

# Remuneration and Teachers' Performance in Universal Primary Schools in Kashari South County, Mbarara District

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## Abstract

The study was about remuneration and teachers' performance in Universal Primary Schools in Kashari South County, Mbarara district. The purpose of the study was to establish the relationship between the variables. The objectives of the study were to examine the impact of remuneration of teachers, to assess the level of teachers' performance and to establish the relationship between remuneration and teachers' performance in Kashari South County, Mbarara District. Qualitative and quantitative data was gathered in order to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The data was collected from a total population of 81 respondents including teachers, head teachers and district education officials. Data was presented in tabular form with mean scores and percentages. The study findings agreed that Remuneration affects the teachers' performance in that the feelings and learning of pupils consequently relies on the quality of remuneration. The study recommended that; Government should put in place strategies like improving teachers' salaries periodically, promotion and recognition of teachers in order to improve on their performance. Furthermore, Government should put up strategies to ensure that teachers' accommodation is conducive and adequate. Government should also look into payment of allowances to teachers such as; duty allowances and overload allowances. It should also be noted that; teachers should be paid according to their qualifications.

**Keywords:** Remuneration, Teachers' Performance and Universal Primary Schools

## Background of the study

### Historical background

Globally, the remuneration of teachers began in the United States in the 1830s, with effective management at the school level playing a crucial role in supporting teachers' professional responsibilities (Adkins, 2004). Recent studies in California's UPE schools show that bonuses, incentives, and allowances significantly impact teachers' career decisions and retention (Gerhart, 2015).

In Nigeria, stakeholders emphasized the need for a specialized salary structure for teachers to enhance the profession's appeal (Ochwo, 2013). Interviews with the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) highlighted the inadequate compensation and poor conditions in primary schools (Ojeleye & Okoro, 2016). Sajuyigbe (2013) found that competitive labor markets rely on salaries and working conditions to attract and retain skilled educators. The remuneration reflects supply and demand within the teaching profession.

Malcolm (2015) in Zimbabwe noted that education is a transformative tool for society. While monetary incentives are important, growth opportunities, recognition, and non-monetary rewards are more effective in motivating teachers. However, there is a research gap in understanding how these alternative motivators impact teacher performance.

In Tanzania, the Ministry of Education faced challenges in enhancing education due to a crisis in the teaching profession. Public primary school teachers experienced frequent delays and inadequate payments, leading to demoralization, high attrition rates, and diminished professional commitment (Bennell & Akyeampong, 2014).

Summer Matter and Siegel (2015) identified common performance dimensions such as outcome, efficiency, and quality, but there is no universal definition of performance in management. Katarasibwa (2006) defined teacher performance as fulfilling job requirements to achieve school objectives. This

highlights the need for further research to establish a coherent understanding of performance across professions.

Sirisha (2015) asserted that organizational success depends on workforce quality and efficiency. The effectiveness of primary teachers is crucial globally, requiring essential skills, knowledge, and a positive attitude (Njoku, 2011; UNESCO, 2015). Despite acknowledging teachers' significance, there is a gap in research on strategies to enhance primary education teachers' quality and effectiveness.

Teacher performance is critical for successful universal primary education in developing countries. Muthoni & Wafula (2016) noted that an education system's quality depends on teachers' effectiveness and dedication. In Uganda, teacher absenteeism is alarmingly high, leading to significant financial losses (Kagolo, 2015). There is a need to explore how remuneration impacts performance in UPE schools, specifically in Kashari South County.

### **Theoretical Background**

The study adopts Equity Theory, developed by J. Stacy Adams in the 1960s, which posits that employees seek to maintain equity between their job inputs and outcomes compared to others (Adams, 1963). Equity theory emphasizes fair treatment and resource distribution, suggesting that well-remunerated teachers perform better (Guerrero et al., 2014).

### **Conceptual Background**

The independent variable is remuneration, defined as monetary benefits given to employees, including salaries, bonuses, allowances, and fringe benefits (Maicibi, 2015). This study defines remuneration as basic salary, advance salary, arrears salary, housing allowance, transport allowances, overtime allowances, medical insurance, and meal provision.

Basic salary is a fixed payment for non-manual employees, usually paid monthly (Bratton & Gold, 2013). Transport allowance covers commuting expenses (Abhishek Raja, 2010). Housing allowance compensates for basic living expenses (Knyszewska, 2010). Overtime allowance is paid for work beyond 40 hours per week (Jean Murray, 2010). Fringe benefits are additional compensation beyond the agreed salary.

The dependent variable is teachers' performance, referring to job-related activities and how well they are executed (Herath & Rosli, 2013). Armstrong (2013) defined it as the output record of specific job functions. This study considers teachers' performance in making schemes of work, lesson planning, delivery, and routine assessment.

### **Contextual Background**

In Kashari South County, frequent absenteeism among teachers is common during salary collection periods, leading to poor performance and low academic achievement among pupils. Teacher absenteeism in rural Uganda is the highest globally, causing financial losses for the government (Kagolo, 2015). However, Kashari South County reported a lower absenteeism rate of 1.4% in 2017. Challenges include inadequate lesson preparation, low syllabus coverage, and late coming. Stakeholders link declining primary education quality to low teacher incentives (Ssesamba, 2014).

External quality assurance systems like the Directorate of Education Standards (DES) and the National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE) operate in Kashari South County. Initiatives include thematic curricula, teacher training, salary increments, regular monitoring, and improved infrastructure (Nsubuga, 2018). However, research on the correlation between remuneration and teacher performance in UPE schools is insufficient. This study aims to evaluate this association in Kashari South County to provide insights for improving the education system.

### **Significance of the study**

It is hoped that the findings, recommendations and conclusions may be useful to education policy makers by identifying gaps in the existing teachers' remuneration packages in Uganda.

The findings of this study may provide gaps in the performance of primary school teachers in UPE schools which is important to education training institutions when training the teachers in areas of educational administration, management and planning, consequently improving quality of education among the UPE schools.

Other organizations may use the findings of this study to improve on the welfare package of their employees in order to enhance their performance and productivity. The findings of this study may contribute to the body of knowledge regarding remuneration and teacher performance among UPE schools in Kashari South County. Therefore, the study may have wide reaching implications not only for academicians but also for the government, policy makers, managers and the private sector to improving quality education.

### **Literature Review**

The theoretical framework underpinning this study primarily references the equity theory, which posits that employees expect equitable rewards for their efforts, influencing their motivation and perception of fairness within an organization (Buchan et al., 2000; Aswathappa, 2017). This theory is pertinent to understanding how remuneration impacts teacher performance, especially in the context of public primary education, where equitable pay structures are crucial for maintaining teacher motivation and performance (Oonyu, 2012; Education International & Oxfam Novib, 2011).

Remuneration in the form of salaries and bonuses is pivotal in influencing teacher performance. Basic salaries are typically fixed payments without productivity incentives, contrasting with wages, which are hourly-based and associated with manual labor (Braton & Gold, 2013; Surbhi, 2015). Agburu (2012) highlights the necessity of adequacy and equity in wage distribution to prevent employee discontent, a sentiment echoed in Nigerian workers' concerns. Salaries provide financial stability, crucial for employee and family well-being, but gaps remain in understanding equitable salary structures' impact on organizational outcomes.

Bonuses, additional compensations for meeting specific objectives, are another form of remuneration that can significantly influence motivation and performance (Investopedia, 2016; Heathfield, 2016; Bardot, 2014). Romanoff (2018) distinguishes between bonuses and incentives, emphasizing that incentives, clearly linked to specific objectives, have a more profound impact on employee behavior. However, the discretionary nature of bonus payments and the specific factors contributing to the effectiveness of incentives require further exploration to optimize their design and implementation.

Several studies have examined the relationship between remuneration and employee performance. Babagana and Dungus (2015) found a correlation between remuneration and student performance in Nigerian technical schools, suggesting that teacher pay impacts educational outcomes. Edirisooriya (2014) and Sajuyigbe et al. (2013) identified a positive relationship between rewards (both intrinsic and extrinsic) and worker performance in various organizational contexts. However, a research gap persists in understanding how these rewards impact performance in different cultural and organizational settings, particularly in educational institutions.

Specific studies on teacher remuneration in Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools reveal critical insights. Abhishek Raja (2010) discusses allowances such as health insurance and transport, noting a gap in understanding their effectiveness on employee satisfaction. Housing and overtime allowances, essential for living expenses and extra work hours, are infrequent in Uganda, indicating a need for equitable compensation policies (Knyszewska, 2010). Ikenyiri and Ihua-Maduenyi (2011) found that medical and recreation allowances significantly enhance teacher effectiveness, yet broader desire satisfiers remain unexplored.

Remuneration and its influence on teacher performance are crucial for educational quality. Poor remuneration often leads to early transfers and reduced effectiveness, as highlighted by Mulkeen (2015) and Akinmoladun and Oluwoye (2017). Suitable housing and equitable pay can reduce absenteeism and enhance teaching quality. The relationship between monetary rewards and performance is emphasized by Armstrong (2010) and Guajardo (2011), who found financial rewards critical for attracting and retaining

competent staff. However, the specific mechanisms through which financial incentives impact teacher motivation in Kashari South County remain under-researched.

Research by Akiri and Ugborugbo (2015) and Salman et al. (2012) indicates that inadequate compensation leads to poor teacher performance and higher student failure rates. These findings underscore the need for targeted interventions to improve teacher remuneration and, consequently, educational outcomes.

Studies across different regions yield mixed conclusions on the relationship between remuneration and job performance. In Switzerland, unexpected bonuses boost worker effort (Engellandt & Riphahn, 2004), while in the U.S., financial incentives enhance school workers' achievements (Ahn & Vigdor, 2010). In Nigeria, remuneration positively impacts performance (Charity & Timinefere, 2011), and in Turkey, basic rewards improve worker performance (Gungor, 2011). Conversely, in Ethiopia, the absence of motivating factors like salary and allowances adversely affects teacher performance (Negussie, 2014).

Overall, while remuneration significantly impacts teacher performance and educational quality, further research is necessary to understand the specific factors and interventions that can address remuneration issues, particularly in the context of UPE schools in Kashari South County.

### **Methodology**

This study employed a cross-sectional design, which is cost-effective and suitable for analyzing data from a specific population at a single point in time. The design was selected for its ability to support both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study focused on Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Kashari South County, Mbarara District, and involved teachers, head teachers, the District Education Officer, and the Inspector of Schools. A sample size of 83 respondents was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table. Purposive sampling was used for key informants like the District Education Officer and head teachers, while simple random sampling was applied to teachers. Data was collected through face-to-face interviews and closed-ended questionnaires, ensuring a mix of qualitative insights and quantitative data. Interviews provided detailed perspectives from key informants, and questionnaires offered structured responses from teachers.

The data collection involved interviews and questionnaires, with interview guides used for district officials and head teachers, and structured questionnaires for teachers. Validity and reliability of instruments were ensured through pre-testing and determining the Content Validity Index (CVI). Data analysis involved both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data from interviews were categorized and interpreted using the tally mark method, while quantitative data from questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Ethical considerations included obtaining approval from the Research Ethics Committee, ensuring informed consent, and maintaining participant confidentiality. Community engagement was fostered by involving local stakeholders and ensuring accessible communication. A COVID-19 risk management plan was implemented to ensure safety protocols and compliance with regulations.

### **Results**

This study aimed to examine the relationship between remuneration and teachers' performance in UPE schools in Kashari South County, Mbarara District. This section presents research findings, analysis, and interpretation based on the specific objectives stated earlier: to examine the amount of remuneration of teachers in UPE schools, the level of teachers' performance in UPE schools, and the relationship between remuneration and teachers' performance in Kashari South County, Mbarara District. The response rate is the ratio of actual respondents to the target population. Out of 83 respondents, 81 responded positively, giving a response rate of 98%. According to Amin's (2004) recommendation, a response rate over 70% yields valid findings. The response rate from interviews was 100% as all targeted informants participated. The study involved 70 teachers through questionnaires and 13 key informants (DEO, Inspector of Schools, and head teachers) through interviews. The demographic information included gender, age, education level, and years of service.

**Table 4.1: Demographic Information**

Aspect	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Males	52	64%
Females	29	36%
Total	81	100%
Age (Years)		
30-40	20	25%
40-50	31	38%
50 and above	30	37%
Total	81	100%
Highest Education		
Grade III	8	10%
Grade V	20	25%
Graduate	51	63%
Master's Degree	2	2%
Total	81	100%
Marital Status		
Single	12	15%
Married	69	85%
Total	81	100%

According to Table 4.1, the majority of respondents were males (64%), with females making up 36%. Most male participants were teachers, including higher positions such as DEO and head teachers. The majority age group among respondents was 40-50 years (38%), followed by 50 years and above (37%) and 30-40 years (25%), reflecting the experience required for senior roles. Education levels showed 10% had Grade III, 25% had Grade V, 26% were graduates, and 2% held master's degrees. 85% of respondents were married, indicating the mature age of most participants.

**Amount of Remuneration of Teachers in UPE Schools**

**Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics on Impact of Remuneration of Teachers in UPE Schools**

Statement	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Mean Score
Teachers' salaries in schools are paid promptly.	37	27	3	4	10	3.95
Teachers' basic salary can cater for all their needs.	1	1	5	10	64	1.33
Teachers' salary is commensurate to qualifications in schools.	2	10	4	22	43	1.84
Teachers get salary advances at times.	1	10	14	18	38	1.99
Teachers usually get their arrears salaries.	3	30	23	12	13	2.98
Teachers always get their annual increment on their salaries.	2	12	4	22	41	1.91
There are overload allowances in this school.	2	28	7	15	29	2.49
Teachers get transport allowance.	1	6	4	15	55	1.56
Teachers get housing allowance in this school.	1	13	6	15	46	1.86
Teachers receive responsibility allowances.	2	19	8	24	28	2.30
Teachers are always paid recognition allowance.	1	0	15	24	41	1.72
Allowances are paid promptly.	1	0	15	53	12	2.07
There is provision of duty allowance in this school.	1	27	11	19	23	2.56
Allowances are commensurate to what teachers do.	1	20	10	16	34	2.23
Provision of medical insurance in this school.	2	3	3	16	57	1.48
Teachers are given scholarships by the government.	4	7	11	8	51	1.83
Teachers are given study leave to go for further studies.	3	20	10	7	41	2.22

The findings showed that teachers' salaries are paid promptly (mean score 3.95), but the basic salary is insufficient to cater for all needs (mean score 1.33). Additionally, the salary is not commensurate with qualifications (mean score 1.84). Teachers do not receive regular salary advances (mean score 1.99) or

annual increments (mean score 1.91). Other benefits like transport allowance (mean score 1.56), housing allowance (mean score 1.86), and recognition allowance (mean score 1.72) were also lacking.

**Level of Teachers’ Performance in UPE Schools**

**Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics on Level of Teachers’ Performance in UPE Schools**

Statement	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Mean Score
Teachers scheme two weeks before term begins	18	34	5	14	0	3.7
Teachers submit their schemes of work and lesson plans	27	46	0	2	0	4.3
There is supervision of teaching/learning process	29	43	0	4	0	4.2
Teachers are always present at school supervising all activities	28	46	0	1	0	4.3
There is active teacher involvement in co-curricular activities	21	48	1	5	0	4.1
There is efficient teacher management of pupil’s discipline	29	39	4	4	0	4.2
I regularly attend to my classes as scheduled on the timetable	52	23	0	0	0	4.6
There is regular assessment of pupils through tests	43	31	0	0	0	4.5

The findings indicated that teachers perform various tasks effectively, including scheming two weeks before term begins (mean score 3.7), submitting schemes of work and lesson plans (mean score 4.3), and supervising teaching/learning processes (mean score 4.2). Teachers are also actively involved in co-curricular activities (mean score 4.1) and efficiently manage pupil discipline (mean score 4.2).

**Relationship between remuneration and teachers’ performance in UPE schools of Kashari South County, Mbarara District.**

**Table 4.1: Relationship between remuneration and teachers’ performance in UPE schools**

		Remuneration of Teachers	Level of Teachers’ Performance
Remuneration of Teachers	Pearson Correlation	1	.675**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	81	81
Level of Teachers’ Performance	Pearson Correlation	.675**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	81	81

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

The Pearson correlation coefficient between remuneration of teachers and their performance in UPE schools of Kashari South County, Mbarara District, is  $r= 0.675$ , which indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The significance (p) value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, suggesting that the correlation is statistically significant at the 0.05 level. This means that as the remuneration of teachers increases, their performance also tends to improve significantly. The data strongly suggests that better remuneration is associated with higher levels of teachers' performance in the studied schools.

In an interview with the respondent IV, about the relationship between remuneration and teachers’ performance in UPE schools of Kashari South County, Mbarara District, he expressed that truly there are programs running in the district, he had divergent views, he indicated that,

*“Actually, as you very well aware since you are a teacher, remuneration helps in creating much more opportunity on teacher collaboration as well as creating opportunities for teachers to share best practices with their colleagues. we have always had workshops for teachers to enlighten them on various key areas, such as creating a favorable learning environment, we have allowed teachers to do in-service training programs for teachers to have degrees, we have had seminars for senior women and senior men on gender and discipline issues, we have also conducted trainings at schools to teachers and their head teachers”. (Interview, Respondent IV, November, 2023).*

In an interview with respondent V about the relationship between remuneration and teachers’ performance in UPE schools of Kashari South County, Mbarara District. He also expressed that truly there are programs running in the district, he had divergent views, he indicated that,

*“Obviously Kashari South County, Mbarara district, teachers show improvements in their own teaching repertoires and teachers renew, review and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching”. (Interview, Respondent V, November, 2023).*

Also, in an interview with the respondent VI on the relationship between remuneration and teachers’ performance in UPE schools of Kashari South County, Mbarara District, he strongly agreed to this because its implications greatly affect the Teachers’ performance and general performance of learners in school, he said that,

*“Teachers acquire and develop critically all the inputs for good planning and practice with beneficiaries, there is improvement in teachers’ actions of taking account of their life and career phases and the contexts in which they work, Teachers are more likely provide an increased range of learning opportunities for learners” (Interview, Respondent VI, November, 2023).*

## **Discussion of Findings**

The findings of this study indicate that several factors significantly influence teachers’ performance in Universal Primary Education (UPE) schools in Kashari South County. These factors include the provision of teacher accommodation at their workstations, meals, annual salary increments, periodic salary enhancements, payment based on qualifications, responsibility allowances, duty allowances, promotions according to experience and hard work, and prompt salary payments (Agburu, 2012).

### **Amount of remuneration on teachers’ performance in UPE Schools in Kashari South County**

The study found that inadequate remuneration leads to dissatisfaction and poor motivation among teachers. Despite these challenges, teachers in Kashari South County show commendable performance, but there is a clear positive correlation between adequate remuneration and improved teacher performance. Teachers emphasized the need for better salary structures and timely payments to enhance their motivation and performance.

The study also found that inactive learners, often sitting at the back of the class, negatively affect teacher performance as they do not concentrate well, especially in large classes. This finding aligns with Jennings and Greenberg (2019), who noted that poor classroom environments lead to teacher burnout, hostile reactions to learner behavior, and a cycle of classroom disruption. Peng et al. (2018) also found that learners perform better in environments where teachers emphasize learning and improvement.

The finding reported that pupils of the same sex tend to sit together, affecting teacher performance, especially when both groups are academically weak. This observation is consistent with Suleman and Hussain (2017), who reported that physical environments play a crucial role in teaching and teacher performance. Proper classroom management, discipline techniques, and engaging lesson plans are essential. The study also found that classroom seating arrangements significantly impact pupils' ability to contribute to or participate in class discussions. Adequate seating helps pupils relax and focus, which improves teacher performance. Swati Kekare (2020) highlighted the relationship between classroom

seating and academic achievement, emphasizing the importance of comfortable and well-arranged classrooms.

The teacher-pupil ratio affects the extent of individualized attention teachers can offer. A lower ratio allows teachers to monitor pupil progress closely, conduct regular formative evaluations, and ensure timely marking of exercises. Keri Stewart (2016) supported this finding, noting that both teachers and learners perceive classroom environments differently, affecting outcomes.

It was discovered that a conducive classroom environment, including sufficient physical and instructional facilities, enhances teaching and learning outcomes. Umar (2017) and Kilel (2012) emphasized the positive impact of proper ventilation, appropriate desks, and adequate instructional aids. Khalid (2008) added that a relaxed and friendly learning environment is crucial for effective learning.

### **Level of teachers' performance of UPE schools of primary schools**

The study also revealed that active pupil participation in question answering, obtaining feedback from teachers, and interacting with learning aids were found to be key elements of teacher performance. Arend (2017) and Sang (2017) highlighted the importance of these interactions, noting that personalized learning aids and technology can significantly enhance learning outcomes.

The study also revealed that pupils' good handwriting promotes self-confidence, which in turn boosts teacher performance. Mafabi and Higwira (2017) stressed the importance of personalized learning aids in fostering productive use of pupils' time and allowing teachers to focus on small groups and individuals. It was reported that learners' guidance in the classroom reduces mistakes and improves teacher performance. Buby (2021) noted that frustration due to lack of guidance can lead to indiscipline, while acceptable teacher personalities encourage pupils to confide in them. Mafabi and Higwira (2018) also highlighted the importance of teacher characteristics in maintaining discipline. The study also discovered that learners' discipline in the classroom promotes attention during lessons, which is crucial for teacher performance. Arend (2017) and other respondents emphasized the role of discipline in ensuring active participation. The study found that effective use of timetables, schemes of work, and time management are essential for teacher performance in UPE schools.

### **Relationship between Remuneration and Teachers' performance in Schools**

The study confirmed that remuneration significantly affects teacher performance. Adequate remuneration, including social, physical, and emotional factors, helps facilitate teaching and achieve educational objectives. Bierman (2011) and Patrick, Ryan, and Kaplan (2007) supported this finding, noting that improved remuneration promotes teacher-pupil interactions and solves academic problems. The study also reported that conducive learning environment, including proper classroom size, ventilation, temperature, lighting, and instructional aids, enhances both teaching and learning. Suleman and Hussain (2014) and Awan (2018) emphasized the positive impact of well-equipped classrooms on student performance. It was also revealed that favorable teacher-pupil ratio allows for individualized attention, reducing anxiety and supporting emotional and behavioral regulation of pupils. UNESCO (2017) highlighted the worrying state of teacher-pupil ratios in developing countries, emphasizing the need for improvement.

### **Conclusions and recommendations**

The study concluded that various factors significantly influence teachers' performance in primary schools, including accommodation, salary enhancement, promotions, annual salary increments, scholarships, payment according to qualifications, and other benefits. Classroom dynamics, such as seating arrangements, teacher-pupil ratios, and classroom facilities, also play a crucial role. Active student participation, regular feedback, interaction with learning aids, good handwriting, and discipline were found to improve teacher performance. Remuneration impacts teachers' attitudes, which in turn affects students' learning outcomes. The study recommends improving classroom facilities, managing teacher-



pupil ratios, providing effective instructional materials, enhancing time management, offering teacher training, and ensuring adequate teacher remuneration and accommodations. These measures are essential for improving teacher performance and, consequently, student achievement.

#### **Authors' abbreviations**

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#### **Authors' contributions**

The authors of this manuscript made the following contributions to this manuscript Concept: MDN, conceived the concept, Data collection; MDN, SB: Data analysis: First draft: MDN, SB, JA, Final revision: MDN, SB, JA, Read and approved final manuscript: MDN, SB, JA.

#### **Competing interests**

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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