

Call for ECD Research Proposal [Small Research Grant]

Rato Bangala Foundation (RBF) has an exciting opportunity for a young or early-career Researcher (1 position) to conduct research for RBF's Early Childhood Development (ECD) Education program in Lalitpur Metropolitan City. The objective of this research is to generate data and produce an analysis that answers the following questions:

- i) *Are teachers using Developmentally Appropriate Teaching Methods (DATM) to teach children in preschool classrooms?*
- ii) *How does practicing the 11 essentials support the development and learning of the young children?*

The fieldwork will consist of ethnographic inquiries including in-depth interviews with Teachers in five ECD centers and observation of the activities conducted by these Teachers.

The norm in Nepali classrooms, whether pre-school or primary, is to focus on the text and pass the test-- but this one-fits-all, memorization-based method of learning is often ineffective, and alarming numbers of children in these classrooms struggle to reach developmental milestones. In recent years, clear trends in research have shown that “learning, social, and emotional outcomes for young children are enhanced by classroom contexts that are learner-centered.”¹ Learner-centered classrooms respond mindfully to the needs of the children-- meaning the teachers use methods that are developmentally appropriate. With this in mind, the RBF trainers built a course based on what we call the 11 essentials:

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|---------------------------|------------------------|---|
| 1. Daily morning meetings | 5. Learning centers | 9. Songs and rhymes |
| 2. Classroom agreements | 6. Block play | 10. Phonics |
| 3. Journal writing | 7. Conflict resolution | 11. Music and movement/
gross motor activities |
| 4. Daily read aloud | 8. Math games | |

In 2018/19, teachers from 13 community schools participated in RBF's ECD training based on the 11 essentials. The researcher chosen for this project will visit selected 5 schools to observe ways in which these teachers are practicing the 11 essentials in their classroom. The effects of their methods on the behavior of children will be documented.

Purpose

To explore the influence of developmentally appropriate teaching practices in Early Childhood Development Centers.

Goal

To increase stakeholders' awareness on the importance of DATM, particularly in the use of 11 essential activities in the classrooms.

Target Audience

Stakeholders in School Education

Study Site

ECD Centers of selected 5 government schools of Lalitpur Metropolitan City

¹ Denise H. Daniels and Kathryn E. Perry
Theory Into Practice
Vol. 42, No. 2, Learner-Centered Principles: A Framework for Teaching (Spring, 2003), pp. 102

Eligibility and Expectations

We seek a young researcher or student in Education, Sociology, or a related discipline, ideally holding a master's degree and specializing in Early Childhood Education. The candidate must be based in Kathmandu or able to relocate to Kathmandu for the duration of the project. The candidate must be Nepali nationality.

Familiarity with qualitative and quantitative research methods is required; prior experience in early childhood education research will be an asset.

The selected candidate will be given a six months (short-term) assignment for which the candidates will complete the following deliverables:

- Submission of the detailed research concept note and work plan including budget
- Preparation of checklists or research guide for data collection in the field
- Fieldwork for data collection
- Data analysis and submission of the final report

How to Apply

All interested candidates should submit the application by 1st March 2020 via email to directorrbf@gmail.com, with the subject line “**Application for ECD Research**”

Your application [in English] should include:

- Cover letter 1 page expressing your particular interest and illustrating your competence.
- Curriculum vitae (CV, max 3 pages)
- Two references
- A short concept note (maximum 3 pages) of explaining your vision for the study, including how you plan to explicitly address the objectives.

Formatting

The Cover Letter should be addressed to the Director of the Rato Bangala Foundation. The Cover Letter and Concept Note should be in Times New Roman, 12 pt., single line space, justified with 1-inch margins. All files should be in either word or pdf.

Late applications will not be considered.

Review Process

Applications will be reviewed by the RBF Research Department within 15 days of the final submission date. A decision will be sent via email within 20 days of the final submission date.

Please direct inquiries to Director (directorrbf@gmail.com)

RBF (<http://rbf.org.np/>) is a national non-profit organization founded in 2002 to empower stakeholders in education by offering evidence-based training and awareness programs that foster quality education that prepares children to thrive in the ever-changing world and ultimately develop their communities. RBF focuses on improving classroom practices, particularly in government schools, to transform them into holistic, child-centered, gender-sensitive schools. Over the past 17 years, RBF has successfully introduced its uniquely communitarian approach in over 1,212 schools in 22 districts of Nepal. It has trained more than 8,970 teachers and oriented thousands of members of parent teacher associations and school management committees and community leaders, with an estimated 297,000 students impacted.

RBF is an equal opportunity employer and emphasizes the importance of diversity and inclusiveness. Female and local residence candidates are highly encouraged to apply. Only shortlisted candidates will be notified for the further selection process. The right to reject and select the application for whatsoever reason shall remain with RBF.