**DEVELOPING MANAGEMENT COMPETENCIES IN PRESCHOOL EDUCATION WITHIN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION SYSTEM**

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**Abstract**

This article addresses the development of management competencies within the preschool education system as a crucial aspect of public administration. It examines the challenges and opportunities for enhancing leadership, governance, and resource management in early childhood education. By focusing on strategic planning, stakeholder collaboration, and professional development, this paper proposes actionable solutions to improve managerial efficiency and ensure the sustainable growth of the preschool sector.

**Keywords:** Public Administration, Preschool Education, Management Competencies, Leadership Development, Educational Policy

**Introduction**

The role of public administration in managing the preschool education sector is fundamental to fostering quality education and equitable access for all children. As a key stage in human development, preschool education requires competent governance to address challenges such as resource allocation, inclusivity, and quality assurance. The development of management competencies among educational leaders, policymakers, and administrators is critical for achieving these objectives.

**The Role of Public Administration in Preschool Education**

**Strategic Management**

Public administrators must design and implement strategic plans that align preschool education goals with national development priorities. For example, integrating frameworks such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into preschool policies ensures a focus on inclusivity, quality, and lifelong learning opportunities [1, p.22-30]

**Leadership and Governance**

Effective leadership is essential for navigating the complexities of preschool education management. Leaders must demonstrate skills in resource mobilization, team management, and policy execution while fostering an environment of accountability and innovation [2, p.45-60].

**Policy Implementation and Monitoring**

Public administrators play a crucial role in translating educational policies into actionable outcomes. This involves establishing monitoring and evaluation systems to track progress, assess teacher performance, and ensure that educational standards are met consistently [3, p.143-157].

**Community Engagement**

Engaging parents, educators, and local authorities is vital for building trust and ensuring that policies reflect the needs of the community. Collaborative decision-making enhances transparency and accountability in the preschool education system [4, p.150-165].

**Challenges in Managing Preschool Education**

Managing preschool education effectively is a complex endeavor that requires addressing various systemic and operational challenges. These obstacles not only impact the delivery of quality education but also hinder efforts to achieve equity and sustainability in early childhood development programs. Key challenges include resource constraints, insufficient leadership capacity, policy misalignments, and resistance to change, each of which requires careful attention and strategic solutions.

**1. Resource Constraints**

Unequal distribution of resources remains one of the most pressing issues in managing preschool education. Rural and remote areas often experience significant disparities in access to infrastructure, learning materials, and qualified educators. Urban centers may benefit from relatively better facilities, but the lack of equitable resource allocation exacerbates regional and socioeconomic divides. Insufficient funding further compounds the issue, limiting the ability to expand infrastructure or invest in modern teaching tools and technologies, leaving many preschools ill-equipped to provide quality education.

**2. Lack of Skilled Leaders**

Leadership plays a pivotal role in the success of preschool education programs, yet many administrators lack the necessary training and experience to govern effectively. Inadequate preparation in educational management leaves leaders ill-equipped to handle challenges such as resource optimization, staff development, and curriculum implementation. The absence of robust leadership development programs means that many leaders struggle to foster an environment that prioritizes continuous improvement and innovation.

**3. Policy Gaps**

A significant barrier to progress lies in the gaps between policy design and its implementation. While national frameworks often articulate ambitious goals for preschool education, the practical application of these policies frequently falls short due to insufficient coordination among stakeholders. Inconsistent monitoring, unclear accountability structures, and a lack of alignment between national and local levels result in delays and inefficiencies. These gaps undermine the effectiveness of reforms and make it difficult to achieve the desired outcomes.

**4. Resistance to Change**

Traditional approaches and entrenched mindsets pose a significant challenge to modernizing preschool education management. Teachers, administrators, and even parents may resist innovative practices, viewing them as unnecessary or disruptive to established norms. Resistance to adopting technology, new teaching methodologies, or management practices can stall the progress of reforms. This reluctance is often rooted in limited awareness, inadequate training, or fear of failure, making it essential to address these concerns through targeted capacity-building efforts.

So that, managing preschool education involves navigating a range of challenges that affect equity, quality, and efficiency. Addressing these issues requires a coordinated effort to allocate resources equitably, enhance leadership capacity, bridge policy-practice gaps, and foster a culture open to innovation and continuous learning. Only through such a comprehensive approach can preschool education systems meet the needs of young learners and lay a strong foundation for lifelong success.

**Developing Management Competencies**

**Professional Development**

Training programs for educational administrators are essential for building competencies in leadership, strategic planning, and resource management. Workshops and certification programs focused on preschool education can address skill gaps and enhance decision-making capabilities [5, p.45-50].

**Digital Tools and Innovations**

The use of digital tools in preschool management facilitates data-driven decision-making, resource tracking, and performance evaluation. Platforms for monitoring enrollment rates, teacher attendance, and student outcomes can improve administrative efficiency [1, p.28-32].

**Inclusive Leadership Models**

Adopting inclusive leadership practices that prioritize diversity and equity ensures that all children, regardless of socioeconomic background, have access to quality education. Inclusive models also promote gender balance and cultural sensitivity within the educational workforce [6, p.288-305].

**Collaborative Governance**

Public administrators should foster partnerships between government agencies, private institutions, and non-governmental organizations. These collaborations enable resource sharing, innovation, and the implementation of best practices across the preschool sector [4, p.165-180].

Case Study: Uzbekistan’s Preschool Reforms

Uzbekistan has undertaken substantial reforms to enhance access to preschool education and improve its overall quality. Initiatives such as teacher training programs, digital monitoring tools, and increased investment in infrastructure have demonstrated the importance of developing management competencies in achieving sustainable outcomes [7, p.4-8]. Recognizing the critical role of early childhood education in shaping lifelong learning and development, the government has implemented a comprehensive strategy targeting key areas such as teacher training, infrastructure development, and technological integration.

**Expanding Access to Preschool Education**

One of the primary objectives of the reforms is to expand access to preschool education, especially in rural and underserved areas. This includes building new preschools, refurbishing existing ones, and introducing mobile and alternative forms of early childhood education to reach children in remote regions. The government has allocated significant funds to ensure that every child, regardless of location or socioeconomic status, has an opportunity to benefit from quality preschool education.

**Improving Teacher Competencies**

Teacher training programs are at the heart of these reforms. Uzbekistan has established new training centers and programs to enhance the pedagogical skills and qualifications of preschool educators. These initiatives focus on modern teaching methodologies, child-centered learning approaches, and inclusive education practices to meet the diverse needs of young learners. Continuous professional development programs also aim to equip teachers with the tools needed to implement innovative educational strategies effectively.

**Integrating Digital Monitoring Tools**

To ensure accountability and track progress, the government has introduced digital monitoring tools. These tools enable the real-time collection and analysis of data related to enrollment rates, attendance, teacher performance, and resource allocation. By leveraging technology, policymakers can identify gaps, allocate resources more effectively, and measure the impact of interventions on educational outcomes.

**Strengthening Infrastructure**

Investment in infrastructure has been a cornerstone of the reforms. Uzbekistan has prioritized the construction of modern, child-friendly preschool facilities equipped with the necessary learning materials and resources. This initiative not only improves the quality of education but also provides a safe and stimulating environment for children to explore and learn.

**Promoting Management Competencies**

A critical element of the reforms has been the emphasis on developing management competencies among educational leaders and administrators. Training programs in education management have been launched to empower school leaders with the skills needed to oversee the implementation of reforms, manage resources efficiently, and foster a culture of continuous improvement within preschools.

**Achieving Sustainable Outcomes**

The combination of these initiatives underscores Uzbekistan’s commitment to achieving sustainable outcomes in preschool education. By addressing key challenges such as teacher quality, access disparities, and infrastructure deficits, the country aims to build a robust foundation for lifelong learning and development. These reforms also align with global best practices and reflect Uzbekistan’s dedication to fulfilling its commitments under international education frameworks, such as the Sustainable Development Goals.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, management competencies are critical to the success of preschool education within the public administration framework. By focusing on professional development, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement, policymakers and administrators can overcome systemic challenges and foster sustainable growth in the sector. Investments in leadership development and digital innovation will ensure that preschool education contributes to broader social and economic development goals. Uzbekistan’s preschool education reforms demonstrate a holistic approach to transforming early childhood education. By investing in teacher training, leveraging technology, and strengthening infrastructure, the country is laying the groundwork for a more equitable and high-quality educational system that meets the needs of its youngest learners.

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