



## **Peer Tutoring**

### **Background**

The summary below presents the research evidence on peer tutoring in the Arab World context.

The Teaching & Learning Toolkit focuses on impact on outcomes for learners; it presents an estimate of the average impact of peer tutoring on learning progress, based on the synthesis of a large number of quantitative studies from around the world.

This page offers a summary and analysis of individual studies on peer tutoring approach in the Arab world. In contrast to the Toolkit it includes studies which do not estimate impact, but instead investigate the implementation of interventions and how they are perceived by school leaders, teachers and students using a range of research methods. This information is valuable for school leaders and teachers interested in finding out more about particular examples of peer tutoring interventions that have been delivered in the Arab world.



## **Summary of the research in the Arab World**

There is currently a trend in the Arab world that is focused on improving school performance and enhancing their quality in order to achieve the key performance indicators detailed in their educational reform plans. Particularly, the Gulf countries have been investing ample resources to reform their educational system in order to meet the economic, political and social challenges of the 21st century.

As such, exploring interventions like peer tutoring strategies showed great benefits to students' personal and academic development. For instance, in a randomized controlled trial study (RCT), peer tutoring was used as a pedagogy to improve the mathematical achievement in elementary schools in Saudi Arabia (Aleid, & Abdulaziz, 2015). The social relationships that resulted and were fostered from the peer mentoring strategy were the main predictor for developing students' attainment scores. Not only that, peer tutoring improved students' attitudes towards mathematics and towards the peers with whom they worked.

Interestingly, peer tutoring was employed in secondary schools in Sudan to create awareness and inform students of unsafe sexual behavior with regards to HIV/AIDS. This approach enabled significant improvements to be made with regards to the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of the students (Ali et al., 2015). Hatab (2017) compiled recent studies of Reciprocal Teaching (RT) as a peer tutoring form for English and Arabic language learners. He found that when learners alternate between the role of tutor and tutee, their reading skills and comprehension develop and their attitudes towards learning increase.

Furthermore, students using this technique demonstrated long term content material retention (Al-Osseil, 2010). In another study, Abu Serhan (2014) examined the effect of RT on improving critical listening skills of 121 ninth grade students in Jordan. Through a quasi-experimental design, results of the study indicated significant differences at ( $\alpha=0.05$ ) due to the instruction strategy used, in favor of the experimental group who was taught using RT and significant differences. This strategy attracted students' attention and assisted them in identifying relevant information. Students also gained summarization skills that are helpful for them to grasp the general meaning of the text and relate what they learned to real life experiences. Additionally, findings of this study revealed that female students showed more interest about this new strategy than males mainly because



females were more serious about the tasks than the boys. However, both genders equally benefited from the range of opportunities that this strategy provides in terms of interaction between students and the chance for them to share and express their ideas freely.

Reciprocal tutoring was also examined as a strategy to develop the skills of interpretation of the Quran and divergent thinking of the first year of secondary education for Azhari students. Thirty-six students were divided evenly into two groups; an experimental group and a control group. The results showed a statistically significant difference between the mean scores in favor of the experimental group who studied topics in Quranic interpretation using reciprocal teaching strategy (Hamdy, 2018).

Class Wide Peer Tutoring (CWPT) was also investigated as an approach to help third grade students with learning disabilities in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA). Through an experimental design, Rahman and Al-Zoubi (2017) highlighted that implementing this intervention significantly improved students test scores in the experimental group who received instruction through CWPT than their peers in the control group who received the individual instruction. CWPT fostered spirit of cooperation and positive competition among students, and this contributed to the improved reading skills among students with learning disabilities. Implementing CWPT provided students with learning disabilities and the students without learning disabilities positive opportunities to interact with each other (Rahman & Al-Zoubi, 2017).

Peer tutoring was also examined among adult students at the university level. In a recent qualitative study, Baroudi and David (2020) explored the impact of peer tutoring on tutors and tutees' personal development and leadership skills. Emirati female student tutors and tutees at one federal university in the United Arab Emirates reported that being involved in peer tutoring program increased their self-confidence, leadership skills, expanded their knowledge on the subject, and positively impacted their grades. Student teachers, in particular, mentioned that tutoring others increased their motivation towards teaching and enhanced their teaching skills (Baroudi & David, 2020; Rajab, 2013). These benefits are a result of the non-hierarchical structure of peer mentoring in which student teachers of



similar status take part in supporting each other and meeting their professional needs.

Overall, the introduction of peer tutoring approaches appears to have a positive impact on students learning and changed the learning environment from a traditional to a stimulating environment. Students were provided with a range of opportunities to interact with each other, gain knowledge and social skills, and participate in the teaching and learning process (Rahman & Al-Zoubi, 2017). Peer tutoring was also found to be an effective intervention to manage and ensure the learning is happening in large size classrooms especially for high school students (Beati, 2015). However, for the peer tutoring strategies to work effectively in classrooms, it should supplement the normal teaching, rather than replace it. To this end, teachers should be trained on how to use and integrate peer tutoring within their instruction (Rahman & Al-Zoubi, 2017). Furthermore, establishing peer partnerships based on trust and openness between two equal peers which are recognized as authentic, helpful and non-threatening is a key to the success of the peer tutoring implementation (Sider, 2018).

While a large range of interventions can be classified as peer tutoring, there remains a lack of Arab world-based research that links these to academic outcomes. The few relevant studies have mainly focused on two main forms of peer tutoring and their impact on students' attitudes and motivation towards learning. Hence, further research is needed to include bigger sample size to investigate relationship between the peer tutoring and students' academic achievement in different subjects. Researchers are also recommended to engage in RCT research studies as a research method since it is considered to be one of the strongest methods in educational research (Aleid & Abulaziz, 2015).



### **Summary:**

While a large range of interventions can be classified as peer tutoring, there remains a lack of Arab world-based research that links these to academic outcomes. The few relevant studies have mainly focused Class Wide Peer Tutoring and Reciprocal Teaching and their impact on students' attitudes and motivation towards learning. Hence, further research is needed to include bigger sample size to investigate relationship between the peer tutoring and students' academic achievement in different subjects.

There is evidence of promise where the approaches have been tested. A study of ninth grade students in Jordan found a link between reciprocal teaching strategies and critical listening skills. Another study found that the scores of Azhari students that used a reciprocal tutoring technique were higher than students that did not. In Saudi Arabia, studies have shown positive results of Class Wide Peer Tutoring interventions on elementary maths, and the co-operative learning of students with and without learning disabilities.

Other studies in the region have identified evidence of promise in critical thinking skills, attitudes towards learning, and more general positive effects to learning relationships between students.



## **References**

- Abu Serhan, A. (2014). The effect of reciprocal teaching strategy on improving critical listening skills of ninth grade students at Zarqa directorate. *Jordanian Journal for educational studies*, 4, pp. 445-457.
- Al-Osseil, A. (2010). The Effect of the Reciprocal-Teaching Strategy on Achievement and Retention of Secondary 1st Grade Students in Exegesis. M. A. Thesis, King Saud University.
- Aleid, M., & Abdulaziz, E. (2015). Using peer tutoring and manipulatives to improve mathematics education in elementary schools in Saudi Arabia (Doctoral dissertation, Durham University).
- Ali, M. H. M., Osman, O. B., Ibrahim, M. A. M., & Ahmed, W. A. M. (2015). The effect of AIDS peer health education on knowledge, attitudes, and practices of secondary school students in Khartoum, Sudan. *AIMS public health*, 2(4), 718.
- Baiduri, B. (2017). Elementary School Students' Spoken Activities and their Responses in Math Learning by Peer-Tutoring. *International Journal of Instruction*, 10(2), 145-160. Retrieved from <http://eprints.umm.ac.id/36902/>
- Baroudi, S., & David, S. A (2020). Nurturing female leadership skills through peer mentoring role: A study among undergraduate students in the United Arab Emirates. *Higher Education Quarterly*, pp.1-17.
- Beati, N. Y. (2015). Smaller class size, tutoring, physical education, and professional development: Perception of Saudi Arabia female teachers for improving the academic achievement of Saudi Arabia high school girls. *University of the Pacific*.
- Hamdy, B. (2018). The Effectiveness of the Use of Reciprocal Teaching Strategy in the Development of the Skills of Interpretation of the Quran and Divergent Thinking Among High School Students of Al-Azhar. (English), 32(126Part1), 223-277.
- Hatab, S. A. (2017). Reciprocal Teaching for English and Arabic Language Learners in Recent Studies. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 7(6).



**QUEEN RANIA  
FOUNDATION**

**مؤسسة الملكة رانيا**

Rahman, M. S. B. A., & Al-Zoubi, S. M. (2017). Effects of classwide peer tutoring on word attack skills among students with learning disabilities. *European Journal of Special Education Research*.

Rajab, S. (2013). Peer coaching in the Kingdom of Bahrain: Exploring the implementation of a professional development programme for primary teachers (Doctoral dissertation, University of East Anglia).

Sider, S. (2019). Peer coaching in a school in Cairo, Egypt Implementation, barriers, and pathways to effective adoption. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, 8(1), 37-51.



**QUEEN RANIA  
FOUNDATION**

**مؤسسة الملكة رانيا**

### **Search Terms**

Reciprocal Teaching, Cross Age Teaching, Tutoring, Peer Teaching, Peer Evaluation, Dyad, work in pair, Peer Assistance, Peer Assessment.

### **Databases searched**

ERIC (EBSCO)

Education Source

Google scholar

ProQuest Central

ProQuest Dissertations

PsycINFO