



Project Code: Jasinska C

APD 1210 RESEARCH PRACTICUM COURSE

PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS 2024-25

FALL/WINTER

Name and Title: *Kaja Jasinska, Assistant Professor*

Lab Website: <https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/boldlab/>

TITLE OF RESEARCH PROJECT: *Evaluating the impacts of the an accelerated learning program in Nigerian IDP camps.*

NUMBER OF STUDENT PLACES AVAILABLE: 1

PRIMARY MODE OF RESEARCH PLACEMENT PARTICIPATION:

X IN PERSON *REMOTE (ONLINE)* *HYBRID/FLEXIBLE*

Research placement will involve in-person placement only. 8-10 hrs weekly must be completed in the laboratory. All meetings with PI and other students will be in person in the lab.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY:

244 million children are currently out of school worldwide. These children are at high risk of never obtaining functional literacy and numeracy, significantly jeopardizing their futures. There are over 1.1 million internally displaced children between the ages of 5-17 in Nigeria. This study evaluates an accelerated learning program developed for internally-displaced children in Nigeria: FastTrack.

FastTrack is a technology-enabled and self-assisted accelerated foundational skills development program designed to support out-of-school refugee children in acquiring functional literacy and numeracy skills (ability to read, write and do basic arithmetic) which are vital, indispensable foundational skills needed for further higher education and to lead an empowered, self-determined life. By design, FastTrack is a low-cost remedial learning program aimed at closing learning gaps and building the foundational literacy and numeracy competencies of out-of-school children in either English or in their Indigenous language (Mother Tongue) by adopting marginalized communities with a high population of children who are out of school and do not have access to formal or informal education.

This project is an ongoing randomized control trial that evaluates the impact of FastTrack on learning outcomes of children in IDP camps in Nigeria. Children participating in the study complete a battery of



language, literacy, numeracy, and socio-emotional well-being measures, allowing us to test how FastTrack program impacts learning, and explore links between well-being and learning.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT PARTICIPATION: *Student's activities will include data analysis using R of collected behavioural data that includes assessments of children's cognitive abilities, academic outcomes, and social-emotional well-being, as well as family background information. Student's duties will also include literature reviews, abstract and conference submissions, and manuscript preparation. Student should be prepared to contribute significantly to a manuscript with the aim of a journal-ready manuscript that will be submitted at the end of the practicum.*

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED SKILLS/BACKGROUND (OPTIONAL):

REQUIRED:

Student must have completed or be concurrently enrolled in JOI1288. *Student must be willing to learn data analysis using R over the course of the Research Practicum. The student will receive support from the faculty advisor, but must be prepared to work independently as well.*

PREFERRED:

Strong preference for student who has previous neuroimaging data collection experience and previous experience using MATLAB and R.

DAY AND TIMES OF LAB MEETINGS: *Lab meetings are held for 1 hour each week (time TBD). Student will also have a 1 hour meeting with the faculty advisor every other week between September and April.*