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EarlyEd Empowerment (3E): Enhancing Teacher Confidence in Inclusive Early Childhood Classrooms Utilizing a New Coaching Framework

Tiara Brown

James Madison University, the United States

Abstract

This paper presents the EarlyEd Empowerment (3E) coaching framework, a non-evaluative and culturally responsive tool established to improve instructional quality and teacher confidence within inclusive early childhood classrooms. The 3E framework builds on High-Leverage and Division for Early Childhood (DEC) Recommended Practices and aligns with established assessment systems, including the Inclusive Classroom Profile (ICP™) and the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS®). Designed as a supplement to practice-based coaching, 3E emphasizes individualized support, collaborative reflection, and targeted feedback to promote sustainable professional growth.

Drawing upon a pilot study and two subsequent implementation studies, this paper examines how the 3E framework supports both pre-service and in-service educators in developing inclusive pedagogical competencies and self-efficacy. Findings indicate that participation in 3E coaching contributes to measurable improvements in teacher confidence, responsiveness to diverse learners, and the overall quality of classroom interactions.

The paper situates the 3E framework within current research on non-evaluative coaching, teacher retention, and equity in early childhood education. By addressing systemic barriers such as limited professional support and disproportionate access to coaching in underserved settings, the framework offers a sustainable approach to professional learning. Implications for teacher preparation programs and early childhood leadership are discussed, emphasizing the integration of 3E as a capacity-building tool for fostering confident, reflective, and inclusive educators.

Keywords: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy; Reflective Practice; Teacher Efficacy