An investigation of the effect of low salary on teachers’ academic performance in Liberia

Uma investigação sobre o efeito do baixo salário no desempenho acadêmico dos professores na Libéria

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Abstract

It is a widely known fact that salaries are one of the biggest factors affecting employees working performance regardless of the professional identity in any part of the world. As the title suggests this study was carried out on the issue of the administrative impact of low salary on teachers' performance in Liberia. The major goal was to uncover issues that both instructors and kids encounter as a result of low salaries. The study used a quantitative approach, with a total population of 1500 people and a sample size of 150 people, using a simple random sampling method. More than half of the instructors had evident effects of functioning fairly in the classroom and inconsistent attendance, according to the data. The data revealed that more than half of the instructors were paid low wages with little or no additional perks or allowances. To attain their targeted outcomes, both the national government and school authorities will need to do more. According to the findings, increases in teacher attributes are most likely to lead to significant gains in student performance. As a result, excellent education can only be ensured by great instructors. Gender, age, race, wage, personality, behavior, attitude, education, training, experience, job satisfaction, motivation, morale, ability, and skill are all listed as elements that influence a teacher's performance. Wages remain an important

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determinant, according to this study, which extensively analyzed and evaluated these effects. 

**Keywords:** Teacher Salary. Impact of Low Salaries. Teacher Performance. Educational Administration.

**Resumo**

É do conhecimento geral que os salários são um dos maiores fatores que afetam o desempenho dos trabalhadores, independentemente da identidade profissional em qualquer parte do mundo. Como o título sugere, este estudo foi realizado sobre a questão do impacto administrativo do baixo salário no desempenho dos professores na Libéria. O principal objetivo era descobrir problemas que tanto os instrutores quanto as crianças encontram como resultado dos baixos salários. O estudo utilizou uma abordagem quantitativa, com uma população total de 1500 pessoas e um tamanho de amostra de 150 pessoas, utilizando um método de amostragem aleatória simples. Mais da metade dos instrutores teve efeitos evidentes de funcionar de forma justa na sala de aula e frequência inconsistente, de acordo com os dados. Os dados revelaram que mais da metade dos instrutores recebia baixos salários com pouco ou nenhum benefício ou subsídio adicional. Para atingir os seus objetivos, tanto o governo nacional como as autoridades escolares terão de fazer mais. De acordo com as descobertas, aumentos nos atributos dos professores são mais propensos a levar a ganhos significativos no desempenho dos alunos. Como resultado, a educação excelente só pode ser assegurada por grandes instrutores. Gênero, idade, raça, salário, personalidade, comportamento, atitude, educação, treinamento, experiência, satisfação no trabalho, motivação, moral, habilidade e habilidade são listados como elementos que influenciam o desempenho de um professor. Os salários continuam sendo um determinante importante, de acordo com esse estudo, que analisou e avaliou amplamente esses efeitos.

**Palavras-chave:** Professor Salário. Impacto dos Baixos Salários. Desempenho do Professor. Administração Educacional.

**Introduction**

The Liberian civil war lasted 14 years before concluding in Ghana in 2003 with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Accord. Liberia had to deal with a significant backlog in education due to a generation that had not received enough education. The country had to face the challenge of transforming education, teaching, and instruction, as well as reconstructing...
its whole infrastructure. Most schools and other education-related structures were destroyed during the conflict, and teachers were completely absent (BIS Education for Development, 2012; 2013)

However, during and right after the crisis, national and international partners planned and implemented projects aimed at rebuilding our broken educational system. There were large and significant differences between the provision of education before and after the civil crisis. No doubts the unavailability of trained and qualified personnel, especially teachers became a serious challenge. Many persons were accepted into the classroom under the notion that, in the absent of the qualified, the available becomes the qualified. Today, it is saddened that this same notion still lingers in our schools.

Certainly, the first and most important goal is to guarantee that the teachers' goods are of a high standard of quality. Considering the essential role that schools play in the development of Liberia's educational system and the nation's present and future, a high focus should be placed on their compensation, since education is the basis of a successful society. (Adrianoa, 2023; Alesina, et al. 2013).

If education is the key to nation to nation building, then teachers are the ones who holds the key to build a successful nation. This mean that teachers should be treated fairly as it relates to their income on the job market, so as to be able to have more time for reading and research, also for them to be able to deliver their subjects well to their students for a better understanding. This research work therefore conducts a study on the impact low salary has on teacher’s academic performance: A case study on Liberia.

**Education: An Overview of Its Importance**

Education is regarded as a fundamental capability that has a direct impact on the development and evolution of a person's other abilities (Walker M. and Unterhalter E. 2007). Secondary education, in particular, is critical for the growth of the country and the individuals. Beyond basic education, it is vital for the growth of a country's human resource base (Achoka, Odebero, Maiyo, & Mualuko, 2007). Because of the importance of secondary education, to stimulate demand, the Kenyan government decided to make public secondary institutions tuition-free (Ohba A. 2009). One of the indicators of the quality of education delivered is pupils' cognitive achievement. Blackmur, D. (2007). Academic accomplishment is judged by test and examination outcomes, as well as marks awarded by subject teachers, according to Adediwura A.A, Tayo B. (2007). As a result, delivering high-quality secondary education is

**The Economic Value of Teachers’ Quality**

The researchers' goal is to compile a review of the evidence on the extent to which teacher traits, salary, and ties explain for disparities in student results. In actuality, the researchers outlined those conditions that will lead to the best outcome of students linking them to teacher low salary. Teachers will tend to nurture the students giving them the best if they have some level of satisfaction and are able to meet up with the demands of the day. Due to the constant detains in our economic activities, low salaries have hindered teachers’ output leaving students vulnerable to the whole issue. (Hanushek 2011).

**High Cost of Low Teacher Salaries**

Because teachers’ low wages make raising a family on one income nearly difficult, sixty-two (62) percent of them labor outside the classroom to make ends meet. Because of the ongoing fight for money, the greatest instructors have left the profession. Long hours, little income, and a lack of support and respect have pushed them down. For this reason, many teachers teach more than one school, so that they can make more money/pay for they and their family wellbeing, as the result you will find out that their best will not be given to all of the students equally because of their tireless and the students’ performance is going to be poor. (Eggers D. & Calegari N.C. 2011).

**Low Salaries Harms the Quality of Teaching**

This article tries to compare the salary of teachers who are educators to other similarly qualified workers worldwide. While it is true that people are well-schooled before coming to the profession expect higher salary, but all is just the contrary. This set back reduces the teachers’ strength of teaching and little or less will be given to the students who are to lead in the future. These low compensations will make it much more difficult to recruit the top individuals for teaching jobs. (Garner, 2015).
Factor Influencing Teachers Attention

Salaries are one of the factors influencing teacher attention. Because of dissatisfaction of teachers on the line of salary, some leave their jobs. Because working circumstances are more stressful in low-income schools, teachers quit. In terms of salary and working conditions, the teaching profession must be competitive. However, teacher incomes are low and have been dropping in comparison to other professional earnings, which is cause for worry. As a result, instructors are more likely to leave, particularly those in high-demand subjects such as math and science. This is going to cost the students to lost good understanding of their lessons because their best teachers are quitting their job. (Darling-Hammond, L., & Sykes, G. (2003).

Conceptual Framework

According to Adeyemi (2008), Simkins maintained that the system of education is productive with outcomes. Outputs are generally stated when it comes to pupils' test results, it shows academic achievement (Visaetsilapanonta et al., 2022; Worthington 2001). An input – process – output model might be used to illustrate the components of an educational system. Wobmann (2004), several inputs in the educational process result in student achievement. Such inputs include student family background variables, class size, availability of teaching and learning materials, and teacher characteristics. The teacher is the most important part of education provision, and hence has a significant impact on educational quality as an input. As per Ankomah, et al., (2005), teacher attributes that impact academic accomplishment include the number of instructors on duty, the teacher-to-student ratio, teacher certifications, and each teacher's personal traits.

Personal qualities include academic qualifications, pedagogical training, subject training, ability, and years of service/experience. These attributes are brought into the classroom by a teacher to assist pupils learn more successfully. The quality of education is inextricably linked to the extent to which instructors use extra inputs to improve the teaching and learning process. Process quality is defined by Sifuna and Sawamura (2011) as the quality of the teacher-pupil interaction in the teaching learning process. As a result, the goal of this study was to determine how particular teacher characteristics and instructional approaches in Nyandarua County influenced secondary school academic attainment.
Research Questions

This research questions of the study have been formulated as follows:
1. In which ways do salaries in Liberia impact the level of performance of teachers?
2. How effective are the administrators in providing salaries on time and in supervising and monitoring teachers?
3. What strategies are put into place to ensure that higher salaries/wages are paid to teachers and to ensure better outputs for teachers?
4. What direct impacts does the performance of teachers with low salaries have on their academic output?

Methodology

Low salaries and their administrative implications on teacher performance in Liberia are investigated using a quantitative approach. Through a simple random selection procedure, the researcher picked a maximum of ten percent of the targeted population (study group) which is 1500 persons, resulting in an overall sample size of one hundred and fifty (150) people. During the data analysis, the researcher produced a consent form for the participants and gained permission from an economist at Queens College named dr. Clive R. Belfied, in the city university of New York, to use one of his research questionnaires, performance pay for teachers: determinants and consequences. The date is February 28, 2022. The consent form was used to obtain the respondent’s consent. The computer examined the data from the structured surveys. The data gathered through empirical investigation was processed using the computer application (SPSS).

Research Methodology Group study

The steps in this research study's research technique are as follows:

- Review of literature
- Method of the survey (questionnaires, observations & interviews)
- The sampling method

The review of the literature was hereby based on current theoretical knowledge found in textbooks, journals, and government websites. It includes empirical information from
publications and journals documenting similar study undertaken in other locations. The impact of low salaries on the academic performance of teachers in Liberia was also identified through a literature review.

Findings

10.1 Findings from the Literature Review

- If Liberia is to escape from its downward spiral of insecurity, poverty, and dependence, it must focus on improving its woeful educational system.
- Unfortunately, due to the country's high incidence of illiteracy, most Liberians were unable to compete on the employment market with foreigners and aliens.
- Given the critical role that schools play in the current and future development of Liberia's educational system, as well as the nation's present and future, much emphasis should be placed on their salaries – low salaries vs. high/low performance, education forms the bedrock for the construction of a vibrant society.
- As a result of the proliferation of schools founded to support the national government's attempts to cater to the country's rapidly rising student population, many of these schools are unable to afford to give instructors appealing salaries and wages.

10.2 Findings from the Empirical Research

- Males represented 56.0% while females represented 44.0%.
- 3.36% were marked teacher salaries as very high pay, 16.11% was marked as high pay, 20.13% marked below expectation while 60.40% marked low salaries.
- No respondent marked poor for academic performance of teachers at school, therefore it is 0%, 20.67% marked fair, 16% marked very good, while 63.33% marked Good. This means that most Teachers are doing their best to present their lesson well in order for students to have a better understanding.
- No body marked poor for teacher regularity and efficiency in their school work, therefore it is 0%. 8% marked very Good and 39.33% marked Good, while the highest number of participants which is 79 respondents representing 52.67% marked Good. This means that most Teachers regularity and efficiency in their school work are not too okay.
No body marked fair for administrative impact observed in teachers, therefore it is 0%. 26.67% marked Good, 5.33% marked Very Good, while the highest number of participants which is 102 respondents representing 68% marked poor. This means that most participants observed less administrative impact in Teachers.

68.46% marked that the average qualification of teachers in selected schools is Bachelor degree, 15.44% marked Professional Development related to teaching, 11.41% marked certificate while 44% marked masters’ degree. This illustrates those most high schools in Liberia average qualification of teachers is bachelor degree.

4.03% are teaching on a volunteer basis, 12.75% are fully employed, 19.46% are part time workers, while 63.76% are Contractors. It implies that most of the teachers are teaching as contractors, only a few are fully employed. Most schools prefer teachers being a contractor or a part time worker, and then employing them.

Teachers are mostly not satisfied with their teaching salary according to the responses from respondents. 4.03% strongly agreed with the term, 13.42 agreed with the term, while 34.42% strongly disagree and 47.65% disagree with the term as well.

Mostly, teachers do not feel that it is a waste of time trying to do their best as educators according to the responses from respondents. 9.40% strongly agreed with the term, 75.17% agreed with the term, while 0.67% strongly disagrees and 14.77% disagree with the term.

Teachers are generally not satisfied with their teaching job according to the responses from respondents. 4.70% strongly agreed with the term, 29.53% agreed with the term, while just 2.68% strongly disagree and 63.09% which is the highest amount disagree with the term.

77.18% want school administrations to provide higher salaries and incentives for teachers in order to improve their performance, while 8.72% wants schools administration to provide greater supervision and monitoring of teachers. 4.70% wants schools administrations to employ more qualified and trained teachers, while 9.40% wants schools administrations to carry out full time employment for teachers.
Conclusions

The study is conducted at a very crucial time in the nation’s history, when Liberia is driven away from the mistakes of her bitter past, into the building of a new and vibrant society which must be purely established upon sound education and good moral values. Thus, from the research conducted, the researcher can conclude that the poor performance of teachers and their students is largely attributed to low salaries. However, several indicators which include, strengthening the school’s administrative and instructional capacities, improving facilities and creating a conducive teaching-learning environment, leave room for future improvement. Until school’s administration can realize these impacts low salaries have on them, schools are still going to continue to remain on the same path, and it is likely to get worst.

Recommendations

The success of every nation hugely rests upon her ability to adequately provide the much-needed sound, quality education to its people. No doubts, to succeed in this rapidly changing world, skilled human capital with a solid base of knowledge is essential, and this refined human capital can only be produced by developing and sustaining a quality education system according to social demands.

Therefore, from the study conducted, the researcher is pleased to advance the following findings that should not be overlooked, but rather studied and appropriate actions taken by both school authorities (Administration) as well as education stakeholders. To improve the academic performance of teachers in line with the vision of building the new Liberia.

The researcher therefore recommends that:
1. Salaries of teachers in all schools be raised to the government’s acceptable standard as per teacher’s qualification.
2. The national government provide financial aid/subsidy to each and every school.
3. All schools should hire qualified teachers on a full-time arrangement to avoid teachers roaming from one school to another without sufficient attention given.
4. Monitoring and supervision be carried out regularly by both school administrations and government to ensure teachers’ efficiency and effectiveness on the job.
References


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