Lecturers play important roles in teaching, research and learning processes in tertiary institutions. Continuous study is an indispensable ingredient in the academic career of faculty members. The quality of a lecturer’s intellectual output is directly related to the amount of time they dedicate to study, research and scholarship. No lecturer can survive in any system of education without constant study. Lecturers who do not study constantly and remain up to date with current information in their field of specialization are often ill-prepared to produce quality graduates. Incessant study can therefore greatly contribute to the intellectual growth of lecturers and their students. This short essay attempts to describe the study trends of lecturers at the Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies (IAGAS).

The Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies (IAGAS), formerly the Institute of African Studies (IAS), is research institutes within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Nairobi. The institute was established in 1970 to promote and conduct original research in the fields of African pre-history and history, ethnography, social anthropology, African languages and linguistics, ethnomusicology and dance, traditional and modern arts and crafts, religion and other belief system. In 1986, IAGAS was transformed from a purely research institute into a research and teaching institute offering diploma, degree and graduate courses in anthropology. The institute’s mandate was expanded in 1999 to include a new degree course in Gender and Development Studies and a Postgraduate Diploma in Management and Museum Collection. The name of the institute of African Studies (IAS) was changed to Institute of Anthropology, Gender and African Studies (IAGAS) to reflect its new mandate. However, in recent years teaching has surpassed research as its core activity.
Currently, IAGAS has a staff establishment of twenty full time lecturers (3 professors, 1 associate professor, 10 senior research fellows/lecturers; 4 lecturers and 2 junior research fellows) and five part-time lecturers teaching in the Anthropology and Gender and Development Studies programmes. Of all the lecturers at IAGAS only one is female. Eleven of the lecturers at IAGAS have a background in anthropology while others are drawn from a variety of fields, including history, archaeology, linguistics, and sociology. Nine of the lecturers are former graduates of IAGAS. While all the current crop of lecturers have specialized in different subfields of anthropology, most of its faculty members have a bias towards medical and development anthropology.

Many lecturers at IAGAS are spending much of their time reading and studying materials outside their areas of specialization. The introduction of new programmes such as Gender and Development Studies has made it necessary for faculty members to teach courses and supervise graduate students research projects on topics beyond their areas of expertise. This has challenged lecturers to study more in order to foster their personal and interpersonal competencies as well as academic skills in the new courses. Directly related to this first trend is an increased use of internet and online resources by lecturers to study and prepare teaching materials. Teaching new courses has drastically increased lecturers' workload and, as a consequence, they have limited time to undertake academic study as they previous did. With limited time the internet and online databases have become a very useful study resource for faculty members.

Another trend is that many faculty members at IAGAS are devoting much of their energies on research and publication. Publications are a major prerequisite for career advancement and, as a consequence, faculty members are actively involved in several individual and collaborative research projects. Lecturers are actively publishing their research findings in journals, books and monographs. In addition, they are disseminating their research findings through conferences, workshops, seminars, symposia and other scholarly meetings both local and international. However, it is worth noting here that the lecturer's research direction is not purely motivated by academic interest. Many faculty members and students chose to conduct research that in their opinion is likely to attract donor funding. Faculty members at IAGAS are also increasingly focusing their attention on consultancy. Consultancies are popular among lecturers because they supplement their incomes. While consultancies remain popular, they take away a lot of study time thus restricting lecturers' intellectual production and scholarly creativity (Ntarangwi et al, 2006: 30).

In conclusion, faculty members at IAGAS have diversified their study
habits to include a focus on new fields and use of online resources. Their research interests and practices indicate commitment to scholarly work but also ambitions to use academic study to achieve their own economic ends. In order for lecturers to be effective there is need to reduce their workload and assign them classes in their respective fields of specialization.

Reference