



Early Childhood Teacher Instructional Leadership (Evaluation Study in the Mutiara Cluster, Pondok Kelapa District, Central Bengkulu Regency)

Siti Ro Ikah*

Universitas Dehasen Bengkulu

Rita Prima Bendriyanti

Universitas Dehasen Bengkulu

Feby Elra Perdiama

Universitas Dehasen Bengkulu

Mesterjon

Universitas Dehasen Bengkulu

Yuni Herlina

Universitas Dehasen Bengkulu

*Correspondence: Siti Ro Ikah

sitiroikah0991@gmail.com

Received: 02-08-2025

Accepted: 14-09-2025

Published: 28-10-2025

Copyright © 2025 by author(s) and Scientific Research Publishing Inc. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY 4.0).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

This study aims to evaluate the instructional leadership of Early Childhood Education (PAUD) teachers in the Mutiara Cluster, Pondok Kelapa District, Central Bengkulu Regency. Instructional leadership plays a crucial role in ensuring child-centered learning in early childhood education; however, its implementation in practice still faces various challenges related to teachers' capacities and institutional support. This research employed a qualitative approach with an evaluative research design. The research subjects consisted of PAUD teachers and school principals within the Mutiara Cluster. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, classroom observations, and document analysis. Data analysis was conducted using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The evaluation framework applied in this study was the CIPPO model (Context, Input, Process, Product, and Outcome). Data trustworthiness was ensured through source triangulation, technique triangulation, and member checking. The findings indicate that the instructional leadership of PAUD teachers in the Mutiara Cluster has been implemented but has not yet reached an optimal level. In the context component, teachers demonstrated an understanding of the goals of early childhood education, although their conceptual understanding of instructional leadership remained limited. In terms of input, learning facilities, professional training opportunities, and institutional support were unevenly distributed. The process component revealed that learning activities were still predominantly teacher-centered, with limited differentiation and unsystematic reflective practices. Regarding product, children's engagement in learning activities showed improvement, although the variety of learning activities remained limited. Meanwhile, in the outcome component, teachers exhibited increased professional awareness of their roles as instructional leaders, despite inconsistent implementation in daily practice. Based on these findings,

this study recommends strengthening PAUD teachers' instructional leadership through continuous professional development, pedagogical mentoring, enhanced school leadership support, and more proportional management of teachers' administrative workload. This research is expected to contribute to the development of instructional leadership practices and policies for early childhood education at the cluster and regional levels

Keywords

Instructional Leadership, Early Childhood Education Teachers, Evaluation, CIPPO Model, Qualitative Research

Introduction

Observational findings reveal patterns of problems that are not merely individual in nature (teachers' competencies) but also structural, including limited facilities, insufficient managerial support, and high administrative workloads. Therefore, it is essential to conceptualize instructional leadership not solely as a personal attribute of teachers, but also as the capacity of the local education system (cluster networks, school principals, and education offices) to support high-quality instructional practices. An effective model of instructional leadership should position early childhood education (ECE) teachers as central actors while ensuring adequate organizational support so that instructional actions can be implemented optimally.

The gap between the ideal condition—where teachers function as reflective, creative instructional leaders who prioritize children's needs—and the existing reality—characterized by routine practices, limited resources, and heavy administrative demands—underscores a strong need for further research. Strengthening instructional leadership among ECE teachers constitutes a strategic issue, as it not only affects the quality of teaching and learning activities but also has implications for the achievement of early childhood developmental indicators mandated by national education policies (Law No. 20/2003; Law No. 14/2005).

The urgency of this study is further reinforced by several considerations: (1) the distinctive characteristics of ECE, which require adaptive models of instructional leadership; (2) the empirical evidence gap regarding instructional leadership practices of ECE teachers, particularly within cluster-based contexts in semi-urban areas such as the Mutiara Cluster; and (3) the practical need to formulate concrete, evidence-based strengthening recommendations (e.g., training designs, mentoring models, and administrative arrangements). In this regard, research evaluating the instructional leadership practices of ECE teachers can serve as a foundation for both policy interventions and locally relevant capacity-building programs.

This study focuses on ECE teachers in the Mutiara Cluster, Pondok Kelapa Subdistrict, Central Bengkulu Regency, as this cluster represents the conditions of ECE in semi-urban areas with heterogeneous socio-cultural characteristics and distinctive challenges related to facilities and instructional practices. Employing an evaluative approach and empirical data, including scheduled observations conducted on 23 September 2025, the study aims to: (1) describe instructional leadership practices among ECE teachers; (2) identify supporting and inhibiting factors; and (3) formulate contextual strengthening strategies that are feasible for implementation by local

stakeholders.

In summary, this problem background emphasizes that although the role of teachers as instructional leaders in ECE is well established theoretically, its practical implementation continues to face substantive challenges. Field observations conducted on 23 September 2025 clarify the types of constraints encountered and highlight the need for in-depth evaluative research to ensure that the resulting recommendations are relevant, practical, and capable of tangibly improving the quality of ECE services in the Mutiara Cluster.

Methods

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis in this study was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach based on the interactive data analysis model proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994). The analysis was carried out continuously from the initial stage of data collection through to the final conclusion drawing.

The data analysis comprised three main stages:

Data Reduction

Data reduction involved selecting and simplifying data obtained from observations, interviews, and document analysis. The researcher repeatedly reviewed all field notes, identified salient information, and applied coding procedures aligned with the research focus, including:

1. Instructional Planning,
2. Instructional Implementation,
3. Instructional Evaluation, And
4. Supporting And Inhibiting Factors.

Irrelevant data were discarded, while essential data were organized into core themes for further analysis.

Data Display

The reduced data were presented in the form of descriptive narratives, summary tables, and direct quotations from informants to enhance clarity and interpretability. For instance, interview data from teachers and school principals were compared with observational findings and documentary evidence (e.g., Daily Lesson Plans/RPPH and activity reports) to examine the consistency of the findings.

Conclusion Drawing and Verification

Preliminary conclusions were drawn based on emerging patterns and relationships among the data and were subsequently verified through the following procedures:

1. source and technique triangulation, by comparing data from observations, interviews, and documentation; and
2. member checking, which involved confirming the researcher's interpretations with informants to ensure alignment with their intended meanings.

This stage resulted in final findings regarding:

1. the implementation of instructional leadership among early childhood education (ECE) teachers,
2. supporting and inhibiting factors, and
3. applicable strengthening strategies.

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative descriptive approach with reference to the CIPPO evaluation model. All data derived from interviews, observations, and documentation were categorized according to the CIPPO components and analyzed to identify strengths, weaknesses, and supporting or constraining factors related to ECE teachers' instructional leadership. The analytical results are presented in the form of narrative descriptions, matrices of findings, and summary conclusions across the five CIPPO dimensions

Results and Discussions

In this study, product is conceptualized as the immediate results of classroom instructional implementation, whereas outcome is understood as broader, medium-term impacts, particularly those related to changes in professional awareness, reflective attitudes, and teachers' understanding of their roles as instructional leaders.

The longer-term effects of instructional leadership among early childhood education (ECE) teachers in the Mutiara Cluster indicate an increase in teachers' awareness of their professional roles. Teachers have begun to recognize the importance of reflection and collaboration; however, their effective implementation continues to require sustained and structured support.

The findings of this study indicate that instructional leadership among early childhood education (ECE) teachers in the Mutiara Cluster, Pondok Kelapa Subdistrict, Central Bengkulu Regency, has been implemented, albeit not yet optimally. This condition suggests that teachers have fulfilled the basic roles of instructional leaders; however, they continue to encounter various constraints that affect the quality of instructional planning, implementation, as well as classroom evaluation and reflection.

From the context and input components, the study reveals that ECE teachers generally possess an understanding of early childhood learning objectives and their professional roles as educators. Nevertheless, this understanding is not yet adequately supported by systemic provisions, such as instructional leadership training, sustained pedagogical mentoring, and the availability of learning facilities and educational play materials. The disparity between teachers' conceptual understanding and institutional support emerges as a key factor contributing to the suboptimal development of instructional leadership.

Regarding the process component, observational and interview data indicate that instructional practices remain predominantly teacher-centered, characterized by limited activity variation and the absence of systematic instructional reflection. This condition is influenced not only by teachers' competencies but also by substantial administrative workloads, which constrain the time and energy available for designing differentiated learning experiences. These findings help explain why instructional leadership practices in the classroom tend to be routine and have not yet fully evolved toward more innovative approaches.

Despite these challenges, the product and outcome components reveal positive indications, particularly an increased awareness among teachers of the importance of instructional leadership.

Teachers have begun to demonstrate reflective attitudes and a willingness to improve instructional quality, although implementation remains inconsistent across ECE institutions. These outcomes suggest that instructional leadership among ECE teachers holds considerable potential for further development when supported by a conducive institutional environment.

These findings are consistent with those reported by Bendriyanti et al. (2025), who emphasize that continuous mentoring and professional development are critical factors in enhancing ECE teachers' capacity as instructional leaders. Accordingly, instructional leadership among ECE teachers should not be viewed as an individual responsibility alone, but rather as the result of interactions among teachers' motivation, school leadership support, and institutional professional development policies. This understanding provides an essential foundation for formulating the study's conclusions and recommendations in the subsequent chapter.

Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion concerning instructional leadership among early childhood education (ECE) teachers in the Mutiara Cluster, Pondok Kelapa Subdistrict, Central Bengkulu Regency, it can be concluded that instructional leadership has been implemented, although not yet optimally. ECE teachers have demonstrated an understanding of their roles and responsibilities in leading early childhood learning processes; however, implementation remains constrained by limitations related to systemic support and institutional conditions.

With respect to the context and input components, ECE teachers generally understand learning objectives and the importance of instructional leadership. Nevertheless, support in the form of continuous professional training, pedagogical mentoring, and the availability of learning facilities and educational play materials remains uneven. This condition limits teachers' capacity to develop differentiated, child-centered instructional planning.

Regarding the process component, instructional leadership practices in the classroom remain predominantly teacher-centered, with limited variation in learning activities and a lack of systematic instructional reflection. High administrative workloads further affect teachers' ability to design and evaluate instruction in a reflective and innovative manner.

Finally, within the product and outcome components, the study identifies positive indications in the form of increased professional awareness among teachers regarding their roles as instructional leaders. Teachers have begun to demonstrate reflective attitudes and a willingness to enhance instructional quality, although implementation has not yet been consistent. These findings suggest that instructional leadership among ECE teachers has strong potential for further development, provided it is supported by a conducive institutional environment and a sustainable professional development system.

References

- Alkasih, Z. (2024). The importance of leadership in early childhood education institutions. *JECED: Journal of Early Childhood Education and Development*, 6(1), 42–52. <https://doi.org/10.15642/jeced.v6i1.3793>
- Anwar, R. N., Mulyadi, M., & Soleh, A. K. (2022). Transformational leadership of early childhood education principals to improve teacher quality. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia*

- Dini, 6(4), 2852–2862. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v6i4.1577>
- Arikunto, S. (2010). *Research procedures: A practical approach*. Rineka Cipta.
- Astini, N. K. S. (2020). The use of information technology in elementary school learning during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Journal of the Quality Assurance Institute of STKIP Agama Hindu Amlapura*.
- Barnett, S. (2004). Better teachers, better preschool: Student achievement linked to teacher qualifications. *Preschool Policy Matters*, 2, 1–11.
- Bendriyanti, R. P., Haryono, M., Suwarni, & Pebriani, E. (2025). Instructional leadership management of early childhood education teachers in Seluma Regency. *Jurnal Gotong Royong*, 2(1), 89–94. <https://doi.org/10.37676/goro>
- Daryanto. (2011). *The school principal as an instructional leader*. Gava Media.
- Engkoswara. (2010). *Educational administration*. Alfabeta.
- Enueme, C. P., & Egwunyenga. (2008). Principals' instructional leadership roles and their effects on teachers' job performance: A case study of secondary schools in Asaba Metropolis, Delta State, Nigeria. *Journal of Social Science*, 16(1), 13–17.
- Fakhrudin, A. U. (2018). *Succeeding as an early childhood education teacher*. PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Faridah, I., & Kurniady, D. A. (2015). Teachers' work competence, instructional leadership, and teaching performance of kindergarten teachers in Bandung City. *Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan*, 22(2), 58–68.
- Faturohman, N. (2021). Transformational leadership style of school principals in early childhood education (PAUD) in Serang Regency. *JPP PAUD FKIP Untirta*, 8(1), 111–118.
- Goleman, D. (2015). *Emotional intelligence: Why EI matters more than IQ*. PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama.
- Hilmiyah, J., Widiastuti, R. Y., Umami, Y. S., & Rosyidah, U. (2023). Analysis of the achievement of the PAUD Teacher Mobilizer Program in implementing child-centered differentiated learning. *Educative: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan*, 1(3), 103–117. <https://doi.org/10.37985/educative.v1i3.211>
- Hoy, W. K., & Miskel, C. G. (2008). *Educational administration: Theory, research, and practice* (6th ed., International Edition). McGraw-Hill.
- Kartono, K. (2006). *Leadership and leadership practices*. PT Raja Grafindo Persada.
- Lunenburg, F. C. (2010). The principal as instructional leader. *National Forum of Educational Administration and Supervision Journal*, 27(4).
- Mauliyah, A. (2023). Perspectives on transformational leadership in enhancing the professionalism of early childhood education teachers (PAUD). *Childhood Education: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini*, 4(1), 131–152.
- Mulyasa, E. (2012). *Early childhood education management*. PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Mulyasa, E. (2013). *Becoming a professional school principal*. PT Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Nafiqoh, H. (2017). The influence of school principals' leadership and achievement motivation on the performance of early childhood education teachers. *Tunas Siliwangi*, 3(1), 57–75.
- Nurdin, N., & Anhusadar, L. (2020). The effectiveness of online learning for early childhood education teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Jurnal Obsesi: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak*

- Usia Dini. <https://doi.org/10.31004/obsesi.v5i1.699>
- Nurhanisa, Firman, A., & Razak, M. (2023). The influence of principals' leadership style, learning facilities, and teacher professionalism on the performance of early childhood education teachers in Sidenreng Rappang Regency. *Jurnal Cash Flow: Jurnal Manajemen*, 2(1), 82–93.
- Rizali, A., et al. (2015). From conventional teachers to professional teachers. PT Gramedia Widiasarana Indonesia (Grasindo).
- Robbins, S. P. (2009). *Organizational behavior*. PT Indeks Kelompok Gramedia.
- Rozalena, R., & Kristiawan, M. (2017). Management of early childhood education learning in developing early childhood potential. *JMKSP (Jurnal Manajemen, Kepemimpinan, dan Supervisi Pendidikan)*, 2(1), 68–82.
- Sari, Y., Khosiah, S., & Maryani, K. (2020). Democratic leadership style of school principals and its effect on early childhood education teacher performance. *Jurnal Golden Age, Universitas Hamzanwadi*, 4(1), 20–29.
- Saud, U. S. (2012). *Teacher professional development*. Alfabeta.
- Slamet Suyanto. (2014). *Foundations of early childhood education*. Hikayat Publishing.
- Wiguna, I. B. A. A. (2021). Leadership of early childhood education principals during the COVID-19 pandemic. *Proceedings of the National Webinar IAHN-TP Palangka Raya, No. 1*, 221–233.