Comparing China REACH and the Jamaica Home Visiting Program

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This paper summarizes empirical findings from a series of recent papers studying a replication of the Jamaica Reach Up and Learn home visiting program in China, China REACH. It collects more detailed information than is available on the original program. An analysis of it facilitates investigation of the skills generated by Jamaica Reach Up and Learn. We find evidence for dynamic complementarity for medium- and low-ability children. Children who start behind only slowly catch up. Able children are an exception. Most children master its goals for skill development, but the pace of learning varies greatly among children classified by ability. The program scales well. Costs per pupil are roughly $500 (2015 USD). At the same ages, treatment effect sizes and skill growth curves are comparable across the Jamaica and China REACH interventions, despite differences in scale and differences in cultural settings. We develop a method for comparing scores on different tests by anchoring comparisons on common items.

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