relationship with peers (Enu-Kwesi et al., 2014). On the other hand, the growth and motivators (other factors) are related to the job content (Mullins, 2010). These factors were growth, achievement, responsibility, recognition, advancement opportunities and interesting work. The theory remains relevant for this study because the hygiene factors perspective explains the factors considered in this study. The job context perspectives of the course tutor in terms of welfare, workload, and compensation are explained by the Herzberg two-factor theory. Thus, this study tests the theory from the developing economy's perspective to ascertain whether the job context factors contribute to the retention of part-time academic staff in Ghana.

### *Empirical Review*

In terms of what is known in literature at the global level on the working conditions of academic staff, Jawabri (2017) examined the job satisfaction of academic staff in higher education of private universities in UAE. A survey design from the quantitative perspective was used to collect data from 212 academic staff in 15 private universities in UAE. The study found that there was a high level of job satisfaction among academic staff of the private universities in UAE. Factors found to have positively influenced job satisfaction were promotion, supervisor support, and support from colleagues. Recognition and rewards were rather found to have had a negative impact on job satisfaction among academic staff in UAE.

Segbenya and Nyieku (2021) examined the demographic determinants of job satisfaction among part-time academic staff at the University of Cape Coast. The study adopted the quantitative approach and the descriptive survey design. A sample of 526 from a study population of 2700 part-time academic staff was drawn. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire. The statistical tool for data analysis was an independent sample t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The study found that gender had a statistically significant effect on welfare, and compensation and professional development were statistically and significantly influenced by rank. Tenure also statistically and significantly influenced compensation among part-time academic staff. Therefore, it was recommended that the management of the university pay attention to gender when introducing a college or university level policy to take care of the welfare of part-time academic staff.

Salau, Worlu, Adewale Osibanjo<sup>1</sup>, Anthonia Adeniji, Falola<sup>1</sup>, Olokundun, Ibidunni<sup>1</sup>, Atolagbe, Dirisu, and Ogueyungbo (2020) investigated the impact of workplace environments on retention outcomes of Public Universities in Southern Nigeria. A descriptive cross-sectional design was adopted to elicit information from 384 academic staff, using a questionnaire. The Structural Equation Modelling (SEM\_PLS) was used to analyse the quantitative data obtained for the study. The study found significant factors of concern to lecturers, including sharing dilapidated offices, poorly ventilated and furnished offices, varying promotion criteria, erratic power supply, overcrowded classrooms and a growing disparity in the ratio between teaching staff and students. Therefore, the study recommended strategies, such as creating an enabling environment, adequate funding of tertiary education, effective administration and motivation of staff of the sampled institutions, among others, for curbing this menace in state universities.

Khalid and Nawab (2018) conducted a study on the relationship between types of employee participation (delegative, consultative, worker director, and worker union) on employee retention and the moderation of employee compensation in the relationship. A sample of 1,054 was drawn from the service and manufacturing sectors of Pakistan, using a questionnaire. The statistical tools used for data analysis were descriptive statistics, correlation, univariate analysis, multiple regression analysis, and independent-sample *t*-test. It was

found that all types of employee participation influence employee retention positively in both sectors. Employee compensation moderated the relationship between types of employee participation and employee retention. Delegative participation had a stronger influence on retention, as compared with other types in both sectors. The study recommended that organisations of both manufacturing and service sectors develop such practices, which could enhance employee engagement and voice within their task-related decisions to enhance employee retention.

Fahim (2018) explored the dynamics of using strategic human resource management (SHRM) practices in attaining employee retention in the public sector, using the National Bank of Egypt (NBE) as a case study. A descriptive design from the quantitative approach was adopted for the study. A questionnaire was used as the data collection instrument. The data analytical tool was the Pearson correlation coefficient. The study found that the employment of best HRM practices is deemed a remarkable strategic tool in retaining core public employees. Also, the results of the analysis provide evidence that SHRM contributes to employee retention at NBE. The study recommends that management devise effective policies to improve employee retention, using appropriate SHRM activities, particularly in the Egyptian public organisations.

Thus, the relationship between the variables of the study based on the literature review is depicted in Figure 1. Workload, welfare and compensation in Figure 1 represent the independent variables of the study and tutor retention represents the dependent variable of the study. The study conjectured (as captured in the study's hypotheses and depicted in Figure 1) that there is a relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Thus, the relationship could affect the retention of tutors on the distance education programmes in Ghana. Therefore, tutors could be retained if proper attention is given to the independent variables of the study.

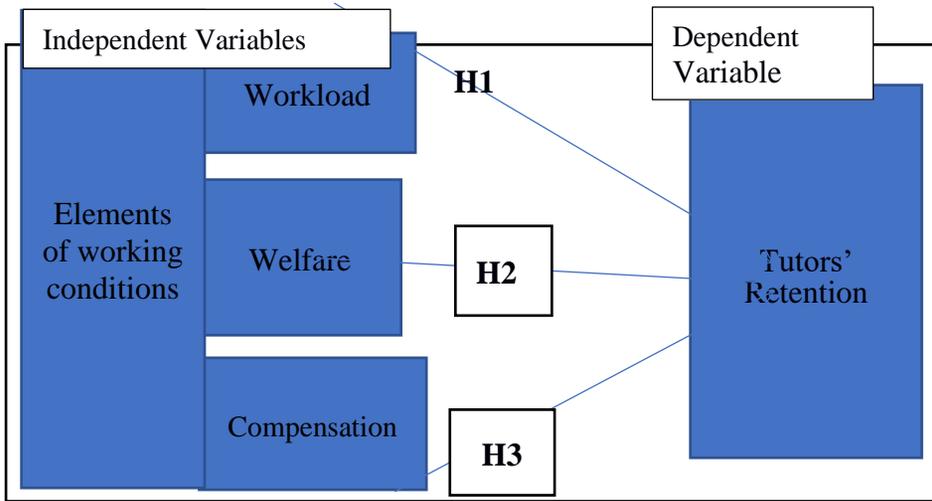


Figure 1: Structural Relationships

Source: Authors' Construct

## Methodology

The descriptive cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data from a large pool of respondents. Due to the need to collect data from a large sample and generalising the study's outcome to the study population, the descriptive design and the quantitative approach were considered the most appropriate for this study. Thus, despite the inherent disadvantages of being very expensive, the quantitative approach was still used because the advantages and suitability for this study overshadowed the weaknesses. A multi-stage sampling technique, including simple random and stratified sampling techniques, was used to select 612 respondents from a population of 2,700 (CoDE, 2021) with the help of Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) table for samples determination. These sampling techniques were deemed appropriate due to the quantitative approach adopted for this study. Additionally, these techniques provided equal opportunity for all units in the population to be selected. The techniques also ensured a fair representation in terms of sub-groups within the population in this study.

The data collection tool was a self-administered questionnaire for quantitative data collection, which was analysed with the help of the SmartPLS

software—structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) technique. Common method bias (CMB) was addressed by ensuring that the questionnaire dealt with respondents' privacy, using diverse measures from varied sources and separate sections for measured items. The principal component analysis extraction method and exploratory factor analysis were used to deal with Common method bias. The self-administered instruments were divided into two, with part one dealing with demographic characteristics and part two focusing on the study's research questions. Data collection was done from June to August 2019. All ethical considerations, such as informed consent, privacy, freedom to opt-out despite starting the process, anonymity, among others, were discussed with respondents and agreed upon before data was collected.

#### *Description of Measurement Items*

The questionnaire used comprised 30 items for the five variables of the study. The items were adopted from Klopfer and Power (2014) on workload, Bigirimana and Masengu (2016) on compensation and welfare, and Enu-Kwesi et al. (2014) on employee retention. The partial least square structural equation modelling was used to analyse the data. The choice of the analytical tool was based on the hypotheses guiding the study. That is, the study sought to examine how course tutors' compensation, workload and welfare significantly relate to retention of part-time academic staff. To enhance the strength of the model, only items loaded with a value of 0.70 and above were assigned to their respective construct. The use of reflective modelling of the construct ensured that items removed with a loading value below 0.70 do not pose any structural model problem. The SEM model's strength was determined by evaluating the convergent discriminant validity, using the Average Variance Extracted [AVE], Fornel-Lacker criterion of the model, and reliability, using Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability. Henselaer, Ringle and Sarstedt's (2015) and Baah, Amponsah, Issau, Ofori, Acquah and Agyeman's (2021) Criterion of Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach alpha value of 0.50 and above, as well as a value 0.70 of and above, were used as thresholds. *Evaluating the Structural Model*

The PLS-SEM was used, and Table 1 provides information for an assessment of the structural model. It is clear from Table 1 that the Cronbach alpha and

CR values obtained were respectively within 0.721 and 0.894, suggesting high reliability of constructs which further confirms that the model achieved reliability.

Table 1: Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct	Factor loadin	VIF	Cronbach' rho_A alpha	Composite reliability	(AVE)
Compensati					
COMP2	0.715	1.292			
COMP3	0.799	2.479	0.802		
COMP4	0.858	2.851		0.804	0.628
COMP5	0.792	1.578			
Retention					
RET1					
RET5	0.760	1.296			
RET6	0.829	1.577	0.721	0.722	0.643
Workload					
WKL2					
WKL3	0.893	2.118			
WKL4	0.763	1.609	0.824	0.864	0.739
Welfare					
WLF1	0.915	2.546			
WLF2					
WLF3	0.838	2.012			
WLF4	0.808	1.802			
	0.893	2.424	0.830	0.859	0.662
	0.705	1.478			

Source: Field data (2021)

Determining the convergent validity by using AVE, as can be seen in Table 1, also confirms that the AVEs obtained for the constructs of the study were between 0.628 and 0.739. These figures were far above the *0.50 minimum threshold*, suggesting convergent validity of the constructs of the study.

Convergent validity, according to Henseler et al. (2015) and Baah et al. (2020), shows how a construct has truly been represented by a set of indicators that were used to measure it. Multicollinearity was also checked for the constructs of the study, using variance Inflated Factor (VIF), and the results are found in Table 1. The findings suggest that all values obtained were *below 3.0*, implying that there was no multicollinearity threat.

The Fornell-Lacker Criterion (FLC) was also checked, and the results are presented in Table 2. The FLC, according to Baah et al. (2020), states that the AVE’s square roots of a construct should not be lower than the results of how other constructs relate with it in the model. It is, therefore, evident that discriminant validity was attained (See Table 2).

Table 2: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

1	COMP	0.793			
2	RETN	0.430	0.802		
3	WKL	0.319	0.462	0.859	
4	WLF	0.262	0.437	0.349	0.814

Source: Field data (2021). COMP= Compensation, RETN= retention, WKL= workload, WEF= Welfare

### Results of the Study

The results for the three hypotheses of the study are presented in Table 3. The  $R^2$  supported by the adjusted  $R^2$  values, as shown in Table 3, is used to explain the variance in retention of course tutors explained by compensation, workload and welfare. Thus, the  $R^2$  of 0.363 indicates that the three independent variables, such as compensation, welfare, and workload, explain about 36.3 per cent variance of employee retention among facilitators on the distance education mode in Ghana. It also means that there is about 63.7 per cent variance in retention that could be explained by other constructs not included in the model. This is equally supported by the results presented in Figure 2.

**Table 3: Structural Model**

Construct	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>
Ret	0.363	0.360

Path	Beta value	Mean VI deviation (M)	Standard deviation	T-coefficients	P-values	F2 Hypotheses	Inference
1. COMP -> RETN	0.270	0.264	0.094	2.882	0.004	Supported	1.146
2. WKL > RETN	0.268	0.262	0.112	2.395	0.017	Supported	1.172
3. WLF > RETN		2			7		2

Source: Field data (2021), Effect size ( **f-square**) (>= 0.35 is large; >= 0.15 is medium; >=0.02 is small)

*Testing of Hypotheses*

The first hypothesis (H1) of the study was that “tutors’ workload statistically and significantly relates to their retention in the distance education mode in

Ghana.” The results for the study’s first hypothesis can be seen in the second row in Table 3 (supported by the results in Figure 2). The results ( $\beta=0.283$ ,  $T=2.027$ ,  $p= 0.043$ ) clearly indicate that course tutors’ workload had a positive and significant relationship with their retention on the distance education mode in Ghana. Thus, the null hypothesis that “*Course tutors’ workload has no significant relationship with their retention in distance education programmes of the University of Cape Coast and the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana*” was not supported.

The study’s second hypothesis (H2) also states that “*Course tutors’ welfare has no significant relationship with their retention in distance education programmes of University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba, Ghana*” was also tested. The results (See Row 3 in Table 3) ( $\beta=0.268$ ,  $T=2.395$ ,  $p= 0.017$ ) is a clear indication that tutors’ welfare positively and significantly relates to their retention in the distance education mode in Ghana. Based on the results and supported by what is presented in Figure 2, the study, therefore, rejects the study's null hypothesis.

Hypothesis three of the study (H3) also states that “*Course tutors’ compensation has no significant relationship with their retention in distance education programmes of University of Cape Coast and University of Education, Winneba, Ghana.*” The results are presented in Table 3 and Figure 2. The individual contribution of tutors’ compensation was ( $\beta=0.270$ ,  $T=2.882$ ,  $p= 0.004$ ) to employee retention. The results indicate that tutors’ compensation positively and significantly relates to their retention in the distance education programmes in Ghana.

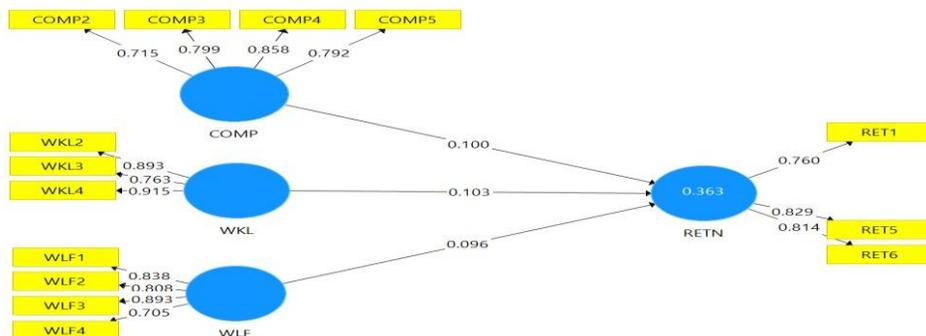


Figure 2: Structural Model Showing Path Coefficient ( $\beta$ ) and  $R^2$

Source: Field data (2021)

### **Discussion of the Results**

A statistically significant relationship was found between the study's three independent variables/constructs, such as compensation, workload and welfare, and the dependent variable, tutors' retention. The significant relationship between compensation and employee retention suggests that the more tutors on the distance programmes in Ghana are satisfied with their compensation, the easier it will be for the public universities to retain them. The results, thus, agrees with the findings of Segbenya and Nyieku (2021) that compensation (extrinsic reward) is a key determinant for workers' decision to accept and stay on a job. From the two-factor theory by Herzberg, compensation as a hygiene factor cannot induce retention. However, the study's findings disagree with the theory and suggest that compensation as a hygiene factor within the job context induces retention among course tutors on the distance education mode in Ghana.

Another indicator of concern is the workload of course tutors and its significant positive relationship with employee retention. The results implies that any percentage increment in tutors' satisfaction with their workload will yield the same percentage increment in employee retention of course tutors in Ghana. Tutors' workload on the distance education mode spanned over teaching, marking, invigilation, and teaching practice supervision (these activities were either similar or entirely different from what these tutors do on weekdays at their formal workplaces). Each of these elements of the workload was remunerated separately; hence, the majority wished they could always be engaged in such activities for feedback and experience, among others, without recourse to their health effects. These expectations or desires were sometimes truncated due to low enrolment/number of students. Thus, there were semesters/times when some tutors could not get a class/student to teach, which affected their working conditions (Deduced from responses on individual items measuring the variable). The possibility of being poached by other competing institutions during semesters without classes to teach thus becomes very high and challenging.

The place of workload in the life of the tutor served as the basis/precursor upon which all other indicators could be meaningful. Thus, the

higher the enrolment of students, the higher the likelihood that existing tutors will be assigned more classes/hours to teach and be engaged in all teaching practice, invigilation and marking of examination scripts. The possibility of high enrolment leads to better working conditions among tutors. However, there must be a limit to safeguard the health of the tutor and ensure quality delivery. The results, thus, disagree with earlier findings of Salau, et al. (2018) that the workload of tutors had no statistically significant relationship with gender, rank and tenure.

The last independent variable of concern was tutors' welfare having a statistically significant relationship with employee retention, suggesting that the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) and University of Cape Coast (UCC) can best retain their course tutors by paying attention to and investing in the welfare of course tutors. Thus, the results disagree with the findings of Jawabri (2017), who found that tutors' welfare had no statistically significant relationship with gender, rank, and tenure.

## **Conclusion**

The study examined the relationship between working conditions and retention of course tutors facilitating distance education programmes in Ghana. It can be concluded that all the three independent variables, representing elements of working conditions, such as workload, welfare and compensation, had a positive and significant relationship with course tutors' retention on the distance education programmes in Ghana.

The above conclusion demands that the management of the institutions under study should take specific actions towards the retention of their course tutors. Therefore, it is recommended that management of the University of Education, Winneba and the University of Cape Coast should officially engage course tutors in enrolment drive, which should be tied to compensation (commission) and/or additional classes/course. High enrolment/students number leads to the course tutors' opportunity to be assigned more classes or courses that translate to better working conditions through their workload. Course tutors are scattered all over the country and serve as the first point of contact for prospective applicants and guardians or parents. They stand a chance

to convince many applicants to enrol in distance education programmes if they are officially engaged and rewarded.

Management of these institutions should provide a welfare package for their tutors in distance education programmes that include medical support, end of year benefits, a package for the tutor who dies in service, a funeral page for the death of parents or children and the spouse of a tutor. The welfare of tutors gives some comfort and a sound mind to the tutor to concentrate on teaching. Thus, the possibility of retaining competent tutors in distance education programmes by the public universities is equally tied to their betterment in terms of welfare.

The University of Education, Winneba and the University of Cape Coast should introduce an attractive compensation package for their tutors in the distance education mode. Compensation is essential since the two universities remain the market leaders in distance education in Ghana. An attractive compensation is needed to attract and retain competent tutors to avoid being poached by other market entrants or competitors.

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