

The Effectiveness of ‘The Pioneer Schools’ program on Moroccan Pupils’ learning

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Abstract

The Pioneer Schools program in Morocco has been designed using a multi-dimensional approach covering the three axes of the 2022-2026 roadmap: the student, the teacher and the school. Its main objective is to improve learning in the primary cycle; 626 schools have participated voluntarily, i.e. around 9% of all primary schools; in 12 regions and 82 provinces (rural, urban, peri-urban); in which 12,000 teachers were voluntarily involved and trained; with more than 300,000 beneficiary pupils.

The Teaching methods of Pioneer Schools are :1 to provide detailed, scripted lessons to teachers, based on the explicit teaching approach;2 to apply the method of "Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL) that consist in training teachers to implement remedial sessions for pupils; 3 to apply specialization of teachers in the subjects that best correspond to their areas of training and expertise;4 to improve school management by putting in place all the material conditions that promote learning;

This paper aims to measure the impact of the Pioneer Schools’ program on students' academic performance in mathematics, French and Arabic. The analyses of 276 schools (138 school in treatment group and 138 school in control group) show a highly promising effect of teachers in pioneering schools on fundamental knowledge, in all three subjects and for all grades. The study is based on the double-difference method - measuring the change in before-and-after outcomes for program beneficiaries, then subtracting the change in before-and-after outcomes for non-participants to obtain the relative change in outcomes for beneficiaries.

Keywords: TaRL; Pioneering Schools; Remediation; Fundamental knowledge; Impact