

Financial stress and private schools

Literature, Russian Literature



Financial Stress and private schools Issues related to finances emerged as another but more important source of stress for teacher. The data reflected various kinds of financial stresses. Low Salary Packages In private schools teacher are given low salary packages, making it very hard to meet their household requirements. Due to this reason teachers do not take interest in teaching and their family is always unhappy with the salaries packages. Therefore, the low salary package is a source of stress for teachers. One of the teachers stated: “ As teachers we work very hard but what we get in return is not enough to meet our basic family needs" (Excerpt from teacher’s interview). Sandra Feldman, president of the American Federation of Teachers, had once said that if we want to improve the quality of our schools, a major part of that is to make sure that attract the best and the brightest and you’re not going to do that without increasing salaries. Lack of Resources Resources are necessary for teaching and learning as without resources teachers cannot teach in effective ways. But in the private schools of Gilgit-Baltistan there are not enough resources for teachers which make their life very challenging. One of the teachers said: “ private schools are managed through the income from the students’ tuition fees. Therefore, the resources in these schools are never enough to run the schools effectively. If you increase fee to add to the school income, students drop out and the enrollment decreases. So, it is a big challenge to manage the private schools" (Excerpt from teacher’s interview). Hence, lack of material and human resources is a source of ongoing challenge and frustration for teachers in the private. Teacher wages and teacher quality The Coleman report looked at a variety of specific schooling resource measures, most

notably teacher characteristics, finding positive relationships between these traits and student outcomes. A multitude of studies on the relationship between teacher characteristics and student outcomes have followed, producing mixed messages as to which matter most and by how much. Inconsistent findings on the relationship between teacher “effectiveness” and how teachers get paid — by experience and education — added fuel to “money doesn’t matter” fire. Since a large proportion of school spending necessarily goes to teacher compensation, and (according to this argument) since we’re not paying teachers in a manner that reflects or incentivizes their productivity, then spending more money won’t help. ²⁵ In other words, the assertion is that money spent on the current system doesn’t matter, but it could if the system was to change. Of course, in a sense, this is an argument that money does matter. But it also misses the important point about the role of experience and education in determining teachers’ salaries, and what that means for student outcomes. While teacher salary schedules may determine pay differentials across teachers within districts, the simple fact is that where one teaches is also very important in determining how much he or she makes. Arguing over attributes that drive the raises in salary schedules also ignores the bigger question of whether paying teachers more in general might improve the quality of the workforce and, ultimately, student outcomes. Teacher pay is increasingly uncompetitive with that offered by other professions, and the “penalty” teachers’ pay increases the longer they stay on the job. A substantial body of literature has accumulated to validate the conclusion that both teachers’ overall wages and relative wages affect the quality of those who choose to enter the teaching

profession, and whether they stay once they get in. For example, Murnane and Olson (1989) found that salaries affect the decision to enter teaching and the duration of the teaching career, while Figlio (1997, 2002) and Ferguson (1991) concluded that higher salaries are associated with more qualified teachers. In addition, more recent studies have tackled the specific issues of relative pay noted above. Loeb and Page showed that: “ Once we adjust for labor market factors, we estimate that raising teacher wages by 10 percent reduces high school dropout rates by 3 percent to 4 percent. Our findings suggest that previous studies have failed to produce robust estimates because they lack adequate controls for non-wage aspects of teaching and market differences in alternative occupational opportunities. ” In short, while salaries are not the only factor involved, they do affect the quality of the teaching workforce, which in turn affects student outcomes. Research on the flip side of this issue — evaluating spending constraints or reductions — reveals the potential harm to teaching quality that flows from leveling down or reducing spending. For example, David Figlio and Kim Rueben (2001) note that, “ Using data from the National Center for Education Statistics we find that tax limits systematically reduce the average quality of education majors, as well as new public school teachers in states that have passed these limits. ” Salaries also play a potentially important role in improving the equity of student outcomes. While several studies show that higher salaries relative to labor market norms can draw higher quality candidates into teaching, the evidence also indicates that relative teacher salaries across schools and districts may influence the distribution of teaching quality. For example, Ondrich, Pas and Yinger (2008) “ find that

teachers in districts with higher salaries..... In short, it's not just how much you spend, but how you spend it. relative to non-teaching salaries in the same county is less likely to leave teaching and that a teacher is less likely to change districts when he or she teaches in a district near the top of the teacher salary distribution in that county. " With regard to teacher quality and school racial composition, Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (2004) note: " A school with 10 percent more black students would require about percent higher salaries in order to neutralize the increased probability of leaving. " Others, however, point to the limited capacity of salary differentials to counteract attrition by compensating for working conditions. Finally, it bears noting that those who criticize the use of experience and education in determining teachers' salaries must of course produce a better alternative, and there is even less evidence behind increasingly popular ways to do so than there is to support the policies they intend to replace. In a perfect world, we could tie teacher pay directly to productivity, but contemporary efforts to do so, including the idea of defining productivity based on student test results, have thus far failed to produce concrete results in the U. S. More promising efforts to measure teacher quality, such as new teacher evaluations that incorporate test-based teacher productivity measures as one component, are still a work in progress, and there is not yet evidence that they will be any more effective (or cost-effective) in attracting, developing or retaining high-quality teachers. To summarize, despite all the uproar about paying teachers based on experience and education, and its misinterpretations in the context of the " Does money matter? " debate, this line of argument misses the point. To whatever degree teacher pay matters

in attracting good people into the profession and keeping them around, it's less about how they are paid than how much. Furthermore, the average salaries of the teaching profession, with respect to other labor market opportunities, can substantively affect the quality of entrants to the teaching profession, applicants to preparation programs, and student outcomes. Diminishing resources for schools can constrain salaries and reduce the quality of the labor supply. Further, salary differentials between schools and districts might help to recruit or retain teachers in high need settings. In other words, resources used for teacher quality matter.