

## Implementing Joyful Learning Strategies to Foster Student Learning Interest and Discipline in Elementary Education

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### Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy in improving students' learning interest and discipline at SD Al-Azhar 1 Bandar Lampung. This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive research design, involving 2 teachers (the vice-principal of curriculum and a homeroom teacher) and 27 students as research subjects. Data were gathered through observations, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using thematic reduction. The results showed that joyful learning—implemented through structured educational games and interactive media—effectively bridged emotional engagement and behavioral regulation. Descriptive data revealed that the 27 students demonstrated a significant increase in situational interest during gamified sessions, despite varying levels of enthusiasm. Crucially, the qualitative mechanism showed that the "joyful" atmosphere reduced cognitive fatigue and classroom resistance, transforming external rules into voluntary compliance. This emotional-to-behavioral transition allowed students to maintain high focus and self-discipline without coercive measures. Thus, joyful learning acts as a psychological catalyst where emotional joy directly drives stricter behavioral regulation.

**Keywords:** Joyful Learning, Learning Interest, Learning Discipline, Emotional Engagement, Behavioral Regulation

### INTRODUCTION

Education is a crucial process in shaping the quality of human resources (Leoni, 2025). Through education, students not only acquire knowledge but also develop the attitudes, skills, and character traits needed in everyday life (Sakti et al., 2024). In the educational process, learning success is influenced by various factors, one of which is the learning strategies used by teachers during teaching and learning activities (Rincon-Flores et al., 2024). Appropriate learning strategies can help create an active, enjoyable learning environment and increase student engagement (Cayubit, 2022).

In reality, the learning process in elementary schools still faces various

challenges (Rahmawati, 2022). Students sometimes appear less active, easily bored, less willing to ask questions, and lack focus during learning (Tulaskar & Turunen, 2022). These conditions lead to less than optimal learning interest and discipline, impacting student engagement in the learning process (Li & Xue, 2023). Furthermore, the use of monotonous, teacher-centered learning methods reduces the opportunity for students to actively engage in learning activities. Therefore, learning strategies are needed to create a more engaging and enjoyable learning environment for students (Cayubit, 2022).

One learning strategy that can be implemented to create a joyful learning atmosphere is the Joyful Learning strategy (Lukman et al., 2021). The

Joyful Learning strategy is designed to create a fun, active, creative, and engaging atmosphere, allowing students to learn without pressure (Salong & Ansiska, 2025). Through this strategy, students not only passively receive material but also directly engage in the learning process through educational games, discussions, practice, and the use of interactive learning media (Asbah et al., 2025). Enjoyable learning can help students understand the material more easily, increase their interest in learning, and foster active engagement throughout the learning process (Aliyah et al., 2024).

Joyful Learning is a learning strategy that emphasizes a pleasant learning atmosphere so that students feel comfortable, motivated, and active in participating in learning (Hamidah et al., 2025). Furthermore, Pasaribu et al. (2025) explains that enjoyable learning can be created through the use of varied learning methods, strategies, and media so that students do not easily become bored during the learning process. This opinion is reinforced by Dursun & Aykan (2025), who states that learning success is influenced by the teacher's ability to design learning strategies, methods, and media that are appropriate to students' needs.

In line with current educational developments, the application of learning is also moving towards a deep learning approach, which includes mindful learning, meaningful learning, and joyful learning (Marzius et al., 2025). Deep learning emphasizes active student involvement through meaningful, conscious, and enjoyable learning, enabling students to understand the material more deeply and develop a better learning experience (Ricita et al., 2025). Thus, implementing the Joyful Learning strategy not only creates a

pleasant learning environment but also supports meaningful, student-centered learning (Andayanie et al., 2025).

Student interest in learning is a crucial factor in successful learning. According to Ardiyansyah, interest in learning is a person's enjoyment and attraction to learning activities without any coercion. Students with a strong interest in learning tend to be more active, enthusiastic, and pay greater attention to learning (Kehle & Urhahne, 2026). Furthermore, learning discipline is also a crucial factor in supporting successful learning. Learning discipline relates to student compliance with rules, responsibility in completing assignments, and regularity in participating in learning activities. Therefore, implementing appropriate learning strategies is necessary to optimally enhance student interest and discipline in learning (Rokhimawan et al., 2025).

Based on initial observations at Al-Azhar 1 Elementary School, Bandar Lampung, the school has implemented the Joyful Learning strategy through the use of interactive learning media, educational games, group discussions, icebreakers, and out-of-class learning activities. Teachers also utilize learning technologies such as Wordwalls (Azkiya & Istiqomah, 2025).

However, a fascinating conceptual paradox remains under-explored within this context. In traditional educational psychology, joyful learning and classroom discipline are frequently viewed as contrasting paradigms; joyful learning inherently emphasizes freedom, playfulness, and low-stress environments, whereas discipline is historically anchored in rigid structures, compliance, and extrinsic boundaries. This division creates a critical research gap regarding how a

strategy rooted in positive affect can organically cultivate rule-following behavior in elementary schoolers without relying on authoritarian coercion. Bridging this tension requires understanding the psychological transition from emotional engagement to behavioral regulation, where fun does not act as a distraction, but rather as an internal mechanism that transforms external rules into voluntary compliance. Recent state-of-the-art literature emphasizes that meaningful learning environments must synthesize emotional well-being with behavioral boundaries to achieve optimal outcomes (Deng et al., 2026). When students experience genuine positive affect, their cognitive resistance decreases, allowing them to internalize classroom structures not as restrictive punishments, but as cooperative rules of engagement. Therefore, investigating this exact intersection at SD Al-Azhar 1 Bandar Lampung provides essential novelty, demonstrating how joy can serve as a primary catalyst for self-regulation and organic structural discipline in fifth-grade students

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive type of research. The qualitative approach was chosen because the study aimed to describe in depth the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy in improving the learning interest and discipline of fifth-grade students at Al-Azhar 1 Elementary School, Bandar Lampung. The study was conducted in the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year at Al-Azhar 1 Elementary School, Bandar Lampung, specifically in fifth-grade Aisyah.

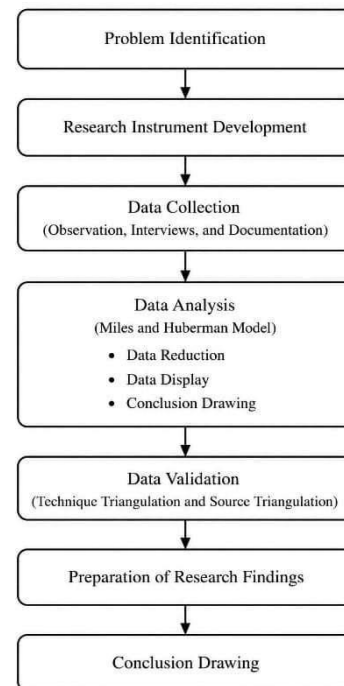
The research subjects consisted of 29 participants, including the Vice Principal for Curriculum Affairs, the Grade V Aisyah homeroom teacher, and 27 Grade V Aisyah students. The participants were selected using purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria for teacher participants were being directly involved in the planning and implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy, namely the Vice Principal for Curriculum Affairs and the Grade V Aisyah homeroom teacher. The inclusion criteria for student participants were Grade V Aisyah students who actively participated in classroom learning activities during the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy. The exclusion criteria included teachers who were not directly involved in the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy and students who were absent during the observation and interview sessions. These criteria were applied to ensure that the selected participants could provide relevant and comprehensive information regarding the research focus (Waruwu, 2024).

The object of the research was the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy in Indonesian language learning, including planning, implementation, and its impact on students' learning interests and discipline (Fadli, 2021).

Research data consisted of primary data and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through observation and interviews (Sugiyono, 2021). Observations were carried out to directly observe the learning process that implemented the Joyful Learning strategy, while interviews were conducted with teachers and students to obtain information regarding the implementation of learning, students'

learning interest, and learning discipline. Secondary data were obtained through documentation in the form of teaching modules, school profiles, photographs of learning activities, and other supporting documents (Susilawati et al., 2025). Data collection techniques in this study included observation, interviews, and documentation.

Data validity was ensured through technique triangulation and source triangulation. Technique triangulation was conducted by comparing data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. Source triangulation was carried out by comparing information obtained from the Vice Principal for Curriculum Affairs, the homeroom teacher, and the students (Sugiyono, 2022). The triangulation protocol was implemented by cross-checking interview data with observation field notes and supporting documentation. For example, statements regarding the implementation of educational games, interactive media, and group discussions were verified through direct classroom observations and documentation records. This process was conducted to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the research findings and to minimize researcher bias.



**Figure 1. Research Procedure**

Figure 1 illustrates the research procedure used in this study, including problem identification, instrument development, data collection, data analysis using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, data validation through triangulation, and conclusion drawing.

Data analysis used the Miles and Huberman model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaria, 2014). Data reduction was performed by selecting and focusing data relevant to the research objectives. Data presentation was conducted in narrative form to facilitate understanding of the research results. Next, conclusions were drawn based on the patterns, findings, and meanings derived from the entire research data.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

## Result

This section presents the findings obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation conducted at SD Al-Azhar 1 Bandar Lampung regarding the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy.

**Table 1. Summary of Research Findings**

No.	Research Focus	Research Findings
1	Planning and Implementation of the Joyful Learning Strategy	Teachers implemented Joyful Learning through teaching modules, digital media, educational games, discussions, videos, icebreakers, and outdoor learning activities, creating an active and student-centered learning environment.
2	Improvement of Students' Learning Interest	Joyful Learning increased students' enthusiasm, participation, confidence, willingness to ask questions and express opinions, while reducing boredom.
3	Improvement of Students' Learning Discipline	Joyful Learning enhanced students' responsibility, compliance with classroom rules, adherence to instructions, and

		timely task completion.
4	Supporting Factors for the Implementation of Joyful Learning	Key supporting factors included adequate facilities, digital learning media, school and parental support, and teacher creativity.
5	Challenges in the Implementation of Joyful Learning	Main challenges included diverse student characteristics, limited instructional time, and teachers' technological competencies.

Table 1 presents a summary of the research findings regarding the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy at SD Al-Azhar 1 Bandar Lampung.

### Planning and Implementation of Joyful Learning

The findings showed that the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy at SD Al-Azhar 1 Bandar Lampung began with lesson planning. The teacher prepared teaching modules, determined learning objectives, selected learning media, and designed learning activities according to students' characteristics. Based on interviews, the homeroom teacher stated: "Before the lesson begins, I adjust the learning materials, then develop teaching modules and determine Joyful Learning activities such as interactive games, group discussions, and puzzles to make learning more engaging for students."

The implementation of Joyful Learning was carried out through educational games, Wordwall activities, group discussions, learning videos, icebreakers, and outing class activities. The Vice Principal for Curriculum also explained that learning activities were supported by digital media such as Wordwall, Smart TV, and LCD projectors.

### **Improvement of Students' Learning Interest**

The findings indicated that students showed greater enthusiasm during learning activities. Students actively participated in discussions, asked questions, expressed opinions, and showed increased confidence during classroom activities.

One student stated: "Learning with Joyful Learning is very enjoyable because we learn while playing, so we do not get bored easily."

Another student explained: "I really like educational games, group discussions, and learning videos because they make learning more exciting."

### **Improvement of Students' Learning Discipline**

The findings also revealed improvements in students' learning discipline. Students demonstrated greater responsibility in completing assignments, following classroom rules, and obeying teacher instructions. One student stated: "I have become more disciplined in doing assignments and try to complete them on time."

The teacher also reported that students became more orderly and responsible during classroom activities.

### **Supporting and Inhibiting Factors**

The findings showed several supporting factors, including adequate facilities and infrastructure, digital learning media, support from the school and parents, and teacher creativity in designing learning activities. Several inhibiting factors were also identified, including differences in student characteristics, limited instructional time, and varying levels of teachers' technological competence.

### **Discussion**

The findings indicate that the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy was conducted systematically through lesson planning, the use of interactive media, educational games, discussions, and various student-centered learning activities. These findings are consistent with the study conducted by Lukman et al. (2021), which found that Joyful Learning creates an interactive and meaningful learning environment for elementary school students.

The successful implementation of Joyful Learning at SD Al-Azhar 1 Bandar Lampung demonstrates the importance of careful lesson planning and the selection of learning activities that match students' characteristics. The use of educational games, discussions, Wordwall, and learning videos enabled students to participate actively in the learning process. This finding is also supported (Mahmudi & Arief, 2025), who emphasized that Joyful Learning promotes student engagement and creates meaningful learning experiences through active participation.

The increase in students' learning interest found in this study is reflected in students' enthusiasm, participation, confidence, and willingness to express opinions. These findings support the research of, which

reported that interactive learning media such as Wordwall can increase students' learning interest through enjoyable learning experiences (Suci et al., 2026). The increased learning interest can be attributed to the enjoyable and interactive learning atmosphere created through Joyful Learning activities. Students were not merely passive recipients of information but became active participants in the learning process. This finding is consistent, who found that Joyful Learning enhances students' motivation and interest by providing engaging and enjoyable learning experiences (Sembiring et al., 2026). That educational games and icebreaking activities can reduce boredom and increase students' enthusiasm for learning (Jumrah, 2025).

The findings also revealed that Joyful Learning contributed to students' learning discipline. Students became more responsible in completing assignments, following classroom rules, and participating actively in learning activities. This finding supports the Humanistic Theory, which emphasizes the importance of a comfortable and enjoyable learning environment in encouraging students' personal growth and motivation. The improvement in students' discipline indicates that enjoyable learning does not reduce classroom order; instead, it encourages students to take responsibility for their learning activities. Students became more aware of classroom rules and were more willing to complete assignments on time. This finding supports previous studies showing that positive learning environments can strengthen students' self-regulation, responsibility, and discipline (Yang, 2026). Furthermore, it is in line with Behavioristic Theory, which explains that positive learning

experiences and reinforcement can shape positive learning behaviors.

Supporting factors identified in this study included adequate facilities, digital learning media, school support, parental support, and teacher creativity. Meanwhile, differences in student characteristics, limited instructional time, and technological competence were identified as challenges in implementing Joyful Learning. Similar findings have been reported by previous studies, which found that successful implementation of Joyful Learning depends on teacher creativity, school support, and the availability of learning resources. The availability of adequate facilities and digital learning media played a crucial role in supporting the implementation of Joyful Learning. Interactive technologies such as Wordwall, Smart TV, and LCD projectors helped teachers present learning materials in more engaging ways. In addition, parental and school support contributed significantly to the success of the strategy. However, differences in students' characteristics and limited instructional time remained challenges that required teachers to continuously adapt their teaching strategies. These findings are in line with Zhao et al. (2026), who highlighted the importance of teacher creativity, institutional support, and learning resources in the successful implementation of Joyful Learning.

In conclusion, the implementation of the Joyful Learning strategy at SD Al-Azhar 1 Bandar Lampung successfully created an active, enjoyable, and student-centered learning environment. The strategy contributed positively to improving students' learning interest and discipline while encouraging meaningful learning experiences.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the Joyful Learning strategy at SD Al-Azhar 1 Bandar Lampung effectively fosters an active, student-centered, and engaging environment through creative activities like educational games and digital media, backed by strong school and parental support. Although challenges such as diverse student characteristics, limited time, and varying teacher tech skills persist, the approach significantly enhances students' learning interest and discipline. However, given that these findings are context-specific and limited to a single school, future research should encompass broader, more diverse samples and employ mixed-method approaches to investigate the broader generalizability and outcomes of Joyful Learning across different educational contexts.

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