

Instructional Leadership Practices, Communication Skills, Collaborating Skills, and Performance of Early Childhood Educators: A Causal Model

Charmaine P. Pagonzaga., Ma. Fe. D. Opina., Nenita I. Prado

Philippine College Foundation, Valencia, Bukidnon, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

Early childhood educators play a pivotal role in child development, particularly in brain development, which is known to be significantly advanced by age five. This study explored the impact of instructional leadership practices, communication skills, and collaborating skills among early childhood educators in the Philippines, a context where early childhood education integration into the K12 curriculum is a recent development. The participants of the study were the 300 Early Childhood Educators both in the private and public schools from the province of Bukidnon, Philippines. Descriptive correlational and causal comparative research designs were employed in the study. Stratified random sampling was used to ensure the representativeness of the sample. The Early Childhood Educators competently applied the particular aspects of instructional leadership strategies. Communication skills are generally perceived as effective across various domains, including verbal, non-verbal, written, and visual communication. The collaborating skills are effective in both internal and external contexts. Early Childhood Educators' performance is significantly predicted by professional development, verbal communication, visual communication, and collaborative skills. The best-fitting causal model on the performance of Early Childhood Educators is anchored on non-verbal communication, professional development, visual communication and written communication, as mediated by collaboration skills and verbal communication. This model is called *CHARMAINE PAGONZAGA'S* Model on the Performance of Early Childhood Educators.

Keywords: professional development, non-verbal communication, visual communication, best-fitting causal model, performance

INTRODUCTION

Critical concerns about instructional leadership, communication, and collaboration among educators have been brought to light by watching the researcher's 4-year-old son's fluctuating levels of involvement and passion in several early childhood education settings. During the observation, the researcher identified significant issues in early childhood education, particularly regarding inconsistent instructional leadership, poor communication skills, and variability in educator performance. For instance, in some classes where leadership was decisive and educators communicated effectively, the researcher observed that the child was excited to join and exhibited positive learning behaviors. On the other hand, the child needed to be more enthusiastic and willing to participate in different classrooms with adequate leadership and communication. Additionally, collaborative practices among educators led to more consistent and enriching educational experiences, whereas isolated teaching practices resulted in clarity and consistency. The researcher's observations underscore the urgent need to investigate and address these critical areas to improve the quality of early childhood education and enhance outcomes for young learners.

"A teacher affects eternity; no one can tell when and where his influence stops." these are the words of Adams in Merrill (2021). Yes, teachers or educators have a very significant impact on the totality of a learner's life. Among all groups of educators, Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) are among the most influential, as ECEs lay the foundation for learning, discovery, socialization, critical thinking, focus, self-control, and even motivation in life. As Li (2023) mentioned, Early Childhood Educators play a crucial role in brain

development, as 90% of the brain could be fully developed by the age of 5, which roughly belongs to the early childhood stages of learning. Early Childhood Educators are expected to inspire, encourage, and promote children's education, care, and rights.

Additionally, ensuring safety and security among the young learners while on the school premises is a huge responsibility of an ECE. The duties of ECEs are so vast that they may require the attention of researchers all over the globe, especially in the Philippines, where the integration of ECE has just been streamlined in the new K-12 curriculum. Their instructional leadership, communication, and collaborating skills are as important as their teaching performance, equivalent to the full development of the potential abilities of the young learners in school.

Moreover, the instructional leadership skills of ECEs could help develop and communicate the school's vision, mission, and goals, which sets high standards for the academic achievement of their young learners. Corollary to this statement, Ahmed (2016) mentioned that instructional leadership practices include framing the school goals, supervising and evaluating instruction, coordinating the curriculum, monitoring the young learners' progress, maximizing the use of instructional time, and maintaining high visibility in school even after instructional time ensuring the young learner's safety.

Another significant quality of an ECE is collaborative skills. It is essential for creating a growth-based learning environment and increasing student learning progress. Research shows that teachers who work together and learn from each other are more successful in improving student outcomes than those who work alone. Teacher-centered collaborative practices in school are specifically practical for teacher learning because they allow teachers to engage in in-depth discussions about teaching approaches and student learning relevant to their context (Akiba & Liang, 2016; Lecat, 2019). Research findings show that school-based teacher collaboration can increase student achievement, especially those collaboration initiatives that are purposefully organized in schools (Hargreaves, 2019).

In addition, Bouchrika (2022) mentioned that teacher collaboration involves teachers working together to lead, instruct, and mentor learners to improve student learning and achievement. The benefits of collaborative learning include the development of higher-level thinking, oral communication, self-management, and leadership skills.

Collaboration is essential to sustain inclusive settings. No single educator should be responsible for holding the expertise in the infinite presentations of learner variability. Further, students work with multiple adults within a school building. Collaboration creates safe conditions for students and educators to share knowledge and collectively problem-solve (National Learning Center for Learning Disabilities, 2021).

With the recent studies presented, there is no causal model that focuses on all three aspects of instructional, communication, and collaboration skills for early childhood educators. The researcher, therefore, wants to investigate the overall performance of early childhood educators in this setting. Specifically for early childhood education, the study's findings would contribute to raising the caliber of teachers.

Framework of the Study

This study is anchored on: Hallinger's instructional leadership theory (2010) which focuses on the role of school leaders in promoting effective teaching and learning practices. He emphasizes the importance of principals engaging in activities that directly support and enhance classroom instruction, such as setting clear instructional goals, providing resources and support for teachers, and creating a positive school climate conducive to learning. Hallinger's framework highlights the idea that effective instructional leadership requires a deep understanding of teaching and learning processes and strong interpersonal and organizational skills to facilitate collaboration among stakeholders and drive continuous improvement in educational outcomes (Hallinger, 2010). Secondly, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction for cognitive development. Communication is seen as a primary means through which children learn and construct knowledge. The interaction between children and more knowledgeable others (peers, teachers, and parents) is crucial for language development (Vygotsky, 1962). Moreover, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory of

cognitive development reflects the root of all mental functions of the learners, involving unity of behavior and consciousness, mediation, and psychological systems that facilitate total learning and development of an individual. According to Vygotsky (1962), much meaningful learning by the child occurs through social interaction with a skillful tutor. The tutor may model behaviors or provide verbal instructions for the child. Vygotsky refers to this as cooperative or collaborative dialogue. The child seeks to understand the actions or instructions supplied by the tutor (often the parent or teacher) and then internalizes the information, using it to guide or regulate their performance.

Additionally, collaboration skills in early childhood education are crucial for developing young children's social competence, emotional intelligence, and cognitive skills. These skills enable children to collaborate, share ideas, resolve conflicts, and build relationships. These cooperative abilities are based on the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which was developed by Vygotsky and emphasizes social contact has a role in cognitive development. The spectrum of tasks a kid can complete with the assistance of an adult with more excellent expertise is known as the ZPD.

Collaborative activities fall within this zone, where peers and adults scaffold children's learning experiences. Collaborative learning experiences are essential for developing higher-order thinking skills. Collaborative skills, according to Vygotsky, are developed through interaction with others who are more knowledgeable or skilled. This process, known as "scaffolding," involves more competent individuals providing support and guidance to less experienced ones, developing new skills and understanding (Vygotsky, 1962).

Lastly, Hallinger's theory (2011) provides the foundation for understanding the effectiveness of early childhood educators. This theory focuses on instructional leadership and how leaders can influence teaching methods to improve student outcomes. Within the framework of early childhood education, Hallinger highlights the importance of effective leadership practices in supporting and enhancing the performance of educators working with young children.

Hallinger (2011) emphasizes how effective leadership can positively impact teacher performance, influencing the quality of education provided to young children. His study emphasizes how important it is for educators to collaborate, pursue professional development opportunities, and be supported in their leadership practices to improve their performance and, eventually, the educational experiences of their students. Hallinger emphasized that early childhood educators require the support and direction of leaders. This assistance could include tools, chances for professional growth, and motivation to help teachers advance their craft. Leaders should make access to workshops, training, and other educational opportunities specially designed to meet the requirements of early childhood educators more accessible. Hallinger's philosophy ultimately focuses on enhancing results for young children. Leaders can improve the overall quality of education that children receive throughout their formative years by supporting early childhood educators' work.

Statement of the Problem

The study would like to develop a structural model of the instructional leadership skills, communication skills, and collaborating skills on the performance of Early Childhood Educators. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions.

Specific Problems

1. What is the level of instructional leadership practices of the Early Childhood Educators in terms of:
 - 1.1. curriculum;
 - 1.2. instruction;
 - 1.3. student progress, and;
 - 1.4. professional development?

2. What is the level of communication skills of Early Childhood Educators in terms of:

- 2.1. verbal communication;
- 2.2. non-verbal communication;
- 2.3. written communication; and
- 2.4. visual communication?

3. What is the level of collaborating skills of Early Childhood Educators in terms of:

- 1.1. internal;
- 1.2. external?

4. What is the level of performance of Early Childhood Educators in terms of:

- 4.1. emotional commitment;
- 4.2. work ethics, and
- 4.3. leadership abilities?

5. Is there a significant relationship between Early Childhood Educators' performance and:

- 5.1 instructional leadership practices;
- 5.2 communication skills; and
- 5.3 collaborating skills?

6. Which of the variables best predicts Early Childhood Educators' performance?

7. What causal model best fits Early Childhood Educators' performance?

Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The following null hypotheses were formulated based on Problems 5, 6 and 7.

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between the early childhood educators' performance and their instructional leadership practices, communication skills, and collaborating skills;

Ho2: There is no variable that best predicts early childhood educators' performance.

Ho3: There is no model that best fits early childhood educators' performance.

METHODOLOGY

Research Setting

The locale of the study was within the province of Bukidnon, specifically at the three divisions, namely, the Dep-Ed Division of Bukidnon, the Dep Ed Division of Valencia City, and the Dep-Ed Division of Malaybalay City, and selected private schools within the province of Bukidnon. The province of Bukidnon is situated in the mountainous parts of Region 10, which are infused with uneven terrain. Also, some municipalities and barangays surrounded by mountain ranges are inaccessible to any transport system. Further, the largest division

of Region X is committed to delivering its mandate to provide access to relevant, inclusive, culture-sensitive, and quality education to its learners. For several years, it has provided programs and projects to accommodate the needs of its clients from urban, rural, and remote areas by recognizing the geographically isolated and disadvantaged areas (GIDAs) of its school communities (DepEd Bukidnon, 2017). Notwithstanding the developments to improve performance, the Division encountered barriers and bottlenecks in improving learning outcomes and achieving universal participation. However, with the recent reforms and decentralization of school management, the division was able to monitor and evaluate these issues at the school level with the aid of direct downloading of school funds for its operations and improvement of educational outcomes. The provision of early childhood education in public schools has made early childhood education accessible to all Filipino children through Universal Kindergarten. Thus, Figures 2-4 are herewith shown, which comprise the locale of the study.

Research Design

A causal model is a way of representing the relationships between variables that are assumed to cause or influence each other. A causal model can help us understand how different factors affect the outcomes of interest, such as early childhood education. The study used the descriptive correlational and causal comparative research designs to find the causative relationship between the independent and dependent variables. Descriptive research is concerned with the description of data and the characteristics of the population. The goal is the acquisition of factual, accurate, and systematic data that can be used in averages, frequencies, and similar statistical calculations. It also supported the opinion (Crosswell, 2012) that in correlational research design, the researcher used the statistical correlation test to describe and measure the degree of association or relation between two or more variables or sets of scores. Maheswari (2018) highlighted the purpose of causal comparative research is to identify the causative relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

Participants and Sampling Procedure

The participants of the study were 300 Early Childhood Educators both in private and public schools. Sample size was determined by applying the Raosoft Sample Size Calculator (Raosoft, 2004), where the margin of error is the amount of error that can be tolerated. This study utilized stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation of different educational institutions. Based on the total population of 911 educators, the Raosoft sample size calculator indicated a required sample size of 300. This stratified approach ensures that our sample accurately reflects the diversity within the population, allowing for robust analysis of instructional leadership practices, communication skills, and collaborative skills across various educational contexts. Stratified sampling is a probability sampling technique used in a sample survey. The elements of the targeted population are divided into distinct groups, or strata, with elements within each stratum being similar to one another in terms of certain survey-relevant characteristics (Parsons, 2017).

Research Instrument

The data for this study was gathered through self-administered surveys using the hard copy (in-person) method. These questionnaires measured the instructional leadership practices, communication skills, collaborating skills, and performance of early childhood educators. A research instrument for a causal model is a tool or method that can be used to measure or manipulate the variables of interest in a causal study. Causal research aims to identify the cause-and-effect relationships between two or more variables. This study utilized adapted questionnaires from Jimenez and Galicia (2023), as instruments for data collection. The questionnaires were modified to suit a different purpose, context, or language than the original ones.

The survey instrument has three (3) parts. The participants' demographic information is covered in the first section. The indicators for early childhood educators' instructional leadership, communication, and teamwork abilities are included in the second section, while their performance indicators are found in the third.

Data Gathering Procedure

Ensuring thorough preparation with appropriate instruments is crucial in the data-gathering process. Necessary approvals were obtained from the Dean of the School of Teacher Education and from the Schools Division

Superintendent, and also from the Principals of the Private schools. Before distributing the survey and gathering data from the intended participants, formal letters were personally handed over to the superintendent of the school's division, as well as the School Principals of the selected Private schools seeking permission to distribute test surveys and questionnaires to the teacher participants.

Consent forms were provided alongside the survey forms. Establishing trust between and among the participants is a fundamental principle of research ethics, which is achieved through an explicit agreement. The informed consent was distributed and presented in a manner that ensured participants could freely participate and contribute to this study. They were given thorough information about the implications of their participation and were guaranteed consent before joining the study. The participants were given a detailed explanation of the study procedures, potential risks, and benefits. They were assured that any information they shared would be kept strictly confidential.

Researchers are crucial in upholding ethical standards, particularly when protecting privacy and maintaining confidentiality. The researcher took great care to safeguard the personal information and details of the respondents, ensuring that they were used exclusively for academic and personal purposes and never disclosed or made public. By adhering to principles such as informed consent, confidentiality, and respect for the respondents, the researcher aims to conduct the study responsibly and respectfully. The researcher was committed to upholding the research's objective of conveying accurate information and avoiding errors (Chetty, 2016).

Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

The questionnaire was adapted from Jimenez and Galicia (2023), was submitted to three experts for validation to ensure that the instruments are valid. Pilot testing was conducted to 30 teacher participants not included in the study. Then reliability evaluation using Cronbach's alpha was used to test the instruments. All the instruments are valid and reliable.

Statistical Techniques

The data gathered in the study was subjected to statistical analysis. For better results and a more comprehensible interpretation of the data gathered, statistical tools were used to explore the scale of the survey data, validate the item and scale, and determine the nature and strength of patterns in response. Descriptive Statistics such as a mean and standard deviation were used to interpret problems 1-4. In interpreting problem 5, Pearson-Product Moment Correlation was utilized to determine the relationship between the instructional leadership, communication, and collaboration skills of the teacher. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient is suitable when the data for both variables are continuous and follow a linear relationship. Additionally, it requires bivariate normality, homoscedasticity, and independence of observations (Field, 2018). Problem 6 utilized the predictive analysis of multiple regression to examine the relationship and the degree of influence between the independent variables and dependent variables. Regression analysis, a statistical method extensively used in research, is employed in several scenarios. It serves as a powerful tool for predictive modeling, enabling the estimation of a dependent variable's value based on one or more independent variables. Moreover, regression analysis aids in exploring the nature and strength of relationships between variables, facilitating the quantification of the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable. Additionally, it is utilized for controlling and adjusting for the effects of other variables, thereby enabling a focused examination of the relationship between variables while holding certain factors constant. Furthermore, regression analysis supports hypothesis testing by providing statistical tests to determine the significance of observed relationships between variables. Finally, it is valuable for model evaluation and comparison, offering measures such as R-squared, adjusted R-squared, AIC, BIC, etc., to assess model fit and performance across different specifications (Hair et al., 2019; Field, 2018).

Finally, this study employed path analysis through Structural equation modeling (SEM) to determine the best-fit model for the performance of early childhood educators. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a versatile statistical technique widely utilized in the social sciences, psychology, and economics for testing complex theoretical models involving multiple variables and causal relationships among them. SEM is particularly advantageous when researchers aim to examine intricate hypotheses, as it allows for the simultaneous evaluation of direct and indirect effects among variables. Notably, SEM can handle latent (unobserved)

variables, enabling the modeling of constructs that cannot be directly measured, such as intelligence or personality traits. Moreover, SEM is adept at accounting for measurement error in observed variables, enhancing the accuracy of parameter estimates and model fit assessments. With its array of fit indices and statistics, SEM facilitates the evaluation of how well the proposed model aligns with the observed data. Additionally, SEM empowers researchers to explore complex mediation and moderation effects, offering insights into the underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions of relationships among variables (Kline, 2015).



BUKIDNON STATE UNIVERSITY
Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, 8700, Tel (088) 221-2237; TeleFax (088) 813-2717
www.bsc.edu.ph - presoffice@bsc.edu.ph

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VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

Table 2

Reliability Statistics of the Instrument

Instruments	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Interpretation
Instructional Leadership	40	0.954	Reliable
Communicating Skills	40	0.970	Reliable
Collaborating Skills	20	0.925	Reliable
ECE Performance	30	0.947	Reliable

Prepared by:

DR. MARLON S. FRIAS
University Statistician

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BUKIDNON STATE UNIVERSITY
Malaybalay City, Bukidnon, 8700, Tel (088) 221-2237; TeleFax (088) 813-2717
www.bsc.edu.ph - presoffice@bsc.edu.ph

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RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Table 1 Summary of Mean Scores for the Level of Instructional Leadership Practices of the Early Childhood Educators

SUB-VARIABLES ON INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF ECEs	MEAN	SD	DESCRIPTION	INTERPRETATION
Curriculum	4.31	0.610	Agree	High
Instruction	4.34	0.612	Agree	High
Student progress	4.36	0.634	Agree	High
Professional Development	4.28	0.661	Agree	High
Over-all Mean	4.32	0.629	Agree	High

Table 1 presents the Summary of Mean Scores for the Level of Instructional Leadership Practices of Early Childhood Educators. As shown in the table, the respondents obtained the highest mean score of $M=4.36$, $SD=.634$ for student progress, indicating that educators feel most effective in practices related to monitoring and supporting student development. This aligns with contemporary educational research emphasizing tracking student progress and implementing timely interventions to enhance learning outcomes. For instance, Khan (2020) highlights that data-driven decision-making and fostering a positive school climate are vital practices that significantly contribute to student progress.

Following closely, the mean score for instruction is $M=4.34$, $SD=.612$. This suggests that educators perceive their instructional leadership practices, such as guiding and collaborating with colleagues to improve teaching strategies, as highly effective. Effective instructional leadership is crucial in enhancing teaching quality and aligning instructional methods with school goals, as supported by Bada (2024), who notes the importance of focusing on instructional leadership to improve teachers' effectiveness. The curriculum sub-variable received a mean score of $M=4.31$, $SD=.61$, reflecting a strong agreement among educators on the effectiveness of their practices related to curriculum implementation. This is consistent with the findings of Marinette and Hui (2020), who emphasize that the success of a well-crafted curriculum heavily depends on its proper implementation. Effective curriculum leadership ensures that the instructional content meets educational standards and addresses the diverse needs of students.

The lowest mean score, $M=4.28$, $SD=.661$, was observed for professional development. Despite being the lowest, this score still falls within the 'agree' range, indicating that educators recognize the effectiveness of their professional development practices and acknowledge room for improvement. Continuous professional development is vital for keeping educators updated with the latest teaching methods and educational research, enhancing instructional quality, and improving student outcomes. Mora-Ruano (2021) states that continuous professional development is crucial to ensuring that educators are prepared to handle the challenges of today's classrooms.

The overall mean score of $M=4.32$, $SD=.629$, described as 'agree' and interpreted as 'high,' reveals that the Level of Instructional Leadership Practices of the Early Childhood Educators is perceived as effective by the respondents. This implies that Early Childhood Educators have a high level of instructional leadership practices across all four dimensions, namely: curriculum, instruction, student progress, and professional development. Effective instructional leadership plays a crucial role in the successful implementation of educational practices across various dimensions.

The data from Table 1 highlights the perceived effectiveness of instructional leadership practices among Early Childhood Educators. The slightly higher scores for student progress and instruction indicate that educators feel remarkably competent in these areas. However, the relatively lower score for professional development suggests a need for further focus and enhancement in providing ongoing support and growth opportunities for educators. These findings align with existing research, underscoring the critical role of effective instructional leadership in achieving positive educational outcomes.

Table 2 Summary of Mean Scores for the Level of Communication Skills of Early Childhood Educators

Sub-variables on Communication Skills of ECEs	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Verbal communication	4.38	0.715	Agree	High
Non-verbal communication	4.43	0.597	Agree	High
Written communication	4.39	0.622	Agree	High
Visual communication	4.37	0.620	Agree	High
Over-all Mean	4.39	0.639	Agree	High

Non-verbal communication emerges as the highest-rated skill, with a mean score of 4.43, suggesting that educators recognize the importance of gestures, facial expressions, and body language in conveying messages and fostering connections with children. This aspect of communication is particularly crucial in the early years, where verbal language development may still be emerging, emphasizing the need for educators to communicate effectively through multiple channels. Written communication follows closely, with a mean score of 4.39, indicating agreement among educators regarding its effectiveness in conveying information to parents, colleagues, and other stakeholders. Written communication plays a pivotal role in documenting children's progress, sharing essential announcements, and fostering collaboration within the community. Report cards, newsletters, and communication platforms are vital tools for maintaining transparent and collaborative relationships between educators and families. Verbal communication, with a mean score of 4.38, reflects educators' proficiency in articulating ideas, providing instructions, and facilitating discussions in the classroom. Effective verbal communication skills enable educators to engage students in meaningful dialogue, scaffold learning experiences, and create a supportive learning environment conducive to academic and socio-emotional development. Visual communication, though slightly lower in a mean score at 4.37, remains a valuable component of educators' repertoire, enhancing comprehension, engagement, and retention of information. Integrating visual aids such as charts, diagrams, and multimedia resources enriches the learning experience, catering to diverse learning styles and promoting active student participation.

The overall mean score of 4.39 signifies a high level of agreement among respondents regarding the effectiveness of their communication skills. This finding underscores the importance of ongoing professional development and reflective practice to further enhance educators' communication competencies and optimize learning outcomes for young children.

Moreover, the discussion is enriched by referencing relevant literature, which highlights the critical role of communication skills in early childhood education. Studies by Reith-Hall & Montgomery (2019), AkhtimWahyuni et al. (2017), and Study Driver (2022) emphasize the multifaceted benefits of effective communication for educators, students, and families, ranging from improved academic performance to enhanced social-emotional development.

Table 2 offers insightful information about early childhood educators' communication abilities, confirming their ability to interact with young students and stakeholders in textual, visual, non-verbal, and spoken domains. These results highlight how crucial it is to develop excellent communication skills in early childhood education settings in order to establish inclusive and caring learning environments.

Table 3 Summary of Collaboration Skills of Early Childhood Educators

Sub-variables on Collaboration Skills of ECEs	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Internal Collaboration	4.23	0.671	Agree	High
External Collaboration	4.16	0.704	Agree	High
Over-all Mean	4.20	0.688	Agree	High

With an emphasis on internal and external cooperation, Table 3 gives a general picture of the degree of collaboration proficiency among early childhood educators. The data reveal that educators perceive their skills in both dimensions of collaboration as effective, with mean scores of 4.23 for internal collaboration and 4.16 for external collaboration. The overall mean score of 4.20 further underscores the effectiveness of ECE educators' collaborative skills. Internal collaboration, characterized by teamwork and cooperation among

educators within the educational institution, received a slightly higher mean score of 4.23. This indicates that educators excel in working together within their professional community to support the holistic development of young learners. Effective internal collaboration is crucial for fostering a positive work environment and enhancing the quality of educational practices.

On the other hand, external collaboration, which involves partnerships and engagement with stakeholders outside the educational institution, received a mean score of 4.16. While slightly lower than internal collaboration, this score still indicates a high level of effectiveness in collaborating with parents, community organizations, government agencies, and other external stakeholders to support children's learning and development. However, it's essential to note that challenges may exist in achieving effective collaboration, particularly in external partnerships with parents. Research by Rouse and O'Brien (2017) indicates that while educators may perceive effective collaboration with parents, there may be discrepancies in parents' perceptions, particularly regarding communication and involvement in decision-making processes. This underscores the importance of ongoing efforts to enhance communication and mutual understanding between educators and parents.

The perceived efficacy of early childhood educators' collaborating abilities in both internal and external collaboration is shown in Table 3. These results highlight how crucial it is to promote cooperative partnerships both inside and outside of the educational community to support young learners' holistic development and improve the caliber of early childhood education programs.

Table 4 Summary of the Level of Performance of Early Childhood Educators

Sub-variables of the Performance of ECEs	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
Emotional commitment	4.36	0.615	Agree	High
Work ethics; and	4.19	0.666	Agree	High
Leadership abilities	4.26	0.656	Agree	High
Over-all Mean	4.27	0.656	Agree	High

The data underscores that emotional commitment is the most substantial area for Early Childhood Educators. This high level of performance suggests that educators are deeply invested in their work, which likely translates to better student outcomes and a more positive educational environment. Emotional commitment can drive educators to go above and beyond, fostering a nurturing and supportive atmosphere for young learners. Leadership abilities also scored highly, reflecting educators' confidence in their capacity to guide and inspire students and colleagues. Effective school leadership is pertinent to educational reform and improving educational outcomes (Ainley & Carstens, 2018). Strong leadership in ECE settings is crucial for setting a positive example, managing classrooms effectively, and building strong relationships with parents and the community. Ainley & Carstens, (2018) leadership is the most important school-level factor in students' learning outcomes.

Table 4 highlights that Early Childhood Educators generally perceive their performance as effective, with particular strengths in emotional commitment and leadership abilities. While work ethics also received a positive rating, it presents an area for further improvement through targeted support and professional development. These insights are consistent with existing literature and emphasize the importance of comprehensive support for ECE educators to ensure their continued effectiveness and satisfaction in their roles.

Table 5 Relationship Between Early Childhood Educators' Performance, Instructional Leadership Practices, Communication Skills and Collaborating Skills

Variables	N	R	Effect Size	P-value	Interpretation
Curriculum	300	.630	Large	.000	Significant
Instruction	300	.708	Large	.000	Significant
Student Progress	300	.711	Large	.000	Significant
Professional Development	300	.812	Large	.000	Significant

Instructional Leadership Practices	300	.806	Large	.000	Significant
Verbal communication	300	.766	Large	.000	Significant
Non-verbal communication	300	.753	Large	.000	Significant
Written communication	300	.766	Large	.000	Significant
Visual communication	300	.762	Large	.000	Significant
Communication Skills	300	.843	Large	.000	Significant
Internal Collaboration	300	.739	Large	.000	Significant
External Collaboration	300	.759	Large	.000	Significant
Collaborative Skills	300	.808	Large	.000	Significant

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 5 presents the results of the Pearson R correlation analysis, examining the significant relationships between Early Childhood Educators' performance, instructional leadership practices, communication skills, and collaboration skills. The correlation coefficients (r) and their corresponding p-values indicate the strength and significance of these relationships.

The table reveals that all examined variables have a large and significant positive correlation with Early Childhood educators' job performance, with p-values less than 0.05. The strength of these relationships, indicated by the correlation coefficients, suggests that improvements in these areas are strongly associated with enhanced job performance.

The strong correlation between curriculum ($R=.630$, $p=.000$) and educators' performance indicates that a well-structured curriculum is significantly associated with educators' effectiveness. This underscores the importance of a robust curriculum for facilitating effective teaching and learning. Similarly, the strong positive correlation for instruction ($r=.708$, $p=.000$) highlights the critical role of effective instructional strategies in enhancing educator performance, suggesting that continuous improvement in teaching methods is vital. Considering these data, the hypothesis stating that 'there is no relationship between Early Childhood Educators' performance and their instructional leadership practices, communication skills, and collaboration skills, is rejected.

Education plays a crucial role in the development of a nation, necessitating the effective implementation of the curriculum. Babtilla (2020) further emphasizes that no matter how well-crafted a curriculum is, its goals will not be achieved without proper implementation. This highlights the importance of instructional leadership in ensuring that curricular standards are met through creative assessment methods and professional development. Student progress ($r=.711$, $p=.000$) also shows a significant relationship with educator performance, emphasizing the reciprocal nature of teaching and learning, where student success directly reflects teacher effectiveness. Professional development ($r=.812$, $p=.000$) has one of the highest correlations, suggesting that ongoing professional development is crucial for maintaining and improving educators' performance. Investments in training and development programs are likely to yield substantial benefits.

Instructional leadership practices ($r=.806$, $p=.000$) strongly correlate with educator performance, highlighting the importance of leadership roles in guiding and supporting teachers to achieve their best. Effective leadership is essential for fostering collaborative and supportive school cultures, ultimately enhancing educator and student performance. Groenewald (2023) further emphasizes that good instructional leadership, especially in difficult educational situations, plays a critical role in supporting student access and teacher growth. A study by Hafsat Aliyu Bada (2024) suggests that instructional leadership, in terms of defining school mission, managing instructional programs, and developing a positive school learning climate, is significantly and positively associated with teachers' effectiveness.

Various forms of communication skills—verbal ($r=.766$, $p=.000$), non-verbal ($r=.753$, $p=.000$), written ($r=.766$, $p=.000$), and visual ($r=.762$, $p=.000$)—all show strong correlations with job performance. This emphasizes that effective communication is crucial for teaching, collaboration, and overall performance. Overall

communication skills ($r=.843$, $p=.000$) have the highest correlation, underscoring their critical role in an educator's performance. Collaboration skills, both internal ($r=.739$, $p=.000$) and external ($r=.759$, $p=.000$), show strong positive relationships with job performance. This indicates that effective collaboration within the school and with external stakeholders significantly enhances performance. Overall collaborative skills ($r=.808$, $p=.000$) further highlight the importance of teamwork and partnerships in achieving educational goals.

Table 6 Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for the Variables that Predict Early Childhood Educators' Performance

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Interpretation
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	.131	.131		.999	.319	Not Significant
Curriculum	-.014	.045	-.014	-.306	.760	Not Significant
Instruction	.002	.049	.002	.045	.964	Not Significant
Student Progress	.006	.044	.007	.142	.887	Not Significant
Professional Development	.153	.049	.167	3.116	.002	Significant
Verbal communication	.206	.043	.214	4.820	.000	Significant
Non-verbal communication	.070	.054	.071	1.299	.195	Not Significant
Written communication	.065	.053	.069	1.233	.218	Not Significant
Visual communication	.144	.047	.148	3.092	.002	Significant
Internal Collaboration	-.013	.059	-.015	-.218	.827	Not Significant
Collaboration Skills	.342	.069	.375	4.970	.000	Significant
R=.899 R ² =.808 F(10/288)=121.23 Sig/p=.000						

Table 6 presents the results of multiple regression analysis for the variables that predict Early Childhood Educators' performance. The analysis provides insights into which factors significantly influence performance and to what extent.

The multiple regression analysis reveals a strong positive relationship ($R = .899$) between Early Childhood Educators' performance and the independent variables, with an R^2 value of 0.808. This indicates that 80.8% of the variability in educators' performance is explained by the significant predictor variables: professional development, verbal communication, visual communication, and collaborative skills. The F-statistic ($F(10/288) = 121.23$) and its associated p-value ($p = .000$) confirm that the overall model is statistically significant. Among the predictor variables, collaboration skills ($Beta = .375$, $p = .000$) emerge as the most significant predictor of educators' performance. This is followed by verbal communication ($Beta = .214$, $p = .000$), professional development ($Beta = .167$, $p = .002$), and visual communication ($Beta = .148$, $p = .002$). The other variables, including curriculum, instruction, student progress, non-verbal communication, written communication, and internal collaboration, do not significantly predict performance.

The regression equation for this model is:

$$Y' = .131 + .153X_1 + .206X_2 + .144X_3 + .342X_4$$

Where:

Y' =Respondents' Performance

X_1 =Professional Development

X2=Verbal Communication

X3=Visual Communications

X4= Collaborative Skills

This equation suggests that for a 1-point increase in professional development, educators' performance increases by .153 points. Similarly, a 1-point increase in verbal communication results in a .206 point increase in performance, a 1-point increase in visual communication leads to a .144 point increase, and a 1-point increase in collaborative skills results in a .342 point increase in performance. Considering the data from the regression analysis, the hypothesis stating that, 'there are no variables, singly or in combination, that best predict Early Childhood Educators' performance' is hereby rejected.

Recommendations stemming from these findings include enhancing professional development by providing comprehensive and ongoing programs to support educators in improving their skills and knowledge. Mora-Ruano (2021) further emphasizes that providing ongoing professional development opportunities ensures teachers stay updated with the latest educational practices and research, thereby improving instructional methods and student outcomes. Moreover, investing in training programs targeting verbal and visual communication skills is crucial, as effective communication plays a pivotal role in facilitating teaching interactions with students and colleagues. Additionally, fostering collaborative skills is essential; institutions can achieve this by encouraging and facilitating collaboration among educators and stakeholders through various means, such as team-building activities and collaborative projects. Studies by Datnow & Park (2019), Drago-Severson and Blum-DeStefano (2019), and others underscore the significance of collaborative structures such as professional learning communities (PLCs) and communities of practice (CoP) in promoting continuous improvement and professional growth among educators. Ultimately, by prioritizing these areas, educational institutions can significantly improve the overall effectiveness and performance of Early Childhood Educators, thereby leading to better educational outcomes for students.

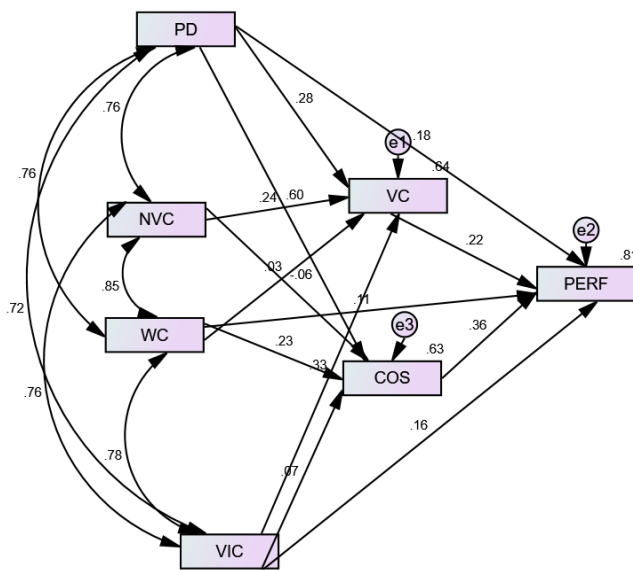
Table 7 Summary of Goodness-of-Fit Measures of the Three Causal Models

Model	CMIN/DF	P-value	NFI	TLI	CFI	RFI	RMSEA
1	69.58	.000	.136	-.272	.133	-.267	.479
2	24.87	.000	.94	.675	.942	.666	.283
3	1.33	.264	.999	.995	1.00	.982	.033
Standard	<2	>.05	>.95	>.95	>.95	>.95	<.05

Best Fit Model on the Performance of Early Childhood Educators

The best-fit model of Early Childhood Educators' performance is causal model 3 since its model fit values for CMIN/DF (1.33 <.2), P-value (.264 >.05), NFI(.999>.95), TLI (.995>.95), CFI(1.00>.95), RFI(.982>.95), and RMSEA(.033<.05) were within the acceptable or standard values of the said model fit indices. This Model 3 implies that Early Childhood Educators' performance was significantly influenced by verbal communication (VC) ($p<.05$), collaboration skills (COS) ($p<.05$), professional development (PD) ($p<.05$), written communication skills (WC) ($p<.05$), and visual communication skills (VIC) ($p<.05$). In addition, causal model 3 states that collaboration skills (COS) have mediated the significant relationship between professional development (PD) and performance of ECEs (PERF), and written communication (WC) and performance (PERF). At the same time, verbal communication (VC) also mediated the significant relationship between professional development (PD) and performance (PERF) of Early Childhood Educators. Thus, causal model 3 best fits the performance of the ECEs; and, the hypothesis that states, 'There is no causal model that best fits ECEs' performance' is hereby rejected.

Figure 10 Causal Model 3 – CHARMAINE PAGONZAGA'S model of Early Childhood Educators' Performance



Legend:

C-Curriculum
I-Instruction
SP-Student Progress
PD-Professional Development
VC-Verbal Communication
NVC-Non-verbal Communication
WC-Written Communication
VIC-Visual Communication
IC-Internal Collaboration
COS-Collaborating Skills
PERF-Teachers' Performance

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are hereby drawn:

Early Childhood Educators effectively practiced the specific dimensions of Instructional leadership practices as defined in this study, particularly in instruction and student progress, align with existing literature emphasizing the importance of strong leadership. The highest effectiveness is noted in practices related to student development, consistent with research highlighting the impact of data-driven decision-making and positive school climates. Curriculum implementation is also seen as effective, reflecting the crucial role of leadership in meeting educational standards. While professional development received the lowest effectiveness score, it still falls within the 'agree' range, indicating room for improvement.

Early Childhood Educators generally perceive their communication skills as effective across various domains, including verbal, non-verbal, written, and visual communication. The highest-rated skill is non-verbal communication, emphasizing the importance of gestures, facial expressions, and body language in engaging young learners, followed closely by written communication, which is crucial for maintaining transparent relationships with parents and colleagues. Verbal communication is rated highly, underscoring its role in classroom interactions and student engagement. Visual communication, while slightly lower in the score, remains essential for enhancing comprehension and participation through visual aids. The overall effectiveness of these communication skills supports the creation of supportive and inclusive learning environments, highlighting the need for ongoing professional development to refine these competencies further and improve educational outcomes for young children.

Early Childhood Educators perceive their collaborating skills as effective in internal and external contexts. Internal collaboration, which includes working with colleagues and bridging home-school connections, suggests that educators excel at fostering teamwork and supportive professional communities. External collaboration, involving partnerships with parents, community organizations, and government agencies, is also rated highly, though slightly lower than internal collaboration. This highlights the educators' commitment to engaging parents in their children's education and improving holistic child development through collaborative efforts. However, slightly lower scores in areas like connecting with external institutions suggest growth potential. Overall, these collaborative efforts align with research that emphasizes the importance of such partnerships in enhancing educational practices and outcomes.

Early Childhood Educators demonstrate a commendable high level of performance, particularly in emotional commitment and leadership abilities. Continuous professional development and support are essential to address areas of challenge, ensuring educators maintain and enhance their effectiveness and satisfaction in their roles. This comprehensive support aligns with existing literature, emphasizing the crucial role of emotional commitment, ethical conduct, and leadership in the success of ECE pedagogy.

The correlation analysis indicates that Early Childhood Educators' job performance is significantly influenced by various factors, including a well-structured curriculum, effective instructional strategies, student progress, professional development, instructional leadership, communication, and collaboration skills. Among these, professional development and communication skills exhibit the highest correlations, highlighting their critical importance to an educator's effectiveness.

Early Childhood Educators' performance is significantly predicted by professional development, verbal communication, visual communication, and collaborative skills. Collaboration skills emerge as the most significant predictor, followed by verbal communication, professional development, and visual communication.

The best-fitting causal model for the performance of Early Childhood Educators is anchored on non-verbal communication, professional development, visual communication, and written communication, as mediated by collaboration skills and verbal communication.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A

Name (Optional): _____

PART I: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Direction: Please fill out the following information by putting a check (✓) mark on the blanks. Please do not leave any item for these are essential in our research data.

Age:

_____ 20-25 years old _____ 30-35 years old

_____ 26-30 years old _____ 36-40 years old

_____ Actual age (in years)

Gender: _____ male _____ female

Civil status: _____ single _____ married

_____ widower _____ separated

_____ common-law partnership

Highest educational attainment:

_____ ECE graduate _____ MAED

_____ PhD in ECED _____ PhD in progress

_____ Other degree (pls. specify) _____

Length of service:

_____ less than a year _____ 1-3 years

_____ 4-6 years _____ 7-9 years

_____ 10 or more years (pls specify) _____

Type of School Employed: _____ Private _____ Public

Present position:

_____ Teacher 1 _____ Teacher 11

_____ Teacher 111 _____ Master Teacher

_____ Other (pls specify: _____)

Trainings and seminars attended:

_____ School-based _____ Division-based

_____Regional-based _____National-based
_____International-based

PART II: INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES, COMMUNICATION SKILLS AND COLLABORATING SKILLS AND PERFORMANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS: A CAUSAL MODEL

Directions: For each statement below, mark **check (✓)** on the choices that indicate how you agree or disagree on your level of the delivery of service quality. There are no right or wrong answers. Please don't leave any item unchecked.

SA– STRONGLY AGREE **A** – AGREE **U** – UNDECIDED

D –DISAGREE **SD** – STRONGLY DISAGREE

Instructional Leadership Practices of the Early Childhood Educators in terms of:

	Instructional Leadership Practices in terms of Coordinating the Curriculum As an Early Childhood Educator (ECE), I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Ensure accountability in obtaining better learning outcomes, by directing initiatives on the creative use of learning assessment methods, methodologies, and outcomes that are consistent with curricular standard.					
2	Keep abreast of new developments in education and resources, and then persuades educators to accept and experiment.					
3	Recommend ordering or permits the purchase of educational resources, equipment, visual aids, and instructional materials that are specifically designed to meet the needs of young learners.					
4	Demonstrate sound judgment when reviewing, contextualizing, and putting learning standards into practice to help teachers make the curriculum engaging for young students.					
5	Enable my co-teachers to benefit from possibilities for professional growth including seminars and training.					
6	Make clear who is responsible for implementation of the coordinated curriculum.					
7	Frame a focused set of annual school wide goals.					
8	Ensure the in-service activities attending by staff are consistent with the school goals.					
9	Plan conferences and programs for teachers to learn about new methods of education, tools, and teaching aids.					
10	Understand, create and evaluate a comprehensive, rigorous, and coherent curricular skills.					

Adapted from the instrument of: (Jimenez, R. G., & Galicia, L. S., 2023). School Heads' Instructional Leadership and Emotional Competencies, and Teachers' Work Performance in Selected Public Junior High Schools.

	Instructional Skills in terms of Overseeing and Evaluating Instructions As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Guide my junior and co-Early Childhood Educators to continue their education and give them the tools they need to succeed as leaders.					
2	Provide my co-Early Childhood Educators with updates and advise them to engage in action research to find solutions to issues that arise in the					

	classrooms of young students.					
3	Promote collaboration for improved instruction.					
4	Invite my co-teachers to share their top strategies for instructing students in the classroom.					
5	Frequently use a variety of sharing and communication techniques to distribute knowledge and assets, such as school-based training that enables me and my co-teachers to perform better.					
6	Ask ideas from my co-teachers when difficulties needing immediate solution arise in school.					
7	Share good results to my co-teachers when making decisions.					
8	Ensure mechanism for compensating the lost instructional time and place.					
9	Use student performance data in developing the school academic goals.					
10	Design the use of differentiated instructional strategies, curriculum materials, and technologies to maximize high-quality instruction					

	Instructional Skills in terms of Monitoring Student Progress As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Examine educational tools for any remediation that would be appropriate for young learners.					
2	Work with colleagues to collect, assess, and exchange information on the effects of academic intervention programs on teaching and learning.					
3	Give the larger school community the authority to support and preserve a welcoming, inclusive, and healthy learning environment appropriate for young learners.					
4	Engage in worthwhile exchange of practices for teachers to learn about new methods of education, tools and teaching aids.					
5	Ensure that tardy and truant students are given appropriate action.					
6	Recognizes students who do superior works with formal rewards.					
7	Coordinate with parents to communicate exemplary students' performance.					
8	Notify parents regarding remediation needed for improving' performance of their child.					
9	Support teachers in their reward of student accomplishment.					
10	Share stories/videos of successful individuals for the young children to emulate in the future.					

Adapted from the instrument of: (Jimenez, R. G., & Galicia, L. S., 2023). School Heads' Instructional Leadership and Emotional Competencies, and Teachers' Work Performance in Selected Public Junior High Schools.

	Instructional Skills in terms of Promoting Professional Development As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Provide expertise to identify effective teaching strategies and elements of lesson plans for both teaching and learning.					
2	Demonstrate good practice in helping teachers build effective practices that are in line with teaching standards and pedagogies within and across subject areas.					
3	Demonstrate the ability to use valid feedback from students, parents, and other stakeholders to help instructors become better at what they do.					

4	Encourage my co-teachers to join membership in professional organization.						
5	Keep myself updated on the curriculum at the school by attending trainings, seminars, and conferences.						
6	Help my co-teachers reflect, pinpoint their areas of weakness, and turn those into their assets.						
7	Reinforce superior performance of my co- teachers in staff meeting and newsletter or memos.						
8	Acknowledge my co- teacher's exceptional writing skills, and the preparation of memos for their personal profile.						
9	Provide support for the granting of rewards on special skills and abilities of teachers relevant to professional development.						
10	Work collaboratively with school staff to improve teaching and learning.						

B. COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS ALONG:

	Communication Skills in terms of Verbal Communications As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Maintain healthy feedbacking with my co-teachers especially relating to lesson materials so that the young learners could easily understand.					
2	Make sure that my communication skills effectively deliver the message across to my learners and co-teachers.					
3	Express myself clearly during faculty meetings.					
4	Use appropriate verbal language when talking to young children.					
5	Know how to use my 'teacher-voice' during meetings with the parents and other stakeholders.					
6	Maintain healthy communication with my young learners, parents, co-teachers, and school leaders.					
7	Show respect to my students by encouraging them to express their opinions in classes.					
8	Work with my co-teachers in improving communication channels with the community and other stakeholders especially when it relates to support to programs and projects.					
9	Show tact and respect, even when talking to young learners.					
10	Responsibly handle confidential and sensitive information, for the benefit of the institution.					

	Communication Skills in terms of Non-Verbal communications As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Make my young learners comfortable by projecting a welcoming and conducive learning environment.					
2	Demonstrate respect for my learners by fostering an environment where they are encouraged to share their opinions.					
3	Teach my learners the proper gestures, body language, and facial expressions when addressing with adults and persons in authority.					
4	Show to my learners that I am happy and I enjoy my time with them.					
5	Model to my learners the proper gestures, body language, and facial expressions when addressing with adults and persons in authority.					
6	Establish a close and a personal bond with my young learners.					
7	Consider my young learners as my own children and I deal with					

	them with all understanding and care.					
8	Make my young learners comfortable inside the classroom and in school premises.					
9	Use appropriate non-verbal expressions in managing learner's misbehaviors.					
10	Show my learners the appropriate way of behaving in school and in any public places.					

	Communication Skills in terms of Written Communication As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Clearly communicate to parents on the needs of the learners, including how the young learners are assessed in their competencies.					
2	Use varied communication tools and media such as mobile and online messages, mobile text messages, e-mails, and formal letters to reach the parents of the young learners.					
3	Express through bulletin boards and other media, the accomplishments of my young learners.					
4	Use appropriate words when dealing with my learners, parents, co-teachers, school heads, and other stakeholders.					
5	Utilize varied strategies and methods o encourage my learners to speak and participate in classes.					
6	Provide opportunities for my learners to share their memorable and joyful experiences in class, verbally, and linguistically.					
7	Facilitates logistics and communication.					
8	Create a welcoming atmosphere in class so that my learners freely share their ideas.					
9	Demonstrate proper listening and speaking skills so that my learners will follow accordingly.					
10	Recognize in different venues such as displaying in the classroom bulletin boards, or during any school activity, the notable written accomplishments of my learners.					

	Communication Skills in terms of Visual communications As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Maximize the use of visual aids in my classes.					
2	Use various strategies to display the talents and skills of my learners.					
3	Stimulate the interest of the young learners through exposing them to various learning opportunities such as videos, pictures, charts, graphs, and even realia whenever possible for a more engaged and meaningful learning.					
4	Provide opportunities for learners to display their skills and talents.					
5	Give the learners an opportunity to create and develop their visual structures by allowing them to take photos, paste stickers, gifts, and emoji's in a scrapbook, card, or other media.					
6	Assist the young learners in discovering their potential in the arts, imagery, and other performance tasks and activities.					
7	Offer gifts and rewards to the best art or workmanship of the learners.					
8	Encourage the non-visually inclined learners to appreciate and understand the other visuals, arts, and workmanship done by their					

	co-learners.					
9	Develop learner's critical minds through the use of visuals and other imagery.					
10	Help learners relate, understand, and appreciate life better through the use of visuals and other symbols that are available in school premises.					

C. LEVEL OF COLLABORATING SKILLS OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS ALONG:

	Collaboration Skills in terms of Internal Collaboration As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Work with the parents to improve the performance of their child/children.					
2	Suggest to School Heads on different ways to enhance the learning environment and promote better learning experiences for the young learners.					
3	Serve as a bridge between home and school in critical decision-making pertaining to child/children's academic and non-academic deficiencies.					
4	Assist parents to make their child/children establish better aspirations and successes in life.					
5	Partner with co-Early Childhood Educators in providing opportunities for young learners to unleash their potentials, skills, and talents.					
6	Strengthen connections with co-Early Childhood Educators, through the conduct of research to continuously improve the performance of the young learners.					
7	Connect with successful alumni in Early Childhood Education program, to improve the facilities and equipment of the school.					
8	Continuously link with other academic institutions with Early Childhood Education program to help improve and make the life of young learners more comfortable in school.					
9	Talk to successful implementers of Early Childhood Education programs and obtain information on their best practices.					
10	Create a pro-active and nurturing environment with co-Early Childhood Educators, school heads, and other institutions, to continuously improve Early Childhood Education instruction.					

Adapted from the instrument of: (Jimenez, R. G., & Galicia, L. S., 2023). School Heads' Instructional Leadership and Emotional Competencies, and Teachers' Work Performance in Selected Public Junior High Schools.

	Collaboration Skills in terms of External Collaboration As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Coordinate with parents to communicate student performance.					
2	Assist the parents in improving the academic and non-academic performance of their young child/children.					
3	Work with LGU in providing opportunities through scholastic activities that foster strong family-community- and school relationship.					
4	Establish partnerships with non-government organizations to provide educational videos and other informative materials on improving and understanding developmental milestones for young learners.					
5	Provide opportunities through linkages with other successful					

	organizations to mirror better practices at home and in school.					
6	Create an online tool, for other stakeholders and community partners to be actively updated and be supportive of school activities for the young learners.					
7	Build strong partnerships with non-government organizations (NGOs) to improve the delivery of Early Childhood Education.					
8	Visit and talk to other organizations with Early Childhood Education programs, and learn from their best practices.					
9	Engage with educational researchers, especially in Early Childhood Education programs, to continuously upgrade and improve the services of Early Childhood Education.					
10	Partner with government and non-government institutions in conducting studies that would help strengthen the Early Childhood Education program.					

Part III. Performance of Early Childhood Educators

For each statement below, mark **check (✓)** on the choices that indicate how you agree or disagree on your level of the delivery of service quality. There are no right or wrong answers. Please don't leave any item unchecked.

SA– STRONGLY AGREE **A** – AGREE **N** – NEUTRAL

D –DISAGREE **SD** – STRONGLY DISAGREE

A. LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN TERMS OF:

	Emotional Commitment As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Am sensitive to the learner's developmental needs and act on them accordingly.					
2	Establish a harmonious relationship with other early childhood educators.					
3	Am open to constructive criticisms from my co- teachers.					
4	Deal with the mistakes of my co-early childhood educators professionally.					
5	Do what matters for my young learners and continuously reflects at improving them.					
6	Establish good rapport with my school head, my co-teachers and my young learners as well.					
7	Am happy and fulfilled if I did my best in teaching my young learners everyday.					
8	Serve as a model of good values to my young learners such as punctuality, patience, following rules and regulations, kindness, generosity and other good values in life.					
9	Manage varied emotions of my young learners everyday, such as temper tantrums and the like.					
10	Assist my young learners and co-Early Childhood Educators in resolving some peer problems in school.					

B. LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN TERMS OF:

	Work Ethics As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D
1	Share ethical dilemma or issue previously encountered in work, for reference and proactive measures.				
2	Demonstrate desirable teacher behaviors that can be emulated by young learners to increase their academic engagement and decrease likelihood of challenging behaviors.				
3	Provide instruction to my co-Early Childhood Educators, on preventive strategies that teachers can use with young children to prevent the occurrence of challenging behaviors in school.				
4	Assist the school in making instruction on how to design and implement rules, expectations, and routines effectively during specific activities to support young children's appropriate behavior at home and in school.				
5	Recommend for various forms of recognition of the accomplishments of the young learners, be it academic or non-academic.				
6	Share my personal experiences to my co-Early Childhood Educators, on challenges and conquests, to motivate them to keep going further.				
7	Use effective verbal statements that conforms to established "rules and regulations" in school.				
8	Issue verbal statements to the young learners that (a) indicates approval of a behavior or correct response over and above an evaluation of adequacy and (b) specifies the behavior being praised.				
9	Provide instruction to caregivers of young children on how to establish strong and positive relationships and share information about the child's behavior and effective strategies for ameliorating behavior at home.				
10	Provide additional instruction to my co-teachers on how to link BEST in CLASS strategies and ensure that teachers' continued use of these strategies.				

C. LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS IN TERMS OF:

	Leadership Abilities As an Early Childhood Educator, I...	SA	A	U	D	SD
1	Show my best and take the lead in developing the young learners to their full potential, so that parents, including both private and public organizations are motivated to support the school.					
2	Mentor my fellow Early Childhood Educators in attaining learner achievement and in attaining other performance indicators to promote accountability within and beyond school contexts.					
3	Establish connections with other Early Childhood Educators for continuous professional growth.					
4	Attend and help in providing solutions to the early childhood educators 'work- related issues and concerns.					
5	Exhibit skills in strengthening the relationships with authorities, colleagues, parents and other stakeholders to sustain an enabling and supportive learning environment for learners.					
6	Lead the community, including parents, alumni, authorities, industries, and other stakeholders in creating collaborative actions to solve complex issues in learner development, as well as school and community improvement.					
7	Create a culture of inclusivity in the school and the community through practices such as gender sensitivity, physical and mental awareness, and cultural responsibility to promote and strengthen awareness, acceptance, and respect.					
8	Take the lead in coping stress by indulging in activities such as					



	deep breathing, meditation, rhythmic exercise, yoga, and the like.					
9	Keep motivating my young learners to do well in their studies.					
10	Make fair decisions related to student disciplinary actions and informs parents when necessary.					

Thank you very much.

The data will be rated using the 5-point scale shown as follows:			
Scale	Range Interval	Descriptive Rating	Interpretation
5	4.51-5.00	Strongly Agree	Very Effective
4	3.51-4.50	Agree	Effective
3	2.51-3.50	Undecided	Moderately Effective
2	1.51-2.50	Disagree	Less Effective
1	1.00-1.50	Strongly Disagree	Not Effective