Remedial Learning

How can new breakthroughs in personalized technology-supported learning be deployed to support remedial education for young people whose education has been disrupted by conflict, shock, or migration?

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How can new breakthroughs in personalized technology-supported learning be deployed to support remedial education for young people whose education has been disrupted by conflict, shock, or migration?

There are 263 million school-aged children and young people out of school, 53 per cent are upper-secondary-school age. In conflict or disaster-stricken countries, 3 in 10 young people are literate. The figure is triple the global rate. The impact of a disruption in education on young people’s development can have permanent effects.

Young people who return to education are likely to face gaps in their learning, and teachers are often unable to accurately address those gaps on a personalized level. Weak learning outcomes for these students are often due to failure or inability to teach at the right level. This, in turn, demotivates those who fall behind their peers and can result in dropouts.

Remedial learning can allow people to catch up on missed education and continue their education. However, it is usually not readily available and is too costly.

Breakthroughs in technology-enabled personalized learning can quickly identify educational gaps and empower teachers to better tailor the content and intensity of study to students’ needs, abilities and goals. Technology-enabled personalized learning can also discover students’ knowledge structure, education level, and cognitive style, and it can provide precise information that helps clarify misconceptions and optimize their progress.

There are positive results from use of this innovation in early and later grades, demonstrated at scale. For example, experimental evidence on the impact of a technology-led instructional program in India suggests that the users of such programs can improve their test scores considerably. The program was cost-effective, and is likely to be even more cost effective at a larger scale.

These technologies have yet to be tested with refugee populations. Many of the existing programmes fail to go beyond the provision of hardware devices.

Success is enhanced when accompanied with in-person and consistent guidance.

Implementing personalized remedial learning requires considering local contexts, teacher training, cultural norms, language and other key issues.

While use of online educational applications has grown, offline applications are still essential for students in rural areas where digital connectivity is limited.

Remedial learning has the potential to be expanded beyond traditional subjects that currently dominate much of the curricula. Expanded curricula can include mathematics, languages, and courses that enhance critical thinking and digital skills, among other subjects.

What the experts tell us

- Adaptive learning programme providers
- Web-based platforms providing AI-based personalized educational content
- Global research centres

What can be done?

- Explore opportunities to apply personalized remedial learning models to young people in refugee and internally displaced people’s camps
- Conduct research that examines the right combination of human interaction and personalized remedial learning for these students