Preschool Teachers’ Salaries in Russia in the Context of the Russian Federation Presidential Decree No. 597 Goals

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Abstract. The quality of the state educational system depends on many factors. One of them is the remuneration of preschool teachers. Despite the fact that the Russian Federation Presidential Decree No. 597 was adopted, the preschool teachers’ salaries and standards of living are still low. Moreover, in 2013-2017 the living standards of preschool teachers has been decreasing and the target indicator has not been reached. However, their salaries differ markedly depending on the form of ownership of preschool institutions. The salaries for preschool teachers in municipal-owned preschool institutions are the lowest, whereas they get a much higher salaries in state-owned institutions.

Introduction

Preschool ages are very important for any person, because it’s character and cognitive abilities are forming during this period of life, which is important even for the future wage and professional trajectories evolution. That’s why early childhood education and care (ECEC) should be of high quality. It should be one of the main directions of the state educational policy in every country.

An educational system can be considered as of high-quality one if it has a well-developed infrastructure, a well-trained staff that gets a decent remuneration for its work and academic programs are in line with the society and economy needs. The elements of this system are interconnected and a quality decrease of one of them means the quality decrease of the system as a whole.

Special attention should be given to decent wages. If preschool teachers’ salaries are low it is more difficult to attract and retain the most skilled of them to the educational system. Meanwhile, love for the teaching profession can significantly compensate for the low salaries.

Literature Review

A lot has been written in Russia about the development of the network of preschool institutions and its problems over the past 15-20 years. Unfortunately, few works are devoted to the salaries for preschool teachers. The main idea of these works is preschool teachers’ salaries are very low. Some works are devoted to the analysis of the using of paid additional educational services, which may help to raise the salaries for preschool teachers. However, we suppose that the commercialization of education will result in too many negative consequences. In order to talk about the widespread adoption of such a measure the average wage throughout the overall economy should be greatly increased. One can also note a number of works devoted to the value orientations of preschool teachers that touch upon the issues of their salaries. The authors noted a low satisfaction among preschool teachers with this aspect of their lives. Finally, there are works devoted to the analysis of the purchasing power of preschool teachers’ salaries. Their low standards of living are noted in such works. All the mentioned above works consider short periods of time (one to two years), while the published data is enough to make a study for a longer period. It’s their common drawback.

The problem of the low salaries for preschool teachers is not a feature of Russia. Many economically developed countries face it. Very low preschool teachers’ salaries are mentioned in the articles that describe the educational systems of the USA, Australia, the UK and...
Canada [13-14]. This fact indicates significant underestimation of the contribution of preschool
teachers to the social and economic development of society.

**Research Methodology**

The work has two aims. Firstly, we plan to show that the target rates indicated in the Russian
Federation Presidential Decree of 05/07/2012 No. 597 “On measures for the implementation of state
social policy” (onward the Presidential Decree No. 597) were not reached. Secondly, an attempt to
investigate to what extent the salaries in preschool institutions of the state (federal and regional) and
municipal ownership forms differ and why it is so. These issues are of great importance in Russia
because these salaries differ significantly. If we consider the salaries in preschool institutions without
taking into account the forms of ownership of an educational organization we will make a wrong
conclusion concerning the state policy efficiency.

As the information source, the Rosstat data was chosen: the federal statistical monitoring in the
field of remuneration of certain categories of workers in the social sphere and science for 2013-2017
[15], data on the average wage [16] and subsistence minimum information [17]. To ensure
comparability of the data for 2013-2014 with the data for 2015-2017, the average wage that is
calculated according to the old methodology is used, although the new methodology for calculating
the average wage, which is more correct, is also used.

To achieve these aims, we consider the dynamics of indicators that characterize the salaries for
preschool teachers in 2013-2017 (for the period of the Presidential Decree No. 597). For the analysis,
three indicators were selected. The first one is the ratio of the preschool teachers’ salaries to the
average wage throughout the overall economy. According to Presidential Decree No. 597, this ratio
should be at least 100%. The second one is the addition of the preschool teachers' salaries compared to
the previous year. This allows to assess the growth rate of the preschool teachers' salaries and to
to compare them with the growth rates of the average wage. The third indicator is the ratio of their
salaries to the subsistence minimum of the adult working-age person. This relationship determines the
purchasing power of the preschool teachers' salaries.

The article deals with preschool teachers only, but the work and functioning of the entire preschool
educational system is impossible without the work of auxiliary personnel (nurses, for example),
whose salaries are much lower than that of pedagogical employees. This problem is very relevant, but,
unfortunately, very little attention is paid to it in the scientific literature in Russia.

Salary has a number of functions, one of which is the reproduction of labor force. This function
assumes that the amount of salary should allow recovering the employee’s mental and physical forces.
Meanwhile, it is also used to support family’s members. For example, to ensure at least the simple
reproduction of a population the salary of a parent should be enough to maintain one child. Of course,
to specify the amount of family well-being per capita or disposable income, taking into account the
contribution of other family members, is used. However, the low purchasing power of salaries means
serious hardships and high probability of being poor. Also, this raises difficulties in changing
generations of preschool teachers and means the low prestige of the teaching profession and its low
social status. Finally, low labor income means the educational system is highly likely faced double
negative selection: far from the best school graduates are going to study in educational organizations
with a pedagogical profile, and graduates who could not get jobs elsewhere go to work as teachers
after they graduate. These considerations led to our emphasis on the salaries of preschool teachers,
and not on all sources of income for their families.

**Salaries for Pedagogical Employees in Preschool Institutions**

Currently, the Presidential Decree No. 597 and the target indicators presented therein are the main
guidelines that authorities look at when establish the salaries for preschool teachers. As for preschool
education these indicators were not achieved (table 1). If we consider organizations of all the forms of
ownership, then we will see the lack of 21-26 percentage points up to the target rate. Using the new
methodology, the preschool teachers' salaries are lower than the average wage by about 15 percentage points.

Table 1. Salaries for pedagogical employees’ in preschool institutions to the average wage ratio in 2013-2017 [%].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Salaries for preschool teachers in preschool institutions of all the forms of ownership to the average wage ratio</th>
<th>Salaries for preschool teachers in preschool institutions to the average wage ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>federal-owned institutions</td>
<td>regional-owned institutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>78.4 (n.a.)</td>
<td>84.0 (n.a.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>78.8 (n.a.)</td>
<td>85.1 (n.a.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>78.0 (86.5)</td>
<td>87.6 (97.2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>74.8 (84.2)</td>
<td>88.0 (99.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>74.2 (84.0)</td>
<td>90.4 (102.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017 to 2013</td>
<td>94.6</td>
<td>107.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: the values in parentheses are calculated on the basis of the new methodology for calculating the average wage.

For the entire period under review the salaries for preschool teachers in regional-owned preschool organizations were higher than the average salary. These teachers had the best position. Preschool teachers that work in federal-owned institutions got in 2017 salaries higher than the average salary only if we use the new methodology for calculating the average wage. They were in a worse position. However, in 2013-2017, their salaries have grown faster comparing to the salaries of preschool teachers that work in institutions of the regional and municipal forms of ownership. The salaries for the preschool teachers in municipal preschool institutions have grown more slowly compared to the average wage. The ratio of their salaries to the average salary was lower than the target value by almost 30 percentage points (almost 20 percentage points when using the new methodology for calculating the average wage). The position of this kind of preschool teachers was the worst.

In 2013-2017 the salaries of preschool teachers in preschool institutions of all the forms of ownership increased by 24.2%. It’s less than the increase in the average salary (31.4%). As a result their position has worsened. Preschool teachers in preschool institutions of the federal ownership form have greatly improved their position since the increase in their salaries exceeded the increase in the average wages by almost 10 percentage points. Besides, this growth has been uniformly high throughout the entire period. On the contrary, by this indicator preschool teachers in regional-owned preschool institutions were in the worst position. The increase in their salaries was much lower comparing to the increase in the average wage. Moreover, in 2014 compared to 2013, even nominal salaries for these teachers has decreased. Nevertheless, the purchasing power of their salaries has been the highest among all preschool teachers (see Table 3). Although this decrease lowered their standards of living, they are still higher by comparison with the salaries for preschool teachers in organizations of a different form of ownership. The dynamics of salaries for preschool teachers in preschool institutions of municipal ownership have showed an average level. Over the entire period, they grew by only 4.4 percentage points less than the average wage, but continue to remain low.

Table 2. Salaries for preschool teachers in preschool institutions by the forms of ownership in 2013-2017 [%].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ownership form</th>
<th>Preschool teachers’ salaries in relation to the previous year salaries</th>
<th>2017 to 2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All forms</td>
<td>109.5</td>
<td>103.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal form</td>
<td>110.4</td>
<td>107.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional form</td>
<td>99.0</td>
<td>100.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal form</td>
<td>112.9</td>
<td>103.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The increase in preschool teachers’ salaries was the largest in 2014. After years their salaries have grown more slowly. We assume this due to the implementation of economic sanctions against Russia and the subsequent decrease in budget revenues. By 2017 their impact was partially overcome, so this year, almost all preschool teachers increased their salaries more than in any other year, starting in 2014.
The subsistence minimum in Russia is quite modest, but the ratio of preschool teachers' salaries to it gives us a lot of information about their standards of living. Data regarding the purchasing power of the preschool teachers’ salaries is presented in table 3. The purchasing power of salaries varies depending on the ownership form of preschool institution. We may see that preschool teachers in preschool institutions in federal and regional ownership were in a better position. The position of preschool teachers in municipal preschool institutions was the worst because for all years their salaries have not allowed even 3.0 subsistence minimums to be acquired. Salaries were higher in state-owned preschool institutions, but preschool teachers even there may purchase less than 5.0 subsistence minimums in 2013-2014 and less than 4.0 subsistence minimums since 2015.

Table 3. Purchasing power of the preschool teachers’ salaries in preschool institutions by the forms of ownership in 2013-2017.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>By all forms of ownership</th>
<th>Ownership Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>federal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>3.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>3.25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A sharp decrease in the purchasing power of preschool teachers’ salaries in 2015 is noteworthy. We can associate this decline with the influence of the economic sanctions imposed against Russia after the incorporation of Crimea, but subsistence minimum increase have influenced significantly either. The purchasing power of preschool teachers’ salaries has been slowly increasing since 2016, although it is still far from the level of 2013-2014.

If we consider the state of preschool teachers in the regions of Russia, we will see that the most socially unprotected of them are in municipal preschool institutions and are in a very difficult position. In 2015-2017 preschool teachers in more than 20 regions could afford less than 2.0 subsistence minimums and in more than 30 regions from 2.0 to 2.5 subsistence minimums. The coefficient of variation for this indicator was more than 30 % and has increased. Urgent measures that can improve the standards of living of preschool teachers in municipal preschool institutions are needed to be implemented.

**Summary**

The standards specified in the Presidential Decree No. 597 were not implemented in preschool institutions under any methodology for calculating the average wage. Achievement of these standards will require a significant increase in the salaries for preschool teachers. First of all, it is necessary to increase the base pay of preschool teachers and not their salaries in general.

However, the amount of the preschool teachers’ salaries is highly dependent on the form of ownership of preschool institution. Municipal-owned institutions provide the bulk of services for the supervision, care, upbringging and provision of preschool education. However, the salaries for preschool teachers there were the lowest, since the financial conditions of most municipalities in Russia were poor. As a result, the social prestige of the teaching profession continues to stay low. State-owned organizations are much less in number, but the salaries for preschool teachers there are much higher. This is probably due to the fact that such organizations are departmental (for example, for federal ministry employees) or were created to achieve the goals of the regions of Russia (for example, experimental or for cooperation with foreign countries) and they have better financing. Therefore, the unification of preschool institutions of different forms of ownership leads to the publication of incorrect payroll data.
Acknowledgement

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References


