

Original Paper

Factors Affecting Sudanese EFL Teachers' Teaching Performance at Public Schools Comparing to Their Performance at Private Schools

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Abstract

Teachers' performance is a fundamental concern of all educational institutions and is negatively influenced by different dissatisfactions such as financial status and learning environments that impact on institutional productivity. Sudanese English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers of Governmental schools that simultaneously work in public and private schools have a different performances. The performance of these teachers in private schools is usually estimated adequate and of very good quality comparing to their performance in public schools where their performance is rated as less than expected or even inadequate. This study is based on a non-systematic narrative overview and the practical experience of the researcher who has been a secondary school teacher, university English language lecturer and teacher trainer and supervisor for secondary English language teachers in Sudan. Moreover, the study describes and reflects on the male teachers' condition during the year 2018 in Khartoum, Sudan. Results of the analysis suggest that performance variation of EFL teachers in public and private schools in favour of private schools is influenced by poor financial status of teachers as well as inappropriate teaching/learning environments.

Keywords

performance, public, private, teacher, poor, environment

1. Introduction

The quality of education in any educational institution is mainly based on getting teachers to play the pivotal role in the process. The teachers who are able to provide quality education to their students are not only well-qualified and experienced but also motivated and satisfied. In fact, the quality

performance of these qualified teachers correlates with job satisfaction (Khan et al., 2012). Job satisfaction influences teachers' job performance positively and dissatisfaction negatively reflects on the performance of the teachers (Afshar & Doosti, 2016). A long negative economic condition in Sudan prolonged teachers suffering poor condition which consequently, negatively impact on teachers' productivity (Tehseen & Hadi, 2015). In this respect, particularly in big Sudanese cities, most English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers who originally work for the public schools, simultaneously work for private schools to improve their living conditions. Thus, well-trained and experienced Sudanese English language teachers of public schools show low quality performance at their public schools in contrast with their performance at private schools. In other words, there is an obvious variation between their performance in public and private schools in favor of the latter. In fact, the lack of equivalence of these teachers' performance results from different teaching conditions in both schools. This study attempts to analyze the influential factors that cause negative impact on teachers' performance in public schools, which subsequently affect students and school's performance as well. This study attempts to find an answer for the following question: What are the main factors that create variation in teachers' performance in public vs private schools?

Many studies have been conducted to investigate factors that influence teachers' performance. Research studies like (Tehseen, & Hadi 2015; Mary, 2010; and Kuncoro & Dardiri, 2017) show that low salaries or wages have very negative effects on teachers' performance.

On the other hand, the effect of learning environments on teachers' performance has been studied by researchers as (Ado, 2015; Amirul et al., 2013; Siddiek, 2011; Njoki et al., 2017; Khan et al., 2012; and Stavroula et al., 2014) which shows that learning environments correlate with institution productivity in general and with teachers' performance in particular.

Teachers' attitudes towards public schools dramatically changed due to the current economic and political crises in Sudan. In spite of teachers' condition before these crises, it was not ideal even estimated not good but it was quit better than current state. Besides the burden imposed by the economic and political crisis, there are many other complex factors involved in the deterioration of teachers conditions. The present study deals with two of these factors, namely, financial factors and those related to learning environments.

Teachers who work in private schools are more satisfied than their public school counterparts with careers, classroom conditions, and school environment (Choy, 1997). On the other hand, teachers in private schools are more satisfied with their careers, feel more recognized and supported, and are less stressed about their job setting than teachers in public schools (Choy, 1997). In Sudan, success in most private schools is a reaction of continuous deterioration of the public schools which in turn increase teachers' interests in working in private schools (Siddiek, 2011). In fact, there are many reasons behind low wages in public school EFL teachers forcing them to work simultaneously in public and private schools. Moreover, private schools usually offer higher salaries for qualified experienced teachers. Therefore, schools continuously strive to recruit good and qualified teaching staff that can deliver

quality education to its students. In addition, quality of learning environment and working conditions are more appropriate and better compared to public schools'. So, teachers' satisfaction in private schools is higher.

2. Findings

In what follows, an attempt will be made to answer the question raised in this study, to highlight the influential factors that create variation in EFL teachers' performance in public schools in favour to private schools. Thus, proposing some recommendations that may be utilized to deal with the teachers' difficulties in order to better teachers' attitudes toward public schools classes.

2.1 Teachers' Financial Status

Undoubtedly, poor conditions at any part of the teacher negatively effects his performance, which in their turn affect good quality teaching. Thus, poor earnings of teachers negatively impact on their performance (Adedeji & Olaniyan, 2011). A human being gets satisfaction only when at least their basic needs are fulfilled (Abraham Maslow cited from Alyaha & Mbogo, 2017). Enormous and continuous deterioration of the economic conditions in Sudan affect in educational processes as whole and in teachers' attitudes in particular (Siddiek, 2011). Thus, poor financial conditions of public school teachers in Sudan was main and crucial factor of teachers' inadequate performance at public schools' classes comparing to their performance in private schools' classes. In fact, an average income of ten years' experience Sudanese public secondary school teachers is estimated to 30 USD per month this according to the period between June 2018 and January 2019. Nonetheless, ministry of labor estimated that the standard cost of living for a family of five members at least about 300 USD for a month. It means that the public Sudanese public school teachers' actual salary just represent 10%. It is obvious; the gap is too enormous and impossible between the actual income and the cost of living. For this reason and others, the teachers are forced to find out an additional income to augment their poor earnings. Working in private schools is usually most appropriate destination for these teachers as well as it is their preference. Thus, most of the majority of the teachers tend to improve their income through having part-time teaching at private classes. In this respect, the governmental educational administrations, conventionally offer a helpful coordination for these teachers as type of aid. In fact, this coordination allows to the teachers to have apart-time teaching work in the privates schools besides their work in their public schools. Public school administrations deals with the matter of this coordination in two ways. From one hand, by allowing the teachers have a part of the daytime work in the public school and other part of daytime work for their own use. On the other hand, by getting teachers two or three full days to work in public school and this the predominant alternative and the other three or two full days of the week for their own work. The reason lead for this condition not poor monitoring of teachers in public schools, but poor condition of these teachers. Therefore, private school administrations mainly depend on attracting command teachers by offering them well-paid and satisfied salaries and bounces. However, these schools are designed to utilize teachers' capacities and

functioning them as possible in order to quality performance. Thus, for achieving so the private school administrations usually depend on such strategies which can be summarized in as follows:

1. Highly depending on an very effective unit of evaluation and follow-up.
2. Standards in lesson planning and preparations are strictly followed.
3. Students' feedback on teachers' performance are highly considered whether positively or negatively. Therefore, teachers are expected save no effort in order to better performance.
4. An additional incentive for an outstanding performance that to keep teachers in progress.
5. Intense competition between private schools involve teachers' up-to date by utilizing and innovating most appropriate methods for teaching and learning.

In respect of teachers' performance in public schools, instead of public school administrations offer facilities and appropriate adaptations, they get teachers to take all responsibilities for the improvement that involve teachers in inadequate performance. In fact, poor conditions of these schools impose ineffective strategies and inappropriate policies which can be summarized in as follows:

1. Total incapability (financially and others) of public school administrations' of helping hopeless teachers to overcome their difficulties respecting basic living conditions.
2. Feedback of students are not usually considered, if so, not strictly considered.
3. Poor monitoring system with ineffective evaluation unit.
4. Standards of lesson plan and lesson preparation are not strictly followed.
5. Very weak competitions between public schools.
6. No additional incentives encourage teachers for better performance. In this respect, all levels of performance are dealt equally from the part of public school administrations.
7. Common sense of dissatisfaction towards public teaching jobs.
8. Little opportunities of training courses to develop teachers teaching skills.

In spite of these difficulties and challenges, no teacher resigns or intends to put end for his work in public schools. On the contrary, they are more keen to keep their positions remaining in public education that for many reasons. In public education, they benefit from many privileges that can be summarized in as follows:

1. Most important one that it is easy for the teachers could have opportunities for part-time work simultaneously at least two day off per week.
2. Low educational fees for their children
3. A Cheap comprehensive health insurance for the teachers and their families' members.
4. Permanent retirement salary.
5. Their exceptions in many cases such as getting funding for their projects.

2.2 Learning Environment

The "Learning Environment" concept focuses on the school physical and social environment. The physical environment should be both appropriate and attractive to teachers in the school. A school's social, cultural and economic context is another important component of "learning environment" that

influence the teachers performance (Allen, 2009). In recent years, a large number of schools have been moving towards a particular type of practice: innovative learning environments (Wall, 2016). The school environment is of paramount importance in shaping and reshaping intellectual ability. This is because supportive and favourable school environment enriched with enough learning facilities, and favourable climate makes students more comfortable, more concentrated on their academic activities that result in high academic performance (Njoki et al., 2017). With no doubt, teachers spend much more time and effort seeking of best ways for facilitating learning and communicating knowledge; but often times with good learning environments the knowledge comes to be learnt with no great efforts and seeking. So, positive learning environments not just help teachers and saving teachers' efforts but empowering and engaging learners. Thus, learning environment is the second teacher for the contemporary learners and it is extremely important and vital for the teachers' performance and students' achievements as well. So, teachers' teaching performance is positively and negatively affected whether by ideal or dull learning environment.

2.2.1 Classroom Physical Environment

The physical environment has continued to appear in contemporary studies as an influence on behavioral and academic outcomes. Physical appearance and seat and sitting arrangement, materials, painting and Lighting, ideal climate and air quality (ventilation), class size and equipment do make a difference in classroom management, student productivity and teacher effectiveness (McVetta & McCorskey, 1978; Ado, 2015). Public Sudanese secondary schools learning environment are estimated as dull and they are not well equipped for an effective performance (Siddiek, 2011). Thus, the gap is so enormous between the physical classroom environment in public school and in private school in favour of the private schools. EFL secondary school teachers of public schools suffer from poor and dull physical environment in school as general and classroom in particular, which in turn affect their teaching performance. Poor and dull physical environment of public Sudanese that hinder teachers performance can be summarized in as follows:

1. Inadequate classroom's size per number of students.
2. Inflexible classroom seating.
3. Old and traditional building design.
4. Inadequate classroom furniture.
4. Lack of various technologies such as audio devices, data show devices and an effective ventilator ... etc.
6. Poor and dull classrooms' wall of poster, pictures, maps, charts, objects, well wall color, and murals ... etc.
7. Difficulty of accessing primary classroom stationaries such as colored chalk, ruler, eraser, markers, posters, ... etc.
8. Chalkboard is often the only main teaching instrument in the class.
9. Improper classroom equipment such as equipment of lighting and ventilation.

2.2.2 Social and Emotional Learning Environment

Teachers are the engine that drives learning situation and practices in schools and classrooms. Teachers' social-emotional competence, wellbeing and Well-managed environment strongly influence the learning context and support teachers' effectiveness and lets them interact with their students positively and efficiently (Reichl, 2017). Poor learning environment of public schools create inconvenience situations for teachers and then increase teachers' stress besides their hard financial conditions that they live because of enormous gap between their income and cost of living. The teachers' stress negatively affects the performance of teacher by lowering the productivity of individual teacher and of educational institution (Khan et al., 2012). Moreover, public school administration do no financial support under any situation for its teachers. When the School climate becomes more supportive, the teachers become progressively less alienated (Stavroula et al., 2014). The conducive work environment can provide comfort and security for teachers in carrying out the instructional works and other duties. In addition, it helps teachers to do their job and obligations well and wholeheartedly (Kuncoro & Dardiri, 2017).

3. Conclusion

What affect on teachers whether positively or negatively reflected on their performance and shape their attitudes. In public Sudanese schools, EFL teachers are negatively affected by the poor learning situations in different aspects particularly in terms of financial status and learning environment. Therefore, public school teachers' performance comes better and with well quality in private schools comparing to their performance in their public schools. That because the private schools administrations filled the gap for those teachers by make them quite satisfied particularly of the aspects that they suffer from. In addition, they are become hopeless for improvements from the part of public education administrations particularly this hard condition has been taken along time.

3.1 Recommendations

Sudanese EFL teachers' performance is mainly affected by poor financial condition and poor funding and support for the field of their work. Therefore, the recommendations come concerning with refunding and financial support from organizations of civil society, students' parents, companies and individuals as follows:

- Establishing appropriate invested projects for supporting teachers and refunding public schools.
- Support necessary services for the public teachers' family members.
- Evaluation and follow-up unit should be activated and expanding its role in public schools.
- Better performance should be fulfilled and reinforced.

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