

Implementation of Child-Friendly School Program in Creating a Positive School Climate

Nadia Pratiwi¹, Rudi Hariawan², Muhammad Iqbal^{3*}

^{1,2,3} Administrasi Pendidikan, Universitas Pendidikan Mandalika, Mataram, Indonesia.
Email: ¹nadiapратиwi481@gmail.com, ²rudihariawan@undikma.ac.id,
³muhammadiqbal@undikma.ac.id

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Abstract: This study aims to examine the implementation of Child-Friendly School (CFS) program in creating a positive school climate at SMPN 22 Mataram. The research focuses on three aspects: planning, implementation, and evaluation of the CFS program. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation from principals, teachers, and students. Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, while data validity was ensured through credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability criteria. The study concludes that the comprehensive implementation of the CFS program significantly contributes to establishing a positive school climate that supports students' safety, comfort, and optimal learning.

Keywords: Child-Friendly School, Creating a Positive, School Climate,

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji implementasi program Sekolah Ramah Anak (SRA) dalam mewujudkan iklim sekolah yang positif di SMPN 22 Mataram. Fokus penelitian mencakup tiga aspek utama: perencanaan, pelaksanaan, dan evaluasi program SRA. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi terstruktur, observasi, dan dokumentasi dari kepala sekolah, guru, dan siswa. Analisis data mengikuti model interaktif Miles dan Huberman, sedangkan keabsahan data dijamin melalui kriteria kredibilitas, transferabilitas, dependabilitas, dan konfirmabilitas. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa implementasi program SRA yang komprehensif berkontribusi signifikan dalam menciptakan iklim sekolah yang positif yang mendukung keamanan, kenyamanan, dan pembelajaran optimal bagi siswa.

Kata Kunci: Sekolah Ramah Anak, Iklim Sekolah, Implementasi Program.

Introduction

The quality of education is fundamentally determined by the learning environment provided to students. A positive school climate has emerged as a critical factor influencing student outcomes, including academic achievement, social-emotional development, and overall wellbeing (Wang & Degol, 2016; Aldridge & McChesney, 2018). School climate encompasses the quality of relationships, physical environment, safety conditions, and the teaching-learning atmosphere within educational institutions (Cohen et al., 2009; Thapa et al., 2013). Indonesia has recognized the importance of creating child-friendly environments in educational settings. The Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection issued Regulation Number 8 of 2014 concerning Child-Friendly School Policy, establishing a framework for schools to protect children's rights while promoting their optimal development (Kementerian PPPA, 2014). This policy aligns with UNICEF's global framework for child-friendly schools, which emphasizes creating learning environments that are safe, inclusive, and supportive of children's diverse needs (UNICEF, 2012).

Despite these policy frameworks, implementation challenges persist in Indonesian schools. Research indicates that many students continue to experience unsafe environments, while teachers report limited professional development and involvement in decision-making processes (Wahyudi & Fisher, 2006). Data from West Nusa Tenggara Province reveals concerning statistics, with 976 cases of violence against women and children reported in 2024 alone (Suara NTB, 2025). These circumstances underscore the urgent need for effective Child-Friendly School program implementation. The Child-Friendly School (CFS) concept extends beyond physical safety to encompass emotional security, positive relationships, and participatory approaches to education (Ambarsari & Harun, 2018). Research has demonstrated that schools implementing CFS principles show improvements in student engagement, reduced bullying incidents, and enhanced academic performance (Puspitasari & Sholeh, 2024). Furthermore, positive school climates have been linked to teacher job satisfaction, reduced turnover, and improved teaching quality (Fang & Qi, 2023).

SMPN 22 Mataram presents a unique case for examining CFS implementation. The school has reportedly implemented child-friendly principles since before the formal policy was established, suggesting an organic commitment to creating positive learning environments. Understanding how this school plans, implements, and evaluates its CFS program can provide valuable insights for other institutions seeking to enhance their school climate. Based on the background described above, this study aims to: (1) examine the planning process of the Child-Friendly School program in creating a positive school climate; (2) analyze the implementation of the Child-Friendly School program in creating a positive school climate; and (3) evaluate the Child-Friendly School program in creating a positive school climate. These objectives are addressed through the following research questions: (1) How is the planning of the Child-Friendly School program conducted to create a positive school climate at SMPN 22 Mataram? (2) How is the Child-Friendly School program implemented to create a positive school climate at SMPN 22 Mataram? (3) How is the evaluation of the Child-Friendly School program conducted to create a positive school climate at SMPN 22 Mataram?

Method

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine the implementation of the Child-Friendly School program at SMPN 22 Mataram. The case study method was selected because it allows for in-depth exploration of complex phenomena within their real-life contexts (Iqbal et al., 2025). This approach is particularly suitable for examining how and why questions related to program implementation (Emzir, 2016).

Research Setting and Participants

The research was conducted at SMPN 22 Mataram, a public junior high school located in Mataram City, West Nusa Tenggara Province, Indonesia. This school was selected purposively based on its reputation for implementing child-friendly practices and its willingness to participate in the study. Research participants were selected using purposive sampling to include individuals with direct knowledge of and involvement in the CFS program. Primary informants included the school principal, teachers involved in program planning and implementation, and students who could provide perspectives on their experiences within the

school environment. Secondary data sources included relevant documents such as photographs and program-related materials.

Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through three methods: semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation review. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, and students to gather their perspectives on CFS program planning, implementation, and evaluation. Interview protocols were developed based on the research questions while allowing flexibility to explore emerging themes. Observations were conducted in the school environment to directly witness the implementation of child-friendly practices. The researcher observed teacher-student interactions, classroom activities, physical environment conditions, and school facilities. Field notes documented both descriptive observations and analytical reflections. Documentation analysis included examination of photographs depicting program activities, coordination meeting records, and other relevant materials. These documents provided corroborating evidence for interview and observation data.

Data Analysis

Data analysis followed the interactive model developed by Miles and Huberman (2018), comprising three concurrent activities: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Data condensation involved selecting, focusing, simplifying, and transforming raw data from field notes and transcripts. Data display organized condensed information into formats enabling pattern identification. Conclusion drawing involved interpreting patterns and verifying findings through triangulation.

Trustworthiness

Research quality was ensured through four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was established through triangulation of data sources (principal, teachers, students) and methods (interviews, observations, documentation). Transferability was addressed through thick description of the research context and findings. Dependability was supported by systematic documentation of research procedures. Confirmability was achieved through maintaining an audit trail and member checking with participants.

Informant Coding System

To maintain participant confidentiality while ensuring data traceability, a coding system was employed for all informants. The code format consists of: informant initials/role/school level/month/year. For example, "HN/Principal/SMP/VIII/2025" indicates an informant with initials HN, serving as Principal, at the junior high school (SMP) level, interviewed in August (VIII) 2025. Similarly, codes such as "MW/Teacher/SMP/VIII/2025" and "NH/Student/SMP/VIII/2025" represent teacher and student informants respectively.

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Participant confidentiality was protected through the use of codes rather than names in reporting findings.

The research was conducted with institutional approval and in accordance with ethical guidelines for educational research (Iqbal et al., 2025).

Result and Discussion

This section presents findings organized according to the three research focuses: planning, implementation, and evaluation of the Child-Friendly School program at SMPN 22 Mataram.

Planning of the Child-Friendly School Program

The planning of the CFS program at SMPN 22 Mataram was characterized by participatory processes involving multiple school stakeholders. Coordination meetings served as the primary platform for collaborative planning, bringing together the principal, school committee members, teachers, and relevant staff to formulate strategic steps for program implementation.

The school principal explained the participatory planning approach:

"The planning of the child-friendly school program at SMPN 22 Mataram is conducted participatively by involving school elements. We hold coordination meetings involving teachers and the school committee to formulate the steps for the child-friendly school program. In these meetings, we discuss activities aligned with child-friendly principles, such as creating a safe learning environment, forming positive habits, and strengthening student character." (HN/Principal/SMP/VIII/2025)

Teachers actively contributed to the planning process by providing ideas and recommendations for activities that would foster mutual respect, discipline, and caring among students. A teacher participant noted:

"In planning the child-friendly school program, we teachers participate by providing ideas or suggestions for activities that can foster mutual respect, discipline, and care among students. We also emphasize the importance of a school environment free from violence so that students feel safe learning at school." (MW/Teacher/SMP/VIII/2025)

The planning phase also addressed infrastructure and facilities that support child-friendly environments. Based on observation conducted in the school environment, the researcher noted:

"Work groups were observed at various corners of the school with responsibilities for maintaining cleanliness and environmental comfort. The school grounds appeared clean and well-maintained, supported by adequate facilities including a health unit (UKS), library, counseling room, and other supporting infrastructure. This condition indicates that the planning of the Child-Friendly School program at SMPN 22 Mataram is not merely conceptual but is also supported by the readiness of the physical school environment that supports the creation of a positive school climate." (Observation Notes, August 2025)

Key findings regarding CFS program planning include: (1) participatory planning involving principals, teachers, committees, and staff; (2) focus on creating safe, comfortable, violence-free learning environments; (3) emphasis on character building and positive habit formation; and (4) infrastructure support for program implementation.

Implementation of the Child-Friendly School Program

Implementation of the CFS program at SMPN 22 Mataram demonstrated consistency and sustainability, with practices predating the formal government policy establishment. The school principal described this organic development:

"The implementation of child-friendly school at this junior high school has been going on for quite some time, even before this program was officially formalized by the government. We have been applying child-friendly principles in daily activities, especially how teachers interact with students through good, polite behavior without using violence. Teachers also try to establish positive communication so that students feel valued and comfortable at school." (HN/Principal/SMP/VIII/2025)

Key findings regarding CFS program implementation include: (1) consistent practices predating formal policy requirements; (2) friendly, respectful teacher attitudes toward students; (3) teachers serving as both educators and behavioral guides; (4) student involvement in school life and decision-making, including classroom rules; and (5) participatory learning approaches creating comfortable learning environments.

Evaluation of the Child-Friendly School Program

Evaluation served as an essential mechanism for program improvement at SMPN 22 Mataram. Regular evaluations enabled the school to assess program effectiveness, identify challenges, and formulate corrective measures.

The school principal described the evaluation schedule and focus:

"Usually evaluation of the child-friendly school program is done on Saturday mornings through teacher meetings. We discuss what has been going well, evaluate obstacles faced, and determine steps for improvement. Additionally, at every evaluation I continue to remind everyone to always pay attention to conducive conditions for the children." (HN/Principal/SMP/VIII/2025)

Teachers participated actively in semester-end evaluations, examining changes in student attitudes and classroom atmospheres:

"We always try to maintain good communication with students through open methods. At the end of each semester we evaluate activities related to the child-friendly program. From there we see how far students show attitude changes, how they respond to teachers, and whether the classroom atmosphere is comfortable or not." (M/Teacher/SMP/VIII/2025)

Key findings regarding CFS program evaluation include: (1) regular evaluation through teacher meetings, particularly on Saturdays; (2) focus on identifying implementation challenges and determining follow-up actions; (3) assessment of student behavior changes and learning atmosphere; (4) evaluation of facilities and infrastructure alignment with child-friendly principles; and (5) continuous improvement orientation.

Discussion

This study examined the implementation of the Child-Friendly School program at SMPN 22 Mataram through three dimensions: planning, implementation, and evaluation. The findings contribute to understanding how schools can create positive climates that support student wellbeing and optimal learning.



Participatory Planning as Foundation

The participatory approach to program planning at SMPN 22 Mataram aligns with recommended practices in educational management literature. Involving multiple stakeholders—principals, teachers, committees, and staff—in planning processes creates shared ownership and commitment to program goals (Masaong, 2011; Mulyasa, 2013). This finding supports UNICEF's (2012) framework emphasizing community involvement as a key indicator of child-friendly schools. The focus on creating safe, violence-free environments during planning reflects growing recognition that emotional and physical safety are prerequisites for effective learning (Wang & Degol, 2016; Supardi, 2013). Research consistently demonstrates that students who feel safe at school show higher engagement, better attendance, and improved academic outcomes (Thapa et al., 2013; Klevan et al., 2024).

Teacher Role in Implementation

The central role of teachers in CFS implementation observed at SMPN 22 Mataram corroborates extensive research on teacher influence in creating positive school climates. Teachers' friendly attitudes, positive communication, and respectful interactions establish the relational foundation essential for child-friendly environments (Abdillah, 2015; Ersari et al., 2025). The dual role of teachers as educators and behavioral guides reflects comprehensive understanding of teaching responsibilities beyond academic instruction (Dwi Putra et al., 2025). Importantly, implementation at SMPN 22 Mataram predated formal policy requirements, suggesting that school culture and leadership commitment may be more influential than external mandates in establishing child-friendly practices. This finding aligns with research indicating that successful school improvement requires internal motivation and capacity alongside external policy frameworks (Sumar, 2018).

Student Participation and Voice

The involvement of students in school life and decision-making, including participation in establishing classroom rules, reflects core principles of child-friendly education. Mitra (2018) argues that student voice initiatives strengthen schools by incorporating young people's perspectives into educational processes. At SMPN 22 Mataram, student participation contributed to feelings of being valued and increased engagement with learning activities. This participatory approach also supports development of democratic citizenship skills. When students experience being heard and having their opinions respected, they develop confidence in expressing views and participating in collective decision-making (Sanjaya, 2015).

Evaluation for Continuous Improvement

The regular evaluation practices at SMPN 22 Mataram demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement. Weekly teacher meetings and semester-end reviews provide multiple opportunities for reflection, problem identification, and strategy adjustment (Depdiknas, 2008). This systematic approach to evaluation supports program sustainability and responsiveness to changing conditions. The comprehensive scope of evaluation—encompassing teacher-student interactions, classroom atmospheres, student behavior changes, and physical facilities—reflects understanding that school climate involves multiple interconnected dimensions (González et al., 2023). Addressing all dimensions through evaluation enables holistic improvement efforts.



Implications for Practice

This study's findings suggest several implications for schools seeking to implement child-friendly programs and enhance school climate. First, participatory planning processes that engage multiple stakeholders build commitment and shared responsibility essential for successful implementation. Second, professional development should equip teachers with skills for positive communication, respectful discipline, and participatory pedagogy. Third, creating mechanisms for student voice and participation strengthens program impact and student outcomes. Fourth, regular, comprehensive evaluation enables continuous improvement and program sustainability.

Limitations and Future Research

This study focused on a single school, which limits generalizability of findings. However, the in-depth case study approach provided rich understanding of implementation processes that can inform similar efforts elsewhere. Future research might employ multiple-case designs to compare CFS implementation across different school contexts. Quantitative studies measuring relationships between CFS implementation and student outcomes would complement this qualitative examination. Additionally, longitudinal research tracking program development over time could illuminate sustainability factors and long-term impacts.

Conclusion

This study examined the implementation of the Child-Friendly School program at SMPN 22 Mataram, focusing on planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. The findings reveal a comprehensive approach to creating positive school climate through systematic program management. Program planning was conducted participatively, involving principals, teachers, school committees, and staff in formulating strategies aligned with child-friendly principles. The planning focus on creating safe, comfortable, violence-free learning environments while building positive student character established clear direction for implementation efforts. Infrastructure support, including health facilities, libraries, and counseling services, provided material foundations for program realization.

The study concludes that systematic implementation of Child-Friendly School programs incorporating participatory planning, consistent implementation emphasizing teacher-student relationships, and regular comprehensive evaluation contributes significantly to creating positive school climates. Such climates provide conditions supporting students' safety, comfort, and optimal learning, ultimately advancing educational quality.

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