

Mobilizing Social Capital in the Formation of Early Childhood Education (ECE) Institutions in Rural Communities

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ABSTRAK

Layanan Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini (PAUD) di Indonesia tidak selalu berkembang melalui mekanisme formal yang sepenuhnya disediakan oleh negara. Pada komunitas pedesaan, institusi pendidikan sering kali dibentuk secara mandiri melalui pemanfaatan sumber daya sosial yang tertanam dalam kehidupan komunitas lokal. Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis bagaimana mobilisasi modal sosial berkontribusi dalam pembentukan institusi PAUD berbasis komunitas pedesaan. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Studi dilakukan pada PAUD Anggrek 11 di Desa Margahayu Selatan, Kabupaten Bandung. Analisis menggunakan perspektif modal sosial Nan Lin yang berfokus pada tiga dimensi utama, yaitu sumber daya yang tertanam, aksesibilitas, dan mobilisasi. Hasil penelitian

menunjukkan bahwa pembentukan PAUD berawal dari sumber daya sosial yang tertanam dalam jaringan Posyandu dan PKK berupa kepercayaan, hubungan timbal balik, serta interaksi sosial rutin. Kader PKK berperan strategis dalam mengakses sumber daya tersebut melalui identifikasi kebutuhan pendidikan kolektif dan pembangunan legitimasi sosial. Sumber daya tersebut kemudian dimobilisasi menjadi tindakan kolektif melalui partisipasi warga, kerja sukarela, dan koordinasi hingga menghasilkan institusionalisasi PAUD sebagai lembaga pendidikan berbasis komunitas. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa institusi pendidikan di pedesaan dapat terbentuk melalui mobilisasi kolektif modal sosial lokal di luar intervensi formal negara.

ABSTRACT

Early Childhood Education (ECE) services in Indonesia do not always develop through formal mechanisms fully provided by the state. In rural communities, educational institutions are often established independently through the utilization of locally embedded social resources. This study aims to analyze how social capital mobilization contributes to the formation of community-based ECE institutions in rural areas. This research employs a descriptive qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews, observation, and documentation. The study was conducted at PAUD Anggrek 11 in Margahayu Selatan Village, Bandung Regency. The analysis applies Nan Lin's social capital perspective, focusing on three dimensions: embedded resources, accessibility, and mobilization. The findings show that the establishment of PAUD

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began from social resources embedded in Posyandu and PKK networks, consisting of trust, reciprocal relations, and routine social interaction. PKK cadres played a strategic role in accessing these resources by identifying collective educational needs and building social legitimacy. These resources were then mobilized into collective action through community participation, voluntary involvement, and coordination, resulting in the institutionalization of PAUD as a community-based educational institution. The study shows that educational institutions in rural communities can emerge through the collective mobilization of locally embedded social capital beyond formal state intervention.

INTRODUCTION

Inequality in access to early childhood education (ECE) services remains a global issue, particularly for developing countries facing limited educational infrastructure in rural communities. In fact, within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Goal 4 states that countries are obligated to provide inclusive, equitable, and high-quality early childhood education services without discrimination (GEM Report UNESCO, 2023; UNICEF, 2023). Early childhood education makes a significant contribution to children's physical, moral, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual development through various forms of stimulation provided during the early stages of education (Astuti & Triani, 2024; Fitriana et al., 2023; Lilawati, 2025; Yusuf & Jurniati, 2018). However, the provision of early childhood education services in Indonesia remains uneven.

In Indonesia, based on Ministry of Education and Culture Regulation No. 137 of 2014, early childhood education services are delivered through various institutional forms, including kindergartens, playgroups, daycare centers, and similar early childhood education units, which are formally part of the national early childhood education system. In principle, the government has promoted the *one village one ECE center* agenda; however, approximately 17,803 villages in Indonesia still do not have any Early Childhood Education (ECE) institutions (Kemendikdasmen RI, 2025; Klaas, 2025). This situation indicates that the quantitative expansion of ECE services has not yet resulted in equitable distribution of education. Limitations in infrastructure, a shortage of formally trained educators, and operational funding constraints have left many villages without access to ECE services provided by either the government or the private sector (Balaji & Pyari, 2023; Johnson Dayo AKANBI et al., 2025; Martins Gomes De Gusmao et al., 2026). In rural communities, limited access to early childhood education results in children being poorly prepared for formal schooling, thereby spurring the emergence of various community-based initiatives as alternatives for providing educational services (Morrissey et al., 2022). Despite these limitations, a number of rural communities have demonstrated the capacity to independently develop early childhood education by leveraging the social resources embedded in the fabric of residents' daily interactions (Laksono & Rohmah, 2019).

In the tradition of the sociology of education, educational institutions are understood not merely as pedagogical spaces, but as social arenas shaped through processes of

institutionalization influenced by the social structure of the communities in which they develop. The formation of educational institutions cannot be separated from the distribution of resources, power relations, social interactions, and collective practices that develop within a specific social context (Balaji & Pyari, 2023; Brooks, 2025; Guhin & Klett, 2022). In the Indonesian context, the establishment of early childhood education institutions at the community level often does not originate from formal educational design but rather evolves from the transformation of local social institutions such as Posyandu and PKK, which previously functioned in family health services and community empowerment. Regular interactions among community volunteers, parents, and the local community enable the development of community-participation-based early childhood education activities (Elastiana et al., 2025; Islami et al., 2024; Munawaroh & Andriani, 2026).

In rural contexts, limited economic capital and institutional resources often result in unequal access to education, necessitating that local communities develop alternative mechanisms to provide educational services (Ripamonti, 2023). Under these conditions, social capital becomes a vital resource for the development of local institutions, particularly in communities with limited material resources (Field, 2008; Portes, 1998; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). From Nan Lin's perspective, social capital is understood as "*resources embedded in social networks*" that actors can access and mobilize to achieve specific goals (Lin, 1999b, 2001).

Research on the relationship between social capital and education has expanded significantly over the past decade. However, the majority of studies still view social capital as a factor that supports the effectiveness of programs, the quality of services, and the sustainability of established educational institutions. Attention to how social capital functions during the early stages of educational institution formation, particularly in rural communities that lack adequate access to formal education that remains relatively limited. Various studies indicate that the capacity of community social networks plays a crucial role in both the formation and sustainability of educational institutions. The mobilization of collective resources enables communities to establish educational institutions in rural areas (Pryor, 2005), while the involvement of local communities serves as a vital source of legitimacy in supporting the sustainability of rural educational institutions (Watson et al., 2022). Conceptually, educational institutions are socially embedded institutions that develop through the dynamics of social relations at the local community level (Lin, 1999a, 1999b).

In contrast to previous research that positions social capital as a factor supporting the sustainability of education, this study specifically frames social capital as a social mechanism operating during the pre-institutional formation phase—that is, the stage when educational institutions do not yet exist and the community collectively builds these institutions through the mobilization of its social resources. This perspective is important because studies in the sociology of education have largely focused on how educational institutions reproduce

social structures, while attention to how such institutions are initially formed through the mobilization of a community's social resources remains relatively limited. Based on this issue, this study aims to analyze how the mobilization of social capital operates in the process of establishing community-based early childhood education institutions in rural areas.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study design to gain an in-depth understanding of the social process underlying the establishment of a rural community-based Early Childhood Education (ECE) institution. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study seeks to explain social dynamics, interactions among actors, and the process of mobilizing social resources. The case study method was employed to facilitate a more in-depth analysis of the specific social context underlying the emergence of a community-based educational institution (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Yin, 2018).

The research was conducted in Margahayu Selatan Village, Bandung Regency, West Java, focusing on PAUD Anggrek 11 as the case study. The location was selected through purposive sampling based on the consideration that PAUD Anggrek 11 is an early childhood education institution formed through a local community initiative, rather than through a formal program entirely designed by the government. This case was selected because it demonstrates a key characteristic of the study: the process of establishing an educational institution that emerged from the mobilization of social resources within a rural community.

This research was conducted from April to May 2026 for data collection. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews, field observations, and documentation. In-depth interviews were conducted with actors directly involved in the process of establishing PAUD Anggrek 11, including PKK cadres, PAUD administrators, community leaders, parents of students, and village officials involved in the establishment process. Informants were selected using purposive sampling, taking into account their level of involvement, knowledge, and experience in the establishment of the Anggrek 11 PAUD. Observations were conducted to understand the social interactions developing within the community as well as the institutional activities taking place around the PAUD. Meanwhile, documentation was used to supplement data regarding the history of the institution's establishment, organizational archives, and various other supporting documents.

Data analysis employed a qualitative descriptive approach through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions (Miles et al., 2014). Data reduction was conducted by grouping data from interviews and observations based on related themes. Within this analytical framework, the study focuses on three main dimensions: embedded resources, accessibility, and mobilization. This framework was used to analyze how community actors leverage local social networks to establish community-based early childhood education (PAUD) institutions. To enhance data validity, the study employed

source triangulation by comparing information obtained from various informants, as well as methodological triangulation through a combination of interviews, observations, and documentation. This approach was taken to ensure data consistency while strengthening the credibility of the research findings (Patton, 2015).

RESULT

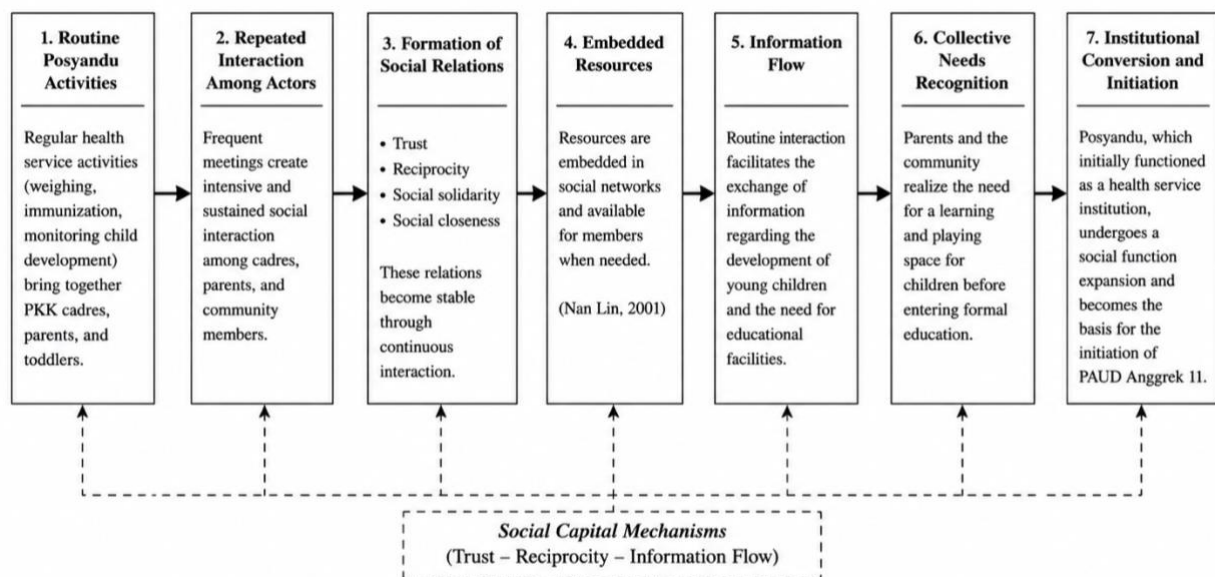
Embedded Resources: Posyandu dan PKK Networks as Social Resources within the Community

The establishment of PAUD Anggrek 11 evolved from social structures that had previously been formed through daily community activities. Before becoming an early childhood education institution, PAUD Anggrek 11 originated from Posyandu activities that were routinely held in RW 11 of Margahayu Selatan Village. In the early stages, the Posyandu activities served as a regular meeting space that brought together PKK cadres, parents, and toddlers for basic health services such as weighing, immunizations, and monitoring children's growth and development. However, over time, the Posyandu expanded beyond its health service functions to become a forum for social interaction that strengthened relationships among community members through recurring, intensive, and sustained gatherings.

From Nan Lin's perspective, this situation indicates the presence of "embedded resources" are resources that are embedded within the community's social structure and available for actors to access when needed to achieve specific goals (Lin, 1999a, 1999b, 2001). Lin observes that social relationships harbor various potential resources that actors can leverage through pre-existing networks. In the case of the Anggrek 11 Early Childhood Education Center, these resources do not take the form of economic capital or formal infrastructure, but rather manifest as trust among residents, social closeness, reciprocity, community solidarity, and patterns of social interaction that have developed through Posyandu activities and the PKK organization.

In the context of rural Indonesia, Posyandu and PKK not only function as institutions for family health services and women's empowerment organizations but also serve as social arenas that bring residents together through routine interactions, fostering reciprocity, building trust, and creating social networks that can subsequently become collective resources for the formation of new social institutions (Elastiana et al., 2025; Lin, 2001). Nan Lin's study confirms that social networks serve as a source of social capital because ongoing relationships enable the accumulation of resources embedded within those relationships (Lin, 2001). The routine interactions that take place during Posyandu activities create social conditions that enable residents to develop a high level of trust in fellow community members, particularly in the PKK cadres who have long played an active role in community service.

Figure 1. Embedded resources in the initial formation of PAUD Anggrek 11



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Figure 1 of this study shows that the need to establish early childhood education centers (PAUD) stemmed from prior social interactions during Posyandu activities aimed at providing a space for children to learn and play. Through regular meetings, parents began to realize that the children attending Posyandu needed more than just health services—they needed a space where they could learn to socialize, play together, and receive developmental stimulation before entering elementary school. Repeated interactions among families, the community, and educational actors led to the accumulation of social capital, which in turn supported the creation of a learning environment for children. Consequently, this collective awareness served as the starting point for the recognition of shared needs or collective needs recognition, which subsequently spurred the emergence of community-based educational initiatives. Posyandu, which previously functioned as a venue for health services, experienced an expansion of its social functions when children's educational needs began to be perceived as collective community needs. This process of reinterpreting social functions marked the initial stage of institutional conversion that is, the shift in the function of a social institution from a venue for health services to a venue for the establishment of educational institutions.

The results of this study also show that social capital operates through the mechanism of information flow, as explained by Lin. Lin explains that one of the primary functions of social capital is to facilitate the flow of information within social networks, enabling actors to identify collective needs, opportunities, and problems more effectively. In the case of PAUD Anggrek 11, routine interactions between parents and volunteers during Posyandu activities facilitated the exchange of information regarding the development of young children and the need for educational spaces that were not yet available in the community.

Thus, the Posyandu social network not only fosters social relationships but also serves as a medium for the exchange of information, which forms the basis for the emergence of a collective awareness to establish new educational institutions.

The establishment of educational institutions in local communities generally does not occur as a spontaneous process but rather evolves from pre-existing social structures that have developed through daily community life. The existence of social networks built through repeated interactions enables communities to identify shared needs, foster collective participation, and mobilize the local resources necessary to establish educational institutions independently. In rural communities, the community's capacity to leverage long-standing social relationships is a key factor determining its ability to establish local educational institutions (Pryor, 2005). Social communication among residents, voluntary participation, and trust deeply rooted in community life are crucial factors enabling the establishment of early childhood education services at the local level. The existence of early childhood education institutions at the community level is also strongly influenced by the capacity of local actors to build collective support for these developing institutions. Social relationships among families, communities, and educational actors enable the formation of social structures that support the emergence of educational institutions, particularly through the community's active involvement in providing social support, legitimacy, and a collective commitment to the existence of these institutions. In the context of early childhood education, local social networks serve as a vital resource that enables communities to establish educational institutions even when formal institutional support remains limited.

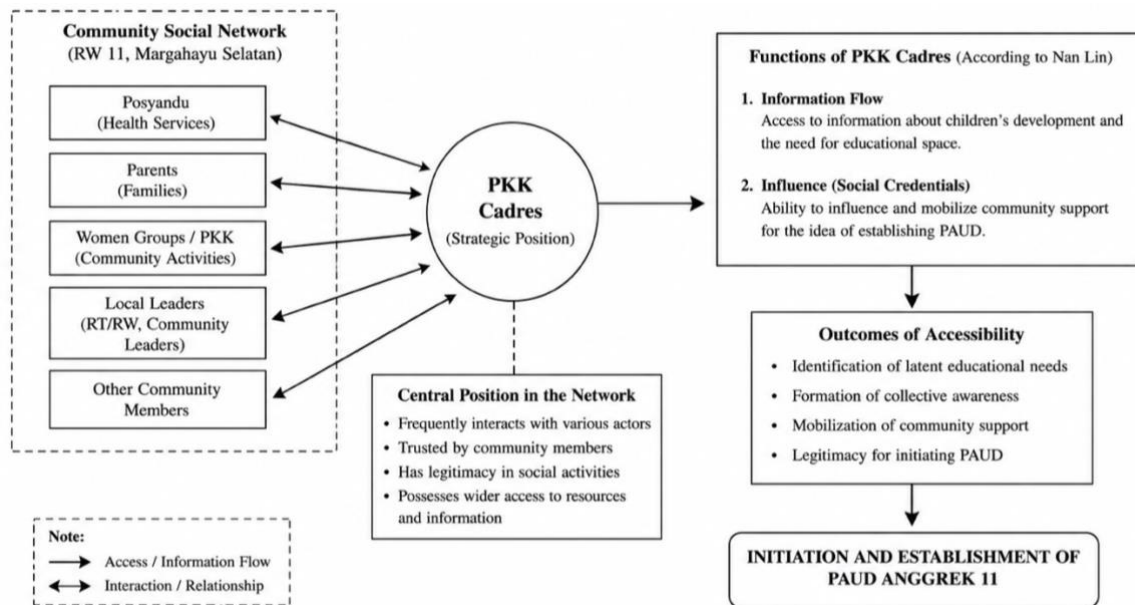
In the context of this study, the process of establishing the PAUD Anggrek 11 demonstrates that the existence of educational institutions in rural communities is not always determined by the state's role as the primary provider of formal educational services. Rather, educational institutions can emerge from social resources already embedded in people's daily lives through local social institutions that previously served non-educational functions. In this context, Posyandu and PKK function as local social infrastructure that provides a foundation of relationships, trust, and resource exchange, enabling the institutionalization of education at the community level.

Accessibility: The Social Position of PKK Cadres

Essentially, social resources embedded within a community's structure cannot directly lead to the formation of new social institutions unless there are actors capable of accessing, connecting, and organizing those resources toward specific collective goals. From a social capital perspective, the fundamental issue is not merely whether a community possesses strong social networks, but rather who holds the strategic social position to gain access to the resources available within those networks. This perspective is central to Nan Lin's theory of social capital, which emphasizes that access to social resources is always unequal because

it is heavily influenced by an actor's position within the structure of social relations—a position that determines an individual's opportunities to obtain information, legitimacy, influence, and the chance to access other resources available within the social network (Lin, 1999b, 1999a, 2001).

Figure 2. The strategic position of PKK Cadres in the formation of PAUD Anggrek 11:
Accessibility in Social Networks



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Figure 2 explains in the case of the Anggrek 11 Early Childhood Education Center, the process of establishing the educational institution was not only determined by the existence of social networks that had previously developed through the Posyandu and PKK activities but was also significantly influenced by the presence of certain actors who had the capacity to access these networks more strategically than other community members. This position is evident among PKK cadres who have previously been actively involved in various social activities at the neighborhood level. Their ongoing involvement places these cadres in a relatively central social position within community life, as they continuously interact with families, children, women's groups, and other local organizational structures. In social network analysis, such a central position results in differential access—a condition in which certain individuals have greater access to social resources than other members because they occupy more strategic positions within the structure of social relationships (Lin, 2001; Mizoguchi, 2009).

The social position of PKK cadres is significant because social needs within the community do not always emerge as needs that are immediately recognized as part of a collective agenda. In the early stages, the need for early childhood education in RW 11 was

not yet understood as an institutional need requiring the establishment of a formal educational institution. This need only emerged through daily social interactions as cadres routinely engaged with children and parents during Posyandu activities. These recurring interactions enabled the cadres to gain contextual knowledge about shifts in community needs that had previously gone unnoticed through formal mechanisms. From Nan Lin's perspective, this situation illustrates the function of information flow—that is, the ability of social networks to provide a flow of information that enables actors to identify opportunities for specific actions based on their access to available social connections. Information becomes a vital resource because individuals who occupy more central positions within a network receive information more quickly, more broadly, and in a more contextual manner than those in peripheral positions within the community (Lin, 1999a, 1999b).

In this context, the establishment of early childhood education (PAUD) does not begin with a top-down educational program but rather with the ability of local actors to identify social needs that emerge informally in the daily lives of the community. In rural communities, access to this kind of social information is often a crucial prerequisite for the formation of local institutions, as collective needs are not always articulated through formal administrative procedures. Community-based institutions tend to develop when there are actors capable of identifying the latent needs of the community and transforming them into a shared social agenda. In the context of early childhood education, the development of community-based educational services demonstrates that the relationships formed between families, communities, and local actors function as a social infrastructure that enables children's needs to evolve into more formal institutional initiatives (Ballantine et al., 2017; Kadar et al., 2020).

However, access to information is not sufficient to explain how the idea of establishing educational institutions subsequently gains community support. Lin explains that social capital operates not only through the distribution of information but also through mechanisms of influence that is, the ability of actors to influence others' decisions due to their social position within a network of social relationships (Lin, 1999a, 1999b). Within a community structure, social decisions are never entirely individual in nature; rather, they are heavily influenced by the social relationships that shape individuals' perceptions of specific actions. In the case of the PAUD Anggrek 11, the position of PKK cadres who had long interacted with the community enabled them to influence the community's perspective on the importance of providing educational opportunities for children before they enter elementary school. Parents' support for the formation of a playgroup, which later evolved into the PAUD, did not stem solely from the children's educational needs but also from the cadres' ability to shape the community's collective perspective on this new idea.

According to Lin's perspective on social capital, this mechanism of influence is referred to as "social credentials" that is, the social legitimacy inherent in individuals due to their position within the social structure (Lin, 2001). Individuals who have gained social

recognition tend to be more easily trusted, so the actions or ideas they propose are more likely to be accepted by other actors. In the context of the program of PAUD Anggrek 11, PKK cadres had already gained social legitimacy through their involvement in child health services, family counseling, and women's organization activities at the local level. This legitimacy generated a form of informal social authority that led community members to view the establishment of the PAUD not as an individual initiative, but as a socially credible agenda worthy of collective support. Furthermore, in contemporary social capital analysis, network structures essentially generate a form of relational power that is, the ability of certain actors to influence collective behavior because they occupy strategic positions within the flow of social relationships taking place in the community (Jackson, 2017). Thus, the establishment of community-based institutions in many early childhood education contexts demonstrates that trust in local actors is often a more decisive factor than the existence of formal policy designs alone (Farrell et al., 2004). In the context of early childhood education, the social legitimacy of local actors is a key factor because communities often place their trust in specific individuals as the primary basis for determining their involvement in educational programs. The relationship between families, communities, and educational institutions indicates that the establishment of community-based educational services is heavily influenced by the capacity of local actors to build trust-based legitimacy, which enables communities to accept new institutional transformations (Keung & Cheung, 2023; Social Capital Theory).

Furthermore, the accessibility of social capital in the case of the PAUD Anggrek 11 also highlights the presence of a brokerage function that is, the ability of actors to bridge social elements that were previously separate into more coordinated relationships. The establishment of community-based educational institutions requires actors capable of connecting various social resources dispersed throughout the community network. The position of social actors enables the expansion of networks from internal community relationships to access external resources that support the development of educational institutions. The ability to build bonding, bridging, and linking relationships serves as a crucial mechanism in expanding the community's capacity to organize community-based education (Anwar et al., 2025). The establishment of community-based educational institutions requires a connection between family needs, community participation, administrative staff, access to knowledge resources, and coordination among local organizations that support the institution's sustainability. In social network theory, the role of the broker is of significant importance because it enables actors to connect different social groups and create new flows of resources that were previously unconnected. Social capital, therefore, is generated not only by high social cohesion but also by the ability of certain actors to connect different networks and convert social relationships into institutional capacity (Jackson, 2017).

In this case, PKK cadres fulfill this function by connecting various community elements that previously operated separately. Parents, Posyandu activities, the PKK organization, children, and the community's social spaces began to be consolidated into a new collective agenda: the formation of a playgroup, which later evolved into a formal educational institution. At this phase, informal social relationships undergo a transformation into a more organized coordination structure. Institutions do not arise solely from the existence of social needs, but from the ability of certain actors to organize dispersed resources so that individual needs are transformed into directed collective action. Community participation in education demonstrates that the ability of local actors to define shared needs is a key factor in transforming social initiatives into formal institutions (Pena-López & Sánchez-Santos, 2017). Thus, education in rural areas consistently shows that the success of establishing local institutions depends heavily on the community's capacity to foster social coordination through the involvement of local actors who hold strategic positions within the community network (Watson et al., 2022).

DISCUSSION

This study applies Nan Lin's perspective on social capital as its primary analytical framework to explain how social resources embedded in networks of relationships can be accessed and mobilized to achieve specific goals. Unlike the perspectives on social capital developed by Robert D. Putnam (1993) and James Coleman (1988) which place greater emphasis on trust, social norms, and community cohesion as collective characteristics that underpin social cooperation (Coleman, 1988; Mikiewicz, 2021; Portes, 1998), Nan Lin's perspective views social capital as resources embedded in the structure of social networks that actors can access and mobilize to achieve specific goals (Lin, 1999a, 1999b, 2001).

Lin defines social capital as "resources embedded in social networks" that actors can utilize through social relationships to gain benefits or achieve specific goals (Lin, 1999b, 2001). From this perspective, social capital is understood not merely as a community attribute, but as a resource that operates through the structure of social relationships and the actions of actors within them. Conceptually, Lin explains that social capital operates through three interconnected processes: embedded resources, accessibility, and mobilization. Embedded resources refer to the various resources available within social networks, such as information, trust, legitimacy, and collective support that develop within a community (Lin, 2001). Accessibility refers to an ability of actors to reach and gain access to the social resources available within that network. Meanwhile, mobilization refers to the process by which social resources that have been accessed are then strategically used to achieve specific goals. This framework enables an analysis of how social resources that have long been part of community life can serve as the basis for the formation of new institutions.

Furthermore, Lin explains that social capital operates through several key mechanisms: facilitating the flow of information, exerting influence on decision-making, generating social legitimacy or recognition, and reinforcing collective identity and social solidarity (Lin, 2001). In the context of this study, these mechanisms help explain how PKK cadres, as local actors, are able to leverage their positions within the Posyandu network and community organizations to build trust among residents, identify early childhood education needs, and simultaneously gain social legitimacy in the process of establishing early childhood education institutions.

Lin also emphasized that the effectiveness of social capital is greatly influenced by the structure of an actor's social network (Lin, 1999a). Dense, closed networks tend to foster strong levels of trust, solidarity, and internal support, whereas more open networks allow actors to gain access to new resources from outside the community. In the context of establishing community-based early childhood education (PAUD), these two forms of networks operate simultaneously. Internal networks that develop through neighborhood relationships, Posyandu, and PKK foster solidarity and community participation, while external relationships with formal institutions enable the community to gain access to additional resources such as administrative support, training, and institutional legitimacy. This study maps the process of establishing the Anggrek 11 PAUD through three dimensions of social capital from Nan Lin's perspective, namely embedded resources, accessibility, and mobilization as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Dimension of social capital in the establishment of PAUD Anggrek 11

Dimension of social capital	Empirical finding	Social mechanism
Embedded resources	Posyandu and PKK	Trust, reciprocity, information flow
Acessibility	PKK cadre	Legitimacy, brokerage, coordination
Mobilization	Establishment of early childhood education (ECE)	Collective action, institutional formation

Source: Created and processed by the author

From a sociological perspective, the formation of educational institutions is not understood merely as the result of formal policies, but rather as a social process that unfolds when community actors are able to access and mobilize resources embedded within their social networks. From the perspective of the sociology of education, educational institutions are understood as "socially embedded institutions" that is, institutions formed through the social dynamics of the communities in which they (Brooks, 2025; Guhin & Klett, 2022). This

means that the existence of schools or educational institutions cannot be separated from the local social structures that underpin their formation. In the case of Anggrek 11 Early Childhood Education Center, the Posyandu and PKK served as the initial social institutions that provided the structural conditions for the emergence of a new educational institution at the community level.

The dimension of accessibility is also evident through the ability of community cadres to access external resources that were previously unavailable within the community. Posyandu cadres, who subsequently serve as educators, receive various trainings before facilitating the learning process. This situation demonstrates that access to organizational networks enables local actors to acquire new resources in the form of knowledge, pedagogical skills, and professional capacities that were previously beyond the reach of individuals. From Lin's perspective, social capital enables actors to gain returns because social relationships open up opportunities to access resources that lie beyond an individual's initial position within the social structure. Thus, social capital not only fosters internal community solidarity but also enables the transformation of social capacity into new productive resources (Lin, 2001). Empirical evidence on participation in early childhood education shows that community involvement is not only influenced by economic factors but is also strongly determined by the distribution of social capital, the relational positions of actors, and the community's ability to establish connections with broader institutional resources (Ripamonti, 2023).

And then, the mobilization of social capital in the formation of PAUD Anggrek 11 cannot be understood merely as a practice of community participation, but as a process of educational institutionalization born from the community's ability to transform social resources into formal educational structures. From the perspective of educational sociology, this case shows that educational institutions in rural communities do not always develop through the expansion of state bureaucracy, but can be formed through the community's capacity to independently perform the social functions of education. Thus, education is not just an arena that reproduces social structures after institutions are formed, but from the outset is a product of the social dynamics of a community capable of mobilizing everyday social relationships into mechanisms for establishing new educational institutions.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the establishment of PAUD Anggrek 11 was not driven solely by educational needs, but by the capacity of local actors to access and mobilize resources embedded within community networks. This finding supports Lin's proposition that social capital generates returns when actors occupy strategic positions within social structures that enable them to transform social relationships into collective action (Lin, 2001). Unlike Coleman and Putnam, who primarily conceptualize social capital as a collective attribute of communities (Field, 2008; Mikiewicz, 2021), this study shows that the institutionalization of community-based early childhood education depends on actors'

differential access to network resources and their ability to mobilize those resources toward a shared educational goal.

This study extends Nan Lin's theory beyond its conventional application to individual resource acquisition by demonstrating that embedded resources, accessibility, and mobilization also explain the emergence of community-based educational institutions. Rather than focusing on the benefits obtained by individuals, this study shows that social capital can be transformed into collective institutional outcomes. This finding contributes to the sociology of education by positioning educational institution formation as a network-based process of institutionalization rather than merely an outcome of state policy or community participation

CONCLUSION

This research shows that the emergence of early childhood education services in rural communities is not always a state intervention, but can develop through the internal capacity of the community in responding to the collective needs they face. The case of PAUD Anggrek 11 illustrates that social relationships previously formed through community activities, particularly through Posyandu and PKK organizations, provide a social foundation that enables local actors to build educational initiatives independently. This process affirms that the existence of educational institutions at the local level is a result of social dynamics that develop through sustained interaction, resource exchange, and organized cooperation within the community.

Conceptually, this research affirms the importance of viewing social capital not merely as a factor that enhances the effectiveness or sustainability of existing educational institutions, but as a mechanism that enables the emergence of new institutions under conditions of limited structural support. From the perspective of educational sociology, this finding reveals that the process of educational institutionalization in rural communities is closely related to the community's ability to transform everyday social networks into productive collective actions. Thus, this study expands the discussion on the formation of educational institutions by showing that local communities are not merely recipients of educational policies, but are social actors with the capacity to autonomously produce educational spaces through mobilizing resources embedded in the community's social structure.

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DECLARATION OF AI

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used artificial intelligence (AI) tools solely to assist in producing visual illustrations based on the research findings. The authors also used DeepL Translator to support language translation and improve the readability of the manuscript. All scientific content, data analysis, interpretation of findings, and conclusions were developed exclusively by the authors. The authors carefully reviewed and verified all outputs generated with these tools and take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the final manuscript.

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