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# Three Scholars Receive the Patrice L. Engle Dissertation Grant in Early Child Development

Established in 2013, the Patrice L. Engle Dissertation Grant for Global Early Child Development provides opportunities for scholars who are from and/or are working in an international context to conduct dissertation research in global early child development. Recipients of the grant are each awarded $5,000 USD to support dissertation research, as well as a two-year graduate student membership to SRCD. This grant honors Patrice L. Engle, a pioneer and leader in global early child development whose work spanned multiple industries, countries, and research fields.

*SRCD is pleased to recognize the 2023 Patrice L. Engle Dissertation Grant winners: Qusai Khraisha, Anushay Mazhar, and Teresa Schwendler.*



**Qusai Khraisha**

**“Advancing a Systems Approach to Understand Caregiving in Protracted Refugee Situations.”**

Qusai Khraisha is advancing system-level thinking in the field of ‘refugee parenting’ as part of his Ph.D. in Psychology at Trinity College Dublin, supervised by Dr. Kristin Hadfield. His work features the largest-ever observational dataset of its kind, involving 320 refugee mother-child dyads. This is part of the Family Intervention for Empowerment through Reading and Education (FIERCE) project. Complementing this work is a systematic review of ~20,000 documents from over 70 countries, providing a panoramic view of seven decades of research on parenting in protracted refugee situations. In collaboration with researchers from Ireland, Jordan, and the United States, Khraisha is also investigating coparenting in displacement dyadically. He is committed to Open Science principles, including pre-registration of all analyses and data sharing. Before his doctoral studies, Khraisha earned a BSc in Psychology from Roehampton University London and an MSc in War and Psychiatry from King's College London. He has further applied this academic foundation through working for WarChild and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). This blend of scholarship and practical know-how uniquely positions him to bridge critical gaps in applying research findings to policy and practice.



**Anushay Mazhar**

**“Investigating how dimensions of early childhood education quality in Pakistan predict children’s academic and social-emotional development.”**

Anushay is a Ph.D. student at the University of Oxford where she is conducting research on Pakistani children’s social-emotional development and its association with their demographic characteristics, their academic development, and quality of early childhood education. For her thesis, she is looking to work with over 500 children from across 40 schools in Karachi. To this end, she will be hiring and training 8 individuals to facilitate data collection. Anushay is working with many stakeholders in Pakistan, including the Aga Khan University. Prior to her doctoral studies, Anushay completed her BSc Psychology from UCL, where she also started her master’s in Developmental Neuroscience and Psychopathology. She was based at Yale University for her master’s thesis, where she worked at the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence to understand children’s emotion development. Anushay’s research interests include understanding child development across different cultures, factors that might be affecting it, and devising culture-specific ways to support children’s holistic development through the educational system. She is also keen on improving the research scope in Pakistan by working with Pakistani researchers, educators, and families. Anushay balances her research with her position as the founder of a non-profit, Resources for Children, which aims to understand

and support children's development in Pakistan.



**Teresa R. Schwendler**

**"Understanding how current programs and policies can be leveraged to improve infant and young child diets in Guinea."**

Teresa R. Schwendler is a registered dietitian and a Ph.D. candidate at The Pennsylvania State University where she works under the supervision of her advisor Dr. Stephen Kodish. Her research examines the enabling determinants that influence maternal and child nutrition globally. In support of the Guinean Ministry of Health, Teresa's dissertation work seeks to understand how stakeholders' knowledge and current programming can be leveraged to improve infant and young child nutrition in Guinea. The specific aims of this dissertation include understanding: 1) how existing policies and programs across systems (water, sanitation, and hygiene, health, food, and social protection) target infant and young child nutrition, and 2) how existing programming and policy can be leveraged to improve infant and young child nutrition using a multi-sectoral approach. Using methods drawn from participatory action research, her work seeks to explore the policy and program environment with stakeholders across systems to generate findings and

recommendations for multi-sectoral collaboration.