

Individual Projects as a Deep Learning Pedagogy Strategy for Package C Students

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<p>Article history: Received 09-10-2025 Revised 26-10-2025 Accepted 01-11-2025 Published 16-11-2025</p> <p>How to cite: Tarwiyati, N., Wibawa, L., & Hermawan, Y. (2025). Individual Projects as a Deep Learning Pedagogy Strategy for Package C Students. <i>Edcomtech: Jurnal Kajian Teknologi Pendidikan</i>, 10(2), 107–119. https://doi.org/10.17977/um039v10i22025p107-119</p> <p>© The Author(s)  This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License</p>	<p><i>Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis implementasi project individu sebagai strategi deep learning pedagogy dalam program kesetaraan Paket C di ABhome Education. Pendekatan yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan desain studi kasus, melibatkan 11 informan yang terdiri atas pimpinan lembaga, fasilitator, mentor, dan peserta didik. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan analisis dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa project individu mampu menciptakan pembelajaran yang berpusat pada peserta didik melalui empat komponen utama. Pertama, perencanaan proyek berbasis minat memungkinkan peserta didik mengembangkan agency, motivasi intrinsik, dan tujuan belajar yang bermakna. Kedua, pelaksanaan proyek memberikan pengalaman autentik yang menumbuhkan kemampuan berpikir kritis, pemecahan masalah, dan kemandirian belajar. Ketiga, refleksi melalui formula 4E (Enjoy, Easy, Excellent, Earn) meningkatkan kesadaran metakognitif serta kemampuan mengevaluasi diri. Keempat, pendampingan mentor sebagai learning partner memberikan scaffolding reflektif tanpa mengurangi otonomi peserta didik. Secara keseluruhan, integrasi PDCA dan refleksi 4E menghasilkan pengalaman belajar yang joyful, meaningful, dan mindful, serta memperkuat kompetensi abad ke-21. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa project individu merupakan strategi efektif untuk mengimplementasikan deep learning pedagogy di pendidikan nonformal.</i></p> <p>Kata Kunci: <i>deep learning pedagogy; project individu; pendidikan nonformal; PDCA; refleksi 4E</i></p> <p>Abstract This study aims to analyze the implementation of the individual project as a strategy for deep learning pedagogy within the Paket C equivalency program at ABhome Education. Using a qualitative approach with a case study design, the research involved 11 informants, including institutional leaders, facilitators, mentors, and students. Data were collected through observations, in-depth interviews, and document analysis, and were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña. The findings show that the individual project</p>

	effectively creates a student-centered learning environment through four key components. First, interest-based project planning enables students to develop agency, intrinsic motivation, and meaningful learning goals. Second, the implementation stage provides authentic learning experiences that enhance critical thinking, problem-solving abilities, and learner autonomy. Third, reflection through the 4E formula (Enjoy, Easy, Excellent, Earn) strengthens metacognitive awareness and self-evaluation skills. Fourth, mentors act as learning partners who offer reflective scaffolding without limiting students' independence. Overall, the integration of PDCA and 4E reflection supports joyful, meaningful, and mindful learning while reinforcing 21st-century competencies. These findings highlight that the individual project approach is an effective strategy for operationalizing deep learning pedagogy in non-formal education settings.
	Keywords: <i>deep learning pedagogy; individual project; non-formal education; PDCA cycle; 4E reflection</i>

INTRODUCTION

21st century education requires students to have more complex competencies than just academic content mastery. Critical thinking, creativity, communication skills, and collaboration (4C) have become important indicators in measuring educational success in the era of globalisation and technological disruption (Astuti et al., 2024). Learners need to be able to think reflectively and adaptively in response to rapid social, economic, and technological changes (Setyowati et al., 2023). This situation requires a pedagogical approach that is not only oriented towards cognitive learning outcomes but also towards the process of self-awareness, character development, and *lifelong learning*. In this context, the concept of deep learning pedagogy emerges as an educational paradigm that focuses on the active involvement of learners in the process of constructing knowledge, rather than merely receiving information passively. Sathiyah & Tomaselli (2024) define *deep learning* as a learning process that requires learners to connect ideas, seek meaning, and apply knowledge in real-world contexts. This approach emphasises the integration of cognitive, affective, and reflective dimensions in the learning experience. Calabuig et al. (2024) assert that *deep learning pedagogy* involves *learning partnerships* between educators and learners, where teachers act as facilitators who foster higher-order thinking, problem solving, collaboration, and reflection.

In line with this, Wulayalin & Suprihatiningrum (2024) describes *deeper learning* as a combination of six key competencies: critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration, effective communication, self-directed learning, academic awareness, and applying knowledge to real-world situations. This approach aims to develop learners who are not only able to understand concepts, but also able to adapt their knowledge in complex social contexts. In line with the concept of *deep learning pedagogy*, through the principles of *joyful, meaningful, and mindful learning* — that is, learning that is enjoyable, meaningful, and done with full awareness. However, the implementation of deep learning in Indonesia is still mostly studied in the context of formal education, while its application in non-formal education is relatively limited (Babu et al., 2023). In fact, non-formal education such as the Paket C equivalency programme has great potential in developing *deep learning*, due to its flexible, adaptive, and needs-based characteristics (Septiarti et al., 2020). Learners in non-

formal education often have diverse learning backgrounds, making a personalised learning approach highly relevant.

One strategy that is in line with the principles of *deep learning* in non-formal education is individual projects. This approach gives learners the space to choose topics according to their interests and personal potential, design learning activities independently, and reflect on the process and results. This project model differs from conventional academic assignments because it stems from learners' curiosity and authentic need for real learning experiences. Through *individual projects*, learners not only construct knowledge but also build *self-awareness* and metacognition through in-depth reflection on each stage of learning (Kang & Xu, 2025). ABhome Education, as a non-formal educational institution that organises Package C equivalency programmes in Bogor City, implements *individual projects* as its main learning strategy. This model integrates the principles of PDCA (*Plan–Do–Check–Action*) cycle management with the 4E formula from *Talents Mapping* (Enjoy, Easy, Excellent, Earn) to help students systematically identify their strengths and areas for development. Thus, learners are guided to learn independently while still receiving guidance from mentors, parents, and facilitators as *learning partners* (Cano et al., 2024).

The following table summarises the relationship between the concept of *deep learning pedagogy* and its application in the context of non-formal education through *individual projects* at ABhome Education:

Table 1. The Relationship Between Deep Learning Pedagogy and Its Application in ABhome Education

Deep Learning Pedagogy Aspects	Definition/Principle (Literature)	Implementation in Non-Formal Education (ABhome Education)
Meaning construction	Learners actively construct meaning through learning experiences (Biggs, 2003)	Learners choose projects based on their interests and connect them to real-life experiences.
Collaboration and learning partnerships	Educators act as <i>learning partners</i> (Coertjens et al., 2017)	Facilitators, expert mentors, and parents accompany the project process without reducing learners' autonomy.
Metacognitive reflection	Learning involves awareness of thinking and self-reflection (Hewlett Foundation, 2013)	Learners use the 4E formula (Enjoy, Easy, Excellent, Earn) for personal reflection.
Learning independence	Learners manage their own time, strategies, and learning goals (Knowles, 1980)	Projects are designed and carried out independently with mentor support.
Contextual and meaningful learning	Knowledge is applied to real-life situations (Newmann & Wehlage, 1993)	Projects are developed based on the context of life and local potential of students.

Thus, *individual projects* at ABhome Education are an effective means of instilling the values of *deep learning* in practice in non-formal education. This study was designed to explore how the implementation of *individual projects* contributes to the development of critical thinking skills, independent learning, and metacognitive awareness among Package C students, as well as to analyse the role of the 4E formula reflection in helping students recognise their potential. In addition, this study seeks to fill the gap in previous studies,

which have been limited in examining deep learning in the context of homeschooling and equivalency programmes (Shilfani et al., 2022).

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach with a case study design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of individual projects as a deep learning pedagogy strategy for Package C students at ABhome Education. A qualitative approach is appropriate because it enables the researcher to explore meanings, experiences, and participants' perspectives within their natural context without imposing interventions that could alter field conditions (Creswell, 1989). According to Prakoso et al. (2020), a case study design is suitable when the research focuses on a specific, complex unit of analysis that requires rich, contextualised, and holistic descriptions. The research was conducted at ABhome Education, a non-formal educational institution in Bogor City that delivers the Package C equivalency programme using a personalised and reflective learning model. This institution was intentionally selected because it consistently implements the individual project as a deep learning strategy, integrating the PDCA (Plan–Do–Check–Action) cycle with the 4E reflective formula—Enjoy, Easy, Excellent, Earn—adopted from Talents Mapping (Reiss, 1993).

The study involved eleven informants, selected through purposive sampling based on their relevance and direct involvement in the implementation of individual projects (Saldana, 2014). The informants consisted of the Director of the ABhome Education Foundation, the Head of the Institution, the Manager of the Package C programme, two facilitators (educators), and six Package C students who had completed at least one semester of individual project work. This number of participants was considered adequate to obtain rich, detailed, and focused data aligned with the research objectives (Creswell, 1989).

Data were gathered using three techniques: non-participatory observation, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and documentation analysis. Observations were conducted to identify learning activities, interactions among students and mentors, and the reflective dynamics that occurred during project implementation. Interviews were conducted using semi-structured guidelines developed based on indicators of deep learning pedagogy such as cognitive engagement, reflective activity, and learner autonomy (Stoykova, 2021). Documentation consisted of students' project reports, 4E reflection notes, activity logbooks, and visual materials illustrating the PDCA stages. The integration of these techniques allowed for effective triangulation of data sources, enhancing the credibility and validity of the findings (Parmawati et al., 2023).

In qualitative research, the researcher functions as the primary instrument responsible for collecting, interpreting, and analysing data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To support consistency and objectivity, auxiliary instruments were used, including interview guides, observation checklists, and 4E reflection matrices. Ethical considerations were maintained throughout the process by ensuring confidentiality of informants' identities, obtaining informed consent, and adhering to established guidelines for social and educational research ethics (Campos et al., 2021).

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), consisting of three interconnected stages. First, data reduction was conducted by organising and simplifying data into thematic categories such as project planning, project implementation, reflection, and mentoring roles. Second, data display was performed by

arranging the organised data into matrices and thematic narrative forms to facilitate interpretation. Third, conclusion drawing and verification involved identifying emerging meanings, confirming patterns, and validating interpretations through iterative analysis. To strengthen the trustworthiness of the findings, source and method triangulation were conducted, along with member checking to confirm the accuracy of interpretations with the informants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The study was conducted over three months, beginning with preparatory activities such as a preliminary study, instrument development, and securing research permissions. Data collection was undertaken through on-site observations and interviews, while data analysis and reflective interpretation were carried out continuously throughout the research period to maintain analytical depth and coherence.

A summary of the methodological design used in this study is presented in the following table.

Table 2. Research Design Summary: Implementation of Individual Projects as a Deep Learning Pedagogy Strategy

Research Components	Description
Approach and Design	Qualitative approach with an exploratory case study design (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).
Location and Context	ABhome Education, a non-formal learning institution offering Package C in Bogor City.
Research Focus	Implementation of individual projects as a deep learning strategy, including planning, implementation, 4E reflection, and mentoring roles.
Research Informants	11 individuals: Foundation Director, Head of Institution, Programme Manager, 2 facilitators, and 6 Package C students.
Data Collection Techniques	Non-participatory observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis (project reports, 4E reflections, logbooks).
Research Instruments	Researcher as the primary instrument, supported by interview guides, observation sheets, and 4E reflection matrices.
Data Analysis	Interactive model by Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña (2014): data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing.
Validity Strategies	Source, method, and time triangulation; member checking; audit trail for dependability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).
Ethical Considerations	Confidentiality, informed consent, adherence to ethical guidelines (BERA, 2018).

Through this methodological design, the study provides a comprehensive understanding of how individual project implementation at ABhome Education functions as a deep learning strategy that fosters students' critical thinking, learner autonomy, and metacognitive awareness. The design also facilitates interpretation of empirical findings within the theoretical framework of deep learning pedagogy (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Fullan & Langworthy, 2014) and supports the development of innovative learning practices in non-formal education.

RESULT

The results of this study describe the implementation of *individual projects as a deep learning pedagogy* strategy for Package C students at ABhome Education. The analysis was conducted based on field findings through observation, in-depth interviews, and analysis of student reflection documents. From the thematic analysis, four main themes were obtained that reflect the dynamics of deep learning: (1) interest- and potential-based project planning; (2) project implementation that fosters independence and critical thinking; (3) learning reflection using the 4E formula as a metacognitive instrument; and (4) the role of mentors in supporting meaningful and self-aware learning.

Project Planning: Exploration of Interests and Construction of Initial Meaning

The planning stage is the main foundation in the implementation of *individual projects*. Students begin by determining the theme of the project based on personal interests, hobbies, or curiosity about a particular field, then compile it in the form of a simple proposal. This approach is in line with the principle of *deep learning*, which places students as active subjects in constructing the meaning of learning (Biggs & Tang, 2011). Observations show that each student is given the freedom to choose a topic that is considered relevant to their potential. The themes that emerge are very diverse, such as digital content creation, clothing design, automotive, culinary entrepreneurship, and animal care. One student stated:

"I chose the project of creating educational content on YouTube because I like to talk and want to learn how to convey information in an interesting way. I was confused at first, but after discussing it with my mentor, I understood the steps." (Interview, PD-3, 15 April 2024)

Project planning not only emphasises topic selection, but also encourages students to design work stages using the PDCA (*Plan–Do–Check–Action*) principle. This process fosters responsibility and awareness of self-management. A facilitator explained:

"We want children to have a sense of ownership over their own learning. So they make realistic plans and determine their own indicators of success. Our role is only to guide them." (Interview, F-2, 20 April 2024)

This finding shows that project planning at ABhome Education is not merely a matter of assigning tasks, but rather a process of exploring the meaning of learning and mapping one's potential, which is characteristic of *deep learning pedagogy* (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014).

Project Implementation: The Process of Independence and Strengthening Critical Thinking

The implementation stage of the project showed that students were the main actors in managing learning activities. They were responsible for managing their time, finding learning resources, and solving problems that arose in the field. These activities directly fostered critical and reflective thinking skills. Most students admitted to experiencing challenges in managing their schedules and consistency, but this actually became a valuable learning process. One student said:

"At first, I had difficulty managing my time because I had many other activities, but eventually I learned to make a schedule and be disciplined. I also learned to find solutions when tools or materials were not available." (Interview, PD-5, 27 April 2024)

Observations also showed that project activities often involved real problem-solving processes, such as finding innovative ideas, adapting to limitations, and working collaboratively with mentors or peers. In these situations, students learned to interpret difficulties as part of meaningful learning. One mentor explained:

"We let them face the problem first before helping them. Because that is where creativity and critical thinking emerge. This project also becomes an exercise in strategic thinking."

(Interview, M-1, 22 April 2024)

These findings show that individual projects foster autonomy and responsibility in learning. Students not only acquire technical skills, but also develop important cognitive dispositions such as reflection, evaluation, and self-assessment of the learning process.

Reflection with the 4E Formula: Metacognitive Processes and Self-Awareness

One of the most notable aspects of the implementation of *individual projects* at ABhome Education is the use of the 4E formula (*Enjoy, Easy, Excellent, Earn*) as a learning reflection tool. This formula helps students recognise their personal strengths and areas for self-development in a systematic manner. The reflection process is carried out at the end of each project, where students assess their activities based on these four dimensions. For example, activities that they enjoyed (*Enjoy*), activities that were easy to carry out (*Easy*), activities with the best results (*Excellent*), and activities that provided tangible benefits (*Earn*). One student said:

"From my 4E reflection, I realised that I enjoy video editing the most (Enjoy), but writing is difficult for me. From this, I realised that I need to improve my writing skills." (Interview, PD-2, 30 April 2024)

The facilitator added that this reflection is not only evaluative in nature, but also serves as a means of strengthening *self-awareness*. Through reflective discussion, students are encouraged to consciously understand their learning process. A facilitator explained:

"The 4E reflection is important because it helps children understand what makes them grow. We do not evaluate projects based on results, but on awareness of the process."

(Interview, F-1, 2 May 2024)

The documentation results show that 4E reflection serves as a metacognitive tool that helps students internalise the values of *deep learning*, such as reflective thinking, learning from experience, and assessing their own progress (Schön, 1983; Royani, 2016). This process reinforces *meaningful learning*, as emphasised by the Ministry of Education and Culture (2025) in the concept of *joyful, meaningful, and mindful learning*.

The Role of Mentors: Learning Partnerships that Build Independence

The role of mentors in the implementation of *individual projects* is very important as *learning partners*, not as controllers of the learning process. This approach is in line with the views of Fullan and Langworthy (2014), who emphasise reflective collaboration between educators and learners in deep learning. The interview results show that mentoring is adaptive and dialogical. Mentors play a role in helping learners find solutions, provide feedback, and foster intrinsic motivation. One learner said:

"My mentor doesn't just give me the answer, but asks me back: 'What do you think?' From there, I learn to think for myself and come up with ideas." (Interview, PD-1, 8 May 2024)

This mentoring approach creates an open and reflective learning environment. According to the Head of the Institution:

“We position teachers and mentors as facilitators. They do not dictate, but accompany children in finding their own learning direction. That is what we call a learning partnership.” (Interview, KP-1, 10 May 2024)

These findings show that the mentoring system at ABhome Education has succeeded in creating humanistic and participatory learning relationships, which strengthen students' intrinsic motivation and independence. In the context of *deep learning pedagogy*, these relationships are at the core of *joyful, meaningful, and mindful* learning.

Overall, the results of the study indicate that *individual projects* at ABhome Education serve as a medium for learning transformation that emphasises independence, reflection, and self-awareness. The four main dimensions (planning, implementation, reflection, and mentoring) are interrelated in creating a deep learning process.

The following table presents a synthesis of findings based on the dimensions of *deep learning pedagogy*.

Table 3. Synthesis of Individual Project Implementation Results from a Deep Learning Pedagogy Perspective

Deep Learning Dimensions	Key Findings in the Field	Impact on Learners
Interest-based planning	Students select projects based on their interests and design objectives and PDCA steps.	Enhancing motivation and self-awareness of personal potential.
Independent implementation	Students carry out projects with minimal guidance from mentors, solving problems creatively.	Developing critical thinking skills, responsibility, and adaptability.
4E Reflection	Reflection is conducted to assess the aspects of Enjoy, Easy, Excellent, and Earn.	Strengthening metacognitive awareness and reflective abilities.
The mentor's role as a facilitator	Mentors act as <i>learning partners</i> who guide, rather than direct.	Fostering learning autonomy and meaningful learning experiences.

Overall, *individual projects* at ABhome Education have proven effective in fostering *deep learning* through a structured yet flexible learning process that is reflective and oriented towards developing the full potential of students. This model is highly relevant to the 21st century education paradigm.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of individual projects at ABhome Education represents a concrete enactment of deep learning pedagogy within a non-formal education setting. The learning process characterised by independent planning, authentic experiential engagement, metacognitive reflection, and participatory mentoring creates a cycle of meaningful, adaptive, and continuous learning. Four core elements agency, autonomy, reflection, and learning partnership serve as the conceptual bridge that links theory with practice. The discussion below explicitly connects each theme with the deep learning outcomes identified in this study: critical thinking, learner autonomy, and metacognitive awareness.

**INTEGRATIVE DEEP LEARNING
PEDAGOGY MODEL IN N-
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION**



Figure 1. Diagram of the integrative learning model

Individual Projects as a Manifestation of Agency and Learner Autonomy

A significant finding is the freedom given to learners to choose, design, and manage their own projects. This demonstrates the growth of *learner agency* and autonomy—two central constructs in deep learning pedagogy (Fullan & Langworthy, 2014; Hargreaves, 2020). As Wittich W (2024) argue, deep learning occurs when learners actively construct meaning rather than absorb information passively. At ABhome Education, learners become architects of their own learning processes by defining objectives, designing work stages, and determining success indicators. This aligns with self-directed learning theory Knowles (1980) and recent studies showing that learner agency enhances intrinsic motivation and sustained engagement in flexible learning environments (Mincu, 2020; Toivonen et al., 2023).

As presented in the Results section, this autonomy directly contributes to learner independence, reflected in students' ability to set goals, manage their time, and address challenges. Thus, individual projects effectively foster *self-efficacy* and self-regulated learning (Zimmerman, 2002).

Authentic Experiences and the Strengthening of Critical Thinking

The implementation of individual projects provides authentic learning experiences in which learners encounter real-world situations, make decisions, and solve complex problems. According to Yu & Yang (2024), authentic learning fosters higher-order thinking because learners are confronted with open-ended and cognitively demanding contexts.

Evidence from this study shows that learners improved their ability to plan, adjust strategies, and negotiate challenges—key indicators of critical thinking development. This aligns with Brookfield's (1986) view that reflection on experience is central to critical learning, and is supported by recent research demonstrating that authentic project-based learning enhances analytical and problem-solving skills (Morris, 2021; Suharto et al., 2022). The PDCA cycle Waluyaningtyas et al. (2024) used at ABhome Education functions as a metacognitive regulatory tool. Each stage prompts learners to review decisions, evaluate interim outcomes, and refine strategies before progressing. Contemporary studies confirm

that PDCA strengthens evaluative judgement and decision-making in self-directed learning environments (Nasejje et al., 2022).

4E Reflection as a Metacognitive Development Instrument

The 4E reflection model (*Enjoy, Easy, Excellent, Earn*) effectively fosters metacognitive awareness by enabling learners to recognise their strengths, challenges, and learning patterns. This approach aligns with Schön's (1983) concept of reflective practice and is supported by recent research emphasising structured reflection as a driver of metacognitive growth (Nam, 2023).

Findings indicate that learners distinguish between activities they enjoy (Enjoy) and those they find easy (Easy). This differentiation represents a critical step in developing metacognitive awareness, as learners begin to identify the interplay between interest and competence.

Furthermore, the Excellent and Earn dimensions guide learners to evaluate their progress and recognise the personal value of their learning process. This shifts the orientation from outcomes toward process, consistent with the principles of joyful, meaningful, and mindful learning promoted in Indonesia's educational reforms (Anugrawati & Pradana, 2021). Recent studies also highlight that reflective learning promotes mindfulness and deeper cognitive engagement (Stoykova, 2021).

Mentoring as a Practice of Learning Partnership

The study reveals that mentors at ABhome Education function not as knowledge transmitters but as *learning partners* who guide inquiry, encourage reflection, and facilitate dialogue. This approach reflects the *New Pedagogies for Deep Learning* framework (De Matías Batalla & Pedrero, 2024) and aligns with recent findings that learning partnerships enhance self-regulation, intrinsic motivation, and learner confidence (Chen, 2024).

This mentoring relationship supports the development of learner autonomy, as students feel valued and supported while navigating challenges. The findings resonate with Vygotsky's (1978) concept of the Zone of Proximal Development, where mentor guidance helps learners move from actual to potential capability through reflective scaffolding.

An Integrative Deep Learning Pedagogy Model for Non-Formal Education

Synthesised findings indicate that the individual project approach forms an integrative deep learning pedagogy model highly relevant to non-formal education. The model combines four interrelated components—*agency, authentic experience, metacognitive reflection, and learning partnership*. Together, they generate a meaningful and learner-centred pathway toward deep learning.

The model supports three core deep learning outcomes identified in this study:

1. **Critical Thinking** → strengthened through authentic tasks, PDCA, and decision-making processes.
2. **Learner Autonomy** → developed through agency, independent planning, and supportive mentoring.
3. **Metacognitive Awareness** → enhanced through structured 4E reflection and ongoing self-evaluation.

Recent literature confirms that interest-based and reflective learning models are particularly effective in non-formal education settings because they offer both flexibility

and structure (Hernandez et al., 2021; Royani, 2022). Thus, individual projects function not only as an instructional method but also as a holistic strategy for cultivating adaptive, reflective, and future-ready learners.

In line with Xhako et al., (2025) emphasis on lifelong learning, this model aligns with global demands for developing learners who are self-directed, reflective, and capable of navigating complex challenges. Through the integration of independence, authentic experience, metacognitive reflection, and reflective mentoring, the individual project approach is strongly aligned with deep learning pedagogy oriented toward 21st-century competencies.

CONSLUSSION

This study concludes that the implementation of individual projects at ABhome Education has proven to be an effective learning strategy in realizing the principles of deep learning pedagogy in non-formal education environments. Through the freedom to choose and design projects, students demonstrate increased agency and learning autonomy. The process of implementing projects based on real experiences engages learners in problem-solving, self-evaluation, and decision-making activities that strengthen critical thinking and independent learning skills. The application of the PDCA cycle fosters discipline, self-management, and learning regulation skills, while reflection through the 4E formula (Enjoy, Easy, Excellent, Earn) helps learners understand their personal strengths, identify challenges, and develop deeper metacognitive awareness. The role of mentors as learning partners serves to maintain a balance between freedom and guidance, so that students are able to manage the learning process independently while still receiving meaningful reflective guidance. Overall, individual projects form a joyful, meaningful, and mindful learning ecosystem that supports the development of 21st-century competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, reflective communication, and lifelong learning skills. This research makes an important contribution to the literature on non-formal education in Indonesia, while also demonstrating that deep learning models are not only relevant in formal education but can also be optimized in equivalency programs with significant results.

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