Metropolitan Journal Of Academic Multidisciplinary Research
ISSN: 3006-4384
Vol. 5 Issue 10, October- 2026, Pages: 135-143

Academic Labor Paid in Kind: Supervision Allowances, Supervisory Load, and Student–Supervisor Co-authorship as Promotion Currency

Dr Arinaitwe Julius
Metropolitan International University

Abstract

This study examined how supervision allowances, supervisory load and student–supervisor co-authorship interacted in the academic labour and promotion of university lecturers in Uganda. A mixed-methods cross-sectional design was used. Questionnaire data were collected from 217 lecturers in four universities, and 15 lecturers, heads of department and graduate school officials were interviewed. Lecturers supervised an average of 21.1 students per year, and the load rose most for junior staff at undergraduate level and for senior staff at doctoral level. Supervision allowances were rated low in adequacy (mean = 2.04) and timeliness (mean = 2.31), while the contribution of supervision to promotion was rated high (mean = 3.78). Most lecturers (72.8%) had co-authored with a student in the previous three years, and 56.7% had initiated such co-authorship to meet promotion requirements. Promotion pressure, supervisory load and allowance adequacy together explained 46% of the variation in reliance on student co-authorship, with promotion pressure the strongest predictor ($\beta = .41$). The study concluded that co-authorship functioned as an informal payment in kind for under-compensated supervision, and that this raised concerns about equity and authorship integrity. It recommended adequate and timely allowances, workload recognition for supervision and transparent authorship practices.

Keywords: academic labour, supervision allowances, supervisory load, co-authorship, promotion, higher education, Uganda

1.0 Background of the Study

Supervision of undergraduate projects, master's dissertations and doctoral theses was a central part of academic work in universities(Faridah et al., 2023). Lee (2008) showed that supervision was a complex form of professional work that combined teaching, mentoring, quality assurance and the development of researcher identity(Nancy & Prudence, 2024). In many universities in Uganda, enrolment in postgraduate programmes expanded, and lecturers carried growing numbers of students while also teaching large classes and meeting research expectations(Qadir et al., 2024).

Higher education systems in Africa faced financial pressure, and staff were often poorly remunerated relative to their workload (Teferra & Altbach, 2004). Mamdani (2007) described how market-oriented reforms in Ugandan higher education increased student numbers and shifted staff effort towards income-generating teaching(Julius & Nancy, 2025). Within this context, supervision allowances were usually modest, and promotion systems placed strong weight on publication(Julius & Audrey, 2025). Supervision therefore produced two sorts of reward: a small cash allowance and a possible stream of publishable work with students(Christopher et al., 2022). The study examined how these rewards interacted and whether co-authorship with students had become a form of payment in kind.

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**

Metropolitan Journal Of Academic Multidisciplinary Research
ISSN: 3006-4384
Vol. 5 Issue 10, October- 2026, Pages: 135-143

1.1 Problem Statement

Supervision demanded considerable time, yet allowances were small and sometimes paid late, and supervision was seldom fully recognised in workload allocation(Brian et al., 2024). At the same time, promotion criteria rewarded publications, and lecturers had little time for research after teaching and supervision(Julius & Nancy, 2026). Under these conditions, publishing with students could appear as a practical way to turn supervision into research output and career advancement(Julius, 2025). Such an arrangement could be legitimate where supervisors contributed substantially to the work, but it also risked unfair pressure on students and honorary authorship(Kazaara & Deus, 2024). Little empirical evidence existed on how far supervision was compensated in kind through co-authorship and how supervisory load and promotion pressure shaped this practice. This study therefore examined supervision allowances, supervisory load and student–supervisor co-authorship as promotion currency.

2.0 Objectives of the study

i. To describe the supervisory load of lecturers.
ii. To assess the adequacy of supervision allowances and the recognition of supervision.
iii. To establish the extent and motives of student–supervisor co-authorship.
iv. To determine the factors that influenced lecturers' reliance on student co-authorship for promotion.

3.0 Literature Review

3.1 Theoretical perspectives

Two theories guided the study. Equity theory proposed that people compared the ratio of their inputs to rewards with that of others and felt distress when it appeared unfair (Adams, 1963). Where supervision involved high effort and low pay, lecturers were likely to seek other rewards to restore balance. Bourdieu (1986) distinguished economic capital from cultural and social capital and argued that these forms of capital could be converted into one another. Publications and academic standing were forms of cultural capital that could be converted into promotion and income, which made co-authorship a potential currency in exchange for supervision(Jaggars & Bailey, 2010).

3.2 Supervision as academic labour

Lee (2008) identified several concepts of supervision, including functional, enculturation, critical thinking, emancipation and relationship development, all of which implied substantial intellectual and emotional work. Such work was often invisible in formal workload models. Teferra and Altbach (2004) observed that African academics worked under heavy teaching loads, low pay and limited research support, and Mamdani (2007) showed how expansion and commercialisation in Ugandan higher education increased pressure on staff without matching rewards.

3.3 Collaboration, credit and authorship

Bozeman and Corley (2004) found that scientists chose collaborators strategically to gain skills and resources, which indicated that collaboration served career goals as well as intellectual ones. Merton (1968) described how recognition in science was unequally distributed and accumulated for those already prominent. The International

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**

Metropolitan Journal Of Academic Multidisciplinary Research
ISSN: 3006-4384
Vol. 5 Issue 10, October- 2026, Pages: 135-143

Committee of Medical Journal Editors (n.d.) set criteria under which authors had to make substantial contributions, take part in drafting or revising, approve the final version and accept accountability. Under these standards, authorship based only on supervisory position would be improper. Brand, Allen, Altman, Hlava and Scott (2015) proposed contributor taxonomies as a way to describe each person's role transparently.

3.4 Research gap

Existing work described the supervision process, collaboration and authorship norms separately. Few studies connected supervision pay, supervisory load and co-authorship as a combined system of reward in African universities, and little quantitative evidence existed from Uganda. This study addressed that gap.

4.0 Methodology

4.1 Research design

A cross-sectional mixed-methods survey design was used (Creswell, 2014). Questionnaires measured load, allowances, co-authorship practices and promotion pressure, while interviews explained the meanings that lecturers gave to these practices(Nafiu, 2012).

4.2 Population and sample

The study was conducted in four universities in the Kampala area, two public and two private. The population comprised 600 teaching staff who supervised students. Using the sample size table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970), 234 lecturers were selected by stratified random sampling according to institution type and rank, and 217 returned usable questionnaires, a response rate of 92.7%(Olanrewaju et al., 2021). Fifteen key informants, including lecturers, heads of department and graduate school officials, were purposively selected for interviews.

4.3 Instruments, validity and reliability

The questionnaire used counts for supervisory load and a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree) for perceptions and practices(Abiodun Nafiu, 2012). Expert review gave a content validity index of 0.88, and Cronbach's alpha was 0.83, above the 0.70 threshold suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). To reduce social desirability bias, questions on questionable authorship practice asked about practices observed among colleagues as well as about the respondent's own behaviour.

4.4 Data analysis and ethics

Data were analysed in SPSS using frequencies, means, standard deviations, Pearson correlation and multiple regression(Nelson et al., 2022). Mean scores were interpreted as low (1.00–2.49), moderate (2.50–3.49) or high (3.50–5.00). Interviews were analysed thematically. Participation was voluntary and anonymous, institutions and individuals were not identified, and informed consent was obtained.

5.0 Results

5.1 Characteristics of respondents

Table 1: Characteristics of respondents (n = 217)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	139	64.1

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**

Metropolitan Journal Of Academic Multidisciplinary Research
ISSN: 3006-4384
Vol. 5 Issue 10, October- 2026, Pages: 135-143

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Female	78	35.9
Rank	Assistant lecturer or lecturer	118	54.4
	Senior lecturer	57	26.3
	Associate professor or professor	42	19.4
Institution type	Public	129	59.4
	Private	88	40.6
Years of service	Below 5 years	51	23.5
	5–10 years	82	37.8
	Over 10 years	84	38.7

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 1 shows that most respondents were men (64.1%), which reflected the gender profile of academic staff, and that more than half (54.4%) were at lecturer level or below. Most (76.5%) had served for more than five years and were therefore familiar with supervision and promotion processes.

5.2 Supervisory load

Table 2: Mean number of students supervised per year, by rank

Rank	Undergraduate	Master's	Doctoral	Total
Assistant lecturer or lecturer (n = 118)	14.2	5.8	0.9	20.9
Senior lecturer (n = 57)	11.5	7.4	2.3	21.2
Associate professor or professor (n = 42)	8.1	8.9	4.6	21.6
All respondents (n = 217)	12.3	6.8	2.0	21.1

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 2 shows that lecturers supervised an average of 21.1 students per year, and the total was almost the same across ranks (20.9 to 21.6). The composition differed, however. Junior staff carried the heaviest undergraduate load (14.2), while senior staff supervised the most master's and doctoral students (8.9 and 4.6)(Nelson et al.,

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**

Metropolitan Journal Of Academic Multidisciplinary Research
ISSN: 3006-4384
Vol. 5 Issue 10, October- 2026, Pages: 135-143

2022). Because postgraduate supervision demanded more time per student, senior staff carried a heavier real burden than the equal totals suggested.

5.3 Allowances, recognition and promotion

Table 3: Perceptions of supervision allowances, recognition and promotion

Statement	Mean	SD	Interpretation
The supervision allowance is adequate for the effort involved	2.04	0.97	Low
Supervision allowances are paid on time	2.31	1.08	Low
Supervision is fully recognised in workload allocation	2.62	1.10	Moderate
Co-authorship with students is a reasonable reward for supervision	3.46	1.03	Moderate
Supervision and student publications count towards promotion	3.78	0.94	High

Source: Primary Data, 2026. *Scale: 1.00–2.49 low; 2.50–3.49 moderate; 3.50–5.00 high.*

As shown in Table 3, lecturers rated the adequacy (2.04) and timeliness (2.31) of allowances low, and recognition in workload only moderate (2.62). In contrast, they rated the contribution of supervision and student publications to promotion high (3.78). Co-authorship was seen as a moderately reasonable reward (3.46)(Brian et al., 2024). The pattern showed that cash compensation was weak while the career value of supervision was strong, and that co-authorship filled part of the difference.

5.4 Co-authorship practices

Table 4: Student–supervisor co-authorship practices (n = 217)

Practice	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Co-authored at least one paper with a student in the last three years	158	72.8
Initiated student co-authorship to meet promotion requirements	123	56.7
Co-authored papers in which the student did most of the writing	131	60.4
Experienced students expecting to include the supervisor as co-author	101	46.5
Observed colleagues adding their names without a substantive contribution	94	43.3

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 4 shows that co-authorship with students was common: 72.8% of lecturers had co-authored with a student in the past three years, and more than half (56.7%) had initiated it to meet promotion requirements(Julius et al., 2026). In 60.4% of cases, the student had done most of the writing, which indicated that supervisors' contributions

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**

Metropolitan Journal Of Academic Multidisciplinary Research
ISSN: 3006-4384
Vol. 5 Issue 10, October- 2026, Pages: 135-143

were often editorial or advisory. Almost half (46.5%) said that students expected the supervisor to be included, and 43.3% had observed colleagues adding their names without substantive contribution(Kaazara & Audrey, 2025). These figures suggested that co-authorship ranged from legitimate collaboration to honorary authorship.

5.5 Relationships between variables

Table 5: Pearson correlations with reliance on student co-authorship for promotion (n = 217)

Variable	r	p-value	Direction
Promotion pressure	.58	< .01	Positive
Supervisory load	.47	< .01	Positive
Allowance adequacy	−.39	< .01	Negative
Seniority (rank)	−.21	< .01	Negative

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 5 shows that reliance on student co-authorship was positively related to promotion pressure (r = .58) and supervisory load (r = .47), and negatively related to allowance adequacy (r = −.39) and seniority (r = −.21)(Winny et al., 2023). Lecturers who faced more promotion pressure and carried heavier loads relied more on student publications, while those with better allowances and higher rank relied less.

5.6 Predictors of reliance on student co-authorship

Table 6: Multiple regression of reliance on student co-authorship

Predictor	β	t	Sig. (p)
Promotion pressure	.41	6.88	< .001
Supervisory load	.24	3.96	< .001
Allowance adequacy	−.19	−3.17	.002

Source: Primary Data, 2026. *Model summary: R^2 = .46, adjusted R^2 = .45, $F(3, 213) = 60.50$, $p < .001$.*

The model in Table 6 was significant and explained 46% of the variation in reliance on student co-authorship. Promotion pressure was the strongest predictor (β = .41), followed by supervisory load (β = .24) and allowance adequacy, which had a negative effect (β = −.19). Better allowances therefore reduced reliance on co-authorship, while greater pressure and load increased it.

5.7 Interview themes

Table 7: Main themes from interviews (n = 15)

Theme	Summary of findings
Recognition without payment	Interviewees said supervision was praised as a duty but paid poorly, and allowances arrived late.

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**

Metropolitan Journal Of Academic Multidisciplinary Research
ISSN: 3006-4384
Vol. 5 Issue 10, October- 2026, Pages: 135-143

Theme	Summary of findings
Supervision as promotion currency	Several described student papers as the most realistic route to publications for staff with heavy teaching loads.
Blurred authorship boundaries	Some distinguished real intellectual contribution from adding a name, but acknowledged that expectations were unclear.
Pressure on students	Some said students felt unable to refuse a supervisor's request to be included as author.

Source: Primary Data, 2026

The interview themes in Table 7 matched the survey results. Participants described supervision as under-paid, saw student publications as a practical route to promotion and recognised that authorship expectations were unclear and could place students in a weak position.

6.0 Discussion of Results

The low ratings of allowances alongside high ratings of promotion value were consistent with equity theory (Adams, 1963). Lecturers who judged their supervisory effort to be under-rewarded in cash looked for another form of reward, and student publications offered one. The result that allowance adequacy reduced reliance on co-authorship supported this reading, since better pay narrowed the imbalance.

The pattern also fitted Bourdieu's (1986) argument that capital could be converted between forms. Supervisory labour, a form of cultural and social capital, was converted into publications and then into promotion. The finding that promotion pressure was the strongest predictor agreed with Bozeman and Corley (2004), who showed that collaboration served career strategies as well as intellectual ones. The context described by Teferra and Altbach (2004) and Mamdani (2007), of heavy teaching loads and limited research time, helped to explain why supervisors turned to student work as a source of output.

The findings did not show that co-authorship was improper in itself. In many cases the supervisor's guidance, editing and conceptual input were substantial, and joint publication was a normal and valuable outcome of supervision.

7.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

The study concluded that lecturers carried a heavy and similar supervisory load across ranks that allowances were inadequate and late, and that supervision was nevertheless valued for promotion. Student–supervisor co-authorship was widespread and, for many lecturers, functioned as an informal payment in kind that linked supervision to career advancement. Promotion pressure, supervisory load and low allowances predicted reliance on this practice. While co-authorship could be legitimate, the arrangement created risks for equity and authorship integrity, particularly for students.

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**

Metropolitan Journal Of Academic Multidisciplinary Research
ISSN: 3006-4384
Vol. 5 Issue 10, October- 2026, Pages: 135-143

7.2 Recommendations

Universities should review supervision allowances so that they are adequate for the effort involved and paid on time.

Universities should recognise supervision, especially postgraduate supervision, in workload models in proportion to the time it requires.

Universities should adopt clear authorship policies based on recognised criteria and require contributor statements that describe each author's role (Brand et al., 2015).

Graduate schools should protect students by establishing confidential channels to raise authorship concerns and by informing students of their rights.

Promotion committees should consider a wider range of scholarly outputs, such as teaching and supervision quality, so that supervision is not rewarded only through publication.

Future research should examine individual papers to distinguish substantive from honorary authorship, and should include students' views.

References

Adams, J. S. (1963). Towards an understanding of inequity. *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 67*(5), 422–436.

Bourdieu, P. (1986). The forms of capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education* (pp. 241–258). Greenwood Press.

Bozeman, B., & Corley, E. (2004). Scientists' collaboration strategies: Implications for scientific and technical human capital. *Research Policy, 33*(4), 599–616.

Brand, A., Allen, L., Altman, M., Hlava, M., & Scott, J. (2015). Beyond authorship: Attribution, contribution, collaboration, and credit. *Learned Publishing, 28*(2), 151–155.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Abiodun Nafiu, L. (2012). Comparison of One-Stage, Two-Stage, and Three-Stage Estimators Using Finite Population. *The Pacific Journal of Science and Technology-166*, *13*(2), 166–171. http://www.akamaiuniversity.us/PJST.htm

Brian, S., Shamirah, B., & Nicholas, K. (2024). *Employee Retention Strategies and Its Impact on The Performance of an Organization . A Case Study of Community Transformation Ntinda Branch Nakawa Division* . *8*(6), 103–108.

Christopher, F., Komunda, T. R., & Milton, N. (2022). *The Impact of Supervision on the Quality-Of-*

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**

Service Delivery at Kirima Community Secondary School in Kanungu District , South Western Uganda. *6*(5), 157–162.

Faridah, K., Kazaara, A. G., & Kazaara, A. I. (2023). *The Effect Of Supplier Selection On Product Quality Management In Organizations . A Case Study Of Uganda Wild Life*. *7*(3), 307–317.

Jaggars, S. S., & Bailey, T. (2010). Effectiveness of fully online courses for college students : Response to a Department of Education meta-analysis. *New York, July*, 18.

Julius, A. (2025). *Discipline as the Unseen Catalyst : Fostering Innovation and Creativity in Ugandan Universities through Structured Integrity*. *9*(8), 201–207.

Julius, A., & Audrey, A. (2025). *Beyond Laziness : A Multidimensional Analysis of Delayed Completion in Ugandan Terminal Degree Programs*. *9*(10), 202–210.

Julius, A., Audrey, A., & Desire, N. (2026). *Land governance failures and the performance of District Land Boards in Uganda ' s local governments*. *10*(7), 202–213.

Julius, A., & Nancy, M. (2025). *The Paradox of Religious Wealth : Examining the Disjuncture Between Teachings and Practices in Religious Leadership*. *9*(12), 194–203.

Julius, A., & Nancy, M. (2026). *The Egg and the Stone : A Critical Analysis of Systemic Inertia and the Promise of Competency-Based Curriculum in Africa*. *10*(2), 112–120.

Kaazara, A. G., & Audrey, A. (2025). *The Impact of Inquiry-Based Learning on Student Engagement in Ugandan Secondary School Science Classrooms* . *9*(12), 102–109.

Kazaara, A. I., & Deus, T. (2024). *Inclusive Recruitment and Admissions in Social Science Programs , A Case Study of Faculty of Arts and Humanities* . *8*(8), 127–132.

Nafiu, L. A. (2012). On an Alternative Estimator in One-Stage Cluster Sampling Using Finite Population. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, *2*(7), 102–107. www.aijcrnet.com

Nancy, M., & Prudence, K. (2024). Capacity Building programs and their impact on employee performance. A case study of Metropolitan International University. *Researchgate.Net*, *8*(4), 23–27. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Metropolitan-University/publication/380909234_Capacity_Building_programs_and_their_impact_on_employee_performance_A_case_study_of_Metropolitan_International_University/links/665576b30b0d2845745e0182/Capacity-Building-p

Nelson, K., Christopher, F., & Milton, N. (2022). *Teach Yourself Spss and Stata*. *6*(7), 84–122.

Olanrewaju, R. O., Waititu, A. G., & Abiodun, N. L. (2021). *On the Estimation of k-Regimes Switching of Mixture Autoregressive Model via Weibull Distributional Random Noise*. *10*(1), 1–8. https://doi.org/10.5923/j.ijps.20211001.01

Qadir, A., Yousuf, M., al Hussaini, M., Hussain, A., Campus, S., & Khan, D. (2024). Impact of Teaching Methodologies on Student Learning Enhancement and Academic Achievement at the Secondary Level. *Teaching Approaches*, *7*(February), 2024.

Winny, N. D., Ariyo, D., Kazaara, G., Kazaara, A. I., & Deus, T. (2023). Effect Of Motivation On

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**

Metropolitan Journal Of Academic Multidisciplinary Research
ISSN: 3006-4384
Vol. 5 Issue 10, October- 2026, Pages: 135-143

Employee Performance In Non-Government Organizations (NGOS): A Case Of Mbale City. In *International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research* (Vol. 7). www.ijeais.org/ijamr

International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. (n.d.). *Defining the role of authors and contributors*. https://www.icmje.org

Krejcie, R. V., & Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30*(3), 607–610.

Lee, A. (2008). How are doctoral students supervised? Concepts of doctoral research supervision. *Studies in Higher Education, 33*(3), 267–281.

Mamdani, M. (2007). *Scholars in the marketplace: The dilemmas of neo-liberal reform at Makerere University, 1989–2005*. CODESRIA.

Merton, R. K. (1968). The Matthew effect in science. *Science, 159*(3810), 56–63.

Nunnally, J. C., & Bernstein, I. H. (1994). *Psychometric theory* (3rd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Teferra, D., & Altbach, P. G. (2004). African higher education: Challenges for the 21st century. *Higher Education, 47*(1), 21–50.

Received: 10.10.2026 **Accepted: 16.10.2026** **Published on: 30.10.2026**