



Research Paper

The disparities in Pay Policies and Structures in Ghana's Public and Informal Sectors: Accra Metropolis Blue-Collar Waste Collectors/Workers vs White-Collar Employees in Perspective

Abdul-Kahar Adam, Judy Benardine Ackon, Vera Ayitey

Department of Management Sciences, School of Business, University of Education, Winneba – Ghana

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ABSTRACT

At the end of the day everybody is working to be paid or to earn something for a living. But one needs to be formally employed or self-employed to make satisfactory living. Hence, blue-collar workers for that matter “borla man” or “sag-vara” meaning waste or rubbish collector is one of the tedious indecent jobs that attract less pay and have unsatisfactory conditions of work. Because they operate in an informal way many do not rate or see them as important workers or deserve better, hence, the charges are negotiated and the giver pays so little without recourse to the terrible and hazardous nature of the work. They collect people’s waste and rubbish thereby cleaning the environment from diseases. The white-collar workers on the other hand work in accordance to contract or are permanently employed with remuneration in the condition of service attached. The white-collar employees receive decent and quality pay in addition to working from well-ventilated and structured offices, such as, sitting in air-conditions, fans, lighting etc. The research findings indicate that the blue-collar workers receive indecent and very low pay or earnings despite the tedious work they do. This research was conducted using a qualitative method of study thereby trying to create inductive theories. A population of quota sample of 15 Blue-Collar workers participated in the interview and the results indicate that their pay or reward is very small compared to the tedious indecent jobs they are doing. They deserve better and quality pay to improve their condition for service from the public engagers. The qualitative software used to run the data was QDA Miner Lite. White-Collar employees on the other hand enjoys decent and quality pay from the Single Spine Pay Policy by the Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC) which is deduced from the secondary sources. The research recommended that for knowledge and management implications, the government must provide a general guidance by advocacy to the general public to put a premium on the charges they negotiate and pay to the “borla man” or “sag-vara” that is, the waste or rubbish collector above the minimum wages.

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INTRODUCTION

Reward system, remuneration, and pay are the major functions of employees work as job satisfaction for motivation. Based on this system of reward and pay for equal work done seems to be a bane in this part of the world since, it does appear that people who do real work as dirty job are paid lesser than one could imagine which leads to economic hardships and disparities of on the remunerations as pay for the marginalized in the society. This research is not about the gender pay policy on the Equal Pay Act, it is about the discriminant lower wages or pay given to those lower rank workers who actually do the menial and degrading work in the public and local sector of work. The main agenda of this research is to assess the effect of the pay gaps that exist between the lower staff and the government executives. In fact, the paper is divided into two categories of civil servants in the government pay structure. Firstly, lower rank such as cleaners/waste collectors (“borla man” or “sag-vara”) together with the security officers/watchmen, and secondly, the government appointees in managerial positions up to the head of that sector, whom they called CEOs instead head or chief of public servants as their title. First of all, who is a lower rank worker and government appointee into the management position? Waste collector in this context refers to garbage collector, street sweeper, and cleaner. These are the groups of workers who are placed at the bottom of every pay structure be it formal or informal sectors. Salaries and wages issues for both the formal and informal sectors are a major concern to the Ghana government and the informal sector as a whole. The challenges are that there are many pay problems and challenges across the formal (government) and the informal (private) sectors of the economy. And the main purpose of this research is to establish the gaps between pay policies and structures within the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs). There is no clear perfect literature framework developed by any one organization on pay policies are managed and implemented by all (O’Riordan, 2008) and only 8 -12 broad graded structures are more commonly pragmatic as an option of practice. In this instance, grades and structures are implemented and also critically ensure that the grades are well defined to differentiate clearly between systems and

structures and carefully evaluate the jobs to ensure the best fit policy among individual grades and role profiles accordingly. This research will base on quantitative method of analysis whereby the unit of analysis is individual within the organization (MMDAs). Due to the limitations of resources and time, the study is targeted within the MMDAs in the Greater Accra region of Ghana. One of the objectives and research question is to establish the type of mechanisms that the Local Government Service (LGS) uses as important pay policy to the MMDAs lower rank or workers without formal education or qualification. The corresponding research question is to what extent is the Local Government Service (LGS) important to the MMDAs? There are two Hundred and Sixty-One (261) Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana, out of which the Greater Accra region has 29 MMDAs.

Background of the research

O’Riordan (2008) stated that Irish Civil Service has a common grading and pay system which implies that all offices and departments have the same respect to grading and pay levels as determined. And the main idea of this establishment was the traditional rationale to promote and preserve an impartial and independent form of civil service. It is however difficult to say whether the same principles hold in the Ghanaian Local Government Service? A grading system is essential to establish a logical framework aligned with organizational pay policies and their implementation (O’Riordan, 2008). Such structures enable employers to determine job placements within the organizational hierarchy which defines pay levels, progression, and the management of pay relativities. This system also facilitates the achievement of equal pay and ensures effective monitoring and control of pay practices. Armstrong and Murlis (2005) stated that grade system and pay structures are a medium by which organization communicate the career and pay opportunities that are available to employees. There is no clear perfect literature framework developed by any one organization pay policies are managed and implemented by all (O’Riordan, 2008) and only 8 -12 broad graded structures are more commonly pragmatic as an option of practice. In

this instance, grade and structures are implemented and also critically ensures that the grades are well defined to differentiate clearly between systems and structures and carefully evaluate the jobs to ensure the best fit policy among individual grades and role profile accordingly. According to IMF (2016) published that it is crucial for the broader prosperity of societies and the functioning of economies through the efficient delivery of public services. That, typically, governments are those who play a key role in the provision of critical services namely sanitation, security, health and education. These results in the growth of the general well-being of the masses of the population. It affirms that government employment policies and compensation (salaries and wages) give better employment standards and compensation which includes employment opportunities for ethnic minorities, disabled persons, the disadvantaged groups, the low-skilled, and for women, and above all, equality of pay. It also opined that in most countries, the governments are the main principal employer which have an impact on the private sectors of employment and wages or salaries, and Ghana is not an exception since it is one of the developing countries. Even, though Ghana is noted as a middle-income country but the statements are real and prevalent to its economic society. The main objectives of this study are as follows:

- To establish the type of mechanisms that the Local Government Service (LGS) uses on the MMDAs structure.
- To find the distinctions within pay structures and grades of other international standards and practice.
- To design and adopt the best pay structure and policies going forward.
- To recommend best pay system, policy and structure for organisations to understand and adapt or adopt.

Research Problem

Boampong et. al., (2021) wrote that many researches literature focuses on waste work in the area of occupational health and safety matters with little or no attention on other side such as the nature of employment, social security, social dialogue, workers' rights, and remuneration (i.e. pay). In terms of wages, all waste contractors confirmed paying janitors a fixed monthly wage starting from US\$63 to US\$113. This amount of pay is just little above the national minimum wage which is US\$4 daily (Boampong et. al., 2021) but currently it is less than US\$2 as the minimum national wage is GHs14.88 (which is US\$1.24 at a rate of US\$1 is equal to GHs12 (16/01/2023)). This clearly shows how terrible the wages received by waste collectors or janitors are surviving unsatisfactorily. It is also noted that in the formal sector that the contracts are constrained to what they can pay waste workers simply because it is the assembly that sets the rates of the amount of the waste collection service not the contractors. It is also noted that apart from the salaries of these waste collectors/workers they have no additional entitlements or incentives such as bonuses, sick pay, medical allowance, education allowance, career path, etc. Moreover, reports indicated that the public sector waste collectors/workers monthly wages or salaries including that of female sweepers/cleaners are very low because their earnings ranges from US\$25 to US\$63 and nothing else is added as fringe benefits. These are the pay challenges that waste collectors/workers go through together with the economic high costs of living. According to OECD (1992) stated that the extent to which collective bargaining and regulations established by laws thwarts the main allocation mechanisms of the labour market is a major issue all around labour markets across the world. The working hours of these waste collectors/workers vary according to the employer as some of them start work as early as 6:30 a.m. and close at 18:00 p.m., that is, almost 12 hours a day (Boampong et. al., 2021). They work seven days a week with no shift system whereas some also work for 5 or 6 days, depending on their agreement terms. Only a few of them can determine their own hours of work and the duration of time they can work a day in a week over a month period and therefore, enjoy some flexibility. It is reported that the waste workers have very minimal levels of unionization under Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA). Ampratwum and Osei-Boateng (2011) reemphasized that 80% of the workforce in Ghana is in the informal sector which is characterized by underemployment, low wages, uncertain work relationships and bad working conditions as some live with high income insecurity. The Chief Executive of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly (AMA) at a maiden meeting assured cleaners and street sweepers in Accra for an intervention towards improving their conditions of service in order to enhance good sanitation in the city of Accra and its environs. This implies that the cleaners and street sweepers as well as the waste or garbage collectors' conditions of service in general terms and by observation are not good (ama.gov.gh, 2022).

1.1 | The Practical Gap of the Research

In this part of the world, everything is a problem and challenging in that systems and structures in general are misleading and seem unjust. Employees within the Local Government Sector who are at the lower rank and performing ugly jobs as responsibility are the same people they pay lower wages. Hence, the issue is, are pay structures and grades fairly about job

responsibility or position and title which looks administrative and office desk job? This study is to establish the main issues concerning job responsibilities and positions or titles in relationship to the pay and grading systems.

Theoretical Gap of the Research

It is obvious that the blue-collar workers in the informal environment do not have compensation as benefits and contract of service with good conditions of service policy. The "borla man" or "sag-vara" which refers to waste collector only depend solely on charges of the waste which is negotiated at all times. Besides, their services are not well organized but base on chances and luck for engagement by waste owners/producers. In this case they are not associated with salary, wages and compensation.

The Scope of the Research

The scope of this research is to bring to bear the facts and proper theories that are considerate as best practice of salary and wages payment as appropriate grades and responsibility. It considers the Local Government Service policies and pay structure in order to relate to other best practices for clear conclusion.

Theoretical and Practical Implications

The essence of this research is to demonstrate the theories that recommend better pay policies and systems and structures in terms of grades and practically show how organisations benefit or otherwise from poor pay practices. O'Riordan (2008) wrote that with respect to the grading system, the key questions that need answers are; how jobs are evaluated and defined internal equity of work? What are the reasons that preserve the hierarchical existence structures? Job evaluation as a systematic process in defining the worth or size of jobs in an organization seems to be done as ad-hoc way in the civil service. That while the number of grades does show distinctions made between different levels of responsibility which makes it questionable whether it is objective in adequate basis for categorizing jobs within grade structure? This shows how the implication of theory and practical of salary or wages payments needs to be checked and corrected as best practice going forward in organisations. The practical implication is that what shows that a manager or office in an office with white collar work should be paid higher salary at a higher grade than a cleaner who is cleaning the gutters, toilets, and dust bins? Such disparity has implications for the general development of the economy positively or negatively depending on the manner of the staff satisfaction levels.

Significance of the Research

This research is significant as it will address the issue of wrong or bad pay discrimination among employees performing the odd jobs as responsibility? This is to address both the theoretical and practical implications of pay policies and grading structures. It will provide a measure for organisations going forward in order for them to justifiably position the lower rank staff performing the odd jobs with equally high pay. This research is significant to boast the Human Resource Management practice of policies establishment in terms of staff pay and grades.

Limitations and Delimitations

This research is limited to the public-civil establishment known as the Local Government Service (LGS), which is responsible for the administration of government local offices and sectors. LGS is established by Ghana 1992 Republican Constitution on section 2 of article 240 that "parliament shall enact appropriate laws to ensure that functions, power, responsibilities and resources are at all times transferred from central government to local government units in a coordinated manner." The delimitation of this research is such that the secondary sources of literature review are in abundance to make this review of theories and practice simple. There are many research articles that somehow relates to these research objectives and is reviewed to establish the discrepancies in the pay policies and structures in the local government sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pay Policies, Systems and Structures

The Civil Service in Ireland has a common grading system and pay policies is based on the traditional public services model (O'Riordan, 2008) and that grading system and pay structures provides the framework for managing pay and at the same time used to map career paths. Grade Structures consist of a hierarchy or sequence of grades, levels, or bands of which a group of jobs are compared broadly in terms of size. Grade and pay systems and structures are crucial as they offer a logically designed framework for implementing an organization's pay policies. The Irish have a narrowed graded system of structure which consists of a sequence of job grades (16 in the case of general service where jobs are broadly placed with equivalent value. Employees are positioned at an appropriate point as

incremental level with a salary range of 30 – 50 per cent higher than the minimum point.

Pay Policies

Flanagan (1992) identified several available pay policy choices for market-based economy. First of all, there is Non-union wage determination where the competitive non-union markets provide most decentralized and determination of wages and salaries approaches since wages and salaries are taken place by the firm or organizational level. In this system a unilateral pay policy is set and announced annually for various jobs and grades they can pay. By this system it causes employers to make poor choices of wages and salaries. This means that if the employer set higher wages and salaries more than its competitors, it will obviously have higher costs than the competitive organization (Benmelech, et. al. 2018; Bivens, et. al. 2018; Antonczyk, et. al., 2010). Ironically, if the employer sets its wages and salaries low, the cost effect is that employees may leave (high labour turnover) and join the other competing company for superior conditions of service and which in turn will leave the employer with fewer employees working with vacancies or left positions. Hence, the Non-union employer will prefer to choose pay policy for the organization that will avoid such costs but it lacks the initial information about the competitive companies pay system as conditions of service. To avoid or minimize this risk, the employer may conduct salaries and wages surveys in the labour market which can be public or private (Kristal and Cohen 2016; Almeida-Santos 2010; Autor, 2014). The second pay policy choice is Collective Bargaining. It is clear that the labour unions are part of or feature of economic growth the world over irrespective of the stage development or ideological orientation. Though, this system between the employer and the labour unions varies substantially across market economies and by sector. Generally, it is noted that union bargains are higher in the goods-producing sector than the service industries, it is higher among blue-collar jobs than the white-collar jobs, and also higher in the public sector than the private sector.

The third pay policy choice is the Arbitration mechanism. Under the Australian system, the state tribunals and a federal commission issue arbitration award to cover minimum wages and other terms of employment after conducting a quasi-judicial hearing. The fourth pay system choice is Mixed Wage Formation Systems is the process of witnessing both union and non-union systems together for example in Canada, USA, and UK has union pay system levels that exceeds non-union pay system levels for a given job. Under decentralized collective bargaining employers do not have assurances that the competitors will face same labour costs. Equity vs Efficiency is the fifth pay policy choice which narrows the wages and salaries structure in all market economies where collective bargaining organisations e.g. planning authorities seek to achieve greater equity. In this instance, efforts to achieve greater pay equality in collective bargaining begin as an effort towards implementing “equal pay for equal work” done. In some countries they use wage indexation and income policies which have special provisions for low-wage workers and narrows the wage structure (White House Council of Economic Advisers, 2016; OECD, 1987). Several Western countries adopted statutory minimum wage policies in order to raise the incomes of the low-paid workers such as in Ghana the blue-collar jobs receive low wages and salaries.

Pay Systems

The choice of employee payment system like the kind of incentive structure within the internal labour market is associated with the particular management and supervision problems indicated by the nature of work within the organization. The degree of flexibility that needs to be adjusted to the changing technology and other structural changes. The following are identified as the Pay System. Time Payment is one of the pay systems that simply refers to time of work such as monthly, hourly wages, or annual salary. This pay system is more common in advanced market economies such as in the UK. This seems to offer weak performance incentives and suitable where individual output is costly to monitor and also when the monitoring is difficult to conduct continuously. Time payment system can be classified as “merit system” by which rate and evaluate employee performance periodically (Appraisal). This appraisal process in a way influence promotion, retention, and salary increase. The essence and purpose of this is the future possibility of promotion into high-paying jobs can be seen as incentives for better or good performance. The wages may rise in terms of seniority that is time in the job and/or for several reasons. This increases worker productivity since the human capital theory concluded that wages grow with seniority because employees and their employers perform training and investment together since it increases worker productivity. Another motivation of this pay system is by delayed payment contracts which are designed in order to discourage employee shirking and malfeasance practices. In this case, workers are bonded against bad performance from the beginning of their career with a company by accepting wages that are lower than their value to the company. If the workers continue to perform well, then they are paid

more than their initial value to the company towards the end of their working life or career and afterward, that is through pension. But these two payment systems are often bound together with a mandatory retirement rule, this is because the worker wages paid cannot exceed their value to the company over the employee's career. Hutchens (1989) concluded that delay payment contracts provide in principle an important incentive where regular monitoring or supervision is not possible since their empirical usefulness remains in doubt.

Individual Incentives are another pay system a worker's pay varies with some performance indicators. This is tied to physical output also known as piece rates or value measured as in sales commission. This piece rate system serves two main functions as motivation and sorting. Its higher performance by employees will depend on the nature and design. Group Incentives is also one of the pay systems where payments are made to groups of people who delivered their work. Three main types of this system have evolved in the market economies. One is Gain-Sharing plans which links the pay of a group of employees to some internal measurement of productivity. This gain attributed to productivity is shared with management. Profit sharing plans provide designated pay period to employees. Employee-stock-ownership plans (ESOPs) gives some special ownership rights to certain kinds of employees. This type of pay system has some advantages as stated it is the least adopted wage payment system. Managerial Incentives simply is the business executives of private businesses who are acting as agents for many wide-spread shareholders as corporate business owners who direct the utilization of funds and resources in the market economies. The executives' pay structures offers incentive mechanism but this is not the least mechanism since it has been debated whether wages are the most powerful mechanism in order to control executives.

Pay Structures

In the history of Ghana, the governments went through several salary and wages administration regimes and their structures just to get the public sector workers' pay right. Seniwoliba, (2014) research noted that, there used to be Prices and Incomes Board Salary Structure as a recommendation by the Price Water House Coopers, and now Ghana Universal Salary Structure (GUSS), which went through a lot of frustrations and challenges. The government of Ghana in 1997 decided to solve the challenges of pay disparities between the public sector workers and the civil servants. Therefore, a job evaluation was conducted nationwide and a new salary and grading structures were developed for the purpose of creating equity among Ghanaian workers. But when it came into the implementation of the Ghana Universal Salary Structure (GUSS), it was only a very few public institutions that adopted it especially the public universities and many of the institutions never concurred to the GUSS structure. In was well noted that in the years between 1999 and 2006, those institutions that adopted the GUSS structure were found at a disadvantage constantly and consistently. This led to other grade and salary disparities and therefore, it called for another exercise to address the problem and it was President J.A. Kufour's administration that finally implemented another new structure called Single Spine Salary Structure (SSSS). The essence of this SSSS was to put all public sector and civil servants' workers into one salary structure despite the nature, type and position of the workers, the organisation must be linked or placed to one of the salary structures in the SSSS.

The main contention was that if employees have the required skills, qualifications, and capabilities to person their task well is part of the job and may not, necessarily improve their job performance (Seniwoliba, 2014). It is only a transparent and a fair reward system for employees and other employment strategic pay innovations such as the work environment being supportive, job enrichment and other educational opportunities. This is the way employees can deliver their work in other to transform the general context for motivation and increasing the organisational performance. In Ghana, there is Article 71 salary structure of the 1992 constitution mainly for the President, Vice President, Members of Council of State, Ministers of State and their Deputies, the Speaker of Parliament and Deputies, Members of Parliament, Chief Justice and other Justices, the Chairman/Chairperson of the Electoral Commission and Deputies and others. With the implementation of the SSSS means that it has replaced the GUSS structure. The GUSS structure was up to level 22 salary structure whereas the SSSS is up to level 25 salary structure. Also, the main distinction between the two was that the GUSS had a variable base pay component across all the levels whereas the SSSS has a common base pay across all the levels. Moreover, there were difference in the process and levels of the implementations of the two structures. Jobs that have the same value range are paid at the same level or range under “equal pay for work of equal value”.

With the creation of the SSSS brought about a new pay reform upon which Fair Wages and Salaries Commission (FWSC) was formed to serve as the responsible institution to oversee the implantation of the SSSS pay structural policy. This FWSC was established through the act of Parliament (Act, 737) in 2007. Its main duty was mandated to make sure that any

decision concerning the public sector wages, salaries, classification, grading and job analysis or evaluation among others are managed and coordinated properly. Also, the FWSC controls and coordinates public sector workers union negotiations of wages and salaries and conditions of service. Therefore, the FWSC oversees the policy known as Single Spine Pay Policy (SSPP). But after the implementation of the SSSS, it becomes a problem to things right for the SSPP since up to today some institutions are not part of the SSPP and the payment also becomes a problem at times because of a lack of resources and funds. Hence, the SSPP is also now been challenged with series of unions and staff agitations of unfairness and wrong placement of levels and so on. In most advanced countries waste/garbage collectors' salaries vary according to their level of experience and education, the geographic location and the company size. They may earn more compensation in addition such as overtime pay (Climbtheladder.com official website, 2022). The median annual salary they receive is US\$39,500 (that is, US\$18.99 per hour), and the top 10% annual salary is US\$82,500 (that is, US\$39.66 per hour). It was published that the employment of waste/garbage collectors is going to grow faster than average over next decade in the advanced world. The grades and categories of positions under the Local Government Service of Ghana is as follows in the table 1.

Table 1: Grades and Categories of Posts under LGS of Ghana

Category of Grades	Grade of Staff
A1	Head of Service, Regional Co-ordinating Directors/Chief Directors
A2	National Directors, Regional Directors, District Co-ordinating Directors District Departmental Directors
B	Deputy Directors and analogous grades at the National Headquarters, Regional and District levels
C	Middle level Management and support grades
D	Junior support service staff
E	Sub-technical/auxiliary grades
F	Utility grades

Source: Conditions of Service for Staff, Local Government Service handbook/policy

The official hours of work under the Local Government Service of Ghana are forty (40) hours per week which is 8 hours per day. Work starts from 8:00 a.m. to 17:00 p.m. with 1 hour break at 12:30 p.m.

Blue-Collar Waste Collectors/Workers Duties and Responsibilities

The process of recruiting waste collectors/workers is very informal but only few are formally recruited with contract of agreement where they enjoy salary, social security, and other benefits but it is still below expectation from decent work point of view. According to Climbtheladder.com official website (2022) published what garbage or waste collectors do. It has published the duties and responsibilities of garbage or waste collectors generically to include the following but not the least:

- Collecting waste from commercial building or residential, individuals or businesses to a recycling facility or dispose it off a dump site.
- Collecting recyclable materials like paper products, plastic containers, aluminum cans, and glass bottles for disposal or recycling.
- Collecting trash
- Loading and unloading trucks with trash bins or bags containing garbage.
- Operating Trucks equipped with lifting mechanisms to lift garbage containers.
- Transporting recyclable materials to a recycling facility where materials are processed and sorted.

Their job requirements are typically to acquire the following qualifications in the advanced countries:

- Education – Waste/garbage collectors must have a high school diploma or GED, though, some employer goes further to prefer candidates who obtained some college courses such as chemistry, physics and biology as this helps them to understand the science behind waste management.
- Training and Experience – At most, many employers prefer candidates to have attended a training program session before they can engage them as garbage collectors. This is where the candidates are being trained on how to operate the machines and equipment they will be using to work. They are also being taught how to handle and dispose of waste materials properly. They can also be trained on-the-job to learn about specific requirements and procedures of the employer.
- Certification and Licenses – Waste/garbage collectors must obtain a valid driver's license to operate garbage collection vehicles, as some employers prefer them to have a certified commercial driver's license (CDL).
- Skills – Waste/garbage collectors must be physical fit, good communication, and attention to detail, problem solving and ability to lift.

White-Collar Employee Duties and Responsibilities

White-collar employees are office-based workers who operate in environments equipped with amenities such as air conditioning, fans, lighting, and office furniture. They typically dress professionally, have access to company vehicles, and participate in meetings and other administrative activities. Examples of Office Workers are production officer, accounts office, budget office, human resource management assistant, office clerk, marketing office, sales supervisor etc. Office workers are the employees who keep organizational offices running smoothly daily. Their responsibilities are very wide that they perform several tasks/duties such as answering calls, meeting and greeting visitors, filing documents, and keeping inventory list among others. Office workers may work in different organization across industries, but with a common thing which is working with efficiency and accuracy. Since their work is vital to the success of their organization or company. The Office Workers duties and responsibilities can be classified as follows generically but not limited (Dögüs I. 2019; De Loecker, et. al. 2017):

- Processing documents (paperwork), answering calls, filing, and other affiliate office activities.
- Maintaining records filed for easy retrieval.
- Supporting supervisors, managers, and any other office member administratively.
- Updating computer databases and software programs with new information when necessary.
- Arranging for conferences and meetings and making hotel reservations.
- Signing contracts of agreements with clients.
- Conducting evaluations and analysis of work progress, Etc.

Office Workers Salaries vary according to their level of education, type of company or organisation or industry they worked for, and years of experience. And they may receive benefits like paid vacation, 401k contributions, and health insurance. The median annual salary for most office workers is US\$39,500 (US\$18.99 per hour), and the top 10% annual salary is US\$71,500 (US\$34.38 per hour). In these modern days, employment trends have shown that office workers employment is expected to decline over the next decade (Climbtheladder.com, 2022). Office workers are expected to have skills such as high communication skills, attention to detail, computer proficiency, organizational skills, Teamwork etc. Their job requirements are very high especially, education can be degree, master, doctorate; high training and experience, and possess career advancement abilities. This type of worker, work in the both the middle and top levels of an organization (Blanchflower and Oswald 1990; Card, 2016).

METHODOLOGY

This research design is based on qualitative study since the total population is not known, hence, it uses non-probability sampling technique. The unit of analysis is based on individual therefore, uses secondary resources or materials of the organisations data together with data collected from primary data sources using interview questionnaire designed which formed the analysis. A quota sample of 15 participants was selected using purposive and convenience sampling techniques to gather individual responses through interviews. The study focused on the Accra Metropolis with a target group of "borla man" or "sag-vara" who are known as waste collectors. This study adapted an interview questionnaire as the primary instrument within a case study framework and a cross-sectional time dimension. The qualitative software used to run the data was QDA Miner Lite which produced descriptive analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Secondary Data Source

Institutional Policy Documents on Salaries, Wages, and Allowances (Secondary Source)

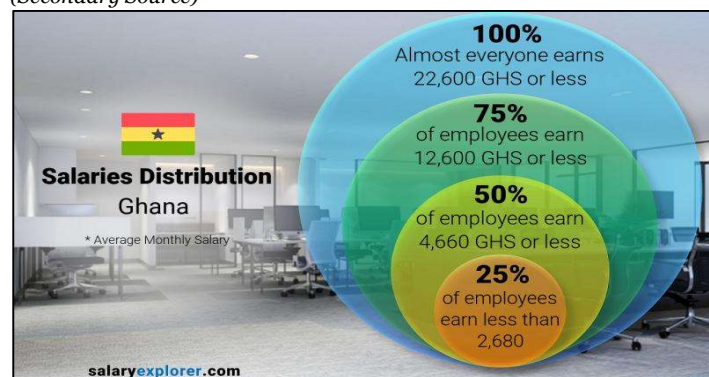


Figure 1: A Survey Report on Salaries Distribution in Ghana
Source: salaryexplorer.com

FAIR WAGES AND SALARIES COMMISSION

SINGLE SPINE SALARY STRUCTURE EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1st, 2020

	STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4	STEP 5	STEP 6	STEP 7	STEP 8	STEP 9	STEP 10	STEP 11	STEP 12	STEP 13	STEP 14	STEP 15
25	72,163.70	73,390.48	74,638.12	75,906.97	77,197.38	78,509.74	79,844.41	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24	63,059.59	64,131.60	65,221.84	66,330.61	67,458.23	68,605.02	69,771.31	70,957.42	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
23	55,104.05	56,040.82	56,993.51	57,962.40	58,947.76	59,949.88	60,969.02	62,005.50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
22	48,152.17	48,970.76	49,803.26	50,649.92	51,510.97	52,386.66	53,277.23	54,182.94	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21	42,077.34	42,792.66	43,520.13	44,259.97	45,012.39	45,777.60	46,555.82	47,347.27	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
20	36,154.28	36,768.90	37,393.97	38,029.67	38,676.18	39,333.67	40,002.34	40,682.38	41,373.98	-	-	-	-	-	-
19	30,545.71	31,064.98	31,593.09	32,130.17	32,676.38	33,231.88	33,796.82	34,371.37	34,955.68	-	-	-	-	-	-
18	28,076.66	28,553.96	29,039.38	29,533.05	30,035.11	30,545.71	31,064.98	31,593.09	32,130.17	-	-	-	-	-	-
17	25,807.19	26,245.91	26,692.09	27,145.85	27,607.33	28,076.66	28,553.96	29,039.38	29,533.05	-	-	-	-	-	-
16	22,934.75	23,324.64	23,721.16	24,124.42	24,534.53	24,951.62	25,375.80	25,807.19	26,245.91	26,692.09	27,145.85	-	-	-	-
15	20,382.02	20,728.52	21,080.90	21,439.28	21,803.75	22,174.41	22,551.37	22,934.75	23,324.64	23,721.16	24,124.42	-	-	-	-
14	18,113.43	18,421.36	18,734.52	19,053.01	19,376.91	19,706.31	20,041.32	20,382.02	20,728.52	21,080.90	21,439.28	-	-	-	-
13	16,097.33	16,370.99	16,649.30	16,932.33	17,220.18	17,512.93	17,810.65	18,113.43	18,421.36	18,734.52	19,053.01	-	-	-	-
12	14,305.64	14,548.84	14,796.17	15,047.70	15,303.51	15,563.67	15,828.25	16,097.33	16,370.99	16,649.30	16,932.33	-	-	-	-
11	12,713.37	12,929.50	13,149.30	13,372.83	13,600.17	13,831.38	14,066.51	14,305.64	14,548.84	14,796.17	15,047.70	-	-	-	-
10	11,298.32	11,490.39	11,685.73	11,884.39	12,086.42	12,291.89	12,500.85	12,713.37	12,929.50	13,149.30	13,372.83	-	-	-	-
9	10,040.78	10,211.47	10,385.06	10,561.61	10,741.16	10,923.76	11,109.46	11,298.32	11,490.39	11,685.73	11,884.39	-	-	-	-
8	8,923.20	9,074.89	9,229.17	9,386.06	9,545.63	9,707.90	9,872.94	10,040.78	10,211.47	10,385.06	10,561.61	-	-	-	-
7	7,930.01	8,064.82	8,201.93	8,341.36	8,483.16	8,627.38	8,774.04	8,923.20	9,074.89	9,229.17	9,386.06	-	-	-	-
6	7,047.37	7,167.18	7,289.02	7,412.93	7,538.95	7,667.12	7,797.46	7,930.01	8,064.82	8,201.93	8,341.36	-	-	-	-
5	6,055.34	6,158.28	6,262.97	6,369.44	6,477.73	6,587.85	6,699.84	6,813.74	6,929.57	7,047.37	7,167.18	7,289.02	7,412.93	7,538.95	7,667.12
4	5,202.96	5,291.41	5,381.36	5,472.84	5,565.88	5,660.50	5,756.73	5,854.59	5,954.12	6,055.34	6,158.28	6,262.97	6,369.44	6,477.73	6,587.85
3	4,470.56	4,546.56	4,623.85	4,702.45	4,782.39	4,863.69	4,946.38	5,030.47	5,115.98	5,202.96	5,291.41	5,381.36	5,472.84	5,565.88	5,660.50
2	3,841.25	3,906.55	3,972.97	4,040.51	4,109.20	4,179.05	4,250.10	4,322.35	4,395.83	4,470.56	4,546.56	4,623.85	4,702.45	4,782.39	4,863.69
1	3,300.54	3,356.64	3,413.71	3,471.74	3,530.76	3,590.78	3,651.83	3,713.91	3,777.04	3,841.25	3,906.55	3,972.97	4,040.51	4,109.20	4,179.05

BOLD= L/H

Bold Figures (L/H) means the terminal point for Low and also the starting point for High, i.e. Step 1 of a High Level.

Single Spine Salary Structure under FWSC
Figure 2: FWSC Public Sector Pay Structure
Source: FWSC official website, 2023

	Count	% Codes	Cases	% Cases
Job Title				
• Other - borla man	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
Demography				
• Male	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
• Married	10	2.1%	10	66.7%
• single	4	0.8%	4	26.7%
• one	4	0.8%	4	26.7%
• 1 – 25 years	9	1.9%	9	60.0%
• divorce	1	0.2%	1	6.7%
• none	5	1.1%	5	33.3%
• 26 – 40 years	5	1.1%	5	33.3%
• two	4	0.8%	4	26.7%
• 41 – 55 years	1	0.2%	1	6.7%
• Three	2	0.4%	2	13.3%

Figure 3: Job Title and Demography

The above figure 3 indicates that 15 blue-collar workers participated in this interview and their local name by the society is “borla man” meaning rubbish/dirty collector. Generally, males are the main persons in this self-employed informal job. The are mostly young men ranging between the ages of 1 to 25 years and the list ages are between 26 to 40 years. Almost, 66.7% are of the participants were married. In effect, it means that this “borla men” are young but with family responsibilities such as taken care of their wife’s and children.

	Count	% Codes	Cases	% Cases
Job Requirement				
• yes (Q1)	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
• yes (Q2)	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
• No (Q3)	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
• yes (Q4)	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
• No (5)	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
• yes (Q6)	14	3.0%	14	93.3%
• yes (Q7)	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
• yes (Q8)	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
• yes (Q9)	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
• yes (Q10)	15	3.2%	15	100.0%

Figure 4: Job Requirements

From the figure 4 above it is clear that almost all the participants answer’s the same except Question 6 which has the 93%, the rest has 100%. What this means is that, terms of the job requirements such as working in the sun, rain and bad weather; working in surroundings or environment that is too filthy and dirty; their main work is collecting rubbish, waste, and cleaning; their hands, uniform or clothing, and the whole body gets sweat and dirty; their job brings hygiene and good health to society; and they clean the markets, houses, cities, and towns were all answered 100% yes. Whereas, the following where answered 100% no that is, they don’t have office to sit in air-condition, fan, lightening, computer desktop etc. to work; and that they do not have breaktime. From the results, it depicts that only 1 out of 15 lifts recycle waste, rubbish and dirty things on to the tricycle motor.

	Count	% Codes	Cases	% Cases
Education Experience Skills				
No (Q1)	14	3.0%	14	93.3%
SSS/SHS (Q2)	9	1.9%	9	60.0%
No formal education	6	1.3%	6	40.0%
No (Q3)Education	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
yes (Q4)Education	3	0.6%	3	20.0%
No (Q4)Education	12	2.5%	12	80.0%
No (Q5)Education	12	2.5%	12	80.0%
Yes (Q5)Education	3	0.6%	3	20.0%

Figure 5: Education, Experience, and Skills of the Blue-Collar workers

The figure 5 represents a challenging side of the research which is about their education, experience and skills. The results indicates that all the participants had no certificate in waste management representing 100%. Only 93.3% confirmed that they did not have educational qualification and certificate whiles starting this self-employed irrational job so to speak. In fact, 80% of them responded that they have never been to school whereas only 9 participants responded that they have been to SSS/SHS as the highest level of education among the blue-collar workers.

	Count	% Codes	Cases	% Cases
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)				
GHS 200 – GHS500	4	0.8%	4	26.7%
GHS501 – GHS800	5	1.1%	5	33.3%
GHS801 – GHS1,100	5	1.1%	5	33.3%
GHS1,701 – GHS2000	1	0.2%	1	6.7%
No (Q2)Remuneration	13	2.7%	13	86.7%
yes (Q2)Remuneration	2	0.4%	2	13.3%
personal pricing or charging	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
less than 8 hours (Q4)	12	2.5%	12	80.0%
No (Q5)Remuneration	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
No (Q6)Remuneration	14	3.0%	14	93.3%
No (Q7)Remuneration	14	3.0%	14	93.3%
No (Q8)Remuneration	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
No (Q9)Remuneration	15	3.2%	15	100.0%
yes (Q10)Remuneration	13	2.7%	13	86.7%
No (Q10)Remuneration	1	0.2%	1	6.7%
owner (Q11)Remuneration	5	1.1%	5	33.3%
GHS300 per week	4	0.8%	4	26.7%
hired	9	1.9%	9	60.0%
GHS350 per week	2	0.4%	2	13.3%
GHS500 per week	2	0.4%	2	13.3%
10 hours	2	0.4%	2	13.3%
GHS400 per week	2	0.4%	2	13.3%
11 hours	2	0.4%	2	13.3%
GHS150 per week	2	0.4%	2	13.3%
GHS210 per week	1	0.2%	1	6.7%

Figure 6: Remuneration of the Blue-Collar workers

In this figure 6, the responses from the participants that represents 100% are the self-pricing or charging for their services. Apart from this alone the following received 100% no responses such as no employment letter or contract of agreement signed, not happy with their wages they receive from self-pricing. Only 93.3% of the participants responded no, that they do not have allowances and other benefits; and that no social security is paid as they don't even have pay slip.

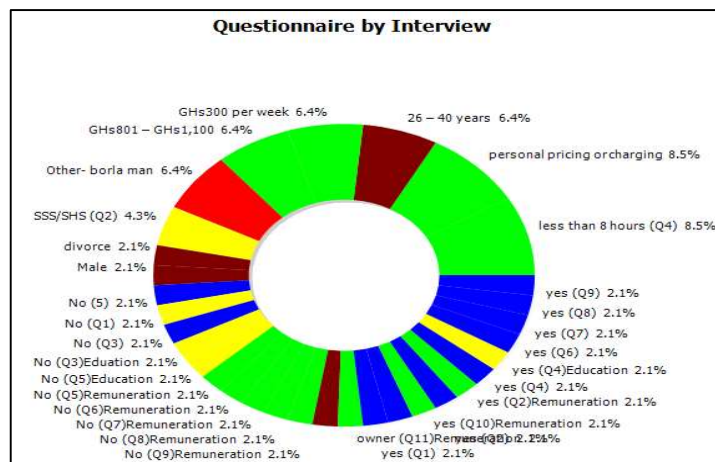


Figure 7: Complete Interview Questionnaire responses

The above circular pie chart indicates all the factors that received responses from participants and it general shows that not much can be desired from the blue-collar workers. The Nos are more that the yes.



Figure 8: Combined effects of the responses

The above figure 8 shows that personal pricing or charging dominates more than other responses followed by working less than 8 hours.

[Table 2 place here]

From the general table 2 above indicates all the factors and corresponding responses results showed that almost all the conditions of employment are a challenge or problematic to the blue-collar workers in waste management and recycling sectors.

DISCUSSION

Regarding the demographic profile, nearly all participants appeared to be married with one or two children, indicating family responsibilities that must be met despite limited earnings. Most participants reported monthly wages ranging from GHC200 to GHC800, though a few mentioned earning GHC300 to GHC400 per week. Only around five participants stated that their monthly income fell between GHC801 and GHC1,100. With regards to the education and certification it is clear that they do not have the necessary educational qualification and certificates for doing their job. This means that their level of job responsibility is in the informal sectors such as the collecting of waste and rubbish from the surroundings for a self-determined charge with negotiation of the final price paid to them. They operate in areas that are unformalized with the government interventions in waste management. They are basically sole proprietors who take all the risks by themselves in looking for the survival and growth of their family. Again, the conditions under which they work and operate are hazardous and lack compliance to health and safety rules and regulations. For them their major aim is to use their energy to perform the garbage collections for pay as the outcome without recourse to the consequences to their health and general well-being. They do not have allowances and other benefits to cater for their emergencies or other needs, all that they earn is what they benefit after they pay back for the hiring of the tricycle owner. This means that majority of them do not even own the tricycle they use for collecting the rubbish, they hire them to operate and pay out their daily earnings.

In contrast to that of white-collar job workers who deliver the majority of their responsibilities and duties by sitting in the air-condition, fan, lightening system and what have you. White-collar workers have conditions for service well documents and contracts well signed; hence they constantly know what their pay and other benefits are. In a Survey Report on Salaries Distribution in Ghana from (salaryexplorer.com) in figure 1 above showed that white-collar workers receive almost 22,600 Ghana cedis in a month and only 25% of employees earn less than 2,680 Ghana cedis in a month. According to the Ghana's Single Spine Pay Policy from FWSC Public Sector Pay Structure in figure 2 shows that white-collar workers in the public sector are well catered for in terms of salary range and grade. What this means is that the government of Ghana pay structure has relied on education, qualification, certificates and experience. Hence, the structure does not capture a pay policy directive to the informal sectors of workers whose major job is to clean the environment through waste and filth or rubbish management. And the question then is where is the fairness in this practice. Is government for all or for some only? The job responsibility of the white-collar job is more attractive than the blue-collar jobs because white-collar jobs are about neatness and well presentable whereas the blue-collar jobs are the ugly or dirty jobs, that is, the waste and rubbish from the white-collar workers is been collected or taken by the blue-collar workers.

CONCLUSION

It is vividly clear that something must be done to promote the welfare of the 'borla man' or 'sag-vara' (waste or rubbish collector) to an appreciable level of dignity in society. The government must make sure to deliberately give policy guidelines to the public as to how they should treat and transact business with the waste or rubbish collectors in the informal sector of the

economy. Government must officially recognize such waste or rubbish collectors under the MMDA operational management body in their localities and municipalities. The work that they do is in fact, helping the country from cholera and other airborne diseases. Besides this, the government must establish and provide medical screening for these self-employed workers in the irrational job sectors which is contributing hugely to the environmental protection and hygiene. The work of the blue-collar jobs is tedious indecent and therefore they deserve decent quality pay and conditions for service. Using a qualitative research approach and QDA Miner Lite software, this study interviewed 15 waste collectors to understand their perspectives on the inadequacy of their earnings relative to the risks and efforts involved.

In view of the above conclusion, it is recommended that further scientific research can be researched into the correlation and inferences (relationships) that can determine the fairness of the conditions for service and conditions of service between the white-collar and the blue-collar employees or workers.

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Table 2: Overall Responses from the Participants

Category	Code	Description	Count	%Codes	Cases	%Cases
Demography	1 – 25 years	age?	9	1.90%	9	60.00%
Demography	26 – 40 years	age?	5	1.10%	5	33.30%
Demography	41 – 55 years	age	1	0.20%	1	6.70%
Demography	divorce		1	0.20%	1	6.70%
Demography	Male		15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Demography	Married		10	2.10%	10	66.70%
Demography	none	number of children?	5	1.10%	5	33.30%
Demography	one		4	0.80%	4	26.70%
Demography	single	marital status?	4	0.80%	4	26.70%
Demography	Three	number of children?	2	0.40%	2	13.30%
Demography	two	number of children?	4	0.80%	4	26.70%
Education Experience Skills	No (Q1)	was employed with educational qualification and certificate?	14	3.00%	14	93.30%
Education Experience Skills	No (Q3) Education	have certificate in waste management?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Education Experience Skills	No (Q4) Education		12	2.50%	12	80.00%
Education Experience Skills	No (Q5) Education	never attended school?	12	2.50%	12	80.00%
Education Experience Skills	No formal education	level of education?	6	1.30%	6	40.00%
Education Experience Skills	SSS/SHS (Q2)	level of education?	9	1.90%	9	60.00%
Education Experience Skills	yes (Q4) Education	Trained in Science e.g. biology, chemistry, and physics?	3	0.60%	3	20.00%
Education Experience Skills	Yes (Q5) Education		3	0.60%	3	20.00%
Job Requirement	No (5)	you have break time?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Job Requirement	No (Q3)	sitting in office and working in air-condition, fan, lightening, computer desktop etc.?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Job Requirement	yes (Q1)	working in the sun, rain and bad weather?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Job Requirement	yes (Q10)	cleaning the markets, houses, cities, and towns?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Job Requirement	yes (Q2)	working in surroundings or environment that is too filthy and dirty?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Job Requirement	yes (Q4)	collecting rubbish, waste, and cleaning is your work and duty?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Job Requirement	yes (Q6)	lifting rubbish into motor king or tricycle?	14	3.00%	14	93.30%
Job Requirement	yes (Q7)	collecting and recycling waste, rubbish and dirty things?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Job Requirement	yes (Q8)	hands, uniform or clothing, and the whole body gets sweat and dirty?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Job Requirement	yes (Q9)	this your job brings hygiene and good health to society?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Job Title	Other- borla man/sag-vara	Title of occupation	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	10 hours	hours of work per day?	2	0.40%	2	13.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	11 hours	hours of work per day?	2	0.40%	2	13.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs 200 – GHs500	wages and salary?	4	0.80%	4	26.70%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs1,701 – GHs2000	wages and salary per month?	1	0.20%	1	6.70%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs150 per week	payment on hire purchase of the tricycle?	2	0.40%	2	13.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs210 per week	paying on hire purchase of the tricycle?	1	0.20%	1	6.70%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs300 per week	amount paying for hiring the tricycle?	4	0.80%	4	26.70%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs350 per week	amount paying on hire purchase or deposit as personal pay?	2	0.40%	2	13.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs400 per week	amount paying on hire purchase or deposit as personal pay?	2	0.40%	2	13.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs500 per week	amount paying on hire purchase or deposit as personal pay?	2	0.40%	2	13.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs501 – GHs800	wages or salary range per month?	5	1.10%	5	33.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	GHs801 – GHs1,100	wages or salary range?	5	1.10%	5	33.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	hired	tricycle using for collecting the rubbish?	9	1.90%	9	60.00%

Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	less than 8 hours (Q4)	working hours per day?	12	2.50%	12	80.00%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	No (Q10) Remuneration	self-known condition of service?	1	0.20%	1	6.70%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	No (Q2) Remuneration	paid by piece rate above national minimum wage per hour daily over a month?	13	2.70%	13	86.70%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	No (Q5) Remuneration	have employment letter or contract of agreement?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	No (Q6) Remuneration	paid some allowances and other benefits?	14	3.00%	14	93.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	No (Q7) Remuneration	paid social security?	14	3.00%	14	93.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	No (Q8) Remuneration	happy with your current wages or salary?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	No (Q9) Remuneration	you have compensation as job security?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	owner (Q11) Remuneration	owner of the tricycle or hired?	5	1.10%	5	33.30%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	personal pricing or charging	salary and wage category or grade?	15	3.20%	15	100.00%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	yes (Q10) Remuneration	Conditions of service is known by yourself?	13	2.70%	13	86.70%
Remuneration (Wages and Salaries)	yes (Q2) Remuneration	want to be paid above national minimum wage per hour daily over a month?	2	0.40%	2	13.30%