‘Are good results enough?
Thinking systematically about identifying factors that influence the transfer and scale-up of programs'

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External Validity & Impact Evaluation: Traditional Thinking

- Policy relevant evaluation
- Replication
- Policy Pilots
- Scale-ups
External Validity & IE: Thinking Beyond Replications

“I want my evaluation to inform decisions in different regions/contexts. What information do I need?”

1) Problem/Need and Context (Institutional, Political, Social)
2) Hypothesis: Academic literature, local understanding, conventional wisdom
3) Theory of Change: Implementation + Theory
4) Enabling and Hindering Factors (Implementation, Context)

A Good Data Collection Plan!
TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL: HARYANA EDUCATION STUDY
TEACHER-LED MODEL
Background

- 96% of children (ages 6-14) are enrolled in school, but being in school does not imply children are learning.

- 53% in grade 5 cannot read a grade-2 level text and 47% cannot do basic arithmetic (ASER 2012).

- What could be the problem?
  - Lack of inputs (textbooks, etc.)
  - Shortage of teachers
  - Teaching/pedagogy
  - Health
  - Lack of demand
  - Distorted beliefs
The proposed solution/hypothesis: TaRL Pedagogy

The Pedagogy

1. Assessment to create groups according to competency.
2. Re-group according to level rather than standard or age
3. Teach according to actual learning levels using level appropriate activities and materials
4. Ongoing monitoring, assessment of student learning levels so that they can continue be taught according to actual learning level
Support for hypothesis

In school pull out classes for lowest-performing students led by local volunteers yielded substantial improvements in learning outcomes (Gujarat, Maharastra)

- Balsakhi remedial tutoring (Banerjee et al. 2007)

In school and after school classes led by local volunteers, and summer camps led by government school teachers showed substantial impact, but government teachers failed inside regular govt. classrooms (Bihar & Uttarakhand)

- Read India (Banerjee et al. 2010, Walton et al. 2011)
Will a teacher-led TaRL model (a) have a positive impact and (b) have the necessary characteristics to be transferred to other states?

TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL:
HARYANA EDUCATION STUDY
TEACHER-LED MODEL
Problem/Need and Context (Institutional, Political, Social)

- **Study Areas**
  - 2 districts – Kurukshetra & Mahendragarh
  - Chosen in consultation with the GoH

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Economic Development</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kurukshetra</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mahendragarh</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
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The Program

Government teachers with monitoring, inside regular classrooms

• For 1 hour in each school day students learned Hindi in their respective group rather than grade level.
• In-program assessments to keep teaching to the current learning level of the child.
• Block officials trained and mentored teachers in-schools.
• Initial and ongoing monitoring and mentoring of block officials and teachers by Pratham staff
Theory of Change: Implementation + Theory

- Low learning outcomes of students
- High-stakes terminal exams do not allow for feedback
- Need to emphasize “holistic” development of children
- Teachers focus on “completing syllabus” – teach to top of the class

Organizing students by ability-levels

- Teachers evaluate students frequently and collect data on student performance
- Teachers use this information to identify low performing students
- Teacher devices ways in which to help low performing students

Pedagogical tool aimed at “teaching according to student ability”

- Teachers conduct quick assessment to classify students according to ability
- Teachers teach according to the prescribed pedagogy and practices

Improve student learning outcomes
Theory of Change: Implementation + Theory

**When?**
- **Pre-intervention**
  - Baseline
- **During the course of the intervention**
  - Process Monitoring
    - Teacher training, intervention
- **Post-intervention**
  - Endline

**What?**
- **Pre-intervention**
  - Student learning outcomes
    - Evaluation practices, teacher attitudes

- **During the course of the intervention**
  - Are teachers trained?
    - Quality of teacher training
    - Teacher knowledge and attitude toward programs
    - Are teachers implementing the programs as prescribed?

- **Post-intervention**
  - Student learning outcomes
    - Evaluation practices, teacher attitudes, Implementation indicators

**How?**
- **Pre-intervention**
  - Students tested individually – written and oral Hindi and Math tests
  - Survey of teachers and headmasters

- **During the course of the intervention**
  - Observation of training, teacher surveys pre & post training
    - Interviews with teachers, classroom observations, physical checks of student and school records

- **Post-intervention**
  - Students tested individually
    - Survey of teachers and headmasters
Enabling Factors: Ensuring strong implementation

- Set-up of school monitoring system
  - Block-level officials trained on monitoring and mentoring

- Sensitizing field level officials
  - Orientation about the program
  - Training

- Setting up platform to share progress update, do course corrections

- Empowering district, block and cluster level officials to take action against non-compliers
Enabling Factors: Fostering Ownership

- Many stakeholders in the study and implementation
  - Senior level officials were very invested in this project
  - From past experience we knew that we needed “champions” at the field level
    - Block-level officials
In-school classes by government teachers, with monitoring support, succeeded in increasing learning outcomes within the official school day (Duflo et al. 2013)
Will a teacher-led TaRL model (a) have a positive impact and (b) have the necessary characteristics to be transferred to other states?

TEACHING AT THE RIGHT LEVEL: HARYANA EDUCATION STUDY TEACHER-LED MODEL
Key Learnings

- Theory Success:
  - The program worked in 2 districts with very different contexts
  - The TarL hypothesis has worked with different implementation models

- Implementation Success:
  - Teacher-led model with strong monitoring

- Positive Enabling Environment:
  - Fostering ownership among stakeholders
  - Fostering ownership among implementers
Key Learnings

- In what contexts is this program most likely to work?
  - Low and heterogeneous learning outcomes
  - Satisfactory strength of teachers in schools
  - Existing cadre of local officials for monitoring

- What are key institutional factors necessary for success?
  - Committed champions of the program within the administration
Where next?

- Gujarat
- Rajasthan
- Andhra Pradesh
- Telangana
- Tamil Nadu
Going beyond India?

- Similar problems with learning levels?
- Sufficient resources in the education system (teachers, infrastructure, etc.)?
- Ability to implement local-level monitoring?
- Similar institutional set-up?
- Enough buy-in within the educational system?
- Political constraints?
- What additional barriers to learning might exist?
Thinking systematically about external validity

- Key lessons for evaluators:
  - It will add an additional data collection burden to your evaluation, but provide essential information for learning
  - Implementation is an essential part of the Theory of Change
  - Monitoring, monitoring, monitoring
    - Key factors of your model that can be replicated in other settings
THANK YOU