

Revitalization of SPS Tunas Bangsa PAUD: Creating a Conducive Early Childhood Education Environment

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to evaluate the effects of the revitalization program on improving the quality of the learning environment at PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa. Given the importance of a conducive learning environment to spur students' motivation, enthusiasm and curiosity, this study is of particular relevance. Evaluation results showed a significant increase in students' motivation and enthusiasm for learning, supported by positive feedback from teachers and parents. Thus, the program succeeded in creating a more supportive learning environment in PAUD. Based on these results, it is recommended to continue the revitalization by adding educational murals on the school walls and conducting classroom arrangements to support more effective learning activities.

INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (ECED) plays a crucial role as an early foundation in a child's personal development, marking the initial phase of building an educational foundation that will last a lifetime. This critical period targets children under the age of seven - a period when psychological development is dynamic and highly susceptible to environmental influences. (Yasa, 2021). ECD goes beyond the delivery of basic academic instruction; it focuses on the development of cognitive skills, language, art, and social and emotional aspects (Nur et al., 2020). It also includes a child's spiritual growth, discipline, positive self-concept, independence, and sensory sensitivities, emphasizing the importance of ECD in a child's holistic development. (Khadijah, 2016). In the context of building excellent human resources, the transition from PAUD to the next level of education must pay attention to the continuity of quality standards that have been pioneered (Mustifa, 2019). Quality education that begins in early childhood education is known to prepare a solid foundation for students to achieve academic excellence later in life (Hartati, 2018). Therefore, it is crucial to emphasize that high-quality education at the ECD level not only paves the way for future academic success but also develops the character and values that these children will carry with them throughout their lives (Darman, 2017).

ECD education should not be judged through the lens of the effectiveness of teaching academic material alone (Puspitasari, 2016). Quality evaluation at this stage is more complex, covering a wide range of aspects. One crucial aspect of improving the quality of education is the establishment of a conducive learning environment that supports exploration and interaction, which are critical pillars in a child's early development (Sabilah, 2022). A comfortable learning environment is a prerequisite for fostering motivation and enthusiasm for learning, as well as cultivating deep curiosity among students. These factors collectively make a significant contribution to increasing interest in learning (Arifuddin & Hidayat, 2023). The management of adequate and high-quality learning facilities is also crucial. Efficient facilities support the achievement of strategic educational goals, ensuring that the educational process is effective (Hazimah et al., 2021).

However, PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa faces significant challenges that include the poorly maintained state of the building and environment. This situation risks reducing the attractiveness and effectiveness of the learning process. The day-to-day operations of this PAUD are self-financed mainly by the management of the institution, supported by the PKK Dusun, kelurahan and local communities committed to early childhood education in the area. Despite this support, the reality is that the expected standard of education has yet to be fully achieved, mainly due to limited facilities and infrastructure that support the quality of education.



Figure 1. Initial condition of Tunas Bangsa SPS PAUD

Responding to this condition, Thematic Real Work Lecture (KKNT) students from Janabadra University, in synergy with Karang Taruna Youth, have initiated improvement efforts through community service activities (PKM). Located in Onggopatran Hamlet, Srimulyo Village, Piyungan District, Bantul, this PKM activity focuses on revitalizing the aesthetics of PAUD buildings and environments to make them more attractive and fun. Through activities that include cleaning, painting, as well as creating gardens and paths, the main goal of this activity is to improve learning effectiveness and attract more parents to entrust their children's early education to this institution.

IMPLEMENTATION AND METHODS

The KKNT Work Program from Janabadra University, which is a form of community service, collaborates with Karang Taruna youth in an effort to revitalize and improve PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa. This PAUD is located in Onggopatran Hamlet, Srimulyo Village, Piyungan District, Bantul Regency. This initiative aims to enhance the effectiveness of the learning process and build trust among parents, making PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa an ideal choice for their children's education. This activity applies several methods as follows:

1. Problem Identification Stage

The KKNT team conducted an initial survey in Onggopatran Hamlet, with the primary objective of understanding the challenges faced by the local community. In the survey process, the team chose an interactive approach, which involved direct observation and dialogue with various relevant parties. The survey activities included an evaluation of existing facilities, their accessibility, waste management systems, as well as the condition of educational institutions. From direct observations in the field, the KKNT Team has identified several problems facing Onggopatran Hamlet, including the inadequate and unattractive disease of SPS Tunas Bangsa PAUD.

2. Preparatory Stage

To address the problems identified at PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa, the KKNT Team has decided to take the initiative of revitalizing the institution. This revitalization activity is planned to be run together with Onggopatran Youth Organization, with the aim of improving the quality of early education in Onggopatran Hamlet. In the preparation stage, the KKN Team and Youth Corps coordinated intensively to develop an implementation schedule detailing the equipment and materials needed to support the success of this revitalization program.

3. Implementation Stage

The implementation stage is the stage where the program that has been designed during the preparation stage begins to be implemented. In this context, the work program implemented is the revitalization and improvement of PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa. This program includes general cleaning activities, repainting of buildings, and arrangement of parks and roads to create a more cheerful and conducive environment for child development.

4. Evaluation Stage

The evaluation phase was conducted on November 22 2023, to measure the success of the SPS Tunas Bangsa PAUD revitalization program. This evaluation was achieved through the distribution of questionnaires to teachers and parents, with the primary objective of assessing whether there was an increase in enthusiasm and motivation to learn among students post-revitalization. The involvement and perceptions of these two groups are critical to understanding the impact of the improvements that have been implemented, and the results will be an important indicator in determining the success of the revitalization activities that have been carried out.



Figure 2. Activity Stages

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To improve understanding of the challenges faced by the community of Onggopatran Hamlet, the KKNT Team has conducted an initial survey that includes a unique method combining direct observation and intensive dialogue with various stakeholders. The purpose of the survey was to assess existing infrastructure and services, focusing on the accessibility of facilities, the efficiency of the waste management system, and the condition of local educational institutions. The survey results highlighted significant challenges, in particular, the inadequate needs at PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa, which demanded urgent repairs and upgrades.

In response to the challenges faced, the KKNT team, with high initiative, immediately started a revitalization program for the educational institution in collaboration with the Youth Organization of Onggopatran. This program has the main objective of improving the standard and quality of educational institutions in the hamlet. During the preparation stage, the KKNT Team and the Youth Organization coordinated intensively to plan the implementation and organize the necessary equipment and materials. Among the essential preparations was the submission of an application for plant seeds to the Yogyakarta Watershed Management Agency (BPDAS), which will be used in the garden arrangement activities. In addition, there was also an initiative to recycle plastic waste from used water gallons into plant containers as an effort to support environmental sustainability and education. Revitalization activities began on October 28 2023, with a general cleaning of the PAUD environment, which was carried out by the KKNT team and PAUD managers. This cleaning included grass cutting and garbage collection. This effort not only improves the aesthetics of the PAUD environment but also ensures safety and comfort for students playing and learning in the area.



Figure 3. Cleaning the PAUD Environment

Once the environmental cleanup is complete, the focus turns to painting the walls of the ECD building. The first stage is the preparation of the wall surface, including smoothing uneven surfaces. Next, a base coat or primer is applied to the walls to improve the adhesion of the paint that will be used next. The finishing stage involves double-coat painting, which aims to guarantee durability and a smooth finish. This method aims to produce a quality that is both aesthetically pleasing and durable, which supports the creation of a conducive learning environment for early childhood education children.



Figure 4. Wall Surface Flattening Process



Figure 5: Wall painting process

After completing the painting stage, the KKNT team continued the revitalization activities with a focus on garden arrangement and road construction. Plant seeds obtained from the Yogyakarta Watershed Management Agency (BPDAS) were planted using two methods: some were produced in plant containers that were recycled from used water gallons, and others were planted directly in the ground. This step is an integral part of efforts to improve the environment around the PAUD, with the aim of creating a refreshing green space that supports children's learning and play.



Figure 6. Planting Seedlings with Planting Media



Figure 7. Planting seedlings directly into the ground



Figure 8. Road Arrangement Results



Figure 9. Before the PAUD Revitalization Activity



Figure 10. Results of PAUD Revitalization Activities

After completing all series of revitalization activities at PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa, the next stage is to evaluate to measure the success of the movement. This evaluation was conducted on November 22, 2023. In the evaluation process, questionnaires were distributed to teachers and parents of students, with the primary purpose of digging up information on whether there was an increase in enthusiasm and motivation to learn among students after the revitalization program. Responses from teachers and parents are crucial to understanding the effects of the improvements that have been made. The results of this evaluation will be an important indicator in determining the overall success of the revitalization activities. The data and findings from this evaluation are summarized and presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Post-Revitalization Evaluation Results

Activities	Questions	Scale	Total
Evaluation of Facilities and Infrastructure	Assessment of the physical beauty of the building after revitalization	Improving	6
		Very Improved	4
	How much have the improvements made to the building and the arrangement of parks and roads affected the attractiveness of PAUD for children?	Big	5
		Very Big	4
Influence on Motivation and Enthusiasm for Learning	How does children's learning motivation increase after the revitalization of the PAUD building?	Greatly Improved	4
		Improved	6
	Do you feel any changes in children's enthusiasm to come to PAUD after the revitalization?	Yes	10
How effective is the revitalization in stimulating children's learning and creativity?	Effective	6	
	Highly Effective	4	

Based on the data in Table 1, the revitalization activities at PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa have yielded positive outcomes. The physical beauty of the building after revitalization was rated as 'Improving' by 6 respondents and 'Very Improved' by 4 respondents. In terms of the impact on the attractiveness of PAUD for children, 5 respondents noted a 'Big' improvement, and 4 found it to be 'Very Big', with 1 rating it as 'Medium'. The revitalization seems to have enhanced children's learning motivation, with 4 respondents noting an 'Improved' motivation and another 6 seeing a 'Greatly Improved' change. All respondents (10 out of 10) have observed an increase in children's enthusiasm to come to PAUD post-revitalization. When it comes to the effectiveness of the revitalization in stimulating learning and creativity, 6 respondents rated it as 'Effective', while 4 considered it 'Highly Effective'.

The revitalization of PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa appears to be a success. The enhancements have led to improvements in the physical aspects of the facilities and positively affected the children's motivation and enthusiasm for learning. While the majority of responses indicate significant positive changes, there is a range of perceptions on just how extensive these improvements are, suggesting some areas may still have room for further enhancement. Overall, the data indicates that the revitalization efforts have had a beneficial impact on the learning environment at PAUD.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion of the revitalization program at PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa, Onggopatran Hamlet, showed significant success. This initiative, which was initiated by the KKNT Team from Janabadra University and Onggopatran Youth Organization, involved a variety of activities, including environmental cleaning, wall painting, and garden and street arrangement. These activities not only improved the aesthetics and safety of the PAUD environment but also created a more conducive learning environment. Based on the post-revitalization evaluation, which incorporated feedback from teachers and parents, there was a significant increase in children's motivation and enthusiasm for learning, as well as the physical attractiveness of the PAUD. This shows that the revitalization effort succeeded in bringing about positive changes that have a far-reaching impact on the educational experience and learning comfort in PAUD.

While most responses indicated significant positive changes, there were mixed perceptions regarding the extent of improvements made, suggesting that some areas may still have room for further improvement. For the next revitalization activity at PAUD SPS Tunas Bangsa, it is recommended to paint murals on the walls and arrange the classrooms. Murals are an effective way to transform the learning environment into a more exciting and interactive one, which can increase engagement and inspiration for children. By choosing an appropriate theme, such as nature, animals, or inspirational figures, murals can not only beautify the school space but also provide a visual stimulus that supports the learning process and the development of children's creativity. In addition, a good classroom arrangement can support learning activities by creating an organized and conducive environment for learning. Thus, the mural

painting activity and classroom rearrangement can be a valuable next step in the effort to revitalize SPS Tunas Bangsa PAUD.

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