An Interaction-Based Approach to Enhancing Secondary School Instruction and Student Achievement

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Improving teaching quality is widely recognized as critical to addressing deficiencies in secondary school education, yet the field has struggled to identify rigorously evaluated teacher-development approaches that can produce reliable gains in student achievement. A randomized controlled trial of My Teaching Partner—Secondary—a Web-mediated approach focused on improving teacher-student interactions in the classroom—examined the efficacy of the approach in improving teacher quality and student achievement with 78 secondary school teachers and 2237 students. The intervention produced substantial gains in measured student achievement in the year following its completion, equivalent to moving the average student from the 50th to the 59th percentile in achievement test scores. Gains appeared to be mediated by changes in teacher-student interaction qualities targeted by the intervention.