

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SALARY AND PERFORMANCE OF ACADEMIC STAFF MEMBERS
IN SELECTED PRIVATE SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN KAMWENGE DISTRICT.
A CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY.**

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Abstract.

Background.

Salary is a periodical fixed payment made to employees, mostly expressed in monetary terms. Inadequate salary contributes towards reduced employees' social status which leads to inadequate commitment to their employment, hence a decrease in employee performance. This study examined the relationship between salary and performance of academic staff members in selected private secondary schools in Kamwenge district.

Methodology.

The descriptive cross-sectional study design using both qualitative and quantitative techniques was used to collect the data. Data collection was done using self-administered questionnaires and interviews. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were used to determine the distribution of the respondents on personal information and the questions under each of the variables. Inferential statistics (correlation coefficient of determination and regression) were used to test the hypotheses. Qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis.

Results.

(47)59% of the respondents were males, the majority 53(67%) of the respondents had Masters' degrees 41(52%) of the respondents had worked at KIU for a period between 4-6 years 41(52%) of the respondents had worked at KIU for a period between 4-6 years. There is a positive significant relationship between salary and performance ($\rho = .630, p = .000$) as sighted by 68% of the teachers were not contented with the salary, they receive from Private secondary schools. The coefficients revealed that pay structures p-value (p-value = .003) and pay systems p-value (p-value = .001) had a significant effect on employee performance

Conclusion.

Salary pay structure based on skills and competencies as well as salary payment to staff based on roles and responsibilities lead to improved employee performance.

Recommendation

Management in private Secondary schools in Kamwenge District should increase staff salaries within the existing payment structures.

Keywords: Salary and performance, Academic staff, Private secondary schools, Kamwenge district.

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Background.

In today's highly competitive global and local business and academic environments, organizations increasingly offer competitive and lucrative remuneration packages to their employees. These compensation strategies are closely linked to enhancing individual performance, retaining high-achieving staff, and achieving organizational goals. Effective remuneration is critical for organizational success;

without it, institutions may face various challenges. Adequate pay packages not only motivate employees but also significantly boost workplace performance. Traditionally, pay systems have been structured to attract and retain productive employees while encouraging them to maximize their output and efforts toward meeting organizational objectives.

This study explores the impact of salary on the performance of academic staff, focusing on key aspects such as quality, efficiency, compliance, effectiveness, innovation, creativity, and output, including the number of graduates and research projects produced. Given these factors, the research aims to investigate how remuneration affects the performance of academic staff in selected private secondary schools in Kamwenge District. According to Cascio (2003), aligning good remuneration with employee contributions is a complex yet crucial process that helps attract, retain, and develop workforce skills and capabilities. Well-designed benefit plans play a vital role in motivating employees to deliver their best performance within an organization.

Kampala International University (KIU) has implemented various remuneration practices to enhance employee performance. These include basic salaries and additional incentives such as allowances, bonuses, performance-based pay, and gratuities. Other benefits, such as tuition fee assistance, transport reimbursement, pensions, and health insurance, are also offered to motivate employees and improve their performance. However, despite these efforts, the performance of academic staff in private secondary schools in Kamwenge District remains below expectations. The Kamwenge District Annual Report (2022) highlights that the quality of reports submitted by some staff members did not meet the Ministry of Education's standards. Furthermore, the district is characterized by low employee morale, dissatisfaction, and high turnover rates, indicating that employee motivation has been inadequately addressed (Kamwenge District Report, 2021).

If the issue of remuneration in private secondary schools is not adequately addressed, persistent problems such as poor-quality reports and non-compliance with Ministry of Education standards are likely to worsen. This could further reduce the schools' competitiveness in the current market environment. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the relationship between salary and employee performance in selected private secondary schools in Kamwenge District.

Methodology.

Research design.

This study employed a case study design using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The design is chosen to enable the researcher to cover a desirable quantifiable behavior of the respondents (Yin, 1994). Case study design links the experimental data to the initial research questions of the study and its conclusion. Qualitative approaches were used because they encourage a great understanding of both the way and why things are in a particular way. The researcher therefore to be able to obtain and describe findings that promote a greater understanding of how remuneration affects employee performance. On the other hand, the quantitative approach was used to collect

numerical data to describe, explain, understand, control, or predict the phenomenon of interest or to interest or to investigate the relationship including the cause-and-effect relationship.

Population of the study.

The study population was academic and administrative staff from six private secondary schools in Kamwenge District for research purposes a population comprising 140 respondents from academic staff was considered.

Sample Size and Selection.

From a population of 140 members of the academic and administrative staff, the sampling technique that was used in selecting the respondents for the research purpose was purposive sampling and simple random sampling, the sample size was 103 respondents determined using the (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970) table.

Sampling Technique and Procedure.

The study employed purposive and simple random sampling techniques to select respondents as further explained below;

Simple random sampling.

This technique was employed to select respondents from Teachers. This is because they have many members, all of whom have equal chances of participating in the study. This was premised on the fact that the simple random technique enables respondents to have an equal chance of participating in the study and giving reliable data, as Amin (2005) emphasizes.

Purposive Sampling.

The purposive sampling was employed to select key informants District Education officer, Inspector of Schools, Headteachers, and Director of Studies since these are expected to be more knowledgeable about remuneration and employee performance in private secondary schools. The purposive sampling will enable the study to choose participants of the study's interest based on their knowledge and expertise (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999).

Data Collection Methods.

Questionnaire survey method.

The questionnaire survey method involved the use of questionnaires to generate quantitative data. A questionnaire was used to investigate motives and feelings on a Likert scale, as suggested by Creswell, (2011). It can also be used because it is less expensive for data collection (Amin, 2005).

Interview method.

This is a purposeful discussion between the researcher and the respondent. Interviews are face-to-face meetings (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The researcher interviewed the District Education Officer, Inspector of Schools, Headteachers, and Director of Studies, to obtain in-depth information on the relationship between remuneration and employee performance among academic staff in private secondary schools.

Documentary review.

The documentary review method involves the analysis of texts that contain records of events, values, rules, and norms (Sekaran, 2003). Several documents will be reviewed in line with the study topic. These included human resource manuals, remuneration policy documents, annual reports, and other articles with information on remuneration and employee performance. This helped to provide supportive data to come up with a comprehensive report.

Data Collection Instruments.

Self-Administered Questionnaire.

The self-administered questionnaire will be used to capture data on the independent variable. These instruments were used because they are cost-effective in a survey of highly literate persons who are expected to respond clearly as they give their personal opinions. This tool was designed to be used in both closed and open-ended questionnaires. Amin, (2005) describes a questionnaire as a self-report instrument used for gathering information about the variables of interest in an investigation. Mugenda and Mugenda, (1999) explain that questionnaires are valuable methods of collecting data from a large number of respondents.

Structured Interview Guide.

Interview guides were focused on getting responses from the senior persons in the District Education Officer and inspector of schools that enabled the researcher to interact more through probing for more detailed information from the respondents. Mugenda & Mugenda, (1999) state that interviews are face-to-face encounters and lead to obtaining accurate information because the researchers can seek clarity such improves the relationship with the respondents.

Documentary Review Checklist.

Documentary review was used on secondary data collection involving analysis of documents such as reports. Libraries like the Team University library, were used to get information. According to (Beavers & Hampson, 2000) documentary analysis is one way of interpreting textual data since it examines it as a medium of expression that reflects a people's culture.

Validity and Reliability.

Validity.

This refers to the degree to which a data collection instrument measures the intended item to be measured (Gay, 1992). Validity is designed to measure and pre-test the instrument, to ensure clarity; and accuracy of the instruments so that the data collected provides meaningful, reliable results representing variables in the study, Mugenda and Mugenda, (2003). Mark (1995) recommends that before a survey is used to collect meaningful data, it has to be tested to ensure its accuracy and avoid random error (unpredictable error) and measurement errors. To ensure the validity of the instrument, the validity was measured using expert judgment. The questionnaire was given to two experts in the field of human resource management, who were requested to rate the relevance of its question items one by one. After expert judgment, the content validity index was computed by adding up all items rated relevant by each expert and dividing them by the total number of questions in the questionnaire.

Reliability.

Mugenda and Mugenda (1999) contend that reliability is the measure of the magnitude to which a research instrument can yield consistent data or results after several trials. To ensure consistent measurement and reliability of the instrument, every participant in the sample was asked a similar set of questions presented in the same way such that differences in responses were based on variations in respondents' views and not stimuli. To control variations in stimuli, the researcher followed particular directions to ensure consistent question wording and meaning in a simplified language to respondents for easier understanding and response. The instrument was pretested to 10 respondents to establish its reliability and relevant corrections made. The degree of reliability was established by using the Cronbach Alpha, a formula that was developed by Kuder Richardson, and Amin, (2005) to estimate rational equivalence reliability. The reliability of the research instrument was then tested using the Cronbach alpha coefficient, computed using SPSS.

Data Analysis.

Quantitative Data Analysis.

The researcher carried out a scrutiny of the data captured to ensure consistency, accuracy, and completeness of the questionnaire. Analysis was done according to the objectives of the study. The quantitative data was edited with the view of checking the completeness and accuracy during data collection, where incomplete data sheets were omitted before it is entered into the computer using

Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) (Forster, 1998). The researcher used frequencies, and the Spearman correlation coefficient to statistically determine the relationships, in the form of tables, where interpretations were made.

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Ethical approval.

Ethical considerations in research concern the dilemmas that arise over the proper way to execute research, more specifically not to create harmful conditions for the subjects of inquiry, humans, in the research process. The researcher therefore ensured that respondents' informed consent was obtained through a letter that specified what the research was about, including laid down procedures the participants expected to follow. The researcher also will ensure

objectivity, integrity, anonymity, and confidentiality by withholding the respondent's names.

Informed Consent.

Verbal consent was sought from the respondents after the explanation of the study topic to them. The respondents were assured of their right to freely consent. Confidentiality was assured to the respondents and the participants in the study. Code numbers were used instead of patient names as an assurance that no one else would know from whom the information was collected.

Results.

Background characteristics.

Figure 1: Gender of teachers.

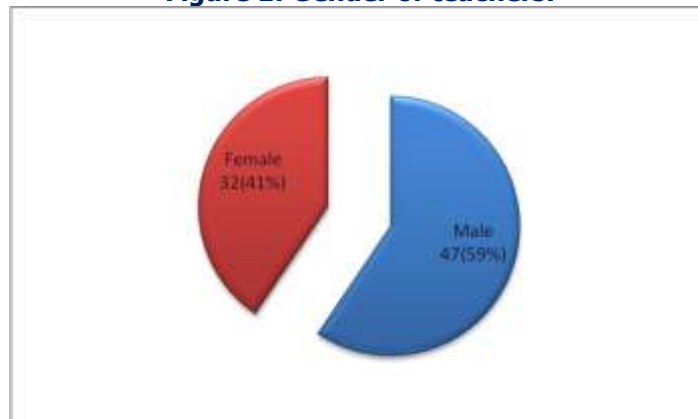


Figure 1: shows that the majority (47)59% of the respondents were males while (32) 41% were females. This indicates that data was obtained from a gender-balanced sample size without bias and, therefore appropriate for the study.

Figure 2: Teachers' level of education.

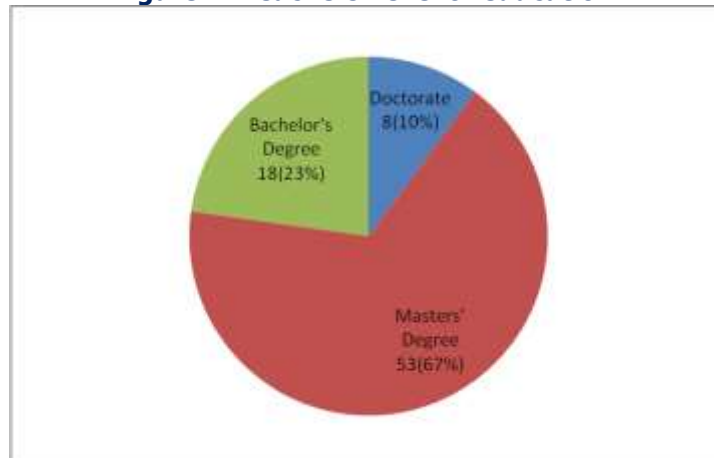


Figure 2: shows that the majority 53(67%) of the respondents had a Master' degree. Those with Bachelor's Degrees we 18(23%) while respondents who had PhD constituted 8(10%). This shows that all the respondents

were educated and able to understand and interpret research questions to provide reliable data. The reliable and authentic data enabled the researcher to prepare a comprehensive report.

Table 1: Teachers' length of service.

Length of service	Frequency	Percentage
1-3 Years	24	30%
4-6 Years	41	52%
7 Years and above	14	18%
Total	79	100

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 1: shows that the majority 41(52%) of the respondents had worked at KIU for a period between 4-6 years. Those who had worked for a period between 1-3 years constituted 24(30%) while those for seven years and above were 14(18%). The above statistics show that most respondents

had worked in private secondary schools for a long period and were more knowledgeable about remuneration and employee performance. Therefore, they were in a position to provide reliable data for the study.

Descriptive statistics about employee performance.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics from 79 teachers showing the performance of academic Staff.

Statement	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Total
1 I produce work of good quality	3 (4%)	17 (21%)	0	44 (56%)	15 (19%)	79 (100%)
2 Quality Assurance department in the school has greatly improved my performance	20 (25%)	9 (11%)	2 (3%)	20 (25%)	28 (35%)	79 (100%)
3 I produce my work when it is error-free	13 (17%)	12 (15%)	0	35 (44%)	19 (24%)	79 (100%)
4 I usually complete targets set for me to achieve	15 (19%)	27 (34%)	0	12 (15%)	25 (32%)	79 (100%)
5 Performance gaps do not exist in the school	18 (23%)	23 (29%)	9 (11%)	21 (27%)	8 (10%)	79 (100%)
6 I follow the school policy of ensuring full-time attendance to my duties	4 (5%)	8 (10%)	0	46 (58%)	21 (27%)	79 (100%)
7 I do my work in conformity with school regulations	3 (4%)	8 (10%)	8 (10%)	46 (58%)	14 (18%)	79 (100%)
8 The school encourages innovations and attributes it to performance	2 (3%)	8 (9%)	13 (16%)	38 (47%)	18 22%)	79 (100%)
9 Providing academic funds has improved innovation among staff members.	3 (4%)	7 (9%)	17 (22%)	36 (46%)	16 (20%)	79 (100%)

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 2: shows that most teachers concurred with all the 9 items about the performance of academic staff. The

respondents who concurred were between 85% and 37%. On the other hand, respondents who were not sure were between

0% and 22% while those opposed ranged between 11% and 53%. Therefore, results indicate that the majority of teachers held the opinion that they produced work of good quality, the quality assurance department in the school has greatly improved their performance and they produce work when it is error-free. However, they do not complete targets set for them to achieve on time, an indicator of poor employee performance which is attributed to inadequate remuneration in the school. This was verified by findings from a documentary review of the quality assurance report (2016) on staff performance which indicated that a total of 69 teachers did not submit results of the second semester, year one students for the academic year 2015/2016 in time.

Findings from interviews.

When key informants were asked whether staff members work in conformity with school regulations, KI_3 noted: *Academic staff members work in conformity with the school regulations. For example, the school requires that teachers give coursework and tests at the end of each course unit, a thing they have observed each term.*

Providing academic funds has improved innovation among staff members because teachers are supported to pursue further studies and advance their teaching careers. Key Informant KI_5 reported:

Providing academic funds has improved innovation among staff members because members who are sponsored for further studies can acquire more knowledge and skills applied at the school which leads to generally improved output.

Although the findings show that teachers concurred with the items on the performance of academic staff and results from key informant interviews show that there are attempts to ensure improved performance at the school, it can be noted that teachers do not complete targets set for them to achieve on time as verified through the review of existing documents. This explains why teachers noted that performance gaps exist in the school.

Descriptive statistics about salaries.

Table 3 Descriptive results on salary and performance.

Items about pay structure	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Total
1 I am contented with the salary I receive from the School	1 (1%)	42 (54%)	4 (5%)	22 (28%)	10 (13%)	79 (100%)
2 The salary I receive is commensurate to the work that I do	23 (29%)	29 (37%)	0 (0%)	20 (25%)	7 (9%)	79 (100%)
3 The school has a clear pay structure for staff members	11 (14%)	33 (42%)	1 (1%)	13 (16%)	21 (27%)	79 (100%)
4 Salary pay structure is based on skills and competencies	29 (37%)	15 (19%)	9 (11%)	4 (5%)	22 (28%)	79 (100%)
5 Payment is based on one's career path (career structure) which encourages me to develop	25 (32%)	5 (6%)	3 (4%)	25 (32%)	21 (27%)	79 (100%)
Items about pay systems	SD	D	NS	A	SA	Total
6 Salary payment to staff is always based on roles and responsibilities	3 (4%)	5 (6%)	16 (20%)	34 (43%)	21 (27%)	79 (100%)
7 I am comfortable with the system of payment	32 (41%)	24 (30%)	14 (18%)	4 (5%)	5 (6%)	79 100%
8 The salary pay system motivates me to perform very well	38 (48%)	10 (13%)	2 (3%)	10 (13%)	19 (24%)	79 (100%)
9 I am content with the existing policies that govern the system of payment of salaries.	33 (42%)	14 (18%)	1 (1%)	9 (11%)	22 (28%)	79 (100%)

Source: Primary data (2024)

Pay structure.

Table 3 shows, that most teachers were opposed to all the items about pay structure (items 1 to 5). The respondents who opposed were between 66% and 55%. On the other

hand, respondents who were not sure were between 0% and 11% while those who concurred ranged between 34% and 41%. Therefore, results indicate that the majority of teachers were not contented with the salary they receive from Private

secondary schools. When staff members are not contented with their salary, they are de-motivated which affects their performance. In addition, most teachers held the idea that the salary they receive is not commensurate to the work they do.

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Pay systems.

Most teachers were opposed to the four items about pay systems (6 to 9) in comparison with respondents who agreed that they were not sure. The respondents against the statement were between 10% and 71%, those not sure were between 1% and 20% while those in support were between 10% and 70%. Therefore, findings show that most teachers were of the view that salary payment to staff is always based on roles and responsibilities. However, most teachers are not comfortable with the system of payment, the salary system does not motivate them to perform well, and are not contented with the existing policies that govern the system of payment of salaries.

Interview findings.

In support of the findings from questionnaires and documentary review were interviews with staff members from quality assurance, principals of schools and colleges, human resource department, and heads of Department. For example, when asked whether the academic staff was contented with the salary they receive, the Key Informant KI_12 responded as follows: *"The salary I receive from this school is not enough to cater for my needs. The School pays us little salary compared to the amount of work that we do."* (Interview with Key Informant KI_12, 10th March 2024).

In addition, Key Informant KI_14 revealed how she receives little payment for the extra work she does as quoted:

The payment I receive is little compared to the work that I do. I am paid only 200,000 Uganda Shillings per month for the extra workload. At the end of the month, the salary I receive is not commensurate with the work that I do. (Interview with key informant KI_14, 10th March 2024)

Thus, findings show that academic staff members are not contented with the payment they receive which affects their performance at the School. As noted in Table 8 for descriptive statistics, results from Key Informant interviews confirmed that the pay structure for academic staff is based on skills and competencies as noted by a key informant: *"The school has a structure for paying staff members. The structure is based on qualifications such as diploma, degree or any other relevant*

qualification." (Interview with key informant, 14th March 2024). In addition, findings from key informant interviews showed that payment to academic staff is based on the roles and responsibilities as revealed by KI_7 in the quotation below: *Payment is made to staff members according to their responsibilities at the School. For example, all academic staff members who are in positions of responsibility; for instance, Heads of departments are paid an additional sum for that extra role besides teaching.* (Interview with key informant KI_7, 12th March 2024) Similarly, KI_10 revealed that academic staff members are paid according to the amount of work they do as noted:

Some staff members who are part-timers are paid according to the amount of work each of them does. They are paid according to the number of hours they teach. On the other hand, full-time staff members are paid a monthly salary although they also receive additional allowances based on the number of extra hours, they teach but are paid every month. (Interview with key informant KI_10, 8th March 2024) This implies that payment to academic staff members is attached to the job or work done since staff members with additional responsibilities are paid for the extra duties played which contributes towards improved performance.

In addition, results from Key Informants confirmed that salary pay structure is based on skills and competencies as evidenced by the payments made to staff members in different departments. Key informant KI_17 said: *"Payment to staff members is based on their skills and competencies because staff members who teach in the School of Engineering are paid more money than those lectures who teach other degree courses."* (Interview with key informant, 18th March 2024) This shows that skills and competencies in secondary schools in Kamwenge are determined by one's level of education. Degree holders are paid more than diploma holders because they have more skills and therefore receive a higher remuneration which motivates them to improve their performance. After establishing the respondents' views on salary and employee performance, the researcher tested the hypothesis using inferential statistics. Findings are presented in this section.

Testing the first hypothesis.

The first alternative hypothesis stated: *"There is a significant positive relationship between salary and performance of academic staff at Private secondary schools."* The researcher used the Spearman rank order coefficient (ρ) to test the hypothesis.

Table 4: Correlation matrix for salary and employee performance.

Employee performance	Salary
	$\rho = .630^{**}$ $\rho^2 = .372$ $p = .000$ $n = 79$

Source: Primary data (2024)

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Findings show a strong positive correlation ($\rho = .630$) between salary and employee performance. The coefficient of determination ($\rho^2 = .372$) shows that salary accounted for a 37.2 % variance in employee performance. The findings were further tested to establish the significance (p) which was 0.000, below 0.05 level of significance. From all the results obtained, the hypothesis that; there is a positive significant relationship between salary and performance of academic staff was accepted.

The strong correlation means that improvement in salary was related to a big change in employee performance. Since the nature of the correlation was positive, it means that salary moved in a similar direction, in that a salary increase was related to improved employee performance while poor salary was related to poor employee performance. In addition, regression analysis was carried out to establish the effect pay structures and pay systems had on employee performance.

Table 5: Regression analysis for pay structure and pay systems on employee performance.

Regression statistics					
Multiple R			.574		
R Square			.329		
Adjusted R Square			.312		
Standard Error			.51959		
Observations			79		
ANOVA					
	SS	df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	10.071	2	5.036	18.652	.000
Residual	20.518	76	.270		
Total	30.589	78			
	Coefficients	Standard Error	t Stat	P-Value	
Intercept	1.461	.321	4.553	.000	
Pay structures	.195	.106	1.850	.003	
Pay systems	.355	.101	3.530	.001	

Source: Primary data (2024)

Table 5: shows a moderate linear relationship (Multiple R = .574) between the combination of dimensions of salary (pay structure and pay system) and employee performance. Based on the Adjusted R Square, it is indicated that the dimensions of salary, that is pay structure and pay systems account for a 32.9% variance in employee performance. The ANOVA test gave the significance value (Sig F=0.000) of the Fishers ratio ($F = 18.652$), below the significance level of 0.05. The coefficients revealed that pay structures p-value (p-value = .003) and pay systems p-value (p-value = .001) had a significant effect on employee performance. This implies that improvement in pay structures and pay systems have a significant effect on employee performance.

Discussion of results.

The relationship between salary and employee performance.

The study focused on the relationship between salary and employee performance. Salary was studied in terms of pay structures and pay systems while performance was conceptualized in terms of the quality of reports made, compliance with academic standards, and innovations in academic output. During the study, it was established that few staff members at Kamwenge are content with the salary they receive from the School. When staff members are not contented with their salary, they are de-motivated which affects their performance. This is in agreement with (Vincent, 2020) who asserted that inadequate salary leads to

low employees' social status leading to a lack of commitment to their jobs hence a decrease in employee performance. It was established that the salary staff members receive is not commensurate to the work they do and not enough to cater to their needs. This affects their performance since staff members are de-motivated as a result of the low salary they receive. This is supported by Pink (2013) who stated that the amount of salary people receive affects their commitment to work and performance.

Study findings further revealed that the school has a clear pay structure based on the qualifications of staff members. In addition, salary payment to staff is always based on roles and responsibilities. Therefore, staff members with more roles and responsibilities are paid a higher salary to motivate them to improve their performance. This is supported by (Ryan & Sagas, 2009) who contend that a high level of salary payment and/or benefit relative to that of competitors can ensure that a company attracts and retains high-quality employees who are committed to improved performance. This is further in line with findings from this study which revealed that payments based on one's career path (career structure) encourage staff members to develop and perform better.

During the study, it was further established that the rate of payment is attached to the job or work academic staff members do and that the salary pay structure is based on skills and competencies. This is corroborated by (Torrington, 2009) who asserted that a skills-based pay system allows the employees to influence their pay by acquiring more skills that lead to pay increases. Skills-based pay encourages multitasking and flexibility, which in turn enables the organization to respond faster and more effectively to the needs of customers thereby leading to improved performance.

The study revealed that staff members are comfortable with the payment system and that it motivates them to perform very well. This is in agreement with Milkovich and Wigdor, (2011) who stated that merit pay systems facilitate greater work motivation by differentially rewarding top performers over marginal performers. This further explains why findings from this study showed that staff members are content with the existing policies that govern the system of payment of salaries.

Conclusion.

According to study findings, it was concluded that salary pay structure based on skills and competencies as well as salary payment to staff based on roles and responsibilities lead to improved employee performance. If academic staff members receive salaries commensurate to the work they do, employee performance will improve. The School has a structure for paying staff members. The structure is based on different qualifications such as degree holders or any

other relevant qualification. In addition, payment is made to staff members according to their responsibilities in private secondary schools.

Recommendations.

The study recommends that private secondary schools in Kamwenge increase staff salaries within the existing payment structures. A uniform salary increment should be made across all salary scales. This will ensure that academic staff members receive a salary commensurate to the work they do, which will in turn enhance their performance.

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Conflict of interest.

The authors declare no conflicting interest.

Availability of data.

Data used in this study is available upon request from the corresponding author.

Authors contribution.

VT designed the study, conducted data collection, cleaned and analyzed data, and drafted the manuscript and MS supervised all stages of the study from conceptualization of the topic to manuscript writing and submission.

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