

# Organizational Culture and Child-Friendly Schools: Insights for Early Childhood Education

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## Abstract:

This study explores how a conducive learning environment in P.A.U.D. affects early childhood development and public trust in schools. This study aims to identify critical factors that create a positive learning environment and provide practical recommendations for educators and policymakers. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method, where data are collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation. The data obtained are analyzed using Milles and Huberman's interactive analysis technique, which involves the process of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The analysis results show that collaboration between teachers, staff, parents, and children is essential in building a supportive learning atmosphere and increasing parental trust in the quality of education. Emotional support from teachers and the active participation of parents in school activities have proven crucial in creating a conducive environment. The conclusion of this study confirms that a conducive learning environment not only increases children's motivation and achievement but also strengthens the relationship between schools and the community. The main contribution of this study is to provide an effective strategy for developing collaboration between schools, parents, and the community to create an optimal learning environment.

**Keywords:** *Learning Environment, Public Trust, School Collaboration, Emotional Support*

## Abstrak:

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi bagaimana lingkungan belajar yang kondusif di PAUD memengaruhi perkembangan anak usia dini dan tingkat kepercayaan publik terhadap sekolah. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi faktor-faktor kunci yang menciptakan lingkungan belajar positif serta memberikan rekomendasi praktis bagi pendidik dan pembuat kebijakan. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus, di mana data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Data yang diperoleh dianalisis menggunakan teknik analisis interaktif Milles dan Huberman, yang melibatkan proses reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa kolaborasi antara guru, staf, orang tua, dan anak sangat penting dalam membangun suasana belajar yang mendukung, yang pada gilirannya meningkatkan kepercayaan orang tua terhadap kualitas pendidikan. Dukungan emosional dari guru dan partisipasi aktif orang tua dalam kegiatan sekolah terbukti krusial dalam menciptakan lingkungan yang kondusif. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa lingkungan belajar yang kondusif tidak hanya meningkatkan motivasi dan prestasi anak, tetapi juga memperkuat hubungan antara sekolah dan masyarakat. Kontribusi utama penelitian ini adalah

memberikan strategi yang efektif untuk mengembangkan kolaborasi antara sekolah, orang tua, dan masyarakat demi menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang optimal.

**Kata Kunci:** *Lingkungan Belajar, Kepercayaan Publik, Kolaborasi Sekolah, Dukungan Emosional*

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## INTRODUCTION

This research highlights the crucial role of organizational culture in establishing effective child-friendly schools at the early childhood education level. The existence of Child-Friendly Schools (CFS) is one of the critical priorities in creating a learning environment that supports children's holistic development (King, 2020; Fitriani & Qodariah, 2021; Susanto, 2022). Child-friendly schools have a significant impact on children's development, not only by providing adequate physical facilities but also by creating an atmosphere that supports children to develop optimally in physical, cognitive, social, and emotional aspects (Agarwal et al., 2021; Jansson et al., 2022; Chuanchen, 2023). The relationship between organizational culture and the application of CFS becomes particularly relevant because organizational culture encompasses the values, norms, and practices that shape interactions and ways of working in schools (Piwowar-Sulej, 2021; Bougoulia & Glykas, 2023; Hasanah et al., 2023). This research is vital because it provides an in-depth look at elements of organizational culture, such as collaboration, openness, and support, as well as how those elements affect CFS implementation and early childhood education outcomes.

Child development ecology emphasizes that supportive environments, including families, schools, and communities, have an essential role to play in child development (Iruka et al., 2020; Crawford, 2020; Norman & Paramansyah, 2024). This relates to the organizational culture of the school and serves as a foundation that creates a safe and supportive learning environment (Grooms & Childs, 2021; Ansori et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2023). Piaget's theory of constructivism is also relevant, as it highlights the importance of direct experience and social interaction in children's learning processes (Mohammed & Kinyó, 2020; Marougkas et al., 2023; Knight et al., 2024). Active involvement of parents in school activities, emotional support from teachers, and strong collaboration between all stakeholders are instrumental in creating an environment that supports child development (De Torres, 2021; Sujarwo et al., 2021; Hsu & Chen, 2023). This social fact emphasizes the importance of in-depth, detailed research into how the relationship between organizational culture and CFS can be shaped and sustained to provide practical guidance for educators and policymakers in developing effective strategies to support early childhood education.

The main problem faced in this context is creating and maintaining a conducive learning environment that supports the holistic development of early childhood Tunas Mulia Playgroup. Although much research has been done on the importance of learning environments, more must be done to examine how collaboration between teachers, parents, and communities and internal school support can contribute to creating a conducive environment. An unsupportive learning environment can hinder child development in various aspects, so this

study seeks to identify critical elements that must be considered in creating an optimal environment for children.

Previous research has examined various aspects of the learning environment and its development in early childhood. Brown (2020) emphasizes that a positive learning environment can increase student motivation and achievement. This research shows that a supportive classroom atmosphere, parental involvement, and positive interactions with teachers are essential in improving student learning outcomes. Meanwhile, Smith (2021) found that a supportive environment, both from a physical and emotional aspect, contributes significantly to the holistic development of early childhood. The research highlights the importance of safety and emotional support from teachers and staff in helping children reach their maximum potential. In addition, another study from Johnson (2022) shows that community involvement in school activities can improve the quality of education and the reputation of schools. This research emphasizes the importance of active community participation in supporting school programs and creating a positive learning environment.

While these studies have provided important insights into the learning environment, some gaps must be filled. Previous studies have focused on specific aspects of the learning environment, such as teacher-student interaction or community involvement, but rarely examine holistically how a combination of these factors can create a conducive learning environment in “Early Childhood Care and Education” (ECCE) contexts. This research seeks to fill this gap by comprehensively examining how collaboration between teachers, parents, and communities, as well as support from schools as a whole, can shape a conducive learning environment.

This study is highly novel because it examines individual factors that affect the learning environment and the complex interactions between these elements in the context of the ECCE Tunas Mulia Playgroup. The uniqueness of this study lies in the holistic approach used to understand how a conducive learning environment can be created and sustained through collaboration between various stakeholders. In addition, the study also offers a new perspective on the importance of emotional support and community involvement in building an optimal educational environment.

The main objective of this study was to analyze the relationship between organizational culture and child-friendly schools. This study seeks to evaluate how aspects of organizational culture, such as collaboration, openness, and support, affect the quality of the school learning environment. This includes analyzing the contribution of these elements to the sense of security, comfort, and emotional support felt by students. Through this comprehensive analysis, this study is expected to provide empirical evidence that supports the importance of organizational culture in building child-friendly schools.

This research is urgent because organizational culture is the foundation of all school activities and interactions, including values, norms, and practices that shape all school members’ working and mindset. This empirical evidence can be used to formulate more effective education policies and practices so schools can

more easily implement optimal strategies for creating and sustaining CFS. This paragraph can be combined into one because it is still too long and seems wasteful.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This study uses qualitative research with a case study approach to explore a conducive learning environment, optimization of early childhood development, and the level of public trust in the Tunas Mulia playgroup. Qualitative descriptive research is chosen because it allows researchers to deeply understand the phenomenon under study through collecting and analyzing qualitative data (Doyle et al., 2020). The case study approach allows researchers to explore the learning environment in one location in detail and comprehensively.

Data collection techniques used in this study included in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and document analysis (Rutakumwa et al., 2020). Interviews were conducted with teachers, staff, parents, and students at PAUD Tunas Mulia Playgroup, located at Jl. Raya Kedungreja No. 123, Kedungreja District, Cilacap Regency, Central Java. Participatory observation is done by directly observing the learning process and interaction in the classroom and other school activities. Document analysis is done on various school documents such as activity reports, curriculum, and school policies. This combination of data collection techniques allows researchers to obtain rich and in-depth data on the learning environment and its effect on child development.

Data from the PAUD Tunas Mulia Playgroup study was analyzed using Milles and Huberman's interactive analysis technique. This process begins with data reduction, where information collected through interviews, observations, and documentation is filtered to retain only data relevant to the study. The selected data is then organized in tables, diagrams, or narratives to facilitate the identification of patterns or themes. After that, conclusions are drawn by analyzing emerging patterns or relationships. The results provide insight into critical factors that influence the learning environment at PAUD Tunas Mulia, such as collaboration between teachers and parents, which is an essential element in creating a conducive learning atmosphere. This technique ensures that in-depth data analysis is relevant to the research context.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

This study explains the correlation between a conducive learning environment and optimization of early childhood development and the level of public trust in schools in the Tunas Mulia Playgroup, Kedungreja District, Cilacap Regency. Through in-depth interviews with teachers, parents, and school staff at this location, the study gathered rich and relevant data.

### **Conducive Learning Environment**

A conducive learning environment in Tunas Mulia Playgroup is formed through a collaborative organizational culture, openness, and firm support. Collaboration between teachers, staff, parents, and children creates a positive and supportive learning atmosphere. One teacher stated, "We always work closely with parents to ensure children get the best education possible. Collaboration between teachers and parents is key to creating a supportive and effective learning

environment. Every month, we hold regular meetings with parents to discuss the children's progress and listen to their feedback. Parents are also involved in various school activities, such as classroom events, extracurricular activities, and community projects, allowing them to actively participate in their children's education (I\_Gr\_2024)."

Observation results show that parental involvement in various school activities is very high, which positively impacts their confidence in the quality of education provided. Parents feel their participation is broader than formal activities such as parent meetings but includes active participation in class events and extracurricular activities. The school invites parents to contribute and provide input in every project or activity. This creates a sense of ownership and shared responsibility for developing their children's education. This deep involvement strengthens parents' belief that education at PAUD Tunas Mulia focuses on the needs and development of children holistically and reflects close collaboration between the school and the family.

The above data shows that strong collaboration between teachers and parents in Tunas Mulia Playgroup is essential in creating a supportive and effective learning environment. Teachers regularly meet with parents to discuss children's development, listen to their feedback, and involve them in various school activities, including classroom events and community projects. Parents feel actively involved in every school activity, which increases their confidence in the education provided. This active participation creates a sense of shared ownership and responsibility towards their children's education, strengthens the relationship between home and school, and creates an inclusive and holistic environment. Thus, this collaboration increases parental confidence and supports children's holistic development, reflecting the importance of partnerships between schools and families in supporting educational success. The above guest can be understood as shown in the following chart:



**Figure 1. Correlation of Conducive Learning Environment Factors**

The results of this study show that parental involvement in school activities in Tunas Mulia Playgroup significantly positively impacts their confidence in the quality of education provided. This finding is in line with Brown's (2020) research, which found that parental involvement in school activities can increase student learning motivation and parental trust in educational institutions. Tunas Mulia Playgroup, the active involvement of parents in various school activities, such as monthly meetings and community projects, not only strengthens the relationship

between home and school but also creates a more conducive learning environment and supports the overall development of children. This proves that a collaborative approach and parent involvement driven by a supportive organizational culture can improve the quality of education and parental trust in schools.

### **Optimization of Early Childhood Development**

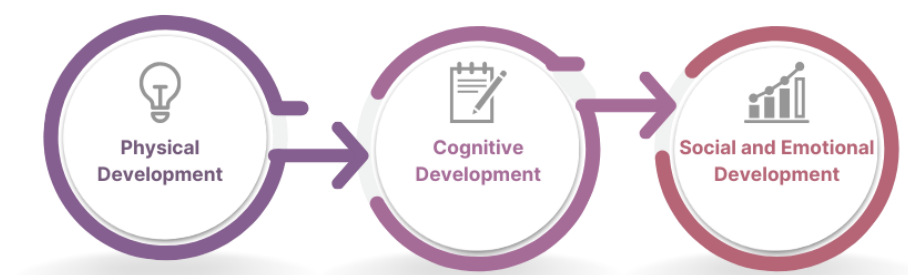
A safe and comfortable learning environment dramatically affects children's physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development in P.A.U.D. Tunas Mulia Playgroup. In physical development, a teacher states, "We make sure that children have enough time to play and exercise every day. This is an important part of our holistic approach to early childhood education. Each day, the school schedule is designed in such a way as to include sufficient time for children to participate in various games and physical activities. We believe that playing and exercising are not only important for their physical health but also for their social and emotional development. Children learn social skills through play such as sharing, cooperating, and communicating with their friends" (I\_Gr\_2024).

Observations at PAUD Tunas Mulia showed significant improvements in the thinking and language skills of children who joined the school. One parent observed that her son had made significant progress in his verbal and written communication skills since attending school. The teachers at the school have proven to be highly skilled in teaching language skills engagingly and interactively, which keeps the children engaged and enthusiastic about learning. In addition, the school's learning program specializes in developing children's critical and creative thinking skills. This can be seen from the stories that children often bring home about various activities in the classroom that challenge them to think logically and solve problems. These observations indicate that the learning approach focuses on academic aspects and developing broader thinking skills, which are essential for the children's future.

The data shows that PAUD Tunas Mulia applies a holistic approach to early childhood education, which includes a balance between academic and non-academic activities. Teachers ensure that children have enough time to play and exercise every day, understanding that physical activity is important for physical health and social and emotional development. Through play, children learn social skills such as sharing, cooperating, and communicating with their friends, which are essential for their holistic development.

From the parents' perspective, there has been significant improvement in children's thinking and language skills since joining this school. Skilled teachers teaching language skills in engaging and interactive ways and learning programs that emphasize the development of critical and creative thinking skills have made children enthusiastic about learning. Children go home with stories about various classroom activities that challenge them to think logically and solve problems, which shows that this holistic approach effectively improves children's cognitive development. This combination of a balanced and interactive approach creates a learning environment that supports children's overall physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development. This social interaction is essential for developing

cooperation, communication, and empathy skills. Based on the research findings above, it can be explained as the following chart:



**Figure 2. Diagram of Early Childhood Development in**

The results showed that a safe and comfortable learning environment in Tunas Mulia Playgroup significantly influenced children's physical, cognitive, and social-emotional development. The school's commitment to providing adequate time for daily play and exercise is crucial in supporting a holistic approach to early childhood education. One teacher revealed that physical activity is essential for physical health and helps children's social and emotional development through learning social skills such as sharing, cooperating, and communicating. This approach aligns with child development theory, which states that play and physical activity are critical components of early childhood physical and motor development (Frost, 2020).

Overall, the results of this study are consistent with previous studies showing that a holistic and supportive learning environment can provide significant benefits for early childhood development. By integrating games, sports, interactive cognitive learning, and positive social interaction, the Tunas Mulia Playgroup has created an environment that allows children to grow and develop optimally. These findings affirm the importance of a comprehensive approach in early childhood education, which includes physical, cognitive, and social-emotional aspects to support children's holistic development.

### **Public Trust**

Public trust in schools is strongly influenced by parental satisfaction, student academic achievement, the school's image in the community, and community involvement in school activities. The level of parental satisfaction with the quality of education provided is very high. One mother said I am delighted with the quality of teaching and the attention given by the teachers in this school. Every day, I see how the teachers here are committed to providing the best education for children. They teach the subject matter clearly and effectively and pay special attention to each child's individual needs. My child always feels heard and supported in every learning step, essential for his emotional and academic development. Teachers are always ready to provide additional assistance and communicate with us frequently as parents about child development (I\_Ortu\_2024)."

Observation results show that the school's support from teachers, classmates, and staff is significant in encouraging students to learn and excel in

competitions. A student reported that teachers at this school always provide the encouragement and guidance needed to reach their maximum potential. During an academic competition or an event, the teachers actively help students prepare well and provide additional materials and relevant intensive training. This support comes from teachers, classmates, and school staff, who always provide encouragement and motivation. When students achieve, the school celebrates it together, creating an appreciation feeling and motivating students to continue trying. This observation underlines that a culture of support and appreciation is vital in encouraging students to achieve academically and continue to develop.

The data shows that teachers' quality of teaching and attention in PAUD Tunas Mulia is very satisfying for parents and supports children's holistic development. Parents appreciate the commitment of teachers to providing the best education, which includes teaching the subject matter clearly and effectively and paying particular attention to each child's individual needs. Children feel heard and supported in every learning step, which is vital for their emotional and academic development. Teachers are always ready to provide additional assistance and often communicate with parents about the child's development, which creates a transparent and supportive learning environment.

From a student's perspective, the support they receive in learning and excelling in various competitions is significant. Teachers provide the encouragement and guidance students need to reach their maximum potential. Whenever there is an academic competition or event, teachers help students prepare well through additional materials and relevant intensive exercises.

As presented in the table related to the following public trust indicators:

**Table 1. Public Trust Indicators in ECCE Tunas Mulia Playgroup**

Indicator	Target
Parent Satisfaction	Reached
Academic performance	Reached
School Image	Reached
Community Engagement	Reached

The results showed that public trust in Tunas Mulia Playgroup was strongly influenced by parental satisfaction, student academic achievement, school image, and community involvement in school activities. High parental satisfaction, as expressed by a mother who was satisfied with the quality of teaching and attention from teachers, reflects the school's dedication to providing quality education and supporting child development. This aligns with Epstein's (2020) research, which emphasizes the importance of parental involvement and effective communication between school and home. Student academic achievement is also an important indicator, with consistent support from teachers and staff helping students achieve maximum potential, as shown in Hattie's (2021) research. A positive school image and active community involvement in school activities, as found by Henderson and Mapp (2022), strengthen the relationship between school and community, showing support and active participation from the surrounding community.



A crucial research contribution to early childhood education is developing a conducive learning environment. Research in Tunas Mulia Playgroup shows that strong collaboration between teachers, staff, parents, and children creates a positive and supportive learning atmosphere. The active involvement of parents in school activities strengthens their relationship with the school and increases confidence in the quality of education. Supportive teachers and staff provide security and comfort, essential for children's physical, cognitive, and emotional development. An open environment that allows the exchange of ideas and innovations is essential for improving teaching effectiveness. By creating a conducive learning environment, ECCE helps children reach their maximum potential and builds community trust and support for educational institutions.

## CONCLUSION

This study explains that a conducive learning environment supports early childhood development in PAUD Tunas Mulia Playgroup, Kedungreja District, Cilacap Regency. Collaboration between teachers, staff, parents, and children creates a positive and supportive learning atmosphere, significantly affecting parents' confidence in the quality of education. Strong support from teachers and staff and openness in organizational culture enables the exchange of ideas and innovations that enhance teaching effectiveness. This conducive learning environment not only supports children's cognitive and physical development but also helps form their social and emotional skills, thus reaching their maximum potential.

For future studies, it is recommended that similar studies be conducted at various sites with different characteristics to test the consistency of these findings. Further research can also explore the specific influences of each element of the learning environment, such as the role of technology in early childhood education or the impact of more structured parental engagement programs. In addition, longitudinal research can provide deeper insights into the long-term impact of a learning environment conducive to early childhood development. These studies will help strengthen the theoretical and practical basis for creating an optimal educational environment for early childhood. Your conclusion still seems general. Needs to be revised briefly, even though it represents the results of the findings and discussion.

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