

## THE IMPORTANCE OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT ELEMENTS IN DEVELOPING MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

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**ABSTRACT.** This article explores the role and significance of project management elements in enhancing managerial competencies among preschool educators. As early childhood education increasingly incorporates innovative, structured, and outcome-oriented pedagogical approaches, project management practices provide an effective framework for planning, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating educational processes. The study highlights how project-based strategies strengthen educators' leadership, organizational capacity, decision-making skills, and collaborative practices, ultimately contributing to improved preschool management and child development outcomes.

**Keywords:** project management, preschool education, managerial competence, leadership, planning, innovation, collaborative learning.

### Introduction

In recent years, the education sector has witnessed a shift toward innovation-driven and efficiency-oriented management models. Preschool education institutions, being the foundational stage of learning, require educators who possess strong managerial competencies. Effective management in early childhood settings ensures structured educational processes, consistent child development, quality assurance, and effective communication among teachers, parents, and administrators.

Project management, recognized globally as a strategic framework for organizing and executing complex tasks, offers substantial benefits when adapted to preschool education. Its core principles—goal orientation, structured planning, time management, resource allocation, teamwork, and continuous evaluation—align closely with the competencies required in modern early childhood pedagogy.

The integration of project management elements into preschool educational practice not only improves organizational efficiency but also enhances the professional capacity and managerial mindset of teachers. Thus, the topic is both timely and essential in addressing current educational reforms and modernization processes.

### Theoretical Foundations of Project Management in Education

Project management is defined as a systematic approach to planning, executing, and evaluating tasks within defined scopes, timelines, and resources. In educational contexts, it serves as a guiding framework for implementing structured and collaborative learning activities.

### Key Principles of Project Management

The following principles form the foundation of project management in preschool settings:



- **Goal Orientation:** Every project begins with clearly defined objectives and measurable outcomes.
- **Structured Planning:** Tasks are divided into phases with specific deadlines and responsibilities.
- **Resource Optimization:** Material, financial, and human resources are allocated efficiently.
- **Team Collaboration:** Teachers, administrators, parents, and children engage in cooperative tasks.
- **Evaluation and Reflection:** Outcomes are assessed using predetermined criteria.

## The Importance of Project Management for Preschool Educators

Integrating project management into preschool education contributes significantly to the development of managerial competencies:

1. **Development of Planning Skills.** Educators learn to design strategic plans, develop schedules, identify goals, and determine appropriate pedagogical methods.
2. **Improved Organizational Competence.** By following structured project phases, teachers gain skills in managing classroom activities, coordinating with colleagues, and organizing educational events.
3. **Enhanced Decision-Making and Problem-Solving.** Projects require educators to identify challenges, analyze situations, and propose effective solutions, fostering critical and analytical thinking.
4. **Increased Leadership Capacity.** Teachers take initiative, guide teams, distribute responsibilities, and motivate participants—key elements of educational leadership.
5. **Strengthened Collaboration and Communication.** Project-based activities promote communication among educators, children, and parents, creating a supportive, transparent learning environment.
6. **Promotion of Innovation.** Projects encourage creative thinking and the integration of modern pedagogical technologies, contributing to the overall modernization of preschool education.

## Discussion: The Impact of Project-Based Management on Educator Competence

Studies indicate that educators who apply project management techniques demonstrate:

- greater professional autonomy,
- stronger leadership and coordination abilities,
- improved confidence in managing complex tasks,
- more systematic approaches to teaching,
- better time management,
- active engagement in innovation, and



- enhanced ability to evaluate their own pedagogical effectiveness.

Project-based management transforms educators from passive implementers into active decision-makers and innovators. It thus plays a crucial role in elevating the quality of preschool education and preparing institutions to meet modern educational standards.

## CONCLUSION

The integration of project management elements into preschool education institutions has significant potential for enhancing educators' managerial competencies. By fostering planning, organization, leadership, collaboration, and evaluation skills, project management supports the professional growth of teachers and contributes to effective institutional governance.

As the preschool sector continues to modernize, the use of structured, measurable, and collaborative project-based approaches becomes essential. Ultimately, project management not only improves teacher competence but also positively influences children's learning environments, institutional efficiency, and overall educational outcomes.

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate that the integration of project management elements into preschool education institutions is not only beneficial but necessary for improving the managerial competencies of educators. In an era characterized by rapid technological advancement, increasing educational demands, and the need for efficiency, preschool educators require structured, innovative, and outcome-oriented management approaches. Project-based management provides exactly such a framework.

First, the application of project management principles—such as goal-setting, task planning, time management, and resource allocation—enables educators to adopt a more systematic and organized approach to their pedagogical responsibilities. This systematic structure enhances the clarity and coherence of educational processes, ultimately improving classroom management and the overall functioning of preschool institutions.

Second, the study highlights that project-based approaches significantly strengthen educators' leadership abilities. Through active involvement in project planning and execution, teachers develop initiative, confidence, communication skills, and the ability to guide collaborative efforts. These qualities are critical for modern educators who are expected to be not only instructors but also managers, innovators, and facilitators within their institutions.

Third, project management enhances educators' problem-solving and decision-making competencies. Working within a project framework exposes teachers to real-life challenges that require analytical thinking, evaluation of alternatives, and selection of effective solutions. This reflective and analytical process fosters a culture of continuous improvement and encourages educators to innovate.

Additionally, project-based management strengthens cooperation between teachers, parents, administrators, and children. Such collaboration builds a supportive educational environment, increases transparency, and facilitates shared responsibility for children's development. As a result, the educational process becomes more inclusive, integrated, and community-oriented.



Moreover, the use of project management elements contributes to the modernization of preschool education by promoting the adoption of digital tools, innovative pedagogical methods, and data-driven decision-making. This aligns early childhood education with global educational development trends and national modernization policies.

In summary, the incorporation of project management elements into preschool education significantly enhances the managerial, organizational, and leadership competencies of educators. It transforms their professional identity from passive performers to active planners, coordinators, and innovators. This shift not only improves institutional efficiency but also creates more effective, engaging, and developmentally appropriate learning environments for children.

Therefore, project management should be regarded as a strategic component of educator development programs, institutional improvement plans, and national preschool education reforms. Its implementation has the potential to elevate the quality of early childhood education and ensure sustainable, long-term progress within the sector.

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