Evidence-Based Teaching: Effective teaching practices in primary school classrooms

Abstract: Even after spending five to six years sitting in a classroom almost every day for anywhere between four to seven hours, a significant share of students in low- and middle-income countries are still not able to read, write, or do basic arithmetic. What explains this “learning crisis?” A growing body of evidence suggests that poor teaching practices and little to no learning inside the classroom are the main culprits. As such, the learning crisis reflects a teaching crisis. So what can teachers do inside the classroom to tackle these joint crises? This paper systematizes the evidence regarding effective teaching practices in primary school classrooms, with special focus on evidence from low- and middle-income countries. By doing so, the paper provides the theoretical and empirical foundations for the content of the Teach classroom observation tool. Implications for teacher education and evaluation are also discussed.

Measuring the Quality of Teaching Practices in Primary Schools: Assessing the Validity of the Teach Observation Tool in Punjab, Pakistan

Abstract: Monitoring the quality of teaching practices of primary school teachers in low-and-middle-income countries is often hampered by the lack of freely available classroom observation tools that are feasible to administer, validated in their own setting, and can be used as part of national monitoring systems. To address this discrepancy, Teach, an open-access classroom observation tool, was developed to measure the quality of teaching practices of primary school teachers in low-and-middle-income countries. This paper uses data from Punjab, Pakistan to evaluate the validity of Teach. Results show that Teach scores were internally consistent, presented good inter-rater reliability, and provided sufficient information to differentiate low from high-quality teaching practices. Further, higher Teach scores were associated with
higher student outcomes. The working paper version of this study can be consulted here.

A generalizability study of Teach, a classroom observation tool

Abstract: The use of classroom observation tools has grown in developing countries due to the consistent positive relationship between teaching quality and students’ learning outcomes. In this study we present results using the Generalizability Theory model for Teach, a classroom observation tool that has been used worldwide to measure the quality of interactions between teachers and students in the classroom. Data from four countries across different world regions was used to analyze to what extent Teach scores are impacted by raters, teachers, and items. Results across countries consistently showed a pattern in which most of the score variance is explained by the items and teachers, and to a lower extent by raters. Results obtained are similar to those reported for other classroom observation tools. Directions and lines of future psychometric research for Teach and other classroom observation tools are discussed.

Teaching for All? Measuring the Quality of Inclusive Teaching Practices Across Eight Countries [Manuscript submitted for publication]

Abstract: While there is a consensus on the importance of inclusive education, there is a lack of evidence on the use and quality of inclusive teaching practices in the classroom. This article uses unique data from 5348 classroom observations in eight countries, finding three main results. First, while teachers spent more than 87% of class time on task, a large majority of teachers does not follow high-quality inclusive teaching practices. Second, teachers demonstrate similar relative strength and weakness on inclusive teaching. Finally, teachers who demonstrate high-quality inclusive teaching practices are also more likely to demonstrate better teaching in other areas.
The Teach Primary Classroom Observation Tool: Strengthening Its Focus on Inclusion

Abstract: The World Bank’s Teach Primary classroom observation tool was released in 2019 (First Edition) to help countries measure and assess teaching practices. In 2020–2021, the Teach Primary tool underwent a revision process to strengthen the way the tool captures inclusive teaching practices. This document presents the analysis and results of this revision process. The document first provides an overview of the concept of inclusive education within the international context. Then the document presents a framework to analyze inclusive education practices within the Teach Primary tool, drawing from the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) framework and other research. Third, the document examines the extent to which the original (First Edition) Teach Primary tool reflects principles of inclusion and captures inclusive teaching practices. Finally, the document proposes a series of adjustments to the Teach Primary tool to improve the way it reflects principles of inclusion and captures inclusive teaching practices, which are consolidated in the revised Teach Primary tool (Second Edition).