CREATING A SCHOOL THAT STUDENTS LOOK FORWARD TO THROUGH ENJOYABLE LEARNING WITH A DEEP LEARNING APPROACH

Windi Widayanti[1], Ida Mirna[2], Anton Setiabudi[3], Jaka Wijaya Kusuma[4]
[1,2,3,4]Universitas Bina Bangsa, Indonesia
Email: windi.widayanti98@gmail.com, idamirna02@gmail.com, antonmunjul1065@gmail.com, jakawijayak@gmail.com

Abstract

Creating a school that students long for requires learning experiences that are not only effective but also enjoyable and meaningful. Recent educational challenges in Indonesia indicate that students' disengagement and learning boredom are often caused by learning practices that emphasize content delivery rather than meaningful understanding. This study aims to systematically examine how enjoyable learning integrated with a deep learning approach contributes to the creation of a desirable and engaging school environment. This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method by analyzing national scholarly publications published between 2021 and 2025 that focus on enjoyable learning, deep learning, meaningful learning, and students' learning experiences. The findings reveal that enjoyable learning integrated with deep learning promotes students' cognitive and emotional engagement, strengthens students' emotional attachment to school, and fosters a positive and supportive learning environment. Deep learning that is implemented in a participatory and contextual manner enables enjoyable learning experiences that are authentic and sustainable. This study concludes that the integration of enjoyable learning and deep learning is a strategic pedagogical approach to creating schools that are meaningful, engaging, and emotionally supportive for students.
Keywords: enjoyable learning, deep learning, meaningful learning, desirable school, systematic literature review

INTRODUCTION

At its core, school is both a learning space and a living space for students. It serves not only as a venue for the transfer of knowledge but also as a social environment that shapes students' emotional experiences, attitudes, and perceptions of learning. The concept of the "school of their dreams" refers to a setting where students feel safe, comfortable, valued, and have a positive emotional connection to the school. In the context of education in Indonesia, various reports and research findings indicate that many students still perceive school as a stressful, boring, and academically demanding space, which results in low learning motivation and student engagement in the learning process (Hidayat & Kurniawan, 2021).

This issue is closely tied to learning practices that remain predominantly focused on content delivery and the cognitive achievement of curriculum targets. Learning that emphasizes rote memorization, assessment of outcomes alone, and minimal meaningful interaction often neglects students' emotional aspects and learning experiences. National research indicates that learning that is monotonous and lacking in context is one of the primary factors leading to learning fatigue and a decline in students' interest in school (Suyanto & Jihad, 2021). This situation underscores the importance of transforming teaching approaches toward practices that are more human-centered, enjoyable, and meaningful.

Enjoyable learning is a pedagogical approach that positions students as active participants in the learning process. This approach is characterized by a positive classroom atmosphere, warm interactions between teachers and students, the use of varied methods, and students'

emotional engagement in learning activities. Studies in Indonesia indicate that enjoyable learning can enhance intrinsic motivation, student engagement, and positive attitudes toward the learning process and the school environment (Wahyuni & Anwar, 2022). Thus, enjoyable learning is a crucial prerequisite for realizing the school of our dreams.

However, enjoyable learning cannot be reduced to merely using engaging methods or recreational activities. Learning that overly emphasizes the aspect of enjoyment without substantive depth risks producing shallow and less meaningful learning experiences. Therefore, the enjoyment of learning needs to be integrated with a learning approach that fosters conceptual understanding, reflection, and the development of higher-order thinking skills. It is in this context that the deep learning approach becomes relevant for examination.

Deep learning is understood as a learning process that enables students to build a comprehensive and meaningful understanding of learning materials, connect them to real-world experiences, and develop critical, creative, and reflective thinking skills. This approach emphasizes students' active engagement in exploring concepts, solving problems, and reflecting on their learning process. In Indonesia, deep learning is one of the approaches aligned with educational policy directions, particularly in the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes meaningful and learner-centered learning (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2022).

The integration of enjoyable learning and deep learning is a key factor in creating a holistic learning experience. Deep learning, when designed appropriately, can foster a love of learning because students feel intellectually challenged, their opinions are valued, and they are emotionally engaged in the learning process. Conversely, enjoyable learning becomes more meaningful when accompanied by activities that promote conceptual understanding and reflection. Research in Indonesia indicates that deep learning, when delivered in a contextual and participatory manner, can enhance student engagement while strengthening long-term understanding of the learning material (Nurhadi & Senduk, 2023).

Deep learning approaches also contribute to the formation of positive relationships between students and the school. Students engaged in meaningful and enjoyable learning tend to feel a sense of belonging to the school, feel valued as individuals, and view the school as a place relevant to their lives. Several national studies report that the implementation of deep learning has led to increased student self-confidence, the courage to express opinions, and emotional attachment to the learning environment (Prasetyo & Rahayu, 2024). These conditions are key indicators of a school that students long for.

Beyond its impact on students, the implementation of enjoyable deep learning also has implications for the role and professionalism of teachers. Teachers are required to transform from content-delivery-oriented instructors into learning facilitators capable of creating spaces for dialogue, reflection, and exploration. Research in Indonesia indicates that teachers who adopt a deep learning approach tend to build more positive relationships with students and are able to create a classroom climate that is safe, inclusive, and supportive of students' potential development (Utami & Sudirman, 2023). Such a learning climate serves as a crucial foundation for fostering a humanistic school culture centered on student well-being.

Although enjoyable learning and deep learning have been extensively discussed in educational studies, research specifically integrating these two approaches within the context of creating the ideal school remains relatively limited, particularly in systematic studies within the Indonesian context. Some studies still focus on the effectiveness of specific teaching methods, while the dimensions of students' learning experiences and emotional attachment to school have not yet been comprehensively synthesized. Yet, a thorough understanding of the integration of enjoyable learning and deep learning is crucial as the basis for formulating sustainable educational policies and practices (Hidayat & Kurniawan, 2021).

Therefore, the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach is relevant for use in this study. SLR enables researchers to identify, evaluate, and synthesize various research findings related to enjoyable learning and deep learning in a systematic and transparent manner. Through this approach, a comprehensive understanding can be obtained regarding how deep learning designed to be enjoyable contributes to creating the school of one's dreams, as well as the factors that support its success within the Indonesian educational context (Suharsaputra, 2023).

Based on this description, this study aims to systematically examine the role of enjoyable learning with a deep learning approach in creating the school of our dreams. This study is expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of learning and educational management studies, as well as practical recommendations for teachers, school principals, and education policymakers in designing learning that is not only academically effective but also meaningful, enjoyable, and oriented toward student well-being.

METHOD

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to comprehensively examine how enjoyable learning through a deep learning approach contributes to creating the kind of school students long for. The SLR approach was chosen because it allows researchers to systematically, transparently, and academically accountably search for, select, evaluate, and synthesize the results of previous research. In the context of educational studies in Indonesia, the SLR is considered appropriate for mapping research trends, identifying patterns of findings, and pinpointing research gaps related to deep learning and student learning experiences (Suharsaputra, 2023).

Research data sources include articles from accredited national journals, scientific proceedings, and academic books relevant to the topics of enjoyable learning, deep learning, the "school of longing," and student learning experiences. Literature searches were conducted through national databases such as Garuda, SINTA, and Google Scholar, taking into account the relevance to the Indonesian context and the recency of publications. The publication timeframe was limited to 2021–2025 to ensure that the studies analyzed reflect the latest developments in national educational practices and policies, including the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum (Kemendikbudristek, 2022).

The literature search strategy utilized a combination of keywords such as enjoyable learning, deep learning, deep learning in education, the school of one's dreams, student learning experiences, and meaningful learning. These keywords were used both individually and in combination to capture publications that directly address pedagogical, psychological, and student learning experience aspects in schools. The search process was conducted in stages and iteratively to ensure adequate and relevant literature coverage aligned with the research focus (Hidayat & Kurniawan, 2021).

The retrieved articles were then screened based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria include: (1) studies discussing enjoyable learning, deep learning, or meaningful learning within the context of formal education in Indonesia; (2) publications containing empirical findings or conceptual analyses relevant to student learning experiences and the school climate; and (3) articles published within the specified timeframe. Meanwhile, exclusion criteria included popular articles, those not undergoing peer review, or those lacking a direct connection to the school and learning context (Wahyuni & Anwar, 2022).

The literature that passed the selection was subsequently analyzed using integrative thematic analysis. This analysis was conducted by identifying key themes that recurred in previous studies, such as the characteristics of enjoyable learning, the principles of deep learning, the teacher's role as a facilitator, students' emotional engagement, and the impact of learning on students' attachment to school. These themes were then compared and integrated to gain a

comprehensive understanding of the relationship between enjoyable deep learning and the creation of a school that students long for (Nurhadi & Senduk, 2023).

The synthesis process was conducted using a narrative-analytical approach by linking findings across studies, identifying similarities and differences in results, and relating them to the context of educational policies and practices in Indonesia. This synthesis not only highlights dominant findings but also reveals variations in approaches, implementation contexts, as well as supporting and hindering factors for the application of enjoyable deep learning in schools. With this approach, the study's findings are expected to provide a comprehensive overview of learning practices that have the potential to create the kind of school people long for (Prasetyo & Rahayu, 2024).

Through the application of the Systematic Literature Review method, this research is expected to produce a synthesis of knowledge that offers both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study enriches the understanding of the integration of enjoyable learning and deep learning within the Indonesian educational perspective. Practically, the research findings are expected to serve as a reference for teachers, school principals, and policymakers in designing meaningful, humanistic, and student-wellbeing-oriented learning as the foundation for creating the school of the future.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the Systematic Literature Review indicate that the concept of the "school of one's dreams" in Indonesian educational literature is understood as a school environment capable of providing meaningful, enjoyable learning experiences that prioritize students' well-being. The "school of one's dreams" is not merely measured by academic achievement or the completeness of facilities and infrastructure, but rather by the extent to which the school can serve as an emotionally safe space, provide a sense of comfort, and encourage students' active engagement in the learning process. Several national studies confirm that positive learning experiences are the primary factors shaping students' perceptions of school and determining their level of attachment to the learning environment (Hidayat & Kurniawan, 2021).

In this context, enjoyable learning emerges as a central element in creating the school of one's dreams. SLR findings indicate that enjoyable learning is not narrowly understood as learning filled with games or entertainment, but rather as a learning process capable of sparking students' interest, curiosity, and emotional engagement. Enjoyable learning is characterized by a positive classroom atmosphere, warm interactions between teachers and students, and the use of varied and contextual learning strategies. Research across various regions in Indonesia indicates that enjoyable learning contributes to increased learning motivation, student engagement, and positive attitudes toward school (Wahyuni & Anwar, 2022).

However, the findings also emphasize that enjoyable learning alone is insufficient to create meaningful and sustainable learning experiences. Several national studies have criticized learning practices that emphasize enjoyment at the expense of depth, as they risk producing superficial learning experiences that do not foster long-term conceptual understanding. Students may feel happy in the short term, but they do not gain deep and real-life-relevant understanding (Suyanto & Jihad, 2021). Therefore, the literature emphasizes the importance of integrating enjoyable learning with a deep learning approach.

In Indonesian educational studies, the deep learning approach is understood as a learning process that encourages students to build comprehensive understanding, connect knowledge to real-life contexts, and develop critical, reflective, and creative thinking skills. The SLR results indicate that deep learning significantly contributes to students' cognitive and emotional engagement. Students engaged in deep learning tend to demonstrate high curiosity,

the courage to ask questions, and the ability to connect learning materials with daily experiences (Nurhadi & Senduk, 2023).

The integration of enjoyable learning and deep learning is a key finding in this study. National literature indicates that deep learning designed to be dialogic, participatory, and contextual can actually foster authentic joy in learning. Joy in learning does not stem from purely recreational activities but from the experience of understanding concepts, discovering meaning, and feeling valued in the learning process. Research by Prasetyo and Rahayu (2024) indicates that students engaged in deep learning feel more intellectually challenged and simultaneously enjoy the learning process more because they are actively involved in exploration and reflection.

The study's findings also show that enjoyable deep learning directly contributes to students' emotional attachment to school. Students who experience meaningful learning tend to view school as a place relevant to their lives, not merely a space for academic obligations. National research reports that students engaged in deep learning demonstrate a sense of belonging to the school, positive attitudes toward teachers, and a desire to attend and actively participate in various school activities (Utami & Sudirman, 2023). This emotional attachment is one of the key indicators of a school that students long for.

Beyond its impact on students, the SLR findings indicate that the implementation of enjoyable deep learning has significant implications for teachers' professional roles and practices. Teachers are required to shift their teaching paradigm from merely conveying content to becoming learning facilitators capable of designing meaningful learning experiences. Teachers need to create spaces for dialogue, provide opportunities for reflection, and build supportive relationships with students. Research in Indonesia indicates that teachers who implement deep learning approaches tend to have more positive relationships with students and are able to create a classroom climate that is safe, inclusive, and conducive to learning (Sari & Mustiningsih, 2023).

From a school management perspective, study findings indicate that enjoyable deep learning contributes to the development of a positive school culture. Schools that promote meaningful learning practices tend to have a culture that values the learning process, collaboration, and reflection. Such a school culture supports the creation of a humanistic learning environment focused on student well-being. Several national studies indicate that schools with a strong learning culture are better able to create an environment where students feel at home and emotionally connected (Hidayat & Kurniawan, 2021).

The SLR findings also highlight the role of national education policies in supporting the implementation of engaging deep learning. The Merdeka Curriculum policy provides flexibility for teachers to design contextual and student-centered learning. The literature indicates that schools capable of leveraging curriculum flexibility to implement deep learning experience increased student engagement and a more positive learning atmosphere (Kemendikbudristek, 2022). This demonstrates that policy support is a critical factor in creating the kind of school students long for.

Nevertheless, the study's findings also identified several challenges in implementing enjoyable deep learning. These challenges include limited teacher understanding of the concept of deep learning, high administrative burdens, and a school culture that remains focused on test scores and exams. Several national studies note that without adequate guidance, deep learning risks being reduced to procedural activities lacking deep reflection (Nurhadi & Senduk, 2023). Therefore, strengthening teachers' capacity and providing school managerial support are key factors for the successful implementation of this approach.

Overall, the synthesis of SLR findings indicates that enjoyable learning through a deep learning approach plays a crucial role in creating the school of our dreams. Such learning not only enhances students' academic understanding but also fosters positive learning

experiences, strengthens emotional bonds with the school, and cultivates a humanistic and sustainable learning environment. A school that students long for is born from learning practices that value students as whole individuals—cognitively, emotionally, and socially—and make the learning process a meaningful and joyful experience.

CONSLUSION

Based on the results of the Systematic Literature Review, it can be concluded that enjoyable learning using a deep learning approach plays a crucial role in creating a school that students long for. A school that students long for is not determined solely by academic achievement or the availability of facilities and infrastructure, but primarily by the quality of the learning experiences students have. Meaningful, enjoyable, and emotionally well-being-oriented learning experiences form the primary foundation for fostering students' attachment to school.

This study indicates that enjoyable learning cannot be separated from the depth of learning. Learning that is solely focused on enjoyment without fostering deep conceptual understanding risks resulting in superficial learning experiences. Conversely, deep learning designed to be participatory, contextual, and dialogic is capable of fostering authentic joy in learning, as students feel challenged, valued, and actively engaged in the learning process.

Enjoyable deep learning has also been shown to contribute to increased cognitive and emotional engagement among students, strengthen their sense of belonging to the school, and build positive relationships between students and teachers. These conditions create a safe, comfortable, and humanistic learning environment, which is the hallmark of a school that students long for. Furthermore, the implementation of this approach fosters a transformation in the teacher's role into that of a learning facilitator capable of creating spaces for reflection, dialogue, and meaningful exploration for students.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that the integration of enjoyable learning and deep learning is a relevant and sustainable pedagogical strategy for creating the school of our dreams. Efforts to realize the school of our dreams require the commitment of all education stakeholders to develop learning practices that are not only academically effective but also meaningful, enjoyable, and oriented toward the well-being of students as whole human beings.

REFERENCES

Hidayat, R., & Kurniawan, D. (2021). Iklim sekolah dan pengalaman belajar siswa dalam perspektif pendidikan humanis. *Jurnal Pendidikan Humaniora*, 9(2), 134–146.

Kemendikbudristek. (2022). *Panduan pembelajaran dan asesmen Kurikulum Merdeka*. Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi.

Nurhadi, & Senduk, A. G. (2023). *Pembelajaran kontekstual dan penerapannya dalam Kurikulum Merdeka*. Malang: Universitas Negeri Malang Press.

Prasetyo, A., & Rahayu, S. (2024). Pembelajaran mendalam dan keterlibatan emosional siswa di sekolah menengah. *Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan*, 15(1), 25–38.

Sari, E. P., & Mustiningsih. (2023). Peran guru sebagai fasilitator dalam pembelajaran bermakna. *Jurnal Manajemen dan Supervisi Pendidikan*, 7(2), 98–110.

Suharsaputra, U. (2023). *Manajemen pendidikan: Teori dan praktik kontemporer*. Bandung: Refika Aditama.

Suyanto, & Jihad, A. (2021). *Menjadi guru profesional: Strategi meningkatkan kualitas pembelajaran*. Jakarta: Erlangga.

Utami, S., & Sudirman. (2023). Pembelajaran bermakna dan iklim kelas inklusif di sekolah dasar. *Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Indonesia*, 8(3), 201–214.

Wahyuni, S., & Anwar, K. (2022). Pembelajaran yang menyenangkan dan motivasi belajar siswa sekolah dasar. *Jurnal Psikologi Pendidikan dan Konseling*, 8(1), 45–56.