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Implementation of Daycare Management based on Management Standards (Permendikbud 137/2014): Multisite Study of 4 Daycares in Malang City

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ABSTRAK

Pengelolaan daycare di Indonesia masih menunjukkan kesenjangan antara standar nasional dan praktik, terutama dalam perencanaan program, struktur organisasi, pelaksanaan rencana kerja, dan pengawasan, sehingga kualitas layanan pendidikan anak usia dini belum merata sesuai standar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis implementasi standar pengelolaan daycare berdasarkan Permendikbud No. 137 Tahun 2014 tentang Standar Nasional Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD). Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus, melalui wawancara terhadap empat kepala daycare dan empat tenaga pengajar di Malang, dengan analisis data menggunakan model interaktif Miles and Huberman yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan adanya variasi dalam penerapan standar. Perencanaan program belum sepenuhnya berbasis kebutuhan perkembangan anak secara holistik, aspek organisasi menunjukkan struktur manajemen yang belum sistematis, pelaksanaan rencana kerja sudah sesuai kurikulum namun menghadapi tantangan kesinambungan kegiatan dan keterlibatan orang tua, sementara pengawasan masih bersifat internal dan belum optimal. Kesimpulannya, penerapan standar pengelolaan daycare belum konsisten di semua aspek, sehingga membutuhkan penguatan dalam tata kelola. Implikasi penelitian ini menegaskan pentingnya upaya pengelola daycare untuk mengoptimalkan praktik manajemen berbasis standar, serta perlunya dukungan regulasi dan kebijakan dari pemerintah untuk meningkatkan kualitas layanan pendidikan anak usia dini secara berkelanjutan.

ABSTRACT

Daycare management in Indonesia still shows gaps between national standards and actual practices, particularly in program planning, organizational structure, work plan implementation, and supervision, resulting in uneven quality of early childhood education services. This study aims to analyze the implementation of daycare management standards based on Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014 concerning National Standards for Early Childhood Education (PAUD). The research uses a qualitative method with a case study approach, through interviews with four daycare heads and four teachers in Malang, with data analysis using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of the study show variations in the implementation of standards. Program planning is not yet fully based on the holistic developmental needs of children. Organizational aspects show a management structure that is not yet systematic. The implementation of work plans is in line with the curriculum but faces challenges in terms of continuity of activities and parental involvement, while supervision is still internal and not yet optimal. In conclusion, the implementation of daycare management standards is not consistent in all aspects, requiring strengthening in governance. The implications of this study emphasize the importance of daycare managers' efforts to optimize standards-based management practices, as well as the need for regulatory and policy support from the government to improve the quality of early childhood education services in a sustainable manner.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Managing a daycare center is a complex task that requires a multidisciplinary understanding. Ideally, a daycare center should provide a safe and stimulating environment that supports children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development, implement a holistic and integrative curriculum, maintain qualified and trained staff, ensure proper facilities and infrastructure, and adhere to health and safety standards. From a developmental psychology perspective, a safe and stimulating environment is essential for a child's cognitive, social, and emotional development, as emphasized in the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky, highlighting the role of social interaction and cognitive stimulation (Jurdi et al., 2023; Rusdiana et al., 2025). From the science of education, a play-based learning approach and effective social interaction support children's holistic development. In the context of business management and administration, operational efficiency, human resource management, and customer service determine the sustainability and quality of daycare services (Yafie et al., 2023; Zone, 2025). Furthermore, the quality of interactions between caregivers and children is a key factor in supporting children's development, highlighting the importance of competent staff and responsive caregiving practices in daycare management (Felfe & Lalive, 2018; Ragni et al., 2021). Meanwhile, from a health perspective, good hygiene and nutrition standards, guided by the WHO, are critical for preventing disease and ensuring children's optimal physical growth. By connecting these various aspects, daycare management can optimize benefits for children, transforming it into an environment supporting overall child development.

Globally, daycare centers play a crucial role in supporting child development and family welfare, yet face significant management challenges. Observations and previous studies indicate that only a small proportion of daycare centers meet the ideal standards. Data from the OECD (2021) reveals only 25% of daycare centers in developing countries meet international standards regarding caregiver-child ratio, caregiver training, and early education curricula. Low-quality care often arises from a lack of trained caregivers and inadequate facilities, negatively affecting children's development. Accessibility remains a significant barrier, especially in rural and remote areas, with only about 40% of children accessing quality daycare services. Additionally, administrative obstacles such as differing regional regulations complicate daycare establishment. High daycare costs further challenge families; according to a World Bank report (2022), daycare expenses in low- to middle-income countries can reach 20% of household income, leading families to opt for cheaper alternatives with subpar care standards (Group, 2026; Gurín, 2025). Moreover, inadequate regulation and standardization exacerbate inequalities in service quality, with many daycare centers operating without permits and proper oversight, increasing risks to child safety and development.

Daycare management in Indonesia continues to face significant challenges that affect service quality and accessibility. Data from the Ministry of Education and Culture (2022) shows that only 30% of daycare centers have official accreditation, while a report from KPAI (2019) revealed that 20% are categorized as poor in quality and 44% operate without legal permits, reflecting weak regulation and supervision (Ardelia & Sirait, 2025; Pranawati et al., 2021). Accessibility is another major issue; in remote areas, only around 40% of children can access proper daycare facilities, while in urban areas many families with incomes below IDR 5 million per month are unable to afford formal services, with only 15% able to do so (Direktorat Statistik Kesejahteraan Rakyat, 2023). This condition forces parents to rely on informal caregivers or family members who often lack professional skills in childcare and education (Suni & Teja, 2024). The high cost of quality daycare further widens inequality, since affordable daycare tends to compromise on standards and service quality (Pekkurnaz et al., 2021; Rizkita & Marliana, 2024). Overall, these findings underline persistent problems in daycare management in Indonesia—ranging from uneven service standards, limited accessibility, and financial barriers to weak regulatory enforcement—which collectively create a gap between the expected standards of planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision, and the reality in practice. This gap ultimately impacts the welfare, development, and educational opportunities of children.

Problems in daycare management, if left unaddressed, can affect child development, family welfare, and the quality of future human resources. Inadequate care threatens children’s emotional, social, and cognitive growth, while unsafe environments increase risks of accidents and psychological issues (Bourne et al., 2022; Panferova & Pak, 2022). For families, limited access and high costs burden the household economy, often forcing parents, especially mothers, to stop working or rely on unskilled caregivers. At a broader level, poor daycare quality produces a generation less prepared for education and work, reducing national competitiveness. Weak regulation and oversight also widen inequality as illegal daycare centers operate without proper standards. Therefore, structured management practices based on national standards are urgently needed to close the gap between expectations and reality. Given these challenges, researching daycare management is critical due to daycare's strategic role in early childhood development and family support. The rising demand for daycare services underscores the urgency of addressing issues like uneven quality, limited accessibility, high costs, and inadequate regulation. Quality

early childcare directly influences children's cognitive, social, and emotional development, affecting future human resource quality (Attanasio, Cattan, et al., 2022; Tilbe & Gai, 2022). Additionally, effective daycare management economically and socially supports families by enabling parents to remain productive. The development of solutions through the adoption of Management Standards outlined in Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture (Permendikbud) No. 137 of 2014 is therefore essential, as these standards regulate program planning, organizational structures, work plan implementation, and supervision mechanisms to ensure quality daycare services.

Previous studies have addressed aspects of child care management, such as curriculum design, integrated child care programs, evaluation systems, and health and safety practices (Gui, 2024; Jannah et al., 2024; Yanti et al., 2022). However, few studies have systematically examined the implementation of child care management based on Permendikbud 137/2014. The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the comprehensive implementation of nationally mandated management standards, including program planning, organizational structure, work plan implementation, and supervision. This study uses a multi-site qualitative case study of four child care centers in Malang City, which allows for cross-case comparisons, highlights implementation variations across institutional contexts, and systematically applies these to identify discrepancies between ideal standards and practices in daycare. The importance of this study lies in addressing the persistent challenges of daycare management in Indonesia, such as uneven quality standards, limited accessibility, high costs, and weak regulatory oversight. Observations and national reports indicate that only 30% of daycare centers are accredited, while many still operate without proper permits and fail to meet basic service standards. Previous research highlights that low-quality daycare services can negatively affect children's emotional, social, and cognitive development while placing additional financial burdens on families, particularly low-income households that cannot afford formal daycare services (Busse & Gathmann, 2018; Pekkurnaz et al., 2021). Therefore, strengthening daycare management is essential not only for children's optimal development but also for supporting family welfare and ensuring equitable access to quality early childhood care and education.

This study aims to evaluate the implementation of daycare management based on the Management Standards set out in Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014. Specifically, it focuses on four key aspects: program planning, organizational arrangements, implementation of work plans, and supervision mechanisms in four daycare centers in Malang City. By analyzing the extent to which these standards are applied and identifying the gaps between ideal expectations and actual practices, the research seeks to provide practical recommendations for improving service quality, strengthening policy implementation, and ensuring that children receive optimal care and developmental support.

2. METHOD

Research Design

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design at four daycare centers in Malang City. The research method was conducted through a survey that combined semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis as the main techniques in data collection. This approach was chosen to evaluate the implementation of daycare management based on the Management Standards in Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014. Using qualitative case studies, this study aims to gain a comprehensive understanding of how daycare centers apply these standards in their daily operations.

Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The population in this study consisted of daycare centers in Malang City, with a total of 8 research informants. This study used purposive sampling techniques, which were chosen to collect data from the most relevant and informative sources. The informants involved included daycare managers and educators, as they have a major role in the implementation of daycare management standards in accordance with Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014. The purposive sampling technique ensures that the data collected provides an in-depth analysis of daycare management practices.

Data Collection Techniques

This study used semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis. Interviews were conducted with informants to explore perspectives on daycare management, while observations focused on staff–child interactions, policy implementation, and compliance with management standards. Document analysis was also carried out to review policies, procedures, and reports, assessing their alignment with Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014. Table 1 presents the instrument grids used.

Table 1. instrument Grids

Aspect	Indicator	Implementation Questions	Obstacle Questions
Program Planning	Annual Program Plan (RPT)	How is the annual program plan (RPT) developed in this daycare? Who is involved in preparing the RPT?	What are the main obstacles in preparing the RPT (time, human resources, references)?
	Learning Implementation Plan (RPP)	Does the daycare prepare a learning implementation plan (RPP) regularly (daily/semester)? How are teachers involved in preparing the RPP?	What challenges are faced in preparing and implementing the RPP?
	Syllabus and Curriculum	Does the daycare use a syllabus/curriculum according to national standards? How is the curriculum applied in daily learning activities?	What difficulties are encountered in adapting the curriculum to the daycare context?
	Facilities & Infrastructure	What facilities and infrastructure are available to support the program? Are these facilities adequate for the implementation of activities?	What are the challenges in providing and maintaining facilities and infrastructure?
Organizing	Organizational Structure	Does the daycare have a formal organizational structure? How is this structure implemented in practice?	What are the obstacles in applying the organizational structure effectively?
	Coordination & Division of Duties	How is coordination among teachers and staff carried out? Does the division of duties run according to roles?	What problems occur in coordination or division of tasks?
	Human Resources Availability	How many teachers and children are there in this daycare? Is the teacher-child ratio in accordance with the standards?	What challenges are faced regarding the availability of qualified teachers?
	HR Training & Development	Do teachers receive training regularly? How does training support the implementation of tasks?	What obstacles are encountered in attending training (cost, time, access)?
	Organizational Structure	Does the daycare have a formal organizational structure? How is this structure implemented in practice?	What are the obstacles in applying the organizational structure effectively?
Work Plan Implementation	Learning Methods	What learning methods are applied in this daycare? How do these methods support child development?	What challenges are faced in implementing the learning methods?
	Daily Activities	How are daily activities carried out according to the schedule? Are all aspects of child development accommodated?	What obstacles are faced in carrying out daily activities?
	Child Development	How does the daycare monitor children's development? What instruments are used to assess child development?	What difficulties are faced in documenting children's development?
	Health & Safety Policy	How are health and safety policies applied in daily practice? Is there a written SOP for health and safety?	What challenges are faced in ensuring health and safety of children?
Supervision	Internal Evaluation	How does the daycare head evaluate teachers and programs? How often is internal evaluation conducted?	What obstacles cause evaluations not to be carried out regularly?
	External Oversight	Does the daycare receive supervision from the Education	What difficulties are encountered in following up recommendations

Aspect	Indicator	Implementation Questions	Obstacle Questions
		Office or other institutions? What are the results and impacts of external supervision?	from external supervisors?
	Parent Participation	How are parents involved in daycare activities? How is children's progress reported to parents?	What obstacles are faced in increasing parental participation?
	Documentation & Reports	How does the daycare document activity reports and children's progress? Are reports prepared regularly and formally?	What challenges are faced in preparing and archiving reports?

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis was carried out using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model (Farantika et al., 2024; Qomaruddin & Sa'diyah, 2024), which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification. This method was chosen because it offers a systematic and structured approach to qualitative data analysis, making it suitable for multi-site research. To ensure the validity and credibility of the research results, triangulation was carried out by comparing data from various collection techniques. The results of this analysis provide an overview of the implementation of daycare management and the challenges faced in implementing Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This study coded and grouped data from interviews, observations, and documents to compare informants' perspectives. Demographic aspects were considered to capture diverse contexts, ensuring reliable findings and deeper understanding of daycare management. Research informants are shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Research Informant

No.	School	Name (Initial)	Position	Gender	Entry Year	Teaching Duration
1	Daycare A	KIN	Daycare Head	Man	2018	7 years
2		ALI	Teaching Staff	Man	2015	10 years
3	Daycare B	DIN	Daycare Head	Woman	2020	5 years
4		AYU	Teaching Staff	Woman	2019	6 years
5	Daycare C	ARK	Daycare Head	Man	2016	9 years
6		WAT	Teaching Staff	Woman	2021	4 years
7	Daycare D	SEN	Daycare Head	Woman	2017	8 years
8		ERI	Teaching Staff	Man	2015	10 years

The study identified key findings on daycare management implementation based on Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014, covering program planning, organization, work plan implementation, and supervision. It also highlighted educator–child interactions, operational policy practices, and challenges in applying management standards, providing insights into service quality and recommendations for improvement in Malang City.

Implementation and Constraints of Program Planning

Program planning in the four daycare centers was carried out through Annual Program Plans (RPT), lesson plans (RPP), and curriculum development adapted to each institution. Approaches such as project-based, thematic, STEAM, Montessori, and parental involvement were applied to align with Permendikbud No. 137/2014. However, implementation quality varied due to differences in resources, educator competence, and evaluation systems. Details are shown in Table 3.

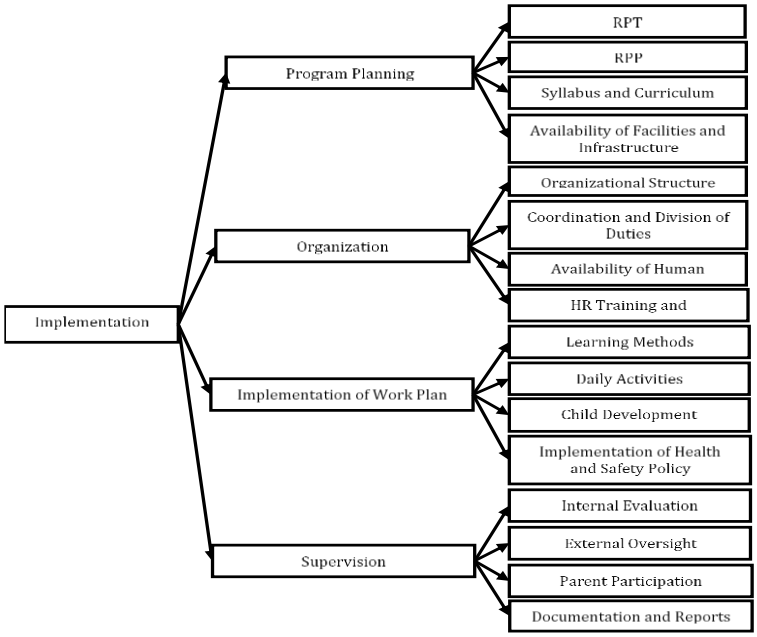


Figure 1. Implementation and Contraints

Table 3. Findings Implementation and Constraints of Program Planning

Lesson Planning	Implementation	Obstacles
Daycare A	The Annual Program Plan (RPT) is prepared annually with the involvement of daycare and education staff, and includes project-based programs to enhance the learning experience for children. The RPP is available but is still general in nature and does not fully adapt to individual needs. Thematic curricula that refer to national standards are being implemented to increase children's engagement. In terms of facilities, the playroom is adequate with several educational play equipment that support children's cognitive and motor development.	The obstacles in program evaluation, limited facilities, and lack of training for educators. The lesson plans are difficult to implement, the curriculum is not well documented, and learning and sanitation aids need improvement.
Daycare B	The lesson plans are structured based on reflections from the previous year to better suit the needs of the children. The lesson plans are flexible to accommodate the individual development and interests of the children. Experiment-based learning methods are used to enhance exploration and understanding of concepts. The curriculum integrates STEAM to enrich the learning experience. Facilities include classrooms, play areas, and reading rooms to foster an interest in literacy from an early age.	The main obstacles are budget constraints, inconsistent program evaluation, and a lack of understanding of RPP and STEAM among educators. The curriculum is hampered by limited resources, while inadequate exploration tools and limited outdoor space hinder learning activities.
Daycare C	The RPT is developed with a team of experts and educators to support character development and environmental exploration. Project-based lesson plans enable in-depth learning through direct experience. Environmental exploration methods are applied to improve children's understanding. The curriculum adopts character-based learning and digital learning. Facilities include	The main obstacle is the lack of program integration with the specific needs of children and evaluations that are not yet based on comprehensive data. Project-based learning is hampered by limited teaching aids and educators' understanding. The curriculum needs to be more adapted to the surrounding environment,

Lesson Planning	Implementation	Obstacles
	mini-laboratories and Montessori equipment to support children's independence and exploration.	while access to digital teaching materials is still limited. Some educational tools have not been updated, and facilities do not fully support inclusivity for children with special needs.
Daycare D	The RPT is formulated with a holistic approach, integrating family and community in learning. The RPP is based on educational games and technology, supporting interactive learning. The curriculum adopts the Montessori method and character-based learning. Parenting programs are integrated to involve parents in their children's development. Facilities support exploration, and consultation rooms are available for parents to strengthen communication with educators.	Evaluation is still observation-based without quantitative data, making it difficult to objectively measure the effectiveness of the program. Funding limitations hamper the development of annual programs. Technology integration in lesson plans is still minimal, reducing learning interactivity. The curriculum needs to be adapted to national standards, while the lack of trained personnel hinders the implementation of the Montessori method. Curriculum evaluation needs to be strengthened with data, and access to technological facilities is still limited. Infrastructure maintenance also needs to be improved to support children's activities.

Overall, the findings indicate that while daycare centers have made significant efforts to design comprehensive program planning in accordance with national standards, they continue to face various challenges. Limited facilities, insufficient educator training, lack of understanding in preparing and implementing lesson plans, and budget constraints hinder the effectiveness of planning. Furthermore, innovative approaches such as STEAM and Montessori are constrained by resource availability and educator readiness. Weaknesses in documentation and the absence of data-based evaluation also make it difficult to measure program effectiveness objectively and to support continuous improvement.

Implementation and Constraints of Organizing

The four daycare centers have established organizational structures with role division, coordination, and human resource development in line with standards. Approaches vary from standard-based, task-based, SOP-driven, to collaborative models, reflecting efforts to ensure effective operations. However, differences in resources, staff qualifications, and management practices influence the quality of implementation. Details are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Findings Implementation and Constraints of Organizing

Lesson Planning	Implementation	Obstacles
Daycare A	Has a clear and standardized organizational structure, with daycare managers experienced in early childhood education management. Educators meet the established qualifications and are supported by assistants for children with special needs. Each staff member has a structured role, with regular coordination meetings. Periodic training is provided to improve the competence of educators, with a main focus on developing learning methods.	Facing operational obstacles due to a lack of administrative staff, causing some tasks to overlap and staff having to handle more than one task. The limited number of educators increases their workload. In addition, not all educators have received the latest training due to a lack of budget allocation. The work documentation system is also not standardized, which hampers management efficiency.
Daycare B	Implement a task- and responsibility-based organizational structure, with a	Facing obstacles in coordination between fields and educators that have not been

Lesson Planning	Implementation	Obstacles
	coordinator in each field. Sufficient teaching and support staff are available, supported by job rotation to avoid burnout. Coordination is done through weekly meetings, ensuring that each field carries out its responsibilities clearly. Periodic training and mentoring programs for new educators are implemented to improve teaching competence and quality.	effective, with the division of tasks that have not been well documented and some tasks still overlapping. Recruitment of educators is not optimal, while some educators still lack experience. There are obstacles in providing time for training, and not all training materials can be directly applied in practice.
Daycare C	Implement a flexible organizational structure that adapts to needs, with a special division for child development programs. Educators receive routine training, including digital-based training, and are supported by child psychologists as consultants. The division of tasks is carried out based on written SOPs, with work teams formed according to expertise. In addition, the daycare center collaborates with universities for human resource development.	Facing obstacles in the understanding of roles and SOPs by staff, as well as requiring more managerial training and special educators. The honorarium for educators is still relatively low, while the monitoring system needs to be strengthened. The lack of resources hinders participation in external training, and not all available training is suitable for daycare needs.
Daycare D	Implement a collaborative work team-based organizational structure with a clear division of roles between educators and administrators. Experienced teachers with an early childhood education background are recruited based on specific competencies. Coordination is carried out through a digital platform, while educators have specific responsibilities. Hands-on training is implemented, supported by a self-development program for educators.	Facing obstacles in cross-divisional communication and large teams that are less effective, with tasks and responsibilities that still need to be clarified. Some educators do not yet have early childhood education certification, while retaining experienced staff is a challenge. The task evaluation system needs improvement, access to technology-based training is still limited, and the lack of incentives for educators who take additional training is also an obstacle.

Overall, the analysis shows that although daycare centers have established organizational structures and coordination mechanisms, challenges remain in staffing, training, and supervision. Limited administrative personnel, overlapping duties, lack of standardized documentation, and budget constraints hinder effective organizational management. In addition, weaknesses in task evaluation systems and insufficient access to capacity-building opportunities reduce the consistency of service quality. Strengthening organizational design through standardized documentation, adequate training, and improved coordination is essential to optimize daycare management in line with national standards.

Implementation and Constraints of Work Plan Implementation

The four daycare centers implemented varied work plans, including play-and-learn, project-based, STEAM, Montessori, and technology-based approaches, with efforts to structure daily activities and involve parents. Implementation quality, however, differed due to variations in resources, educator readiness, and integration with national standards. Details are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Findings Implementation and Constraints of Work Plan Implementation

Lesson Planning	Implementation	Obstacles
Daycare A	Applying a daily schedule according to PAUD standards with a balance between playing and learning using a play-while-learning approach. Varied	Facing obstacles in children's adaptation to the daily schedule and the lack of variety of outdoor activities. Some learning methods are less interesting, coupled with limited

Lesson Planning	Implementation	Obstacles
	interactive methods to support child development, which are evaluated monthly. Parents receive periodic reports, while health protocols are well implemented, including health education sessions for children.	appropriate aids. Child development recording standards are not optimal, and not all development indicators are well measured. Other challenges include children's difficulty in implementing hygiene habits and the lack of medical devices such as masks and sanitation.
Daycare B	Implement exploration-based activities and experimental learning methods to support child development. Special sessions on social skills and a personal approach are being developed. Monitoring is carried out through direct observation and periodic assessments, with routine consultations with parents. High hygiene standards are applied, supported by routine visits from health workers.	Facing obstacles in the flexibility of activities for children with special needs and limited educational play equipment. Not all educators understand the experiment-based method, while documentation of child development is lacking with some subjective indicators. Training in developmental assessment is still limited, and resources to support children's mental health are insufficient. In addition, daycare centers do not yet have small medical facilities for emergency care.
Daycare C	Implement project-based activities and STEAM methods with a focus on creative exploration. Relaxation and mindfulness sessions are held for children, while developmental evaluations are conducted through portfolios and digital assessment tools. Health and safety SOPs are integrated into the daily program, supported by first aid training for educators.	There is a need to improve the balance between physical and academic activities, with limited interactive learning tools and educational tools that do not fully support the STEAM method. Assessment of learning outcomes is still an obstacle, mainly because not all educators are familiar with portfolio-based assessment and the integration of academic and social-emotional evaluation is not optimal. Some procedures are still poorly understood by staff, while budget constraints hamper the procurement of health equipment.
Daycare D	Implementing Montessori-based daily activities with the integration of storytelling and technology-based learning. Interaction with parents is facilitated through dedicated time and child development monitoring applications. Monitoring is carried out digitally, supported by an organized emergency response system, including periodic disaster and safety simulations.	Facing obstacles in educators' understanding of the Montessori method and limited facilities for exploratory activities. The application of technology is still hampered by limited devices and technical obstacles in the application. Not all children are able to follow the storytelling method properly, while some parents find it difficult to understand digital reports. Parental involvement in safety socialization is lacking, and not all children understand emergency procedures well.

Overall, the analysis highlights that while work plans have been designed to support children's holistic development, several constraints persist. Limited facilities, lack of training, and educators' incomplete mastery of applied methods such as Montessori and STEAM reduce program effectiveness. Assessment systems are still weak, relying on inconsistent documentation and subjective indicators, while health support and safety programs remain underdeveloped. In addition, limited parental involvement and resource constraints, especially in technological tools and health facilities, hinder the optimal execution of work plans. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensure that daycare management truly aligns with the standards of Permendikbud 137/2014 and supports children's comprehensive growth.

Implementation and Constraints of Supervision

Supervision in the four daycare centers was carried out through evaluations, audits, checklist-based monitoring, and parent or expert involvement to align with Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014. However, differences in consistency, depth, and effectiveness reflect varying institutional capacities. Details are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Findings Implementation and Constraints of Supervision

Lesson Planning	Implementation	Obstacles
Daycare A	Implement a monthly evaluation by the daycare manager and an internal discussion forum to assess staff performance. Visits from the education office are conducted every semester to ensure licensing standards are met. Communication with parents is facilitated through a monthly forum, where they can provide suggestions regarding the curriculum and children's activities. Child progress reports are compiled monthly and documented in a daily activity journal.	Facing obstacles in staff understanding of evaluation indicators and the lack of standardized measurement tools in assessment. External monitoring is still more administrative in nature without an in-depth focus on the quality of learning, and there is no direct feedback system from the agency. Parental participation in discussions and children's learning is still limited. In addition, child development reports do not yet have a consistent standard format, and not all of them are documented in digital form.
Daycare B	Implement periodic internal reviews through direct observation and evaluation by the internal supervisory team. Supervision is carried out by ECD partner institutions, with annual audits to review operational policies. Regular consultation sessions with parents are held, and they are involved in various daycare activities. Evaluation reports are prepared every three months, with documentation in written form and photos of activities.	Facing obstacles in evaluation documentation and suboptimal follow-up supervision. Communication with parents, especially those who work full time, is still a challenge. Manual reporting is inefficient, while educators' digital documentation skills are still limited.
Daycare C	Implement checklist-based evaluations and performance reports, supported by a weekly reflection program for educators. Audits and training are carried out in collaboration with external parties and universities. Communication with parents is facilitated through digital platforms, while parenting programs involve families in their children's development. App-based documentation is used to facilitate access to information, with a special database system for storing child development reports.	Facing obstacles in evaluations that still focus on administrative aspects, with limited time for in-depth evaluations. Not all supervision recommendations can be applied immediately, and there are challenges in adjusting national standards to local conditions. Gaps in parents' expectations of learning methods still exist, while their access to and familiarity with daycare technology varies. Technical obstacles in documentation applications and manual data input also hinder efficiency.
Daycare D	Implement an evaluation with a combination of interviews and data-based assessments, complete with consultation sessions for post-evaluation improvements. Supervision is strengthened by external certification and cooperation with psychologists and child education experts. Parents receive regular reports on their child's progress and are involved in family events. Reports are compiled in the child's portfolio, while documentation of daily activities is carried out systematically.	Implement an evaluation with a combination of interviews and data-based assessments, complete with consultation sessions for post-evaluation improvements. Supervision is strengthened by external certification and cooperation with psychologists and child education experts. Parents receive regular reports on their child's progress and are involved in family events. Reports are compiled in the child's portfolio, while documentation of daily activities is carried out systematically.

Overall, the results show that while supervision systems have been established, their effectiveness is limited by several factors. The absence of standardized evaluation indicators creates inconsistencies and subjectivity in assessments. Documentation processes remain inefficient due to limited digital skills and technical obstacles, while parental participation and coordination with external parties are not yet optimal. Furthermore, the gap between national standards and local practices

complicates the application of evaluation recommendations. Strengthening evaluation mechanisms, building educators' capacity in documentation, and enhancing parental involvement are therefore essential to improve the overall supervision of daycare management.

Discussion

The findings of this research reveal that the implementation of daycare management standards in Malang still shows significant variation when linked to Management Standards in Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014 concerning National Standards for Early Childhood Education (PAUD). Although the regulation emphasizes the importance of standardized management across aspects such as program planning, organization, work plan implementation, and supervision, the field results demonstrate that each daycare adapts differently based on its capacity, available resources, and social context. This illustrates that national standards, while providing a framework, cannot be applied uniformly without considering local conditions. The results also emphasize that managerial competence, educators' readiness, and the level of parental involvement play an equally crucial role in ensuring that daycare management runs effectively. In other words, the standards provide a normative direction, but their translation into practice requires adaptability and innovation (Apriyansyah et al., 2024; Nurfahma et al., 2024).

In program planning, the study highlights that daycares attempt to design activities systematically, but the extent of innovation varies widely. Some daycare centers adopt modern approaches such as STEAM and project-based learning, while others rely more heavily on thematic and play-and-learn approaches. This confirms the argument of (Panjeti-Madan & Ranganathan., 2023), who stated that program planning in early childhood education must balance multiple developmental domains—cognitive, emotional, social, and physical—yet practical challenges often hinder full integration. The findings of this research enrich those arguments by showing that such challenges often stem from limited access to training, budget constraints, and the absence of standardized documentation. Furthermore, the study identifies that while planning generally considers daily routines, such as balancing play, rest, and nutrition, evaluations are often irregular and not fully data-driven (Damaiyanti et al., 2020; Pidjadee et al., 2024). This indicates a gap between the expectations of national standards and the reality of daycare practice, where program planning is constrained not only by resources but also by managerial and evaluative weaknesses (Arifianto, 2025; Willockx & Dom, 2022).

In terms of organization, the study found that most daycare centers already have organizational structures, but these are not always accompanied by clear documentation and role division. These findings align with the importance of transparency and well-structured administration as prerequisites for effective governance in educational institutions (Tran et al., 2025). However, this study extends that view by demonstrating that organizational clarity is insufficient without adequate human resources and professional capacity-building programs. This is consistent with the finding that strong organizational systems reduce parental stress and increase trust in daycare services, while the lack of standardized SOPs and inadequate managerial training can lead to inconsistencies in policy implementation, ultimately affecting childcare quality (Amarante et al., 2024; Yafie et al., 2023).

The implementation of work plans also reflects diverse practices. Several daycare centers have incorporated creative approaches such as STEAM, Montessori, and project-based activities, while others focus on play-and-learn and thematic learning. Although this shows efforts toward innovation, the study highlights that educators often lack the necessary competence to apply these methods optimally. The findings resonate with the importance of flexibility and responsiveness in early childhood education to accommodate children's diverse developmental trajectories (Attanasio, de Barros, et al., 2022; Landry et al., 2001). Yet, this research also provides new insights by showing that flexibility alone is insufficient; systematic training, adequate facilities, and digital tools are critical to ensuring that innovative learning models truly benefit children (Ashraf et al., 2022; Naida et al., 2024). In addition, the study points out that documentation of child development remains inconsistent, often relying on subjective observations rather than standardized assessment indicators, which reduces the reliability of evaluation results (Perichon et al., 2025).

Supervision is another crucial aspect in which variations occur. The research shows that some daycares use digital documentation, reflective discussions, and external collaborations with psychologists and universities, while others rely mainly on manual evaluations or administrative checklists. These practices support the argument that supervision plays a pivotal role in ensuring accountability and service quality in early childhood education (Legede et al., 2025; Luo et al., 2024). However, the findings of this study go beyond existing theories by revealing that the lack of standardized evaluation indicators often creates subjectivity in assessment (Herut & Setlhako, 2025). Moreover, parental involvement in supervision also varies, with some parents actively participating in evaluation forums, while others remain passive due to work commitments or limited understanding of evaluation tools (Brown et al., 2021; Klein et al., 2021). inconsistency reflects a broader challenge of aligning national standards with

local practices, where community engagement levels strongly influence the effectiveness of supervisory systems.

This study contributes to the understanding of daycare management by mapping the gap between national policy and local implementation, providing empirical evidence of challenges and contextual adaptations needed in practice. Unlike previous research that focused mainly on curriculum or teaching methods, this study takes a multidimensional perspective by analyzing program planning, organizational structure, work plan implementation, and supervision simultaneously, showing that effective daycare management requires not only regulatory compliance but also innovation, parental involvement, and responsiveness to socio-economic realities. Academically, it enriches the literature on early childhood education management, while practically it offers recommendations for managers, educators, and policymakers to improve planning, documentation, training, supervision, and regulatory guidelines. The findings imply that institutions must strengthen management foundations while adopting innovative practices, and policymakers should design flexible yet quality-oriented regulations. For future research, this study opens opportunities to develop adaptive models of daycare management applicable across socio-economic and cultural settings. However, its focus on four daycare centers in Malang limits generalizability, reliance on interviews introduces subjectivity, and systemic issues such as financing, infrastructure, and educator quality were not fully explored. Further research using mixed methods, broader regional coverage, standardized evaluation tools, and innovative financing models is recommended to ensure the sustainability of daycare services.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on interviews with four daycare managers and four teachers in Malang City, it can be concluded that the implementation of daycare management standards still shows variations when compared to Permendikbud No. 137 of 2014 concerning the National Standards for Early Childhood Education. Each aspect of management, including program planning, organization, work plan implementation, and supervision, plays an important role in creating an optimal environment for children's development. The findings indicate that systematic program planning based on children's needs, supported by parental and community involvement, is essential in developing activities that balance cognitive, social-emotional, physical, and moral-spiritual aspects. A clear organizational structure with effective leadership also contributes to management quality through task distribution, transparency, and participation. Consistent and adaptive implementation of work plans enables children to experience relevant and enjoyable learning, while continuous evaluation and monitoring ensure the quality of education, child safety, and educator welfare. This study also maps the gap between national policy and local practice, highlighting that the effectiveness of daycare management is not only determined by regulatory compliance but also by innovation, parental involvement, and the readiness of human resources and infrastructure. Moving forward, it is important to develop daycare management models that are more adaptive to socio-economic and cultural contexts, strengthen flexible yet standardized evaluation instruments, and implement participatory strategies to sustainably improve daycare management quality.

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