The role of primary school contexts in supporting sustained long-term impacts of the “Quality Preschool for Ghana” interventions

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Teachers, head teachers, caregivers and children who participated in this study.
Key Takeaways*

- Quality Preschool for Ghana (QP4G): a scalable, in-service training and coaching program for kindergarten teachers
- In the short run, QP4G improved children’s school readiness, including their early literacy, early numeracy, and social-emotional skills
- Two years later, preliminary evidence shows sustained gains in literacy, executive function, and behavioral regulation
  - Impacts on academic outcomes depend on the quality of the primary classroom and teacher burnout level

*The two-year follow-up results are preliminary and may change after further data collection and/or analysis.*
Outline

- Policy Context
- The QP4G Interventions
- Research Design
- Results
- Conclusions and Implications
The 2012 GES report indicates that the 2004 KG curriculum is sound, but that teacher behavior has not adapted to reflect new pedagogy.

- Low quality of kindergarten instruction

**Key priorities:**

- Train 27,000 untrained teachers in KG-specific pedagogy
- Engage parents and raise their awareness of KG-specific pedagogy
The QP4G Program

In partnership with Ghana Education Service, National Nursery Teacher Training Center, University of Pennsylvania, New York University and Innovations for Poverty Action:

• Develop and test a **nationally scalable model** for teachers and parents with the goal of improving KG quality and children’s school readiness.

• Two main parts: **Teacher Training** and **Parental Awareness** Interventions
Intervention I – Teacher Training Program

**In-service teacher training**

- Led by the NNTTC trainers
- Five-day training at the start of the school year
- Refresher trainings 4 and 8 months later

**In-classroom monitoring and coaching**

- Led by the district education coordinators
- Classroom visits paired with monitoring / feedback
Intervention II – Parental Awareness Program

• 3 sessions of parental awareness meetings
• 1 per term
• implemented through PTA meetings
• Facilitated by district education coordinators

Video screening

Discussion with focus on:
• play-based learning,
• parents’ role in child learning, and
• encouraging parent-teacher and parent-school communication
School-randomized control trial

- 240 KG schools
- Across 6 districts in the Greater Accra Region

Each school randomly assigned to one group:

1. No program
2. Teacher training program
3. Teacher training plus parental awareness program

Participants

- 108 public and 132 private schools
  - 240 head teachers
  - 156 proprietors
  - 443 teachers
  - 3,435 children
  - 2,710 caregivers
QP4G Theory of Change

Interventions

- Teacher training/Coaching support
- Teacher training/Coaching support + Parental-awareness meetings

Classroom-level mediators

- Classroom Quality
- Teacher professional well-being

Child outcomes

- School readiness
Impact on Implementation and Classroom Quality

- **Implementation checklist**: TT 0.56***, TTPA 0.61***
- **Facilitating deeper learning**: TT -0.11, TTPA -0.16
- **Emotional support/behavior management**: TT 0.65**, TTPA 0.66**
- **Supporting student expression**: TT 0.09, TTPA 0.52*
Does QP4G improve teacher well-being?

**NO:**
No improvement in teacher motivation and job satisfaction.

**YES:**
Large reductions in teachers’ burnout
Does QP4G reduced the likelihood that teachers leave the school mid-year?

**YES**

The probability of a teacher leaving the school in the private sector was reduced by 45%.

Notably, the effects were larger in the private sector.
QP4G improves children’s school readiness, including academic and social-emotional development

Only the teacher training program improves overall children’s school readiness

Impacts are concentrated on academic and social-emotional outcomes
QP4G improves children’s school readiness

**Effect size (d_{wet})**

- School readiness: 0.16 **
- Early literacy: 0.11 *
- Early numeracy: 0.11 *
- Social-emotional: 0.18 **
- Executive function: 0.11

** TT  TTPA

*, ** indicate significance levels.
One year later: Impacts on social-emotional outcomes sustained

School readiness Early numeracy Early literacy Social-emotional Executive function

TT TTPA

-0.06 0.04 0.09 0.14* 0.11+

-0.060 -0.06 -0.04 0.01 -0.060
Two years later: Sustained impacts on some domains of development*

Preliminary Results

*The two-year follow-up results are preliminary and may change after further data collection and/or analysis.
Two years later: Sustained impacts on some domains of development*

Sustained impacts on academic outcomes depend on the quality of the primary classroom and teacher burnout level.

*The two-year follow-up results are preliminary and may change after further data collection and/or analysis.
Conclusions and Implications

• Brief, affordable **in-service, teacher training can be successful** if teachers are given ongoing support and messages are **reinforced throughout the year**.

• **Cost estimates** are **$479.65** and **$19.19** per teacher and child, respectively.
Conclusions and Implications

• Causal evidence that activity-based, emotionally supportive classrooms with opportunities for play improve preschoolers’ development in this context.

• **Persistent impacts** on academic outcomes depend on subsequent school quality; persistent impacts on behavior regulation for all children.

• Positive impacts should not be assumed when engaging parents; a more intensive approach may be needed.
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