



Village-Based PAUD Governance and Its Implications for Early Childhood Education Service Quality in Kota Komba District, East Manggarai Regency

Gervasius Adam

Universitas Katolik Indonesia Santu Paulus Ruteng, Indonesia
email: gervasiusadam1983@gmail.com

Stefanus Divan

Universitas Katolik Indonesia Santu Paulus Ruteng, Indonesia
email: stefanusdivan1980@gmail.com

Abstract

Keywords:

Village PAUD
Governance;
Service Quality;
Teacher Welfare;

This study analyzes the governance of village-based early childhood education (PAUD) and its implications for service quality in Kota Komba District, East Manggarai Regency. Using a qualitative case-study approach, the research involved 37 PAUD informants/respondents and drew on interviews, observation, and documentation review. The findings reveal four major governance problems: low teacher welfare, inadequate academic qualifications, weak service sustainability, and village-level political influence over teacher appointments and replacements. PAUD teachers generally receive only IDR 300,000-500,000 per month, usually paid quarterly, while most still hold senior high school qualifications. Observation data indicate limited learning facilities, inconsistent service implementation, multiple teacher workloads, and incomplete learning administration. Documentation review confirms these findings through honorarium records, teacher qualification documents, attendance lists, institutional files, learning plans, and service evaluation records that are not yet systematically organized. These governance weaknesses affect teacher motivation, learning continuity, pedagogical quality, institutional stability, child-teacher relationships, and the sustainability of services. The study recommends strengthening village PAUD governance through competency-based recruitment, accountable financing, regular and more decent teacher honoraria, teacher qualification upgrading, protection from political intervention, improved learning administration, and a village-based quality assurance system.

Abstrak

Kata Kunci:

Tata kelola PAUD
desa;
Mutu layanan;

Penelitian ini menganalisis tata kelola PAUD desa dan implikasinya terhadap mutu layanan pendidikan anak usia dini di Kecamatan Kota Komba, Kabupaten Manggarai Timur. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis

Kesejahteraan
guru;

studi kasus, melibatkan 37 informan/responden PAUD, serta menggunakan wawancara, observasi, dan telaah dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan empat persoalan utama: rendahnya kesejahteraan guru, rendahnya kualifikasi akademik pendidik, lemahnya keberlanjutan layanan, dan pengaruh politik desa dalam pengangkatan serta pergantian guru PAUD. Guru PAUD desa umumnya menerima honor Rp300.000-Rp500.000 per bulan yang dibayarkan per triwulan, sedangkan sebagian besar guru masih berijazah SMA. Data observasi menunjukkan keterbatasan sarana pembelajaran, layanan yang belum konsisten, beban kerja guru yang tinggi, dan administrasi pembelajaran yang belum tertata. Telaah dokumentasi menguatkan temuan tersebut melalui catatan honor, dokumen kualifikasi guru, daftar hadir, dokumen kelembagaan, rencana pembelajaran, dan evaluasi layanan. Kondisi ini berimplikasi pada motivasi guru, kontinuitas pembelajaran, kualitas pedagogik, stabilitas lembaga, relasi guru-anak, dan keberlanjutan layanan.

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1. Introduction

Early childhood education (PAUD) plays a strategic role in laying the foundation for children's cognitive, language, socio-emotional, physical-motor, moral, independence, and school-readiness development. Therefore, the quality of PAUD services cannot be determined solely by the availability of institutions. It also depends on governance quality, teacher competence, service continuity, financial support, learning facilities, and collaboration among educational institutions, families, communities, and government. In this sense, expanding access to PAUD must be accompanied by efforts to ensure that services are professionally managed, developmentally appropriate, and sustainable.

In early childhood education research, service quality is generally understood through two complementary dimensions: structural quality and process quality. Structural quality refers to measurable institutional conditions such as teacher qualifications, teacher-child ratios, learning facilities, financing, curriculum, and management systems. Process quality concerns children's direct experiences within educational settings, including teacher-child interactions, play-based learning, developmental stimulation, emotional climate, and pedagogical practices that respond to children's developmental needs (Burchinal, 2018; Burchinal et al., 2021; Melhuish & Gardiner, 2019; Ulferts et al., 2019; von Suchodoletz et al., 2023). Consequently, PAUD quality must be assessed not only by institutional availability but also by institutions' capacity to provide safe, meaningful, continuous, and developmentally appropriate services.

The challenge becomes more complex in rural and village contexts. Village-based PAUD institutions are often established through village government initiatives, community participation, foundations, or individual initiatives. Their existence significantly expands access to early childhood education, particularly for families living far from urban education centers. However, increased access does not automatically result in high-quality services when governance systems remain weak, financing is uncertain, teacher welfare is inadequate, and institutional accountability is limited. Sustainable village-based PAUD requires pedagogical leadership, reliable financing, appropriate teacher welfare, adequate facilities, quality assurance mechanisms, and constructive relationships between PAUD institutions and village governments (Direktorat Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, 2022b; Håkansson, 2019; OECD, 2020; Windarta, 2024).

Preliminary field evidence from observation, interviews, and documentation involving 37 PAUD informants/respondents in Kota Komba District, East Manggarai Regency, indicates several interconnected governance problems. Village PAUD teachers generally receive honoraria of approximately IDR 300,000–500,000 per month, usually paid quarterly. Most teachers still hold senior high school qualifications. Although village PAUD institutions are relatively numerous, several institutions have not been able to provide optimal and continuous services. Teacher replacement is also sometimes associated with changes in village leadership. In addition, observations revealed limited learning facilities, incomplete learning administration, multiple teacher workloads, and inconsistent service implementation. These conditions suggest that the main challenge facing village-based PAUD is not merely service availability but the capacity of governance systems to sustain service quality.

Teacher welfare represents one of the most critical dimensions of this governance challenge. PAUD teachers facilitate learning, provide care, monitor child development, and communicate with families. However, inadequate compensation and irregular payment schedules may affect teachers' motivation, commitment, retention, teaching readiness, and service continuity. Previous studies have demonstrated that low compensation, high job demands, and limited resources contribute to workforce instability in early childhood education (Farewell et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2023; Sergi et al., 2025). In the Indonesian context, teacher financial welfare has likewise been identified as an important factor in maintaining the quality and sustainability of early childhood education services (Bantali et al., 2025).

Academic qualification constitutes another important component of structural quality. PAUD teachers are expected to understand child development, play-based pedagogy, developmental assessment, classroom and learning-environment management, and partnerships with parents. Nevertheless, studies in Indonesia continue to identify gaps in teachers' academic qualifications and disciplinary alignment (Ewo et al., 2023; Nazidah, 2021; Zulkarnain et al., 2021). OECD, (2020) Similarly emphasizes that improving early childhood education

quality requires sustained investment in a qualified workforce through formal education, continuous professional development, effective leadership, and appropriate working conditions. Thus, limitations in teacher qualifications cannot be separated from broader institutional and governance arrangements that determine access to professional development and career support.

From a governance perspective, quality improvement requires more than classroom-level intervention. It involves institutional arrangements that regulate financing, personnel management, accountability, service continuity, documentation, evaluation, and stakeholder participation. National PAUD standards provide important references for learning processes, assessment, minimum service requirements, infrastructure, accreditation, management, content, and curriculum, while village governments possess strategic authority to support basic community services through village policies and accountable funding allocations (Direktorat Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, 2022a, 2022a, 2022c, 2022d). PAUD management literature also stresses the importance of systematic planning, implementation, supervision, evaluation, and continuous improvement in managing teachers, learners, facilities, financing, learning programs, community relations, and quality assurance (Azan et al., 2023; Hibana et al., 2021; Mentari & others, 2020)

Although previous studies have examined teacher welfare, teacher qualifications, PAUD management, leadership, and quality assurance, these issues have largely been discussed separately. Limited empirical attention has been given to how village-level governance simultaneously shapes teacher welfare, academic qualifications, service continuity, learning administration, institutional stability, and quality assurance within rural PAUD settings. More specifically, evidence concerning the influence of village political dynamics on teacher appointment and replacement, and its implications for teacher-child relationships and service continuity, remains limited. This leaves an important research gap because the quality of village-based PAUD may be shaped not only by pedagogical practices but also by local governance arrangements that determine how teachers are recruited, supported, financed, evaluated, and retained.

Accordingly, the novelty of this study lies in examining village-based PAUD service quality as an integrated governance issue rather than merely a classroom or pedagogical concern. By bringing together teacher welfare, academic qualifications, institutional sustainability, learning administration, quality assurance, and village political dynamics within a single analytical framework, this study provides a more comprehensive understanding of the conditions affecting PAUD service quality in rural settings. Therefore, this study aims to analyze village-based PAUD governance and its implications for early childhood education service quality in Kota Komba District, East Manggarai Regency. The findings are expected to provide empirical evidence for strengthening professional, accountable, sustainable, and child-centered governance of village-based PAUD services.

2. Methods

This study employed a qualitative case-study approach to obtain an in-depth understanding of village-based PAUD governance and its implications for service quality in Kota Komba District, East Manggarai Regency. The case-study design was selected because the research focused on a bounded local context in which governance practices, teacher welfare, academic qualifications, service continuity, institutional management, and village political dynamics could be examined comprehensively within their real-life setting. Rather than seeking statistical generalization, the study aimed to generate contextual explanations of how governance arrangements shape the quality and sustainability of village-based PAUD services.

The research was conducted in Kota Komba District, East Manggarai Regency, during the 2026 research period. The researchers purposively selected participants based on their direct involvement in and knowledge of village-based PAUD services. A total of 37 informants participated in the study. They were included because they possessed first-hand information concerning teacher honoraria and payment systems, academic qualifications, employment status, service continuity, institutional administration, and relationships between PAUD institutions and village authorities. Participant recruitment continued until the information obtained from interviews showed recurring patterns, and no substantially new themes emerged in relation to the research focus.

To preserve participant confidentiality while allowing the reader to distinguish the source of each statement, informants were coded according to their roles. The code G refers to PAUD teachers, P refers to PAUD managers or institutional leaders, and O refers to parents or other relevant community stakeholders who were directly familiar with PAUD service implementation. The number following each code indicates the sequence of the informant within the respective category, for example G-01, P-02, or O-03.

Data were collected through interviews, observation, and documentation review. Semi-structured interviews were used to explore participants' experiences and perspectives concerning teacher welfare, academic qualifications, service sustainability, village governance, teacher recruitment and replacement, and quality assurance practices. Observation focused on institutional conditions, learning continuity, classroom activities, learning facilities, learning environments, teacher roles, teacher-child interactions, and PAUD learning administration. Documentation review included teacher and child attendance lists, teacher honorarium records, teacher qualification documents, institutional files, learning plans, recruitment documents, service evaluation records, and relevant PAUD quality policies and guidelines.

Data analysis was conducted iteratively through data reduction, thematic categorization, data display, and conclusion drawing. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary evidence were first reviewed and reduced to information relevant to the research questions. The data were then coded and grouped into recurring

themes, including teacher welfare, teacher academic qualifications, sustainability of village PAUD services, village political influence, institutional governance, and quality assurance. Comparisons were made across interviews, observation records, and documents to identify convergence, divergence, and supporting evidence for each theme. Interpretive conclusions were developed by relating these themes to concepts of structural and process quality, institutional governance, quality assurance, and PAUD management.

The trustworthiness of the findings was strengthened through methodological triangulation by comparing evidence derived from interviews, observations, and documentation. Consistency across these three sources was used to confirm major findings, while differences were re-examined against field notes and supporting documents before conclusions were drawn. This procedure was intended to strengthen the credibility of the analysis and reduce reliance on a single source of evidence. The analytical framework drew on concepts of PAUD quality, institutional governance, quality assurance, and PAUD management (Direktorat Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c).

3. Result and Discussion

Low welfare of village PAUD teachers

The study found that the welfare of village PAUD teachers in Kota Komba District remains a major governance problem. Interview data show that teachers generally receive honoraria of approximately IDR 300,000-500,000 per month. These honoraria are not always paid monthly; they are usually paid once every three months. Thus, teachers face two problems at the same time: very low compensation and irregular payment schedules.

"The honorarium we receive is usually around three hundred to five hundred thousand rupiah per month, but it is not received every month. It is usually paid once every three months. It is certainly not enough for daily needs, but we continue teaching because children in the village need PAUD services." (G-01)

"If we depend only on the PAUD honorarium, it is not enough for family needs. Therefore, some teachers still work at home, on the farm, or do other work. Teaching at PAUD is mostly driven by responsibility toward the children." (G-04)

Observation data support these interview findings. Teachers continued to accompany children, although financial support and facilities were limited. Learning activities were carried out using simple facilities, locally available materials, and learning spaces that were not always adequate. In several institutions, teachers performed multiple roles, including preparing learning activities, arranging the room, accompanying play, recording attendance, and communicating with parents. This indicates that low teacher honoraria are connected not only to personal welfare, but also to workload and service effectiveness.

Documentation review also confirmed this pattern. Honorarium records showed teacher payments in the range of IDR 300,000-500,000 per month, generally paid quarterly. The documents did not show a stable, decent, and standardized welfare scheme for village PAUD teachers. Not all institutions had written mechanisms for honorarium increases, sustainable financing sources, or teacher welfare protection.

These findings suggest that village PAUD teaching has not yet provided economic security. Teachers remain committed to serving children, but this commitment depends more on personal dedication than on a governance system that properly supports the teaching profession. Low teacher welfare affects motivation, attendance, teaching readiness, and service sustainability, which is consistent with studies on compensation and workforce stability in early childhood education (Farewell et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2023; Sergi et al., 2025).

Low academic qualifications among village PAUD teachers

The second finding shows that most village PAUD teachers in Kota Komba District still hold senior high school qualifications. This creates a serious challenge because PAUD services require teachers who understand child development, play-based learning, developmental assessment, learning-environment management, and communication with parents.

"We have taught children for a long time, but our highest education is still senior high school. We still need to learn more, especially about how to design learning, assess child development, and manage children according to their age." (G-07)

"We actually want to continue studying so that our education matches the PAUD field, but cost and distance are obstacles. We also have family responsibilities. Educational assistance or training would be very helpful." (G-11)

Observations showed that teachers were committed to accompanying children, but learning implementation was not always pedagogically systematic. In some activities, teachers relied more on teaching experience and routine practices than on complete written learning plans. Play-based activities were present, but variations in learning media, stimulation strategies, child grouping, and developmental documentation still needed improvement.

Documentation review supported this finding. Teacher qualification documents indicated that many teachers still had senior high school backgrounds. Training certificates, competency development records, learning plans, developmental records, and children's portfolios were not evenly available across institutions. This indicates that qualification problems are connected to institutional capacity in managing learning and assessment systematically.

Teacher qualification is a key element of structural quality. Teachers without a PAUD background need intensive support in planning learning, implementing play-based activities, and assessing children's development. These findings are consistent with (Ewo et al.,

2023; Nazidah, 2021; Zulkarnain et al., 2021), who report that teacher qualification remains a central issue in PAUD institutions. OECD, (2020) Also emphasizes that high-quality PAUD requires qualified, trained, and continuously supported educators.

Many village PAUD institutions, but not all services are optimal

The third finding indicates that, quantitatively, village PAUD institutions in Kota Komba District are relatively numerous. These institutions were established by village governments, communities, or individuals. However, institutional existence does not always correspond to quality service delivery. Some PAUD institutions have not been able to provide optimal and continuous early childhood services.

"There are many PAUD institutions in the villages, but not all run well. Some are active because the teachers are diligent and parents are supportive. Others only exist as institutions, while learning activities do not always take place regularly." (P-02)

"Children actually need PAUD, but if teachers are limited, facilities are lacking, and village support is weak, PAUD activities cannot run optimally. Sometimes the service runs, sometimes it does not." (G-15)

Observation indicated uneven service conditions. Some institutions carried out learning activities with limited facilities, and children engaged in singing, drawing, group activities, and play. However, in other institutions, learning media, educational play tools, classroom arrangement, and outdoor play equipment were limited. Learning environments did not yet fully reflect PAUD quality standards that emphasize safety, comfort, stimulation, and children's participation.

Documentation review showed that some basic institutional documents were available, such as lists of children, lists of teachers, and basic institutional files. However, learning plans, consistent attendance records, child development records, service evaluation documents, and activity reports were not fully complete. This suggests that some village PAUD institutions are administratively present but not yet strong in service management and quality assurance.

These findings point to a gap between access and quality. The number of PAUD institutions may expand access, but quality depends on good governance. High-quality PAUD requires regular learning, safe environments, competent teachers, parent partnerships, and systematic evaluation and improvement (Direktorat Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, 2022a, 2022b, 2022c).

Village leadership change and teacher replacement

The fourth finding reveals a relationship between village political dynamics and the continuity of PAUD teachers. Several informants stated that a change in the village head could lead to teacher replacement. When a new village head is elected, teachers who have previously served may be replaced by other individuals considered closer to the new village administration.

"When the village head changes, PAUD teachers may also be replaced. Sometimes it is not because the teacher is incapable, but because someone else is closer to the new village government. This makes teachers feel insecure." (G-19)

"We hope PAUD teachers will not be replaced only because the village head changes. If a teacher has taught for a long time and the children are already close to the teacher, the teacher should be maintained. Teacher replacement makes PAUD services unstable." (G-23)

"Children are already used to certain teachers. If the teacher changes, they need to adapt again. Sometimes they become less enthusiastic about attending PAUD because they are not yet close to the new teacher." (O-03)

Observations showed that teacher-child relationships are important for service continuity. Children were more responsive when guided by familiar teachers. Stable teacher-child relationships supported emotional security, adaptation, and orderly learning. Therefore, frequent teacher replacement may disrupt children's adjustment, learning consistency, and communication between teachers and parents.

Documentation review indicated that teacher appointment was not always supported by strong, transparent, and competency-based written mechanisms. Available documents mostly consisted of teacher lists, honorarium records, and administrative appointment letters. There was limited evidence of recruitment documents that consistently included qualification criteria, experience, competency, term of service, performance evaluation, and protection of teacher continuity.

This practice indicates weak village PAUD governance. PAUD teachers should be managed based on professionalism, competence, service needs, and the best interests of children. Teacher replacement that is not based on performance evaluation can disrupt learning continuity, emotional relationships, parent communication, and institutional stability. Stable teacher-child relationships are part of the process quality of early childhood services (Sa'uglam & others, 2023; von Suchodoletz et al., 2023).

Table 1
Summary of Interview-Based Field Findings

No.	Theme	Field findings from 37 informants/respondents	Implication for service quality
1	Teacher welfare	Teachers receive IDR 300,000-500,000 per month and are generally paid quarterly.	Teacher motivation and service sustainability become vulnerable.

2	Academic qualification	Most teachers still hold senior high school qualifications.	Learning planning, assessment, and classroom management need improvement.
3	Institutional quantity	Village PAUD institutions are relatively numerous.	Access increases, but quality is not automatically guaranteed.
4	Service continuity	Some institutions do not provide optimal and consistent services.	Children may not receive continuous developmental stimulation.
5	Village politics	Village head changes may affect teacher replacement.	Teacher stability and child-teacher relationships are disrupted.
6	Governance	Recruitment and teacher continuity are not fully professionalized.	PAUD may become vulnerable to local political interests.

Source: Processed field data (2026)

Observation and documentation as triangulation of interview findings

Observation and documentation findings strengthened the interview data. The observation focused on learning environments, learning media, service continuity, learning administration, teacher roles, and teacher-child relationships. Documentation review focused on honorarium records, teacher qualification documents, attendance lists, institutional files, learning administration, recruitment documents, and service evaluation records.

Table 2
Observation Findings on Village PAUD Service Conditions

No.	Observed aspect	Field finding	Implication
1	Learning environment	Some learning rooms were simple and not fully arranged for young children.	Children did not always receive safe, comfortable, and stimulating environments.

2	Learning media	Educational play materials were limited.	Learning activities depended heavily on teacher creativity.
3	Service continuity	Learning activities were not equally consistent across institutions.	Developmental stimulation was not fully guaranteed.
4	Learning administration	Learning plans, development records, and portfolios were not evenly organized.	Assessment and follow-up were not optimal.
5	Teacher roles	Teachers performed multiple roles beyond teaching.	Workload was high and not proportional to honoraria.
6	Teacher-child relationship	Children responded better to familiar teachers.	Teacher replacement may disrupt emotional closeness and adaptation.

Source: Observation data (2026)

Table 3
Documentation Findings on Village PAUD Governance

No.	Document type	Documentation finding	Governance implication
1	Teacher honorarium records	Records show IDR 300,000-500,000 per month, generally paid quarterly.	Teacher financing is not yet decent and stable.
2	Teacher qualification documents	Most teachers still have senior high school backgrounds.	Academic qualification upgrading is needed.
3	Attendance lists	Teacher and child attendance lists exist but are not always consistent.	Service monitoring is not optimal.
4	Institutional documents	Basic documents exist in some institutions but are incomplete.	Institutional governance needs strengthening.
5	Learning administration	Learning plans and child development records are not evenly arranged.	Learning planning and assessment are not systematic.
6	Teacher recruitment documents	Written competency-based recruitment mechanisms are weak.	Teachers are vulnerable to non-professional replacement.
7	Service evaluation records	Evaluation documents are not routinely organized.	Quality assurance is still weak.

Source: Documentation review (2026)

Table 4
Triangulation of Interviews, Observation, and Documentation

No	Theme	Triangulated evidence	Thematic conclusion
1	Teacher welfare	Interviews, observation, and honorarium records confirm low and quarterly payments while teachers perform multiple roles.	Teacher welfare is not yet adequate and affects service continuity.
2	Teacher qualification	Interviews and qualification documents show that many teachers hold senior high school qualifications; learning often depends on experience.	Qualification and competency development are urgent.
3	Service quality	Interviews, observation, and learning documents show uneven facilities, service continuity, and learning administration.	Access has not been followed by strong quality assurance.
4	Village politics	Interviews report teacher replacement after village leadership changes, while recruitment documents are not yet competency-based.	Teacher governance is vulnerable to local political influence.
5	Quality assurance	Interviews, observation, and evaluation records show limited routine monitoring and documentation.	Village-based quality assurance needs strengthening.

Source: Triangulation of field data (2026)

The triangulated evidence indicates that the problems identified in village-based PAUD are not independent issues but interconnected dimensions of a broader governance system. Low teacher compensation, limited academic qualifications, inconsistent service continuity, incomplete learning administration, and politically influenced teacher replacement reinforce one another and collectively shape the quality of services available to children. This finding extends the discussion beyond individual teacher performance by showing that service quality is strongly conditioned by institutional arrangements governing financing, personnel, accountability, and continuity.

The findings also reveal a close relationship between structural quality and process quality. Inadequate teacher welfare and limited qualifications represent structural constraints, yet their effects become visible in classroom practice through multiple workloads, reliance on routine experience, weak documentation, and uneven continuity of learning. This relationship is consistent with research emphasizing that structural conditions influence the quality of children's everyday educational experiences (Burchinal, 2018; Ulferts et al., 2019; von Suchodoletz et al., 2023). In the present study, structural weaknesses were therefore not merely administrative deficiencies; they shaped the

capacity of institutions to provide stable, developmentally appropriate, and responsive services.

A particularly important contribution of the findings concerns teacher continuity. The evidence that changes in village leadership may be followed by teacher replacement shows how local political arrangements can enter directly into the governance of early childhood services. This issue differs from conventional discussions of teacher qualification or compensation because it affects institutional memory, established teacher-child relationships, communication with parents, and continuity of learning. From a quality-governance perspective, personnel decisions should therefore be based on competence, performance, experience, and service needs rather than political proximity. This interpretation is consistent with systematic quality-work approaches that emphasize continuity, documentation, evaluation, and professional development as foundations of sustainable PAUD leadership (Håkansson, 2019; OECD, 2019; Siraj et al., 2023).

Taken together, the findings suggest that increasing the number of PAUD institutions is insufficient when access is not accompanied by mechanisms that protect service quality. Village governments have an important role because they can influence financing, teacher appointment, facilities, institutional support, and service continuity. However, this authority needs to operate within transparent and accountable governance arrangements and remain oriented toward children's best interests. National regulations and village-fund policies already provide a basis for supporting PAUD services; the central challenge identified in this study is translating those provisions into consistent local governance practices. (Direktorat Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini, 2022; Kementerian Desa, Pembangunan Daerah Tertinggal, dan Transmigrasi, 2024).

Thus, the principal interpretation of the study is that village-based PAUD quality should be understood as the outcome of an integrated governance system. Improvements in classroom practice alone are unlikely to be sustainable unless they are supported by predictable financing, qualified and stable teachers, systematic administration, transparent personnel management, and routine quality assurance. This integrated perspective provides the basis for the governance recommendations developed in the following section.

Recommended model for quality-based village PAUD governance

The governance model proposed in this study is derived directly from the triangulated field findings rather than from normative policy assumptions. Five interrelated components are recommended. First, the finding that teacher replacement may follow changes in village leadership indicates the need for village-level regulations that establish transparent, competency-based recruitment, teacher tenure, performance evaluation, and protection from politically motivated replacement. Such regulation is important for safeguarding institutional continuity and preserving stable teacher-child relationships.

Second, the finding that teachers receive relatively low honoraria that are commonly paid quarterly points to the need for a more predictable, transparent, and sustainable teacher-financing mechanism. Regular payment schedules and clearer financing arrangements are necessary because teacher welfare is directly related to motivation, workforce stability, and continuity of services.

Third, the predominance of teachers with senior high school qualifications indicates the need for a structured teacher qualification and professional development pathway. Support may include opportunities for further study, continuous training, mentoring, and competency development in play-based learning, developmental assessment, learning planning, and classroom management.

Fourth, incomplete learning plans, developmental records, attendance documentation, and service evaluation files demonstrate the need for a simple village-based PAUD quality assurance mechanism. This mechanism should cover teacher and child attendance, learning planning, child development assessment, facilities, learning administration, parent communication, and periodic service evaluation. Rather than creating additional administrative burdens, the mechanism should function as a practical tool for monitoring continuity and identifying areas requiring improvement.

Fifth, because the findings show that PAUD quality is influenced simultaneously by educational, financial, institutional, and village-governance factors, improvement cannot be assigned to PAUD teachers alone. A collaborative governance arrangement is therefore required involving teachers, parents, PAUD managers, village governments, local education offices, PAUD supervisors, health or community services where relevant, and other community stakeholders. Collaboration should focus on coordinated financing, teacher development, service monitoring, referral of institutional problems, and protection of service continuity.

These five components are interconnected. Competency-based recruitment will have limited impact without adequate teacher welfare; professional development will not be sustainable without institutional support; and quality assurance will remain weak without collaboration and clear accountability. The proposed model therefore positions village-based PAUD quality as the result of coordinated governance across personnel, financing, professional development, institutional monitoring, and stakeholder collaboration.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that village PAUD governance in Kota Komba District, East Manggarai Regency, faces serious structural problems. Based on data from 37 PAUD informants/respondents, the main problems are low teacher welfare, low academic qualifications, non-optimal service implementation despite the presence of many PAUD institutions, and village political influence on teacher replacement. Observation and documentation data confirm that these issues are connected to limited facilities, incomplete learning administration, weak recruitment mechanisms, and insufficient quality assurance.

The study's novelty lies in showing that PAUD service quality in rural village contexts is not merely a classroom or pedagogical issue, but a governance issue involving financing, teacher status, qualification, documentation, institutional stability, and village politics. The study recommends that local and village governments strengthen PAUD governance through regular and more decent teacher honoraria, teacher qualification upgrading, competency-based recruitment, village regulations protecting PAUD continuity, improved learning administration, and a village-based quality assurance system.

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