

A time bomb in the proposed teachers salary disparity

EDITOR: The media has been awash with reports of the tabled civil service salary enhancement proposals.

We would like to make our humble observations as patriotic non science teachers. For the last five years, different umbrella trade unions have either threatened to lay down their tools or gone on actual industrial action demanding for better remuneration. In response the Government has out of pressure been forced to make haphazard top up allowances or made promises.

Unfortunately that unplanned and unsystematic approach to salary enhancements has exacerbated the situation. Civil servants have patiently waited for the promise that a salary review commission would provide a lasting solution.

However, to the shock of some civil servants, the commission has only tabled

a segregative and demoralising increment, especially for teachers.

Previous increments have been directed to primary school teachers and secondary science teachers, to the extent that grade three primary teachers earn better than graduate secondary school teachers.

The teachers of non science subjects at secondary level have painfully continued to serve despite the unfair treatment.

However, with the latest proposed increment, it seems that the patience of non science secondary school teachers has been abused. How do you explain this glaring inequality where a U4 science teacher earns sh2m and his non science counterpart with the same qualification earns sh500,000?

It is a conventional practice that salaries differ due to many factors such as the duration of study, occupational hazard (doctors and armed forces),

historical /colonial effect (lawyers and administrators), hard to reach allowances not salaries etc.

Ideally, salary enhancements should follow a systematic procedure, if they are to ensure employee motivation. However, the recent Government proposals do not respect conventional practice.

No wonder, there has been a public outcry championed by NOTU demanding that the proposals be halted.

The curriculum implemented in secondary schools is designed by the Government and implemented by teachers on behalf of the state. Why then does Government want to pay its workers who do the same job differently? Both the science and non science teachers have the same teaching load, supervise all other school activities, operate in a similar working environment and have similar qualifications.

Secondly, the grading system at UCE is based on eight subjects, then how many science subjects will contribute to this grading, if Arts subjects have been rendered inconsequential? How then will students be admitted to HSC schools of their choice without a prerequisite entry mark after demoralising non science teachers? Isn't Government contradicting itself by denying an increment to teachers of other non science compulsory subjects such as English language and geography?

Teachers of English language, which is the language of instruction, should not be denied an increment, if we were to be selective for that matter. After all, it is the policy of the Ministry of Education that a candidate who fails English language is thrown in the next lower grade.

**Rosemary Kansime,
a teacher of English Language**

PICTURE BY FRANCIS MUGURU

LETTER OF THE DAY

WRITE TO US:

The Letters Editor, P. O. Box 315 Kampala; or email: letters@newvision.co.ug
Letters must be precise and must be signed. You can SMS your comment.
LETTERS [SPACE] YOUR COMMENT then send to 8338