

# Analysis of Teacher Ability in Developing Early Childhood Development Assessment Instruments

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**Abstract.** This study aims to determine teachers' understanding of early childhood developmental assessment and teachers' ability to design child development assessment instruments in kindergartens in East Manggarai Regency. This research is qualitative. The subjects of the study were kindergarten teachers from East Manggarai Regency. The study was conducted in July 2021. Data collection using questionnaires, documentation studies and interviews. Data analysis by collecting data, reducing data, and presenting and drawing conclusions. The results showed that kindergarten teachers in East Manggarai Regency quite understand early childhood development assessment. Knowledge of the nature of early childhood assessment, such as; The types of techniques, principles, procedures in conducting assessments, goals, and how to select and determine assessment techniques, are known to teachers but not in a broad scope. Lack of ability of teachers in designing assessment instruments such as; the appearance of the assessment format is not neat and does not have complete components, the design of daily activities not following the theme, the assessment indicators not following the RPPH and not following the stages of child development.

**Keywords:** assessment instruments, early childhood, teacher ability

## 1 Introduction

The early childhood development assessment instrument is a tool used to collect data or information by measuring the results of children's learning activities. Early childhood education assessment (ECE) is collecting and processing information to determine the level of achievement of child development and decision-making, recognition, or determination about the condition (the child's ability). This activity is carried out using various relevant methods and instruments [1], [2]. An example of an assessment in early childhood education activities is to describe a child's ability to perform specific tasks, such as mentioning colours, distinguishing shapes, and mentioning the characteristics of objects, animals, plants, and other characteristics. Of course, the determination of whether or not the expected ability is achieved refers to the standards for the level of achievement of child development contained in the Early Childhood Education curriculum guidelines [3]. The assessment is carried out in a systematic, measurable, sustainable, thorough and objective manner that includes the child's growth and development over a certain period of time [4], [5]. The assessment carried out by the teacher must also be carried out objectively, meaning that the assessment of the child's development is not motivated by other things that will actually have a bad impact on the

child's further development. The assessment is not just to meet the completeness of the institution's administration but for the benefit of child development reports to parents and certain relevant parties [6].

Assessment of learning activities in ECCE using an authentic assessment approach. Authentic assessment is an assessment of learning processes and outcomes to measure the achievement of attitudinal competencies (spiritual and social), knowledge, and skills based on facts. These four competencies are core in assessment, and the four competencies already contain six aspects of early childhood development, including; language, cognitive, physical motor aspects, art and creativity, social and emotional, as well as moral and religious aspects. The data in the assessment instrument can then be used as a reference for teachers to determine the extent of student development with each achievement result. The assessment techniques often used in early childhood development assessments are checklists, anecdotal notes, work notes and portfolios [7].

For early childhood development assessment to be carried out correctly and appropriately, it is also necessary for parties who have the ability in early childhood education. Teachers with Bachelor of ECCE qualifications are the right people to carry out this task supported by competencies that include pedagogic competence, personality competence, professional competence and social competence [8], [9]. These two researchers claimed that four teacher competencies could affect how teachers carry out their profession according to what is expected. Some essential things that are expected to manifest teacher competence are the teacher's way of demonstrating children's learning progress in general and reporting on various children's activities in the classroom.

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This is important to consider because providing an assessment for early childhood development is a challenging thing. To get to the assessment stage, of course, through the process, namely planning, implementing and assessing. Therefore, being an early childhood educator is a challenging profession because teachers must have special skills to provide proper stimulation through play activities that are fun, encouraging and suitable for the development of early childhood. Play can provide an extraordinary learning experience that affects children's multi-potential growth and development. The results of the play activities that have been carried out become a reference for teachers to fill out early childhood development assessment instruments.

Facing the current situation of child development, which is generally influenced by technological development, it is necessary to have good-quality teachers who care about the growth and development of early childhood. The statement supports this that the early age is the golden age. It is said that because, at an early age, children are sensitive to everything and the child's nerves begin to form, proper stimulation is needed for their development to occur optimally. Optimal child development is one of the objectives of implementing learning in early childhood education. For this reason, teachers need to pay attention to the development of children in every aspect. The teacher's task is to provide the right stimulus for the child's development according to their individual characteristics and be able to describe the child's

development in the form of developmental assessment documents for children of this age. These documents serve as a reference for teachers to provide reports on student progress to parents and parties related to ECCE.

In today's education, teachers need help applying the theory obtained from the practice carried out during learning activities. This statement is supported by various facts found in ECCE institutions today: Teachers have difficulty applying child development assessment instruments during learning activities. The teacher needs to gain more understanding related to early childhood development assessment, then results in errors in conducting assessments. Mistakes often occur because the teacher needs to contain specific components of the assessment instrument. These components significantly influence the accuracy of the early childhood development assessment data. Some assessment instruments are also made sober.

Research conducted by [10] on the competence of ECCE teachers in assessing early childhood learning and development in Cimahi city found that academic qualifications need to support the mastery of early childhood learning and development assessment competencies. The ECCE educators studied met academic qualifications and had attended various pieces of training but the level of understanding and mastery of learning assessments needed to be higher. Another study also conducted by [11] on the application of assessment in the assessment of children's fine motor development in kindergartens in the Arjuna cluster, Jatipurno district, found that teachers have not created an effective portfolio assessment process, so the quality of the portfolio assessment has not reflected the effective portfolio assessment process in the classroom.

Based on the background above, researchers are interested in making a study titled "Analysis of Teachers' Ability to Develop Early Childhood Development Assessment Instruments in Kindergarten in East Manggarai Regency". The research will examine teachers' ability to design assessments in ECCE using a variety of assessment techniques such as checklists, anecdotal notes, portfolios and documentation.

## **2 Method and Materials**

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative approach with a research design using descriptive qualitative. Qualitative research is a method used to examine the condition of natural objects, where the researcher is a crucial instrument, data collection techniques are triangulated (combined), and data analysis is inductive. Qualitative research results emphasize meaning rather than generalization [12].

This study tries to understand problems related to the ability of kindergarten teachers in East Manggarai Regency to develop early childhood development assessment instruments. This research was conducted at the Early Childhood institution in East Manggarai Regency. The subjects of this study are kindergarten teachers with high school academic qualifications and strata 1 in the field of education. The teachers who were used as research subjects were selected on the condition that they became teachers at the ECCE institutions studied. The reason for choosing teachers as subjects of the study is based on several problems behind this research, namely that many ECCE teachers currently cannot develop research instruments; for example, has not been able to apply assessment instruments as a tool to assess early childhood development, teachers' lack of understanding of the function of each assessment instrument applied in ECCE. Meanwhile, the object of research is the activity of teachers in developing early childhood development assessment instruments.

Data collection techniques used use interview instruments, questionnaires and documentation. Data analysis was obtained from data collection, reduction, display data, and

conclusion drawing [12]. Data analysis is carried out by searching, and compiling data on the results of answers to open questionnaires that are answered and filled out by informants, namely kindergarten teachers in East Manggarai Regency, as well as other data in the form of teacher assessment instrument documents that are analyzed using checklists or other documents related to early childhood development assessments, as well as supporting data in the form of interview results. The goal is that the data obtained is easy to understand and acceptable to others.

### **3 Results and Discussion**

In this study, researchers wanted to see teachers' ability in terms of understanding and skills in designing assessment instruments. This ability is a manifestation of the teacher's pedagogical ability.

#### *Teachers' understanding of early childhood progression assessment*

Broad knowledge insights are expected to be possessed by every ECCE educator, given the duties of an ECCE educator as contained in the National Standards for Early Childhood Education [9], namely planning, implementing learning, and assessing learning outcomes, as well as conducting mentoring, training, nurturing and protection. Therefore, it is hoped that ECCE teachers will have the ability to realize all their duties as an educator. The task of educators in assessing learning outcomes is expected to be carried out optimally and on target. All of this depends on how the teacher understands early childhood development assessment.

The results showed that teachers had a sufficient understanding of early childhood development assessment in general. The level of teacher understanding is measured from the respondent's questionnaire answers, which show that teachers understand the types, objectives, functions of techniques and instruments for assessing early childhood development. Several assessment techniques that teachers already know have also been applied in assessment data collection activities. Some of the assessment techniques used are checklists and anecdotes. When determining assessment methods and techniques, educators should always consider the child's age and developmental characteristics. However, educators need to follow the assessment procedure more. The principles of conducting assessments need to be better understood, which are the most important part of early childhood assessment. To carry out the assessment or assessment correctly, teachers should fully understand the principles of assessment. This shows that teachers must improve their pedagogical competence to develop their profession.

Lack of understanding results in implementing the assessment process where teachers need help applying assessment techniques. Hence, the teachers only apply the checklist as the proper technique for collecting assessment data. Teachers in some institutions apply three assessment techniques (checklists, anecdotes and portfolios) but are made sober to meet the institution's administrative completeness. From the study results, it is also known that teachers carry out assessments in an educational program only as a formality to meet the administrative rules of the institution or answer parents' curiosity about the development of their children [13].

The lack of teacher knowledge related to early childhood development assessment is caused by teachers not enriching themselves with new knowledge about ECCE through teacher group discussions, attending seminars and other things that contribute to the teacher's needs, namely having broad knowledge insights. A study explains teachers' difficulty in

assessing early childhood learning and development as appropriate, influenced by factors such as teacher workload, available time and incompetent teachers [10].

#### *Teacher's ability to design assessment instruments*

Assessment of learning in ECCE includes the following three things: inputs, processes and outputs. Assessment is a process of measuring the results of children's learning activities [14]. The assessment process has a purpose. This understanding is in line with the concept stated by [5], who explained that there are five objectives of the assessment, namely: To determine the child's developmental achievements, an assessment is carried out to diagnose, an assessment is carried out to place the child in the exemplary service, an assessment is carried out to plan a program, and an early childhood assessment is also carried out for other purposes. Given that several assessment objectives are critical, it is hoped that teachers can conduct assessments appropriately and accurately. It is more than just run and meets the completeness of the administration.

To carry out the task as an appraiser, the teacher must have a broad understanding of early childhood assessment and an understanding of early childhood broadly to be applied in assessment activities. This is a tangible manifestation of the ability in the pedagogical field of early childhood teachers. Early childhood learning and development assessment techniques should be studied by ECCE educators or teachers in order to produce an objective and accountable assessment for parents of students and ECCE institutions [6].

The results showed that in carrying out the assessment process, when viewed from the completeness of the assessment instrument format, teachers needed to carefully pay attention to the essential components of an assessment instrument that will be used in collecting assessment data. The checklists made by the teacher are not disenfranchised.

## **4 Conclusion**

Based on the research that has been carried out, the ability of teachers to develop developmental assessments in early childhood is far from perfect. Teachers in kindergarten have a sufficient understanding of early childhood development assessment. However, some general matters regarding the assessment of early childhood developments still need to be fully known and understood, such as assessment principles and procedures and an understanding of assessment techniques and instruments. The principles of assessment and assessment procedures are considered necessary because they significantly affect the success of teachers in carrying out optimal assessment practices in early childhood.

Some suggestions that researchers can make regarding the results of this study include: First, For ECCE institutions: institutions can motivate teachers to further enrich themselves with knowledge and skills, especially regarding the implementation of appropriate assessments for the development of early childhood. In providing appropriate assessment data related to early childhood development, ECCE institutions can send teachers to attend seminars, attend training on the development of assessment instruments and plan training activities for teachers by bringing in presenters or trainers. Second, For the community and those who care about children: the hope is that the community will always support teachers to be better in various acceptable ways. This is important so that teachers can also be better at carrying out the educational process in ECCE, which can make an excellent contribution to the development of students.

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