



Performance Pay

Background

The summary below presents the research evidence on performance pay in the Arab World context.

The Teaching & Learning Toolkit focuses on impact of outcomes for learners; it presents an estimate of the average impact of performance pay in schools on learning progress, based on the synthesis of a large number of quantitative studies from around the world.

This page offers a summary and analysis of individual studies on performance pay in the Arab world. In contrast to the Toolkit it includes studies which do not estimate impact, but instead investigate the implementation of interventions and how they are perceived by school leaders, teachers and students using a range of research methods. This information is valuable for leaders and teachers interested in finding out more about particular examples of performance pay interventions that have been delivered in the Arab world.



Summary of the research in the Arab World

To date, it is hard to make definitive causal claims about the impact of performance pay on students' achievement. Teachers' performance pay is determined through students test outcomes, performance judgements (i.e, information from lesson observations or feedback from students), or using bonuses or enhanced pay to attract teachers to challenging schools.

In the Arab world, studies are yet to examine the impact of teacher performance pay on student achievement. There is however some evidence of using teachers' incentives to attract and retain strong teachers. In Saudi Arabia, efforts to decentralize school management expanded principals authority to enrich the academic climate and deploy teacher incentives. When the principal's day-to-day activities focused on attracting stronger teachers with deployable incentives, then they had the power to press teachers for stronger performance. As a result, secondary students scores for the Third International Mathematics and Science Study tests (TIMSS) drawn across three cohorts 2003, 2011, and 2015 improved (Aburizaizah, Kim, & Fuller, 2019). As such, reconsidering the incentive system would improve the quality of work inside the school. When examining administrative empowerment in Saudi Arabia, responses on 89 questionnaires revealed that administrators of intermediate schools in Riyadh applied a medium level of empowerment (Alfadli & Al-Mehaisen, 2019). That being said, school administrators had limited authorities to meet the needs of their staff and establish a good incentive system to attract strong individuals and motivate the existing ones.

In another study conducted in Lebanon, a total of 133 Teachers Job Satisfaction Questionnaires (TJSQ) were collected from 6 private and 6 public K-12 schools to measure teachers' perceptions about the factors that are mostly correlated with their job satisfaction levels (Baroudi, Tamim, & Hojeij, 2020). Low teacher wages and lack of incentives were among the extrinsic factors that were associated with teachers job dissatisfaction. Findings of this study recommended for a reconsideration of teacher wages and incentive systems in order to retain teachers especially the ones who are working in a challenging school context. In Lebanon, teachers' responsibilities have increased since they have to cope with the day to day workload and teach large classroom sizes filled with Lebanese students and Syrian refugees as well.



In another challenging context and as a consequence of the Arab spring, teachers in Egypt were concerned of the quality of the education system. A purposeful sample of six high school English teachers were interviewed regarding the type and quality of professional development programs they were engaged in. Thematic analysis revealed that teachers were not satisfied with the PD programs and that other school demands were more focused on at that time. In order to improve the quality of PD programs but more importantly the quality of the education system in Egypt, this study implies that there should be some incentive related to pay increases for improved teaching and motivating teachers to participate in PDs for their self-learning and development (Abdelrahman & Irby, 2016).

In a survey study design, a random sample of 1042 Arabic subject teachers in Kuwait public schools was surveyed to measure the level of their moral based on four dimensions, namely: 1- attitude towards school and work, 2- attitude towards self-operating, 3- school administration, 4- salaries, incentives and promotions. Participants responses showed that salaries, incentives, and promotions are factors that have a moderate effect on their moral (Al-Dhafiri, 2017). Securing teachers incentives would improve their moral and in turn increase their job satisfaction and loyalty to the profession. Hence, teachers' performance will develop which would significantly impact their performance and ensure high quality productivity.

Providing awards as incentives for teachers can be an efficient motivator in establishing a culture of excellence among teachers and has a positive impact on their pedagogy and teaching practices (Alghamdi, Nylén, & Pears, 2019). Qualitative data collected through interviewing 14 K-12 Computer Science teachers in Saudi Arabia, who were awarded as a result of being engaged in one year of professional development, showed that this type of incentive strengthened their pedagogical competence and increased their motivation to engage in pedagogical development in teaching Computer Science. Being awarded encouraged teachers self-learning and provided them with opportunities to have innovative and creative ideas in teaching methodology which could have positive impact on students' outcomes.



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Based on the studies above, it can be concluded that approaches which simply assume that incentives will make teachers work more effectively are not well supported by existing evidence. However, deploying incentives will motivate teachers to provide a quality teaching that would advance the education systems in the Arab world.



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Summary paragraph:

Evidence of the association of performance pay with students' outcomes is inconclusive and has hardly ever been investigated in the Arab world. However, studies in Saudi Arabia and Egypt showed that providing teachers with incentives will motivate them to be engaged in professional development programs which could have positive impact on students' outcomes.

Furthermore, studies in Lebanon and Egypt found that creating an incentive system would retain strong teachers in challenging schools and motivate the existing ones. Teacher surveys in Kuwait and Lebanon indicate that teacher incentives would improve morale and increase job satisfaction and loyalty to the profession.

To date, research on performance pay in schools is limited in this region despite the general belief of its importance in retaining teachers and increasing their motivation and job satisfaction levels. Both quantitative and qualitative research are needed to investigate the impact of performance pay on both students learning and teachers' performance.



References

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Search Terms

Performance pay, incentive, performance-related pay

Databases searched

Academic search complete

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