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Management of Early Childhood Education Students Based on Inclusive Education, Authentic Assessment, and Partnerships with Parents

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ABSTRACT

Student management is essential to ensure inclusive and developmentally appropriate services in Early Childhood Education (ECE). This study examines ECE student management through the interconnected roles of inclusive education, authentic assessment, and school–parent partnerships. A qualitative descriptive library research design was employed. The main data consisted of 29 thematic journal articles published between 2021 and 2025, while one methodological article supported the research design. The literature was analyzed through identification, reduction, thematic grouping, comparison, and synthesis. Findings show that student management connects admission, development, authentic assessment, and services responsive to children's diverse needs. Inclusive practices support equitable access, authentic assessment provides developmental information for responsive learning, and school–parent partnerships strengthen continuity between school and home. Implementation is supported by teacher competence and institutional capacity, but is constrained by limited inclusive services, teacher–student ratios, administrative workload, assessment technology, and inconsistent parental involvement. Strengthening these interconnected components is important for inclusive and holistic ECE services.

Keywords: *Authentic Assessment, Early Childhood Education, Inclusive Education, Parent Partnership, Student Management*

1. INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is an educational service that supports the holistic development of children by meeting their educational, care, protection, health, and welfare needs in an integrated manner. Providing these services requires student management that is not only administratively oriented but also able to accommodate the characteristics, needs, and development of each child. The implementation of Holistic and Integrative PAUD demonstrates that integrated services and the involvement of schools and families are crucial in supporting the fulfillment of children's developmental needs [1]. Therefore, student management in PAUD needs to be positioned as a service process that continues from student admission, guidance and development, development monitoring, and the provision of services tailored to each child's individual needs.

The changes in the learning approach in the Independent Curriculum also place monitoring of child development as a crucial part of early childhood education (PAUD) implementation. In this context, assessment is not only used to document developmental achievements but also serves as a basis for teachers to adapt learning to children's needs. However, its implementation has not always been optimal. A qualitative study of four early childhood education institutions in Palembang City revealed difficulties in integrating learning objectives with assessment methods, the use of

assessment formats that have not fully aligned with the Independent Curriculum, and suboptimal documentation of assessment results [2]. These conditions indicate that authentic assessment needs to be understood as part of student management, not merely as an assessment activity at the end of the learning process.

The challenges of managing students are also evident in the implementation of inclusive education and partnerships with parents. A survey of 50 early childhood education (PAUD) teachers in South Sulawesi showed that 36.6% of respondents stated they were not fully prepared if their institutions transitioned to inclusive PAUD, and 48.8% felt unsure about teaching children with special needs [3]. Furthermore, research on nine PAUD institutions and playgroups in Wonosobo Regency showed that parent partnership programs have been implemented, but some parents' participation is still hampered by busy schedules and work [4]. These findings demonstrate that access to inclusive services, assessment quality, educator competence, and family involvement are interrelated in determining the quality of services provided to students.

Previous research has provided an overview of the implementation of Holistic and Integrative Early Childhood Education (ECE), teacher readiness in inclusive education, assessment practices in the Independent Curriculum, and partnerships between ECE institutions and parents. However, these aspects have been studied as stand-alone focuses, so their interrelationships within the ECE student management framework have not been fully illustrated. In fact, inclusive education requires accurate identification of children's needs, authentic assessment provides developmental information to support individualized services, and partnerships with parents enable the continuous use of information on children's development at school and at home. Based on this, this study aims to examine the implementation of ECE student management through the integration of inclusive education, authentic assessment, and parent partnerships and to identify supporting factors and challenges to their implementation in improving the quality of ECE services.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Student Management in Early Childhood Education

Student management in Early Childhood Education (PAUD) encompasses a range of services, from planning and enrollment, through coaching and development, development monitoring, to providing services tailored to the child's needs [1], [5], [6]. In the context of PAUD, this management encompasses not only student administration but also ensuring that educational services address the characteristics, developmental stages, and needs of each child. The implementation of Holistic and Integrative PAUD demonstrates that services to children can encompass education, health and nutrition, care, protection, and welfare services, all delivered in an interconnected manner [5], [6].

The effectiveness of integrated services is related to educator readiness and institutional capacity. A study of Holistic and Integrative Early Childhood Education (ECE) educators in Jepara showed that educator capacity in service delivery still requires strengthening understanding and institutional support [7]. An evaluation of 100 ECE institutions in Kulon Progo Regency also showed that the effectiveness of holistic and integrative service implementation was moderate and varied across service areas [8]. Within the framework of this research, these conditions indicate that student management requires a connection between inclusive services, development

monitoring through assessment, and family support so that services can be tailored to children's needs.

2.2 Inclusive Education in Early Childhood Education Student Management

Within the framework of early childhood education (PAUD) student management, inclusive education is directly related to the non-discriminatory admission of students, the early identification of developmental needs, and the tailoring of services based on individual needs. This focus places inclusion as an operational principle in student management, relating to the admission process, development monitoring, and service delivery.

Implementing these principles requires educator preparedness and institutional support. Surveys of early childhood education (ECE) teachers indicate a continued need for training, screening tools in the admissions process, collaboration with experts, and increased accessibility of resources to support inclusive services [3]. In pre-service teacher education, instruction specifically addressing inclusive practices also demonstrates increased knowledge, confidence, and practical understanding of services for children with special needs [9]. Therefore, teacher and institutional preparedness is crucial to ensuring that the acceptance of students with diverse needs is accompanied by appropriate services.

2.3 Authentic Assessment in Early Childhood Education

Authentic assessment is a continuous assessment process conducted through observation of children's activities and development in learning situations. In early childhood education (ECE), assessment can be conducted through observation, anecdotal notes, portfolios, checklists, performance assessments, and documentation of work. Several studies have shown that the use of authentic assessment allows children's development to be observed in the context of real-life activities and provides information that can be used to adjust learning and developmental services [10], [11], [12].

The utilization of assessment results is also related to teachers' ability to manage developmental data. Early childhood education teacher practice includes data collection, understanding the information obtained, and using that data in learning [13]. Technological developments have opened up digital documentation options that can facilitate more systematic recording and monitoring of development [14]. In practice, limitations in time, training, facility support, technical understanding, and data completeness remain obstacles to the implementation of authentic assessment [15], [16]. Thus, technology serves as a supporting tool for managing developmental information and not a substitute for teachers' professional judgment.

2.4 Parental Partnership in Early Childhood Education Student Management

Partnerships between early childhood education (PAUD) units and parents are crucial in student management because information about children's development comes from both the school and family environment. This collaboration is realized not only through parental attendance at school activities but also through two-way communication regarding children's needs, habits, development, and support needs. Two-way communication and collaboration are essential elements in establishing partnerships between families and early childhood education practitioners [17], while

adaptive communication mechanisms are necessary when educational service conditions change [18].

The quality of these relationships also depends on the educator's readiness to communicate with families. Families generally value collaborative practices with early childhood education services, but communication and educators' ability to address diverse family needs still need strengthening [19]. Therefore, parent partnerships in student management need to be directed toward ongoing information exchange to more fully understand children's development at school and at home.

3. METHODS

This study employed library research with a qualitative descriptive approach. Literature studies were used to collect, analyze, and reconstruct information from scientific sources relevant to the phenomenon under study [20]. The primary sources consisted of 29 thematic journal articles published between 2021 and 2025, discussing early childhood education (PAUD) student management, inclusive education, authentic assessment, parent partnerships, and the conditions supporting their implementation. One methodological article was used to support the research design. Literature selection emphasized direct relevance to the study's focus, publications in scientific journals during the period, and the availability of comparable and synthesizable findings. Review articles, proceedings, and seminar articles were not used as primary sources for the synthesis.

Data collection was conducted through documentation by identifying and reviewing literature relevant to the research focus. Analysis was conducted in five stages: literature identification, information reduction according to the research focus, grouping by theme, comparing findings between publications, and synthesizing. For descriptive mapping, each article was placed on its most dominant theme, while in narrative analysis, one article could be used across themes if the reported findings were relevant. The main groupings included integrated student management, inclusive services, authentic assessment, school-parent partnerships, and supporting conditions and implementation challenges.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Distribution of Thematic Articles Based on Study Focus and Publication Year.

Thematic focus	Articles analyzed	Publication-year distribution	n
Integrated/holistic ECE student management	[1], [5], [6] [7], [8]	2022=2; 2023=1; 2024=1; 2025=1	5
Inclusive services and teacher readiness	[3], [9], [21]	2023=1; 2024=2	3
Authentic assessment and documentation	[12]–[14], [16], [10], [22] [2], [11], [15]	2021=1; 2022=2; 2023=2; 2024=3; 2025=2	10
School–parent partnerships	[17], [19], [4], [18], [23], [24], [25]	2021=1; 2022=1; 2023=2; 2024=3	7
Supporting and structural conditions	[26], [27], [28], [29]	2023=4	4

Note. [20] *was used as a methodological reference and was not included in the thematic synthesis. Each thematic article was assigned to its dominant focus for descriptive mapping, although relevant findings could be used across themes in the narrative analysis.*

The distribution of 29 thematic articles shows that the most studies relate to authentic assessment and documentation (10 articles), followed by school-parent partnerships (7 articles), holistic and integrative student management or early childhood education (5 articles), supporting and structural conditions (4 articles), and inclusive services and educator readiness (3 articles). Most of the articles were published between 2023 and 2025. This mapping serves as the basis for the following thematic synthesis.

4.1 Integrated Student Management in Early Childhood Education

The literature synthesis indicates that student management in early childhood education institutions (PAUD) occurs as a series of interrelated services, from student admission to monitoring child development. Identified stages include student admission and data collection, grouping by age or developmental stage, guidance and development, developmental monitoring through assessment, and provision of services tailored to the child's needs. Several studies have also identified this management as related to health services, character development, development of children's interests and potential, and parental involvement in supporting the development process.

These findings indicate that student management in early childhood education (PAUD) serves not only as an administrative mechanism but also as a link between the various services children receive during their education. The implementation of holistic and integrative PAUD requires a connection between educational services, families, and other supporting elements, and its effectiveness can vary across service areas [1], [8]. In this context, inclusive education, authentic assessment, and parent partnerships emerge as complementary components in ensuring services are tailored to the characteristics and developmental needs of students.

4.2 Inclusive Services in Student Management

The literature analyzed shows that the application of inclusive principles in student management is primarily related to the institution's ability to embrace student diversity, identify developmental needs, and provide support tailored to each child's individual circumstances. Inclusive management is demonstrated not only through the acceptance of children without discrimination but also through tailoring services and learning based on individual needs. Therefore, identifying children's needs is crucial because it determines the type of support and services required during their education at the PAUD (Early Childhood Education) unit.

However, institutional readiness to provide inclusive services still shows several limitations. The analyzed studies identified teacher competency in addressing diverse learning needs, the availability of supportive facilities, mentoring services, and the ability to identify needs as factors influencing the implementation of inclusive education. Teacher readiness still requires strengthening through training, collaboration, screening tools, and systematic support [3], while specialized learning on inclusion can strengthen the knowledge and practical understanding of prospective educators [9]. This situation suggests that the acceptance of students with special needs requires institutional readiness to provide services that are responsive to the needs of each child.

4.3 Authentic Assessment as the Basis for Student Management

The study's findings indicate that authentic assessment plays a role in providing information on child development that is used in student management. Various forms of assessment found in the literature include observation, anecdotal records, portfolios, checklists, performance assessments, and documentation of work. The ongoing use of multiple techniques allows teachers to obtain a picture of a child's development from various perspectives, not solely based on learning outcomes at a specific point in time.

Several studies have shown that information from authentic assessments can be used to identify individual student strengths, needs, and development [10]–[12]. These findings suggest that, in the context of student management, authentic assessments serve not only as documentation of development but also as information that can be used in planning learning and providing services that are more tailored to the child's characteristics.

However, the use of authentic assessments has not always been optimal. The literature indicates constraints such as time constraints, teachers' ability to document child development, limited technology utilization, training needs, and uneven support facilities [15] [2], [16]. These conditions indicate that assessment effectiveness is determined not only by the availability of instruments, but also by teachers' ability to process and utilize the information obtained.

4.4 School and Parent Partnership in Student Management

A literature synthesis indicates that school-parent partnerships serve as a mechanism for exchanging information regarding student development between the school and the family. Parental involvement is found in the form of communication regarding child development, support for activities at home, consultations with teachers, and participation in programs organized by early childhood education (PAUD) units. Information obtained from families helps teachers understand children's habits, interests, and needs outside of school, while the results of monitoring at school can be used by parents to continue developmental stimulation at home.

Family involvement is a crucial component of implementing holistic and integrated early childhood education (ECE) services [1]. Parent partnership programs have also been implemented in early childhood education institutions, although the level of family involvement still faces challenges related to parents' circumstances and busy schedules [4]. Therefore, the quality of partnerships is determined not only by the availability of programs that involve parents, but also by the continuity of communication and the school's ability to provide forms of participation that are tailored to family circumstances.

The study also shows that parental involvement is not always optimal. Some literature identifies limited communication, differing understandings of educational responsibilities, and inconsistent parental participation as obstacles to building continuity of services between home and school. This situation suggests that parental partnerships need to be positioned as part of ongoing student management, not just incidental school activities.

4.4 Supporting Conditions and Implementation Challenges

The study results show that the integration of inclusive education, authentic assessment, and parent partnerships is significantly influenced by teacher readiness and institutional capacity. Pedagogical competence helps teachers understand children's developmental characteristics and needs, while the ability to conduct assessments enables developmental information to be used in service planning. The link between pedagogical competence, professional attitudes, and the ability to manage authentic assessments is also evident in research on early childhood education (PAUD) teachers [30]. Thus, teacher competence is positioned as a supporting condition that enables the effective implementation of these three main aspects of student management.

Overall, the literature synthesis identified five main challenges in implementing early childhood education (PAUD) student management: limited inclusive education services, teacher-to-student ratios that do not support optimal individualized services, teacher administrative burdens, limited use of technology in assessments, and inconsistent parental involvement. These five challenges are interrelated. High student ratios and administrative burdens, for example, can reduce teachers' time for individual developmental observations, while limited technology utilization can make documentation and processing of assessment results less efficient.

Limitations in inclusive services primarily relate to teacher readiness, supporting facilities, and the institution's ability to provide services tailored to children's needs. Regarding assessment, manual recording and documentation can increase administrative burdens and complicate the

ongoing management of developmental data. Meanwhile, regarding partnerships, suboptimal family involvement limits the exchange of information on children's development between school and home. These findings demonstrate that improving the quality of student management requires support that is not directed at a single component, but rather strengthens teacher capacity, assessment systems, inclusive services, and communication patterns with families simultaneously.

4.5 Discussion

The synthesis results indicate that the quality of student management in early childhood education (PAUD) is not determined by a single, stand-alone component, but rather by the interconnectedness between institutional conditions and the service process for children. Research in the preschool context indicates that the structural characteristics and professional competencies of educators are related to the quality of interactions and relationships experienced by children [27], [28]. Within the framework of this study, inclusive education determines an orientation toward the diversity of student needs, assessments provide developmental information to tailor services, and partnerships with families expand information about children's development beyond the school environment.

In this context, teacher competency is more appropriately positioned as a supporting factor rather than a primary component alongside inclusive education, authentic assessment, and parent partnerships. Professional development in the context of inclusive early years demonstrates the importance of professional learning processes and organizational support in helping educators respond to the diversity of children's needs [21]. For prospective early childhood special education educators, learning that specifically addresses inclusion also increases knowledge, confidence, and practical understanding of implementing inclusive services [9]. These findings reinforce the position of teacher competency as a prerequisite for translating inclusion principles and assessment information into services that meet children's needs.

The use of assessments as a basis for student management also demonstrates that the primary challenge lies not only in collecting information, but also in documenting, interpreting, and using that information. The development of e-portfolios in early childhood education demonstrates the potential of technology to support developmental documentation, but its implementation still requires attention to access, educator readiness, workload, security, and ethical data use [22]. Therefore, the digitization of assessments in the context of this research is not understood as adding new administrative tasks, but as a means to make developmental documentation more systematic and user-friendly in service planning.

In terms of partnerships, the use of multiple communication channels allows schools and families to exchange information more flexibly. Technology can expand the reach of teacher-family communication, although reciprocal communication still requires appropriate strategies [23]. In diverse family contexts, reciprocal relationships and shared understanding between ECEC professionals and parents are essential components of partnerships [25]. Teacher-family communication practices are also related to children's participation in preschool programs, although patterns vary according to child, family, and program characteristics [24]. These findings reinforce that partnership quality is more accurately measured by the continuity of information exchange than simply the frequency of parent attendance at school activities.

The challenge of the teacher-to-student ratio needs to be understood as a structural condition, not the sole cause of service quality. Research on 161 children from 55 preschools in Austria showed that a less supportive child-to-staff ratio was associated with lower-quality peer interactions and more conflict, while other structural characteristics were also associated with interaction quality [28]. In this study, a less-than-ideal ratio is therefore positioned as a condition that can limit teachers' opportunities for individual attention, observation, and mentoring.

Educators' workload is also an important context for implementing student management. A cross-national study of early childhood educators shows that job demands are associated with stress and burnout [26], while research on preschool teachers indicates that high job demands and limited

work resources are associated with higher levels of burnout [29]. These findings reinforce the need for simplified documentation and institutional support so that administrative demands do not reduce teachers' space for observing, interacting with, and supporting children's development.

Overall, this synthesis demonstrates that inclusive education, authentic assessment, and parent partnerships can be understood as three interconnected aspects of early childhood education (PAUD) student management, while teacher competence and institutional capacity are the conditions that enable these connections to operate effectively. This study used secondary data, so the resulting interpretation depends on the scope and context of the literature analyzed. It has not yet empirically tested these relationships in specific PAUD units. Future research could examine the application of these interconnected components through field research in PAUD institutions with different service characteristics.

CONCLUSION

Based on a synthesis of 29 thematic journal articles from 2021–2025, Early Childhood Education (PAUD) student management is understood as a process that connects student admission, needs identification, developmental monitoring, and service provision according to child characteristics. In the analyzed literature, inclusive education, authentic assessment, and parent partnerships demonstrate complementary functions. Inclusive education directs services to be responsive to the diversity of student needs, authentic assessment provides developmental information as a basis for adjusting services and learning, while parent partnerships support the continuity of information and stimulation between schools and families. The implementation of these three aspects is influenced by teacher competence and institutional capacity and faces challenges such as inclusive service readiness, teacher-to-student ratio, administrative burden, utilization of assessment technology, and consistency of parent involvement.

The findings of this study represent a cross-contextual synthesis of the analyzed literature and are not intended to be an empirical representation of all early childhood education (PAUD) units. Implications of the study are directed at strengthening teacher capacity, effective use of assessments, developing services responsive to children's needs, and ongoing communication between schools and families. Future research can examine the interconnectedness of these components through field studies in PAUD units with more specific service characteristics and regional contexts.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. The author confirms that the data and content of the article have been compiled in accordance with academic standards and are free from plagiarism.

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