But Will It Work Here?

Justin Sandefur

Center for Global Development
Outline: Two sources of public sector solutions

1. The literature on what works
   What is the what?
   Context or capabilities?

2. The (efficient, flexible) private sector
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Impact on Test Scores (in SD), with 90% Confidence Interval

Individually-paced computer assisted learning, India (21)
Extra contract teacher + tracking, Kenya (19, 20)
Remedial education, India (21)
Tracking by achievement, Kenya (19)
Contract teachers, Kenya (20)
Teacher incentives (year 1), Kenya (30)
Teacher incentives (long-run), Kenya (30)
Camera monitoring, India (28)
Teacher incentives (year 2), Kenya (30)
Training for school committees, Indonesia (25)
Grants & training for school cmte, Gambia (37)
ELECTING school cmte & linking to local govt, Indonesia (25)
Linking school cmte to local govt, Indonesia (25)

Additional SD per $100 (Log Scale)

90% Upper Bound | Impact | 90% Lower Bound

Access to Education  | Business as Usual Inputs  | Pedagogical Innovations  | Teacher Accountability  | School-Based Management
Results of 32 computer-assisted learning RCTs
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Impact of the “same” contract teacher program in Kenya
CONTRACT TEACHERS
BUDGET!!!

INCOME: 10,000
HOUSE HELP: 7,000
HOUSE RENT: 7,000
TRANSPORT: 3,000
FOOD: 5,000
SCHOOL FEES: 10,000
MISCELLANEOUS: 5,000
BALANCE: NEGATIVE 25,000

END SLAVERY AND
BE NOW!!!!
Implications for doing/reading policy research?

Think big: theorize/generalize

- Before we can make firm policy recommendations, we need to be able to explain the huge heterogeneity of results we’re witnessing.

Think small: A/B testing

- Organizational capabilities are paramount to policy success
- So work within an organization, test policy variants within context and organizational constraints.
Implications for doing/reading policy research?

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Teacher absenteeism & student scores

Teacher absence (%)
- Public: 48
- Private: 28

Student math score
- Public: 44
- Private: 73
Teacher salaries

- Starting civil service teacher: $240
- Contract teacher: $110
- Community teacher: $60
Paraphrasing Bob Lucas:

“I do not see how one can look at figures like these without seeing them representing possibilities. Is there some action a government of India could take that would lead [public schools to be as efficient as government schools]? If so, what exactly? If not, what is it about the ‘nature of [public schools]’ that makes it so?”
Liberia is outsourcing primary schools to a startup backed by Mark Zuckerberg

Updated by Jennifer Williams on April 8, 2016, 8:20 a.m. ET  
@jenn_ruth  
jennifer@vox.com

The New York Times

The Opinion Pages

Liberia, Desperate to Educate, Turns to Charter Schools

Tina Rosenberg  
FIXES  
JUNE 14, 2016
Contracting out: key design choices

- Degree of autonomy
- Results-based accountability?
- Allow top-up fees?
- Allow selective admissions?
Contracting out: key design choices

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<th>Chile</th>
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<td><strong>Results-based accountability?</strong></td>
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| Percentage of funding          | Zero/small | Medium | Zero | Big | ???    |
Monitoring is difficult
Monitoring is difficult
At Kendeja Public School, More Than 300 Students Left Unenrolled
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Photos credit: Dackermue Dolo, Senior Field Manager, IPA Liberia