



What Works Hub
for Global Education



Teacher coaching made cost-effective:

Evidence from two A/B tests in Namibia

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Research Design: A/B testing coaching models for a nationwide TaRL program

Background and context

Context

- In Namibia, 46% of 5th-graders cannot add 2-digit numbers.
- *Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL)* tailors instructions to the competencies of pupils to accelerate learning and close gaps.

Research Motivation

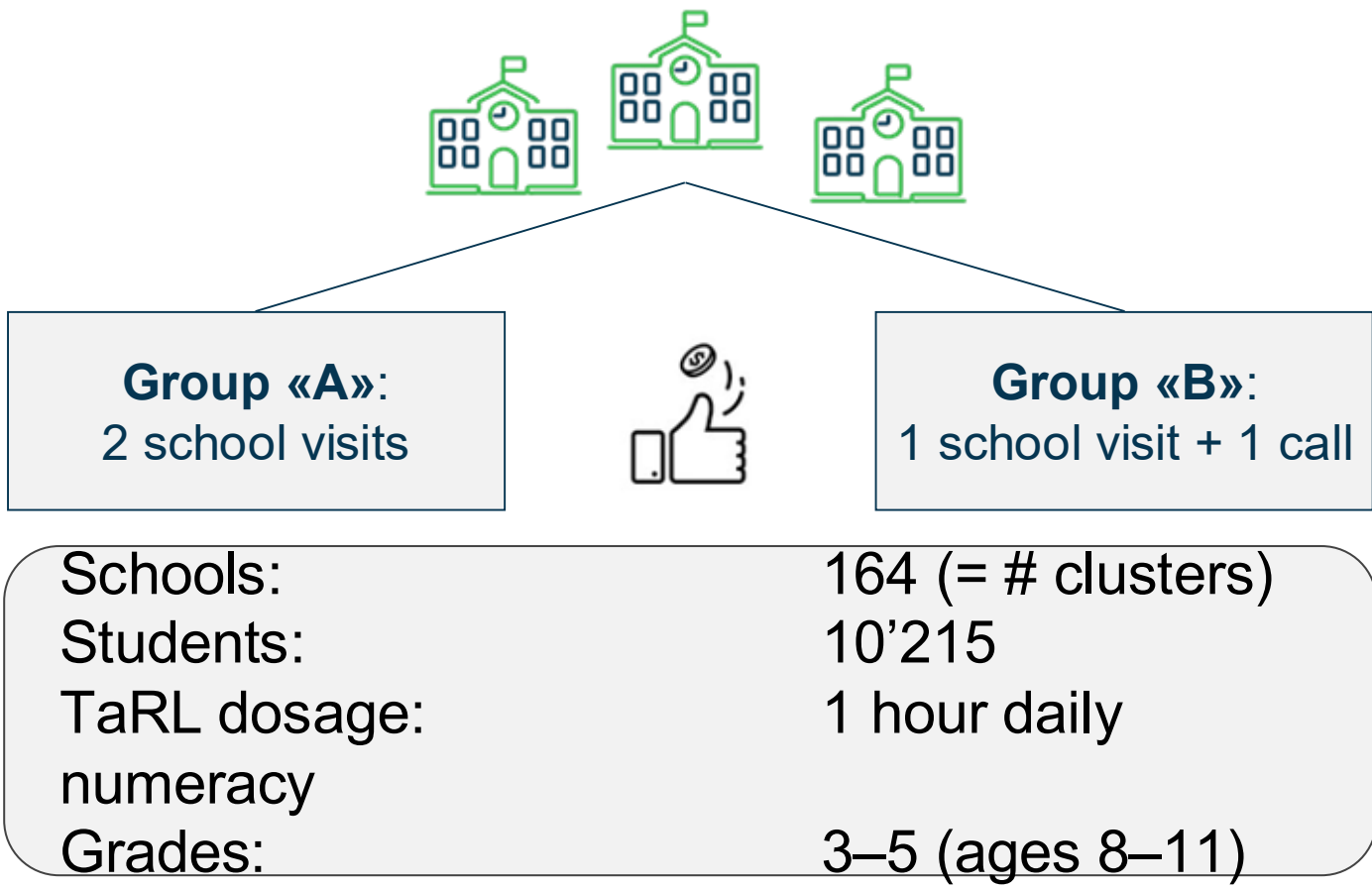
- Teacher coaching can improve learning (Cilliers et al., 2020; Piper et al., 2018).
- Incorporating coaching and mentoring elements into TaRL increases its effectiveness (Banerjee et al. 2017; Kaffenberger et al. 2026).
- **Yet, coaching is costly and hard to scale. How can coaching be delivered cost-effectively at scale?**

Research Contribution

- **We experimentally compare the cost-effectiveness of two coaching approaches embedded in the nationwide TaRL Namibia program.**

How can cost-effective coaching be delivered at scale with school visits and/or coaching calls?

2 rounds of randomized A/B testing



Results: Quantifying cost-effectiveness of (A) Two visits vs (B) call+visit

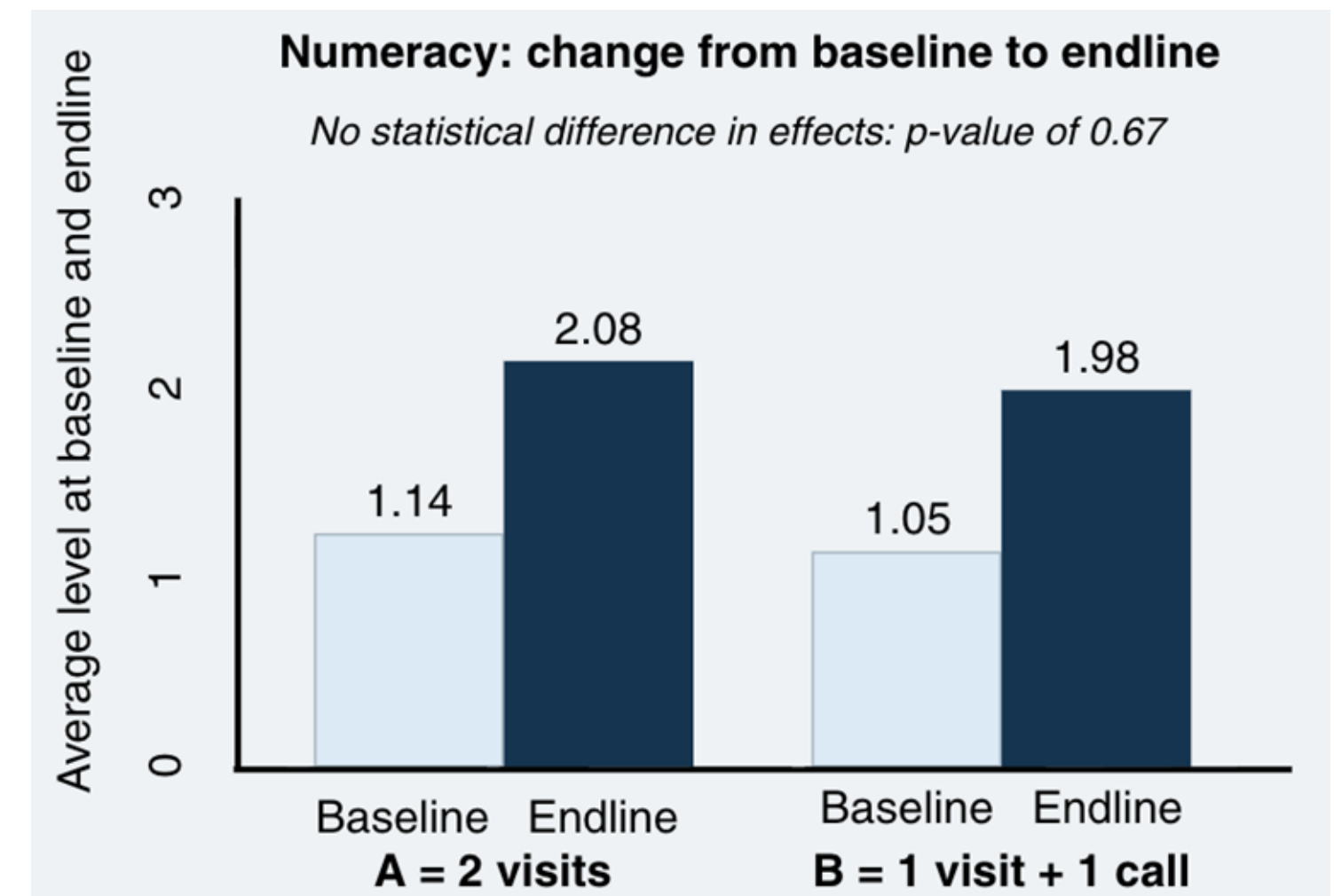
Cost: Calls reduce costs by 33%

	Group «A»: 2 x visits	Group «B»: 1 x visit + 1 x call	Difference
Cost per Child	\$11.10	\$7.40	33%

Design Validity

- ✓ **Balance** of observables at baseline (*p-values*: 0.24-0.96).
- ✓ **High response rate** at endline (84% across both rounds).
- ✓ **No differential attrition** btw. groups A vs. B (*p-value*: 0.70).
- ✓ **High implementation fidelity** in both groups and rounds.
- ✓ **Robust** results across regions.

Effectiveness: Similar impacts



- Replicating the A/B test with new set of schools and pooling both rounds increases the estimates' precision by +30%.
- Substituting one visit with one call reduces costs by -33% without affecting the program's impact.

Testimonials from the field

Coaching calls maintain effectiveness while improving efficiency & scalability

“When I spoke to teachers, many shared that during in-person *visits*, they often felt rushed or distracted by school activities.

With *coaching calls*, however, they could focus on the conversation. They appreciated the ability to quickly check in and plan without disrupting their entire day, proving that the *quality of the interaction* rather than the mode of delivery matters most.”

Njandee Mbarandongo,
Program Manager, TaRL Namibia



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Category: Experimentation (A/B Test)

Key insight

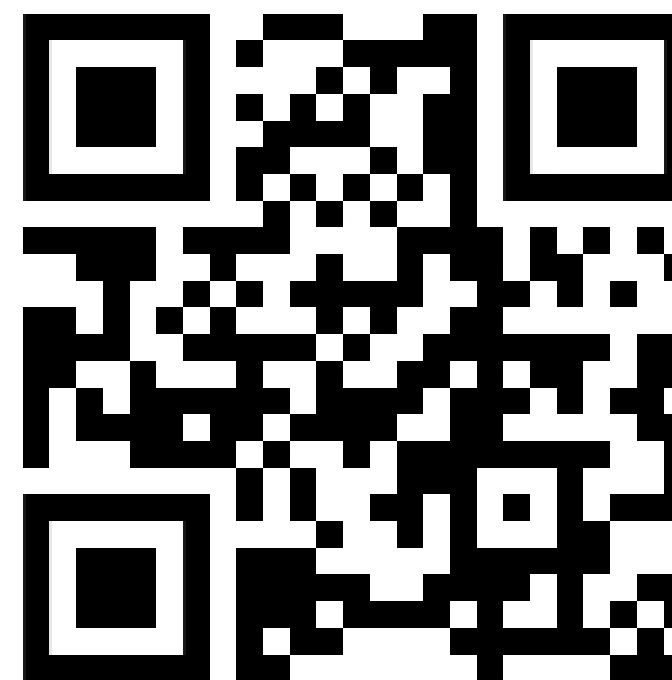
Teacher coaching is a critical component of education programme delivery at scale. Yet coaching can be expensive and hard to scale because it is often delivered through costly in-person school visits. We conduct two randomised A/B tests with a total of 164 primary schools in Namibia to test lower-cost teacher coaching models. We show that, in the context of an ongoing scale-up of Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL), replacing one of two school visits with coaching calls reduces costs by 33% while preserving impact, substantially improving efficiency and scalability.

Written up as a contribution to
implementation insights (i²):

An outlet for short papers that combine
technical rigour & practical insight.



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