

Teachers' Pay and Equality: Baseline Research

BACKGROUND

The NASUWT commissioned the Institute for Employment Research (IER) at the University of Warwick to undertake a longitudinal study into the equality impact of the reforms to teachers' pay in England.

Three reports have been published as part of an initial baseline study:

- *Teachers' Pay and Equality: Literature Review*
- *Teachers' Pay and Equality: Analysis of official survey and School Workforce Census data*
- *Teachers' Pay and Equality: Online Survey and Qualitative Study*

The baseline research is part of a longitudinal study on teachers' pay with particular reference to the impact of age, ethnic background, disability, gender, religion/belief and sexual orientation.

METHODOLOGY

Literature review

A review of UK and international research was conducted, based upon searches of key electronic databases, grey literature and reviews of published literature and research. The searches sought literature from the 2000 onwards. The literature review was complemented by a number of interviews with teachers' representatives to ascertain up-to-date information about the context, circumstances and arrangements regarding teachers' pay in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Sweden and the USA.

Analysis of official statistical data

A review of official statistical data about earnings and the teacher workforce was undertaken, which included analysis of data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS), Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) and the quarterly Labour Force Survey. The bulk of statistical evidence examined included an analysis of the Department for Education (DfE) School Workforce Census (SWC). The review included an examination of data sources from 2002 to 2013. The detailed analysis of the SWC data examined the period 2010 to 2013 inclusive.

Teacher survey

An online survey of teachers was conducted to explore teachers' experiences of the reforms to the arrangements for teachers' pay and pay progression which took effect in 2013. The survey was conducted in 2015 and 7,699 NASUWT teacher and school leader members responded to the survey.

Focus groups and interviews

The qualitative research included five focus groups with a sample of teachers and school leaders identified with reference to various protected characteristics. The focus groups included older women, younger women, black and minority ethnic (BME) teachers, disabled teachers, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) teacher). Focus groups were organised on semi-structured questions exploring positive and negative experiences of pay policies and practices in schools.

One-to-one interviews were conducted with teachers and school leaders, as well as with school governors and local authority managers. The interviews followed a standard topic guide, exploring policies and practices in schools relating to teachers' pay and pay progression.

KEY FINDINGS

Understanding the equality impact of pay arrangements

The baseline study found little evidence of prior research examining the benefits of performance-related pay arrangements in advancing equality for teachers.

No prior research evidence was found with regard to the equality impact of performance pay systems on disabled and LGBT teachers.

Evidence in relation to women teachers and teachers from BME backgrounds suggested that these teachers experienced disadvantage compared with their counterparts.

The literature review of national and international evidence found few if any benefits arising from the use of performance related pay (PRP) systems in educational settings.

The review of existing evidence identified concerns about the subjective nature of assessments undertaken by supervisors or managers, including the risk of bias and favouritism. The research identified difficulties in evaluating and measuring objectively teacher effectiveness and performance.

'The Hutton Review of Fair Pay (2011) argued that performance-related pay systems work less well in the public sector due to the complexity of outcomes and goals, difficulties in monitoring and the proportion of employees who work in teams (and associated lack of evidence of performance-related pay affects individuals in teams).'

Source: Literature Review

The literature review found evidence that PRP does not improve recruitment, retention or motivation of teachers and that it undermines co-operation and collaboration. The review of evidence also suggests that PRP systems impact negatively on teachers' morale and stifle creativity and innovation.

'A qualitative study of...reforms to teachers' pay in China evidenced a link between remuneration and performance. The pay arrangements led teachers to be more likely to adopt "compliant professionalism", for example, being less creative and autonomous and more likely to "teach to the exam".'

Source: Literature Review

Evidence on the impact of PRP incentives for teachers on outcomes for pupils found that the impact on improving outcomes for pupils was weak.

The review of evidence indicates that there are a number of factors that impact on pupil attainments and confirms that these factors are difficult to measure objectively.

'Evidence from the OECD (2012) found no relationship between average pupil performance and the use of performance-based pay schemes.'

Source: Literature Review making reference to the OECD report: *Does performance-based pay improve teaching?* (PISA in Focus 16)

The review of the wider literature also suggests strong evidence that PRP systems have the potential to be discriminatory.

Pay inequality

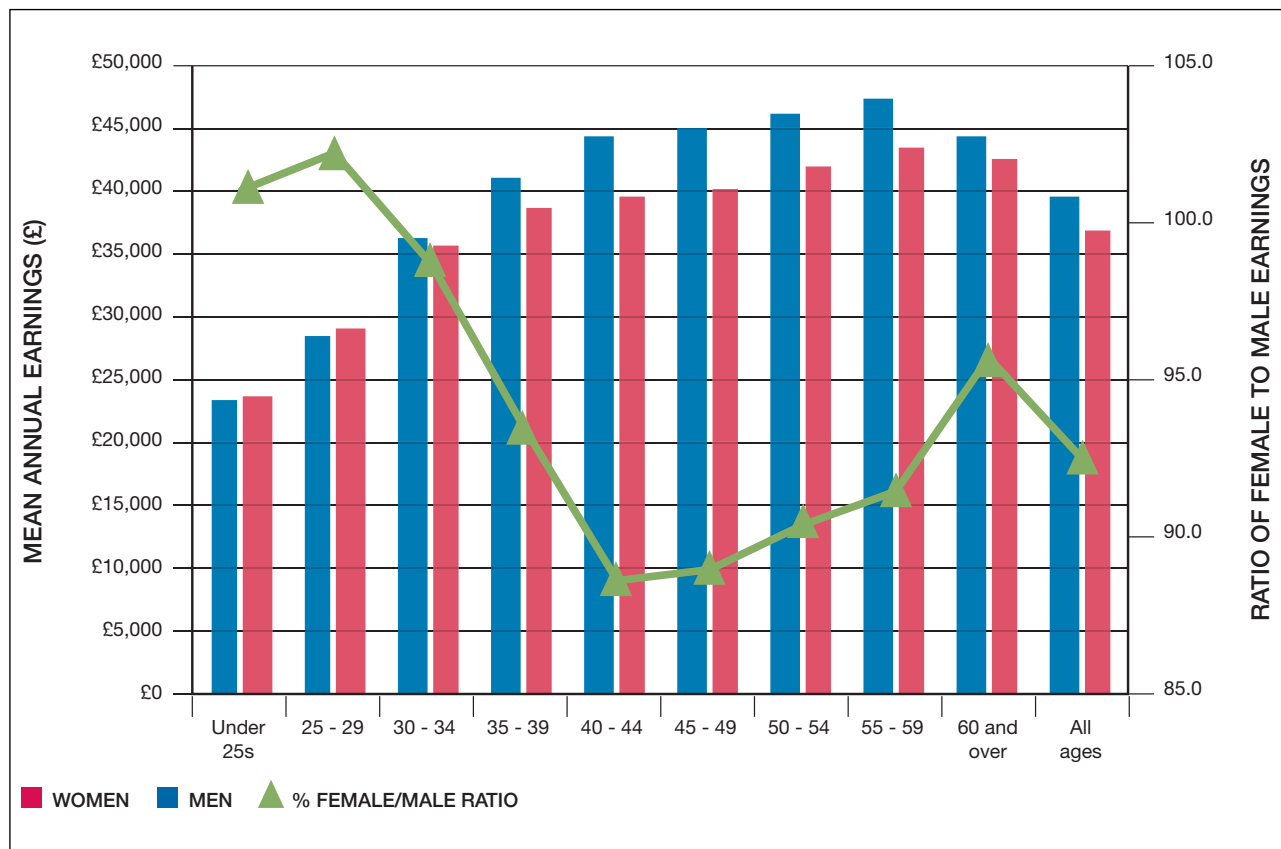
The review of statistical evidence on teachers' pay found that the average pay for all male teachers in 2014 was £39,600 compared to £36,700 for women.

In every age group and every ethnic group, men were paid on average more than women. The gender pay gap widened for younger and older teachers from 2011 to 2013.

Men were more likely than women to be employed as headteachers or deputy headteachers. In 2012, 17% of men were employed as headteachers or deputy headteachers compared with 11.5% of women.

For teachers aged below 30 years, women’s average pay was slightly higher than men’s pay. However, from the age of 35 years, men’s average pay was higher than women’s pay. The gender pay gap was largest for teachers in their forties and early fifties, with men’s pay advantage increasing between these ages.

The following graph shows the distribution of teachers’ pay by gender and age group in 2014.



Source: Analysis of Official Survey and School Workforce Census Data.

White teachers (18.3% of men and 12.3% of women in 2014) are much more likely than teachers from BME backgrounds (8.7% of men and 8.1% of women in 2014) to hold senior positions (headteachers, deputies or assistant).

Chinese, Pakistani and Bangladeshi teachers tend to be paid less on average. The gender pay gap was also significant for teachers from Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Black-African ethnic groups.

‘Relative to all teachers, in 2013, Chinese teachers received 92% of teachers’ average pay, Pakistani teachers received 96% and Bangladeshi teachers 94% (where average median pay = 100).’

Source: Analysis of official survey and School Workforce Census data.

The study found evidence of disadvantage for both younger and older teachers. Younger teachers tended to be concentrated in more junior posts and to experience lower rates of pay.

While teachers aged 50 to 59 enjoyed the highest levels of pay on average, the number of teachers in this age range declined between 2010 and 2013. Pay levels were lower for teachers aged 60 to 64, and the percentage of teachers aged over 60 receiving very low levels of pay increased over the period 2011 to 2013.

Knowledge and awareness of pay reforms

In 2015, the opinions of teachers were surveyed in order to examine levels of awareness about pay reforms introduced by the Government in 2013. The research found that teachers’ knowledge and awareness about the pay reforms at the time was fairly low. Around one third of teachers reported that there was a lack of information about the reforms.

In contrast, school leaders were more aware of the pay changes.

Interviews with stakeholders indicated that, at the time of the study, implementation of the new reforms was patchy. Less than half of the teachers surveyed said that the changes to the pay system agreed in 2013 had had an impact in their school.

'Mixed practice was found in terms of the development and implementation of new policies and practices around pay. A small number of teachers reported that there had been some consultation, but that it had not always been a transparent process.'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

Support for the pay reforms

Teachers expressed high levels of dissatisfaction with the pay reforms.

The qualitative research identified concerns about discriminatory practices in relation to pay progression decisions affecting teachers.

'As soon as the school became an academy [the headteacher] went back on all of her promises, so UPS3 progression was delayed for some staff on the basis of performance, and pay is now at the discretion of the Head teacher, and there is no real transparency about this because the Head teacher has conversations with people and they're not aware who's got the pay progression and who hasn't, and what the pay scales are.'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

The majority of teachers interviewed considered the new pay arrangements to be divisive and believed it had the potential to increase discrimination in the future, particularly in relation to age and disability.

'A recurring theme across the interviews and focus groups was the increased workloads of teachers and how this was linked to pay progression. Those new to the profession took on more responsibilities to try and secure their position and achieve pay progression. Older teachers reported that they had taken on more responsibilities in order to continue to be paid be on the Upper Pay Range.'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

The study found that few teachers believed that PRP would be fair or reward good teaching.

'In one of the focus groups, a female teacher referred to a case where a teacher with disabilities (including hearing problems) felt that her targets were set very high by the head who didn't like her – this was backed up by the fact that he was unwilling to provide her with equipment to help her with her hearing problems: "so her targets were being set unrealistically high because he wanted to get rid of her".'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

Only around half of all teachers thought that their performance objectives were appropriate, achievable or fair.

Teacher recruitment, retention, promotion and equality

The study found evidence of age-related discrimination affecting both older and younger teachers. The study found that young teachers were often kept on rolling contracts and not given a permanent position unless the headteacher liked them.

'I'm in my fourth year of teaching now and I don't have a permanent contract yet. There was me and somebody else on maternity cover; the other one got kept on, not me; there was no consultation, I found out from her that she was being kept on and I wasn't.'

'I've done everything I possibly can to get a permanent contract but it's impacting on my life because I can't get a mortgage so I can't move out, and it's been going on for three and a bit years now'.

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

The research also found several examples of discriminatory practices, especially towards older teachers. The evidence from the study suggests that older teachers were being forced out because they were considered by schools to be too expensive.

'There were many ...examples of age related discriminatory practice ...a female teacher and union rep said that there was a "definite push to move on people who cost a lot of money'.

'There has been a significant peak in the number of older women with issues around capability... often these were women with good teaching records'.

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

Maternity leave and pre-retirement were identified as particular stages at which a teacher was especially vulnerable to discrimination.

'...[teachers] complaining that, while on maternity leave, they were told that they would not progress: "you can't have met your targets if you're not here"... [A French teacher] started to challenge this but was told by the Executive Principal that he would reduce the language department to Spanish teaching only and would make her redundant.'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

Teachers employed on a part-time basis were identified as being vulnerable to discrimination.

'I have been discriminated against for going part-time – I was not allowed to apply for a post during a restructure of the same level as my previous post due to choosing to go part-time.'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

'Part-time staff are routinely discriminated against. Men who request part-time work are able to retain responsibility points. Women are told they may not apply for positions of responsibility.'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

Supply teachers were also identified as being particularly vulnerable to discrimination.

'Just 8% of supply teachers who were eligible for pay progression received a pay rise. This compared with 61% of classroom teachers, 58% of post-threshold class teachers, and 85% of heads.'

Source: Analysis of online survey data responses.

'I went for an interview, I got this role...and the school said we just can't afford to pay you UPS3 so you've got a choice, you either work...or you don't work.'

'...most teachers now signed up to an agency "and you have to waiver your UPS, your experience, they charge a flat rate".'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

Teachers from a BME background and those with a disability or long-term illness expressed higher levels of dissatisfaction and reported that they experienced difficulties accessing opportunities for promotion.

A teacher described what happened when she requested part-time work for health reasons. It took months for her to get a reply. She was told 'yes, the governors have agreed to you going down to 4 days but can it be Friday [day off] because that's more convenient for school?' 'She was also told: "you can't have a class because you're not full-time"...so I was made the float teacher, and I lasted 4 weeks and my health just couldn't cope with constant moving...I'm supposed to take my laptop on a stand which meant I had to carry a laptop, a stand, a separate keyboard...a special chair, I couldn't keep moving all that from room to room...so I worked without it and lasted 4 weeks...and...I was retired on ill-health in May.'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

'I was given extra work load in comparison to other SLT leaders and not given CPD like other staff.'
(South Asian Teacher)

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

Teachers reported low levels of confidence that school leadership would provide information about policies to their staff or tackle instances of discrimination.

Pay progression and equality

The review of available statistical data indicates that between 2011 and 2013 around half of teachers did not move between the Main and the Upper Pay ranges. The figures also found that 'pay stability' increased with age.

'However, teachers from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and women teachers working in particular parts of the education sector (e.g. primary schools) were less likely to have been recommended [for pay progression].'

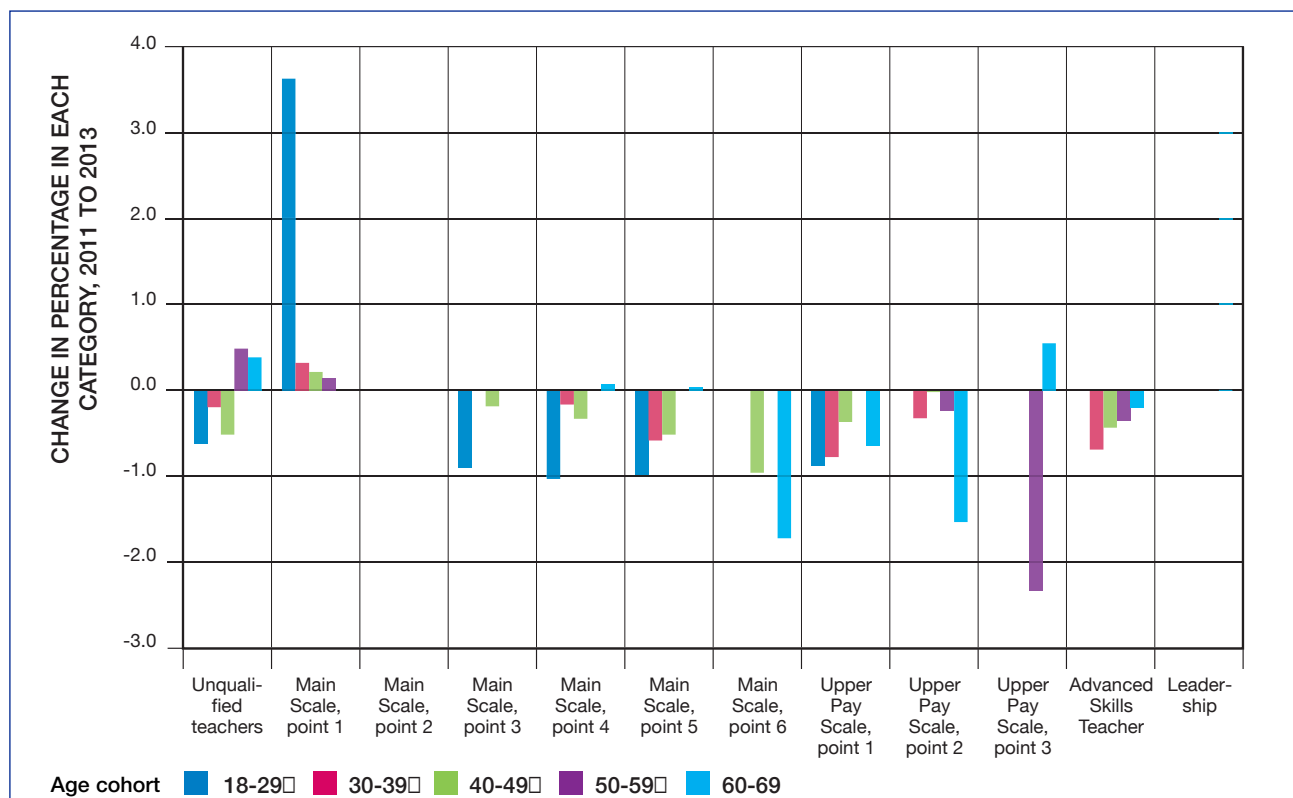
Source: Analysis of official survey and School Workforce Census data.

The study found that headteachers and other school leaders were more likely than teachers to receive pay rises.

'85% of heads who were eligible for pay progression received a pay rise compared with 61% of classroom teachers and 58% of post-threshold class teachers.'

Source: Analysis of online survey data responses.

The following graph shows the change in the distribution of teachers' pay by grade and age group from 2011 to 2013. It indicates the growth in the number of teachers paid at the bottom of the pay range for teachers and at the top of the pay range (i.e. for school leaders). It also shows the reduction in the number of teachers paid at higher salary points along the incremental pay range (i.e. equivalents of M3 to M6 and UPS1 to UPS3).



Source: Analysis of official survey and School Workforce Census data.

CPD and equality

The study found access to continuing professional development (CPD) to be an issue for all groups of teachers. However, there were particular issues for older teachers, teachers from BME backgrounds and teachers with a disability or long-term illness.

'There is a lot of nepotism dependent on personal relationships. CPD and promotion is also dependent on personal relationships as well as race...How many black teachers are given opportunities to access middle management or SLT levels?'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study

Teachers raised concerns about being given time to access CPD opportunities that met their needs. They also expressed concern that opportunities were not distributed evenly amongst staff. Teachers from BME backgrounds and teachers with a disability or long-term illness showed the highest levels of dissatisfaction regarding the CPD opportunities open to them.

'This year one of my team wanted to attend a CPD course which linked to one of his targets, but was told there was no money left in the CPD budget.'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

'In my school there is little CPD, the high expectation in terms of performance. I do not feel that my needs are addressed at all. There is no balance between employee support and judgement.'

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

'Younger and favoured staff get most of the CPD training, women are rarely promoted beyond middle management – only one female member of SMT. The staff in the school are overwhelmingly females rather than male, the males are in charge and on to power'.

Source: Online survey and qualitative study.

Headteachers and school leaders were most likely to have access to CPD.

'86% of headteachers and 70% of deputy or assistant heads said that they had been given time to access CPD in the past year. In contrast, only 44% of classroom teachers and 35% of post-threshold classroom teachers said that they had been given time to access CPD in the past year.'

Source: Analysis of online survey data responses.

Safeguarding equality through policy and practice

Around half of teachers interviewed said that they were aware of safeguards to prevent potential discrimination in relation to decisions about pay and pay progression. The remainder were equally divided between being uncertain or reporting that they were unaware of any safeguards to ensure fair practice in relation to pay decisions.

Having clear policies or procedures was identified as being an important safeguard in relation to preventing discrimination in relation to pay decisions. However, teachers also felt that the effectiveness of policies and practices was contingent upon the relative effectiveness of the school's governing body, monitoring and transparency in relation to pay decisions made by schools, the commitment of schools genuinely to work with trade unions, and the commitment of the headteacher to advance fairness and equality.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The evidence collected for this study forms the first phase of a longitudinal study into teachers' pay in England.

Further evidence about this ongoing research, together with the detailed research reports, is available from the NASUWT at www.nasuwat.org.uk/PRPresearch.



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