Meaningful Learning in Philosophical Perspective: A Review of Ontology, Epistemology, and Axiology

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ABSTRACT
Meaningful Learning is a learning approach that emphasizes the meaning and relevance of material to students' lives. This study aims to explore Meaningful Learning through a philosophical perspective, namely ontology, epistemology, and axiology. The method used is a data-based literature review from Lens.org, focusing on relevant articles, journals, and policy reports. This study found that ontologically, Meaningful Learning is rooted in an understanding of the nature of meaningful learning as a close relationship between subject matter and student experience. From an epistemological perspective, Meaningful Learning emphasizes how to gain knowledge through active experience, reflection, and dialogue. Meanwhile, axiologically, Meaningful Learning provides added value in the form of developing 21st-century competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. The results of this study provide an important contribution to the development of more contextual and transformative learning theories and practices in education. Recommendations are also given for the application of Meaningful Learning in various educational contexts in Indonesia.
Keywords: Meaningful Learning, Ontology, Epistemology, Axiology, Education

INTRODUCTION

Modern education faces a major challenge to ensure learning that is not only cognitive, but also meaningful for students. In this context, Meaningful Learning becomes a key concept that pays attention to the connection between subject matter and students' experiences, interests, and needs. Ausubel (1963) stated that Meaningful Learning occurs when students are able to link new information with existing knowledge in a relevant and meaningful way. With this approach, education is expected to not only be a process of transferring information, but also an effort to develop competencies and values that are relevant to students' lives.

The urgency of this research lies in the need to deepen the philosophical understanding of Meaningful Learning which includes aspects of ontology, epistemology, and axiology. This philosophical perspective provides a strong theoretical foundation for exploring the nature, process, and benefits of meaningful learning in education. In addition, although many studies have discussed the implementation of Meaningful Learning, studies that explicitly link this concept to philosophical foundations are still limited, especially in the context of education in Indonesia. This creates a research gap that needs to be bridged.

This article contributes by offering an in-depth philosophical analysis of Meaningful Learning, which is expected to be a theoretical and practical guide for educators, policymakers, and researchers.

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Using a data-driven literature review approach from Lens.org, this article not only explains the philosophical basis of Meaningful Learning but also provides applicable recommendations to improve the quality of learning in Indonesia. This research is also expected to be able to answer the need for a more holistic, relevant, and transformative educational framework in the 21st century education era.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Meaningful Learning, or meaningful learning, is a concept that emphasizes the relationship between new knowledge and the experiences and prior knowledge possessed by students. To understand this concept in depth, it is important to review it from three philosophical perspectives: ontology, epistemology, and axiology.

Ontology: The Nature of Meaningful Learning

Ontology discusses the nature of reality and existence. In the context of Meaningful Learning, the ontological question that arises is: What is the essence of meaningful learning? According to Rahmadani et al. (2021), ontology in character education emphasizes a deep understanding of the concepts taught, so that students not only know, but also understand and internalize these values.

In Meaningful Learning, new knowledge is integrated with existing cognitive structures, allowing students to build a deeper and more relevant understanding. This is in line with the view that meaningful learning occurs when new information is linked to concepts that students already understand.

Epistemology: How to Gain Knowledge about Meaningful Learning

Epistemology is concerned with how knowledge is acquired and validated. In the context of Meaningful Learning, knowledge is acquired through an interactive process involving direct experience, reflection, and dialogue. According to Suprapto (2021), physics education students' understanding of the concepts of epistemology, ontology, and axiology influences the way they acquire and apply knowledge in educational contexts.

A meaningful learning process requires students to be actively involved in activities that allow them to link new knowledge with previous experiences, thus creating a deeper and more applicable understanding. This shows that the epistemology of Meaningful Learning emphasizes the construction of knowledge through interactions between individuals and their environment

Axiology: Values and Benefits of Meaningful Learning in Education

Axiology discusses the values and benefits of a concept. In education, Meaningful Learning has significant value in shaping the character and competence of students. According to Rahmadani et al. (2021), effective character education must be based on a deep ontological, epistemological, and axiological understanding, so that the values taught can be properly internalized by students.

By implementing Meaningful Learning, students not only gain knowledge, but are also able to apply it in real life, as well as develop critical and creative thinking skills. This shows that the axiology of Meaningful Learning focuses on developing values and competencies that are relevant to the needs of individuals and society.

By understanding Meaningful Learning from the perspective of ontology, epistemology, and axiology, educators can design more effective and relevant learning strategies, thereby improving the overall quality of education.

METHOD

This study uses a Literature Review approach, which aims to systematically identify, evaluate, and synthesize relevant literature to answer the research questions. This method was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the concept of Meaningful Learning from a philosophical perspective, namely ontology, epistemology, and axiology, based on existing data and theories.

The main data sources for this study were journal articles, books, and policy reports obtained from the Lens.org database. The selection of this database was based on its capacity to provide various types of globally relevant scientific literature. The search keywords include: Meaningful Learning, Ontology in Education, Epistemology in Education, Axiology in Education, Philosophical Perspective on Learning

To ensure the relevance and quality of the literature, the following criteria were applied:

Inclusion: Articles published in the last 5 years, Studies relevant to the theme of Meaningful Learning or philosophical perspectives in education, Articles with open access or verified in reputable journals (Scopus, SINTA, or others).

Exclusion: Articles that do not focus on education or Meaningful Learning, Publications in languages other than English or Indonesian that are not translated.

The steps of this research include: 1) Literature Identification, Using search keywords, relevant articles are collected from Lens.org and other supporting sources. 2) Literature Evaluation: The collected articles are selected based on abstracts, keywords, and suitability to the inclusion criteria. 3) Data Analysis: Each literature is analyzed using a thematic approach to identify key findings related to the ontology, epistemology, and axiology of Meaningful Learning. 4) Synthesis of Findings: The findings obtained are arranged in narrative form, integrating key concepts from each philosophical perspective.

This study uses thematic content analysis method. Each selected article is analyzed to find the main themes that support the discussion of Meaningful Learning from a philosophical perspective. The analysis is carried out using an iterative approach, where the findings that emerge are compared with other literature to ensure their validity and consistency. The reliability of this study is maintained by conducting a transparent literature selection process and using references from reputable journals. Validity is strengthened by utilizing several sources for data triangulation. The results of the study are reported in accordance with the thematic structure, including a description of the findings from the perspective of ontology, epistemology, and axiology, as well as their relevance to educational practices in Indonesia. With this approach, the study is expected to be able to provide in-depth and comprehensive insights into Meaningful Learning, as well as its relevance in creating a more meaningful and transformative education system.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study identified three main themes from the relevant literature, namely the nature of Meaningful Learning (ontology), how to acquire knowledge about Meaningful Learning (epistemology), and its value and benefits in education (axiology). The following is a summary of the main findings:

1. Ontology: The Nature of Meaningful Learning, The literature reveals that Meaningful Learning is a learning process in which learners connect new knowledge with previous experiences, resulting in deep and meaningful understanding (Ausubel, 1963; Rahmadani et al., 2021). Its essence lies in the interaction between learners, subject matter, and the learning environment, which allows learners to internalize knowledge.

2. Epistemology: How to Acquire Knowledge, Knowledge about Meaningful Learning is obtained through active experience, critical reflection, and social dialogue. Project-based learning models, case studies, and collaborative exploration are the most effective methods in supporting Meaningful Learning (Vygotsky, 1978; Suprapto, 2021).

3. Axiology: Values and Benefits, Meaningful Learning makes a significant contribution to the development of 21st century competencies, such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. In addition, this learning also builds the character of students through the internalization of ethical and social values (Rahmadani et al., 2021).

Analysis of Findings in the Context of Meaningful Learning PhilosophyFirst, Ontological: The essence of Meaningful Learning lies in its transformative nature. Learners not only receive knowledge, but also build new understandings that are relevant to the context of their lives. This reflects the constructivist view that focuses on learners as active subjects.Second, Epistemology: The process of acquiring knowledge in Meaningful Learning emphasizes the active involvement of learners. Direct experience and reflection are important elements, in accordance with Vygotsky's social construction theory which emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning.Third, Axiology: The value of Meaningful Learning lies in its ability to integrate knowledge and skills with life values, making it relevant to the formation of learners' character and competence.

Comparison with Previous Research

This study reinforces previous findings on the importance of Meaningful Learning. For example, Ausubel (1963) and Vygotsky (1978) studies emphasize the importance of active interaction in learning. This study provides an additional contribution by highlighting a philosophical perspective that is underexplored in previous literature. This perspective provides a stronger theoretical foundation for understanding and implementing Meaningful Learning.

Relevance of Findings to Educational Policy or Practice in Indonesia

The results of this study are very relevant to the Merdeka Curriculum policy implemented in Indonesia. This curriculum emphasizes project-based learning, differentiation, and authentic assessments that are in line with the principles of Meaningful Learning. In addition, this approach supports the development of the Pancasila Student Profile which includes the values of critical thinking, creativity, independence, and social justice.

These findings are also relevant to improving educational practices in Indonesia by providing philosophical guidance for educators to design more meaningful and relevant learning strategies for students. Thus, Meaningful Learning can act as an effective framework for creating transformative and future-oriented education.

By reviewing Meaningful Learning through the perspectives of ontology, epistemology, and axiology, this study provides a deeper theoretical foundation for understanding and applying this concept in education. These findings are not only globally relevant but also have significant practical implications in the context of education in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

This article presents a philosophical analysis of Meaningful Learning by reviewing it from three main perspectives: ontology, epistemology, and axiology. The main contribution of this article is to provide a deep philosophical foundation for understanding the nature of Meaningful Learning, how knowledge about it is obtained, and its value and benefits in education. This perspective strengthens the position of Meaningful Learning as a relevant and transformative conceptual framework for improving the quality of learning.

Ontologically, Meaningful Learning is defined as a learning process that integrates new knowledge with prior knowledge, creating deep and meaningful understanding for learners. From an epistemological perspective, Meaningful Learning is obtained through active experience, critical reflection, and social interaction, providing opportunities for learners to develop understanding through direct involvement. Axiologically, Meaningful Learning contributes to the development of 21st century competencies and character formation that is relevant to learners' lives, making it an important element in the modern education system..

Future prospects for the development or application of Meaningful Learning:

1. Implementation in the Independent Curriculum: With a focus on project-based learning and authentic assessment, Meaningful Learning can be applied more widely to support the objectives of the Independent Curriculum and the Pancasila Student Profile.

2. Integration of Digital Technology: Meaningful Learning can be enriched with digital technology to create a more interactive learning experience, for example through simulations, gamification, or AI-based learning platforms.
3. Teacher Development: Teacher training programs can be designed to adopt the principles of Meaningful Learning, helping educators create more relevant, contextual, and meaningful learning experiences for students.
4. Further Research: This study can be the basis for further research on the application of Meaningful Learning in various cultural contexts, educational levels, and fields of study.

With a comprehensive and philosophical approach, Meaningful Learning has great potential to change the traditional learning paradigm to be more relevant and transformative, providing a positive impact not only on students but also on the education system as a whole

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to this research. All data, literature, and references used in this article were obtained from credible sources and are free from third party influence. This research was conducted independently, without any affiliation or support that could influence the results and interpretations presented.

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