

Part B Project Summary

2013/0420

Project Leader:

Project Title:

Enhancement of Quality in Early Childhood Education: Using the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Extension (ECERS-E) & Revised (ECERS-R) as Formative Assessment Tools for Professional Development

以幼兒教育環境評量表的擴展版(ECERS-E)和修訂版(ECERS-R)為專業發展性評量工具提升幼兒教育質素計劃

Goals and Objectives. This project intends to facilitate the development of local early childhood education (ECE) services by introducing to kindergarten and nursery teachers an internal evaluative instrument for reviewing the quality of their current services. As the project goal, we envision these tools (ECERS-E & ECERS-R) will empower early childhood educators in Hong Kong to gain a better and holistic picture of the status quo and serve a benchmark while planning and designing their programmes and improving in-school facilities. Early childhood educators will receive trainings and hands-on experiences on reviewing their in-service kindergarten and nursery settings. A longitudinal research approach will be adopted to evaluate how well they are able to utilize the tools to assess their services and the positive effects. If successful, this project will well equip ECE practitioners with the mentality and resources to review their educational practices and provisions, adding to their professionalism and the overall educational betterment for young children.

Targets/Beneficiaries. Beneficiaries of this proposed project include kindergarten and nursery principals, teachers, students and policy makers. Being the immediate beneficiaries, 300 teachers from 15 kindergarten and nurseries (which have been registered in compliance with the Education Ordinance of EDB; these institutes will be asked to provide their school registration numbers while applying to participate in this project) in Hong Kong will receive relevant knowledge and practices using the preschool environment assessment resources that have been adapted to fit local educational settings.

Implementation Plan. This proposed project is planned to commence on 1 July 2015 and complete on 30 June 2017. During this period, an estimation of 300 kindergarten and nursery teachers will participate in this project. Facilitating the implementation will require the following:

1. Preparation of Training Materials and Trained Raters
 - i) Adopt a rigorously-translated copy of the ECE environment assessment instruments and its scoring criteria; and ii) Provide intensive trainings for benchmark raters who will then brought together as the professional ECERS assessment team
2. Logistics Arrangement
 - i) Coordinate with PECERA Hong Kong in carrying out the pilot study and arranging a 7-day training programme (including field practices) for kindergarten and nursery teachers; and ii) Communicate with kindergarten and nursery administrators on the arrangement of field practices
3. Preliminary, interim and final trials on assessing kindergarten and nursery environment and kindergarten and nursery teachers' self-efficacy on their services and their belief towards developmentally appropriate teaching practices (assessed at preliminary and final trials only)
4. Compare, analyze and discuss data obtained with computerized statistical programme

5. Validate the reliability and suitability of the rigorously-translated assessment instruments

Expected Project Outcomes. As ultimate outcomes, this first batch of kindergarten and nursery teachers receiving the training will be able to evaluate and enhance their current provisions using the assessment instruments after engaging in the project. Major deliverables developed for this proposed project, including the project report as well as the post-project conference, could be meaningful resources for promoting the creation of learning environments that better fit kindergarten and nursery students in Hong Kong. This pioneering attempt will also give insights to 1-2 journal publications related to ECE quality and management research in Hong Kong.

Budget. This proposed project is planned to operate with a total cost of \$1,799,250 (~1,799,300), including the following costs: \$1,536,600 in staff, \$32,200 in equipment, \$222,000 in general expenses, and \$8,450 in contingency across the project span of two years.

Evaluation and Measurement. The effectiveness of this proposed project will be evaluated with repeated measures on the performance of kindergarten and nursery teachers in using the assessment instruments and also their perceptual difference before and after the project.