

Helping Teachers Reduce Inequality in Education

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Our Promise to Youth

Our team

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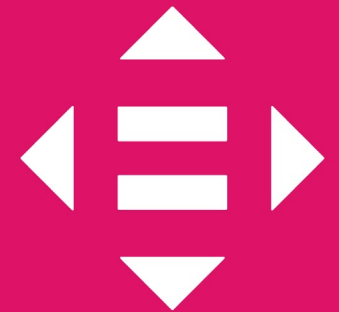
Educational inequality

- Inequality in education is a defining challenge of our time
- Children from poor or working-class backgrounds underperform in school relative to their middle-class and affluent peers
- The achievement gap emerges early and widens with age
- At age 15, children from disadvantaged backgrounds are **seven times** more likely to underperform—a gap that equals **three full years of schooling**
- The gap has been widening globally over the past 50 years
- This rise of inequality has accelerated since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



How can teachers help reduce inequality?

- Now more than ever, we need to support teachers in reducing inequality in education
- As developmental psychologists, we are interested in teacher practices that can help reduce inequality
- Specifically, we are interested in practices that cultivate a *growth mindset*—the belief that intellectual abilities are capable of growth in response to dedicated effort, trying new strategies, and seeking help when appropriate
- **Jacobs Foundation COVID-19 Education Challenge: a 30-month collaborative project to study solutions to inequality**



“Am I
smart
enough?”

Children’s
self-beliefs

“Is school
for kids
like me?”

“Can I
become
smarter?”

Kyrgyzstan and Pakistan

- Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan instituted widespread school closures due to COVID-19. Remote learning is often unavailable or inaccessible, especially to students from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- School closures are expected to result in a loss of a between 0.3 and 0.8 years of schooling for the average student.
- Teachers are in a unique position to help minimize learning losses, while reducing inequality in learning and achievement by offering optimal guidance to those students who need it the most.

Core research questions

- (1) What are the self-beliefs that may contribute to inequality in student learning and achievement?
- (2) How can teachers influence these self-beliefs via their teaching practices (e.g., style of teaching, feedback)?
- (3) How can teachers implement these practices in their classrooms to reduce inequality?

We embrace an *action research approach*, in which the researchers and stakeholders (e.g., teachers and students) collaborate in identifying the problem and developing the solution