

The Role of the Head of Early Childhood Education (PAUD) as an Administrative and Managerial Leader in Realizing a Quality Institution

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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: June 30, 2025

Accepted: October 5, 2025

Available online on:

October 19, 2025

Keywords:

Head of PAUD; Administrative

Leadership; Managerial

Leadership; Quality of PAUD

Institution; Leadership

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Published by Universitas

Muhammadiyah Tangerang

ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the role of the Head of PAUD as an administrative and managerial leader in realizing a quality early childhood education institution. The research uses the library study method by reviewing various sources of academic literature. The results of the study show that the Head of PAUD has strategic responsibilities in the aspects of planning, organizing, implementation, supervision, and efficient management of institutional resources. The Head of PAUD's administrative role encompasses the management of administration, reports, and budget, while the managerial role relates to the application of the POAC management principles (Planning, Organizing, Actuating, Controlling). Leadership styles such as visionary, transformational, and charismatic are proven to have a significant impact on improving the

quality of teaching, the professionalism of educators, and a conducive learning atmosphere. The conclusion of this research affirms that the effective and professional leadership of the Head of PAUD is the main factor in creating a superior institution that is responsive to the development of the times.

Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE/PAUD) is an educational institution that provides guidance and education for children from birth up to six years of age. PAUD aims to provide guidance to children so they can grow and develop well and have optimal readiness for entering the next level of basic education. PAUD plays a critical role in fostering and developing the potential of young children through formal, non-formal, and informal channels (Nurachadijat & Selvia, 2023). The PAUD institution functions as a platform to stimulate the development of children's physical-motor, cognitive, language, social-emotional, and moral domains. PAUD institutions collaborate with families and the community to ensure the child's growth and development proceed optimally and well, covering aspects of health, nutrition, and psychosocial well-being (Nufus, 2016).

Leadership in PAUD is a key aspect that determines the quality of institutional management, the learning environment, and the optimal development of the child. PAUD leadership includes administrative, managerial, and development activities aimed at ensuring the growth and development of the child runs optimally and comprehensively. The

PAUD leader, such as a school principal or manager, has the role of influencing, guiding, and directing all institutional members to collaborate in achieving the established educational goals (Sundari et al., 2024).

The Head of PAUD holds a central role as the administrative leader in the Early Childhood Education institution. This task involves the development and management of the entire staff's and organizational members' administration so that the provision of education runs effectively, efficiently, and in accordance with applicable regulations. The Head of PAUD develops strategic plans, annual programs, and the school's organizational structure. The Head of PAUD also distributes duties and authorities to staff according to the established structure, thereby preventing overlapping work (Ulfah et al., 2025). The Head of PAUD ensures all components of the institution work synergistically. They conduct supervision of the implementation of administration and staff duties, and provide regular guidance and evaluation (Rofingah et al., 2024).

Meanwhile, the Head of PAUD has an important role as a managerial leader who manages all aspects of the institution to achieve early childhood education goals effectively and efficiently. This role demands the ability to execute managerial functions known as the POAC principles: Planning, Organizing, Actuating (directing/implementing), and Controlling. The Head of PAUD

develops the PAUD unit program plan, including strategies for implementing educational and learning activities that align with the child's needs and the institution's vision (Abubakar & Sahriana, 2022).

The leadership of the Head of PAUD has a highly significant influence on the overall quality of the PAUD institution. One of the leadership roles of the Head of PAUD is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning. Strong and effective leadership from the Head of PAUD is capable of inspiring teachers and support staff, thus improving teaching and learning performance. A Head of PAUD who can encourage innovation in learning and provide support and guidance to teachers can significantly enhance the quality of education (Suhardi et al., 2024).

Methods

This research employs the **library study method** or *library research* as the main approach for collecting the data and information necessary to support the analysis and discussion (Mahanum, 2021). This method involves collecting, reviewing, and examining various relevant and credible literature sources, which include scientific books, indexed academic journals, research articles, seminar proceedings, policy documents, official reports, and various other publications with a strong and scientifically accountable academic basis. The library study approach was chosen because the research focus is not directed at collecting primary data directly from the field, but rather on exploring

existing theoretical and conceptual information. Thus, this method allows researchers to gain a deep understanding of theories, concepts, and previous research findings relevant to the topic being studied.

In its execution, Nurrisa et al. (2025) explains that the data collection process is carried out systematically and structurally by selecting literature based on important criteria: relevance to the research topic, topicality of the source, and the scientific validity and credibility of the source. The research conducts a critical review of each selected piece of literature by reading deeply and analytically, then grouping the obtained information based on similar themes or categories to facilitate the process of synthesis and data integration. Subsequently, the collected data is analyzed qualitatively with the aim of compiling a coherent and systematic series of thoughts, which can enrich the study and strengthen the arguments in this research. The library research method is highly appropriate for this research because it provides a strong and comprehensive theoretical foundation, while also allowing the research to build a holistic and in-depth conceptual framework. Furthermore, this approach also assists in identifying gaps in previous research, thereby enabling the provision of new contributions to the development of knowledge in the field studied (Fadli, 2021). By using the library study method, this research is able to produce in-depth analysis and scientific argumentation that supports the overall research objectives. Therefore, this method is not only effective in collecting and

processing data, but also essential in strengthening the validity and reliability of the research results presented in this article.

Result and Discussions

The discussion in this research is structured based on the review of 15 relevant scientific and academic sources concerning the theme of the Head of PAUD's leadership as an administrative and managerial leader in realizing a quality institution. The review consists of scientific journal articles, academic books, and proceedings that discuss the strategic role of the Head of PAUD in institutional management, improving the quality of education, and developing the professionalism of educators. The analysis was performed to trace the extent to which existing theories and previous research findings support the understanding of the administrative and managerial functions of the Head of PAUD and their impact on the quality of early childhood education institutions. This analysis includes identifying the research focus, study context, and main findings of each source, which are then synthesized to demonstrate their relevance to the main issue of this research. Scientific articles provide empirical and conceptual data on leadership practices and education management, while books and proceedings provide the theoretical foundation that strengthens the conceptual framework of the research. Thus, the results of this review present a comprehensive overview of the relationship between the administrative and managerial roles of the Head of PAUD and the quality of the institution,

teacher professionalism, and the effectiveness of early childhood education provision.

Table 1. Analysis of Relevant Scientific Articles

No	Author Name	Title	Journal/Book Name	Narrative of Relevant Findings
1	"Hasyim, S. L. (2015)"	<i>Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD) Dalam Perspektif Islam (Early Childhood Education in an Islamic Perspective)</i>	"Jurnal Lentera: Kajian Keagamaan, Keilmuan dan Teknologi"	"Explains the importance of early childhood education in forming the foundation of children's spiritual and social values, supported by a good institutional management system."

2	"Wiyani, N. A., & Barnawi (2012)"	<i>Format PAUD</i>	Ar-Ruzz Media Journal	"Describes that the success of a PAUD institution depends on effective management structure and professional leadership."
3	"Suhardi, D. R., Putri, L. M., Kamila, R. N., & Rifati, M. (2024)"	<i>Peran Kepemimpinan terhadap Peningkatan Kualitas PAUD (The Role of Leadership in Improving PAUD Quality)</i>	Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai	"Shows that the transformational leadership style of the Head of PAUD can enhance the quality of learning and teacher professionalism."

4	"Kollo, N., Pawartani, T., Maisyaroh, M., & Kusumaningrum, S. R. (2024)"	<i>Upaya Kepala Sekolah Meningkatkan Motivasi dan Kinerja Guru di Sekolah Dasar (School Principal's Efforts to Increase Teacher Motivation and Performance in Primary Schools)</i>	Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan	"Finds that participatory leadership plays a significant role in improving work motivation and teacher performance."
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5	"Alhabsyi, F., Pettalongi, S. S., & Wandu, W. (2022)"	<i>Peran Kepemimpinan Kepala Sekolah dalam Meningkatkan Kinerja Guru (The Role of School Principal Leadership in Improving Teacher Performance)</i>	<i>Jurnal Integrasi Manajemen Pendidikan (JIMPE)</i>	"Indicates a correlation between the school principal's leadership ability and the increase in teacher work effectiveness."
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6	"Rohman, F. J., Ramli, A., & Sudadi (2023)"	<i>Konsep Dasar Administrasi Pendidikan, Fungsi dan Ruang Lingkupnya</i> (Basic Concepts of Education Administration, Functions and Scope)	Tolis Ilmiah: Jurnal Penelitian	"Explains eight administrative functions in education, including planning, coordination, reporting, and supervision, which are the responsibility of the Head of PAUD."
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7	Kamaruddin (2025)	<i>Investigasi Kinerja Kepala Sekolah dan Operator dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Sekolah</i> (Investigation of Principal and Operator Performance in Improving School Quality)	Fondatia: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar	"Concludes that the school principal has a primary role in controlling the quality and efficiency of the institution through continuous evaluation."
8	"Herawan, E. (2011)"	<i>Pengendalian Mutu Pendidikan: Konsep dan Aplikasi</i> (Education Quality Control: Concepts and Applications)	Jurnal Administrasi Pendidikan	"Highlights the importance of a quality supervision and control system carried out by the institutional leader for effective operational running."

9	"Ani Apriyani, Y., Supriani, Y., Kuswandi, S., & Arifudin, O. (2022)"	<i>Implementasi Pengembangan Keprofesian Berkelanjutan (PKB) Guru Madrasah (Implementatio n of Continuous Professional Development (PKB) for Madrasah Teachers)</i>	JIP: Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan	"Explains that the increase in teacher professionalism requires leadership support oriented towards human resource development."
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10	"Supriani, Y., Tanjung, R., Mayasari, A., & Arifudin, O. (2022)"	<i>Peran Manajemen Kepemimpinan dalam Pengelolaan Lembaga Pendidikan Islam (The Role of Leadership Management in the Management of Islamic Education Institutions)</i>	Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan	"Shows that the head of the institution must master managerial functions to maintain the effectiveness of the educational organization."
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11	Isriyanti (2020)	<i>Peranan Kepemimpinan Kepala PAUD Formal terhadap Profesionalitas Guru (The Role of the Head of Formal PAUD Leadership on Teacher Professionalism)</i>	Seminar Nasional Pascasarjana UNNES	"Proves a positive relationship between the leadership of the Head of PAUD and the increase in teacher professionalism and institutional quality."
12	"Fadhli, M. (2020)"	<i>Implementasi Manajemen Strategik dalam Lembaga Pendidikan (Implementatio n of Strategic Management in Educational Institutions)</i>	Continuous Education: Journal of Science and Research	"Explains the importance of implementing strategic management based on the internal and external analysis of the educational institution."

13	"Wheelen, T. L., Hunger, J. D., Hoffman, A. N., & Bamford, C. E. (2015)"	<i>Strategic Management and Business Policy</i>	Reference Book	"Explains the application of strategic management theory relevant to educational institutions in the global era."
14	Mulyasa (2011)	<i>Manajemen dan Kepemimpinan Kepala PAUD (Management and Leadership of the Head of PAUD)</i>	Academic Book	"Describes the seven main roles of the Head of PAUD as an educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator."

15	"Rusdiana, A., & Nasihudin (2019)"	<i>Pengembangan Perencanaan Program Pendidikan (Development of Education Program Planning)</i>	Academic Book	"Provides technical guidance on effective education program planning to achieve the institutional vision."
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Based on the fifteen analyzed scientific and academic sources, it appears that all literature affirms the central role of the Head of PAUD in ensuring the effective, competitive, and quality-oriented management of the institution. Journal articles such as the works of Suhardi et al. (2024), Kamaruddin (2025), and Herawan (2011) demonstrate that the leadership of the institutional head is not merely administrative, but also strategic and transformative in driving all components of the institution to achieve educational goals. The Head of PAUD is viewed as the system driver responsible for the planning, supervision, and quality control of the institution so that the education program runs in accordance with the vision and the needs of young children.

Meanwhile, the research of Kollo et al. (2024), Alhabsyi et al. (2022), and Ani Apriyani et al. (2022) emphasize the aspect of participatory

leadership and human resource development. These three studies find that the effectiveness of the institutional head is highly dependent on their ability to build interpersonal relationships, develop teacher professionalism, and create a collaborative work atmosphere. In the PAUD context, this participatory leadership encourages teachers to be more motivated and feel they have an important role in improving institutional quality. This finding intersects with the study by Supriani et al. (2022), which asserts that mastery of managerial functions is key to the success of educational organizations, especially in maintaining the effectiveness and stability of the institution.

Furthermore, the works of Rohman et al. (2023) and Wiyani & Barnawi (2012) reinforce the administrative side of the Head of PAUD's leadership. They explain that the institution's success is determined by the application of educational administration principles such as systematic planning, coordination, reporting, and supervision. This finding aligns with Hasyim's (2015) view which highlights the importance of good PAUD institutional governance as a means of forming children's spiritual and social values from an early age. Thus, the combination of administrative and moral leadership becomes an important foundation for realizing a superior and character-valued PAUD institution.

Meanwhile, the literature by Fadhli (2020), and the books by Wheelen et al. (2015) and Rusdiana & Nasihudin (2019) add the strategic

dimension to the context of education leadership. They emphasize the importance of management based on internal and external environmental analysis, as well as visionary program planning, so that the institution can adapt to social changes and education policies. This perspective enriches the empirical findings by providing a conceptual basis for how the Head of PAUD can implement strategic management to achieve institutional sustainability.

In addition, Mulyasa's (2011) book serves as a fundamental reference that bridges all previous research results. It outlines the seven main roles of the Head of PAUD—educator, manager, administrator, supervisor, leader, innovator, and motivator—which comprehensively cover the functions explained by the other researchers. With this view, the leadership of the Head of PAUD is understood not only as the ability to manage the administrative system, but also as an agent of change capable of driving the organizational culture towards professionalism and the best service quality.

Overall, the interconnectedness among the literature shows a continuity between theory, practice, and strategy in early childhood education leadership. Empirical articles affirm the direct impact of leadership on teacher performance and institutional quality; while conceptual books and references provide the theoretical basis for managerial functions and institutional management strategies. The synergy between the two demonstrates that the Head of PAUD acts as

a key figure in integrating the administrative, managerial, and strategic dimensions for the realization of a PAUD institution that is effective, adaptive, and oriented towards continuous quality.

Conclusion

The Head of PAUD holds an essential role as a leader in the fields of administration and management, which is highly determining of the institution's success in providing quality early childhood education services. In their administrative duties, the Head of PAUD is responsible for compiling plans, arranging work structure, running programs, conducting evaluations, providing direction, aligning tasks, preparing reports, and managing the budget efficiently and structurally. Meanwhile, as a managerial leader, the Head of PAUD is required to implement managerial functions such as planning, organizing, actuating (implementation), and controlling comprehensively to optimally achieve the institution's vision and mission. The leadership styles applied, such as visionary, transformational, and charismatic leadership, are highly influential in enhancing the quality of learning, strengthening the professionalism of educators, and forming a positive learning atmosphere. With effective leadership ability, the Head of PAUD is able to encourage all institutional elements to collaborate, innovate, and maintain the quality of education continuously. Therefore, competent leadership is the main factor in directing PAUD towards becoming a superior institution, responsive to change, and supportive

of comprehensive child development.

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