Listening to Student Voices:
Factors Affecting Well-being in School

Deasyanti

Bachelor of Psychology (University of Indonesia)
Master of Educational Psychology (University of Indonesia)

Charles Darwin University
Faculty of Law, Education, Business, and Arts
School of Education

Submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
On 14 December 2015
Thesis Declaration

I hereby declare that the work herein, now submitted as a thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of Charles Darwin University, is the result of my own investigations, and all references to ideas and work of other researchers have been specifically acknowledged.

I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis has not already been accepted in substance for any degree, and is not being currently submitted in candidature for any other degree.

Deasyanti
14 December 2015
Abstract

Indonesia’s education system is characterised by teacher-centred approaches and rote learning, and learning in school tends to focus on achieving academic standards and requirements of the curriculum. Pressures are placed on students from teachers and parents to achieve good academic results – particularly in urban settings. Teachers also tend to focus on effective ways to produce better test results rather than on student well-being and learning. Within this educational context, this study addressed the issue of student well-being in school, often measured in terms of school satisfaction or school happiness. Student happiness in school is important because happier students have been shown to learn better. In researching this topic, a mixed-methods approach was used to investigate student perspectives on their school experiences and learning environment. Student voice about their school experiences is a critical focus in this study, expressing a communicative power that highlights the realities of school life. Emerging themes of this study identify the learning environment factors that impact student well-being in school. Self-determination theory is used as a theoretical lens to differentiate school well-being in terms of hedonic perspectives – measured by level of school satisfaction and positive and negative affect, and eudaimonic perspectives – indicated by school happiness, and also by the fulfilment of basic psychological needs. Furthermore, this theory is used to analyse the extent to which school provides a psychologically healthy school experience for students. Despite most students reporting they are happy in school, their feelings of dissatisfaction also indicate that school experiences have not provided sufficient opportunity for them to satisfy their basic psychological needs. Students in this study may experience happiness in school, but this may not necessarily yield the fulfilment of their need for competence, autonomy, and relatedness.

Keywords: learning environment, self-determination theory, school happiness, school well-being, student voices
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This thesis would not have been possible without the support and involvement of students and teachers in this study. Special thanks to students and teachers – your involvement provides significant information, and policymakers in the Indonesian education system can learn from your voices. I would also like to say thank you to the District Office of Education and the school principals who gave me permission to conduct this study. Thanks also go to the Ministry of Education and Culture for their scholarships. Thanks too, to Professional editor, Rosemary Purcell, who provided copyediting and proofreading services according to the guidelines laid out in the university-endorsed national Guidelines for editing research theses.

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<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AEQ</td>
<td>Achievement Emotions Questionnaire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASEAN</td>
<td>Association of Southeast Asian Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBC</td>
<td>Competence-Based Curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CDU HREC</td>
<td>Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COSSS</td>
<td>Children’s Overall Satisfaction with Schooling Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCTB</td>
<td>Directly Controlling Teacher Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECOLE</td>
<td>Emotional and Cognitive aspect of Learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EWB</td>
<td>Eudaimonic Well-Being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEASP</td>
<td>Fear Envy Anger Sympathy Pleasure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAVIS</td>
<td>Goal &amp; Value in School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA</td>
<td>Grade Point Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HST</td>
<td>High Stakes Test/Testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Information Communication Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOEC</td>
<td>Ministry of Education and Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSLSS</td>
<td>Multidimensional Students’ Life Satisfaction Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSNE</td>
<td>Mean Score of Negative Emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSPE</td>
<td>Mean Score of Positive Emotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MSSS</td>
<td>Mean Score of School Satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NAPLAN</td>
<td>National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCLB</td>
<td>No Child Left Behind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>National Examination</td>
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<tr>
<td>NAS</td>
<td>Negative Affect Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
<td>Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>PALS</td>
<td>Pattern of Adaptive Learning Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PANAS-C</td>
<td>Positive Affect and Negative Affect Scale for Children</td>
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<td>PE</td>
<td>Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAS</td>
<td>Positive Affect Scale</td>
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<tr>
<td>PIRLS</td>
<td>Progress in International Reading Literacy Study</td>
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<tr>
<td>PISA</td>
<td>Programme for International Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PNAS</td>
<td>Positive and Negative Affect Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBC</td>
<td>School-level Based Curriculum</td>
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</table>
SBM  School-based Management
SD  Standard Deviation
SDT  Self-Determination Theory
SEL  Social-Emotional Learning
SES  Socioeconomic status
SPSS  Statistical Package for Social Science
SSS  School Satisfaction Scale
SWB  Subjective Well-Being
TIMSS  Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TSRs  Teacher-Student Relationships
UK  United Kingdom
UNICEF  United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
USA  United States of America
WHO  World Health Organization

EBTANAS  Evaluasi Belajar Tahap Akhir (National Examination)
UAN  Ujian Akhir Nasional (National Final Examination)
UN  Ujian Nasional (National Examination)
## List of Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs/Terms</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Comment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Academic Press</strong></td>
<td>the extent to which school members (teachers and students) conform to specific academic standards and experience a normative emphasis on academic excellence (Dever &amp; Karabenick, 2011; Gill, Ashton, &amp; Alginab, 2004; Murphy, Weil, Hallinger, &amp; Mitman, 1982)</td>
<td>other researchers use another term – <em>academic emphasis</em>, but this refers to a similar definition (Goddard, Sweetland, &amp; Hoy, 2000; Hoy, Tarter, &amp; Hoy, 2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affect</strong></td>
<td>a compilation of different emotions and moods (Pekrun &amp; Linnenbrink-Gracia, 2014)</td>
<td>as the component of subjective experience of emotions, affect is present within emotions (Fredrickson, 2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Positive affect</td>
<td>experience of the frequency of positive emotions, such as feeling pleasant, relaxed, or happy (Tian, Chen, &amp; Huebner, 2013)</td>
<td>positive affect reflects the level of pleasantness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Negative affect</td>
<td>experience of the frequency of negative emotions, such as feeling bored, depressed, or upset (Tian, Chen, et al., 2013)</td>
<td>negative affect describes the dimension of unpleasantness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotion</strong></td>
<td>comprises subjective feelings, facial expression, cognitive processing, physiological change (e.g., cardiovascular and hormonal change), and occurs over a relatively short time span (Cohn &amp; Fredrickson, 2009; Fredrickson, 2001).</td>
<td>the terms <em>emotion</em> and <em>affect</em> are often used interchangeably across researchers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>there is an emerging consensus that emotions are but a subset of the broader class of affective phenomena (Fredrickson, 2001)</td>
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<td>Constructs/Terms</td>
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<td>Eudaimonic well-being</td>
<td>the extent to which a person is fully functioning (Ryan &amp; Deci, 2001); embraces non-physical aspects of well-being such as self-development and self-realisation</td>
<td>the concept of eudaimonic well-being has been used in more varied ways in the literature, such as psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989), personal expressiveness (Waterman, 2008), social well-being (Keyes, 1998), self-determination theory (Ryan &amp; Deci, 2001), authentic happiness (Seligman, 2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hedonic well-being</td>
<td>well-being conceived in terms of pleasure attainment and pain avoidance; focuses on happiness (Ryan &amp; Deci, 2001)</td>
<td>most research has used a subjective well-being measurement to evaluate the level of happiness (Diener, Suh, Lucas, &amp; Smith, 1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning environment</td>
<td>generally consists of dimensions of the academic climate, which are related to the goal or demand to promote academic achievement, and dimensions of social climate related to relationships between teacher and student and among students</td>
<td>some researchers describe this by terms such as: psychosocial school environment (Haapasalo, Välimaa, &amp; Kannas, 2010; Sandal, Wold, &amp; Bronis, 1999; Takakura, Wake, &amp; Kobayashi, 2005), classroom social environment (Patrick, Ryan, &amp; Kaplan, 2007; Ryan &amp; Patrick, 2001), or school psychological environment (Roeser, Eccles, &amp; Sameroff, 1998; Roeser, Midgley, &amp; Urdan, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Life satisfaction</td>
<td>global judgement about one’s life as a whole (Diener, 2000)</td>
<td>Life satisfaction can also refer to specific domains of life such as family, environment, friends, self, and school (Huebner, 2010a)</td>
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<td>Constructs/Terms</td>
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<td>Peer relationships</td>
<td>several aspects of experience with peers (Kerns, Klepac, &amp; Cole, 1996), such as peer acceptance, peer rejection, peer status, peer victimisation, and friendship</td>
<td>typically, this term is studied in two ways: within the context of relationships and within structured interactions in the school instruction (Wentzel, Baker, &amp; Russell, 2014)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive education</td>
<td>education for academic skills and for happiness (Seligman et al., 2009)</td>
<td>this term is a part of three overarching themes of positive psychology: positive emotions, positive traits and positive institutions (Seligman &amp; Csikszentmihalyi, 2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School satisfaction</td>
<td>cognitive evaluation of overall satisfaction with one’s school experience (e.g., Baker &amp; Maupin, 2009; Tian, Chen, et al., 2013)</td>
<td>This term also refers to emotional response such as happiness, enjoyment of school and a sense of well-being at school (Samdal, Nutbeam, Wold, &amp; Kannas, 1998)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School well-being</td>
<td>a domain-specific approach to subjective well-being, consists of school satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect in school (Long, Huebner, Wedell, &amp; Hills, 2012; Tian, Liu, Huang, &amp; Huebner, 2013)</td>
<td>this term is identical to student happiness in school; however, in this thesis it does not refer to certain aspects of eudaimonic well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjective well-being</td>
<td>individual evaluation of the quality experience of their lives, in term of judgement of global and domain-specific life satisfaction, and their emotional responses (Diener et al., 1999). Emotional responses consists of positive affect and negative affect</td>
<td>the three components of life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect are often summarised as happiness (e.g., Tenney, 2011). This term is often related to hedonic well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constructs/Terms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher-student relationships</td>
<td>this term has been investigated using different constructs, such as teacher support (e.g. Ming-Te, 2009; Patrick et al., 2007; Ryan &amp; Patrick, 2001; Suldo et al., 2009), teacher caring (e.g. Wentzel, 1997), student-teacher relationships (Hamre &amp; Pianta, 2005), communal school (e.g., Battistich, Solomon, Kim, Watson, &amp; Schaps, 1995; Phillips, 1997), and school responsiveness (e.g., Dever &amp; Karabenick, 2011; Gill et al., 2004)</td>
<td>even though there is a slight difference in the definition of the terms, generally it involves characteristics of caring, friendliness, understanding, dedication, and dependability (Ryan &amp; Patrick, 2001)</td>
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Chapter 1  Introduction
The momentum for positive psychology consolidated during the 1990s, leading to more studies on the positive functioning of people. Despite this, the understanding of happiness and the dimensions of life satisfaction of students at school has received little attention (Suldo, Huebner, Friedrich, & Gilman, 2009). In the context of the Indonesian education system, this research explores this theme and how student experiences at school influence their well-being.

This chapter begins with contextualising the focus of the study, which is the local Indonesian learning context. It critically explores the Indonesian education system, which is typically characterised as examination-oriented and teacher-centred, and thus focusing on intellectual activities and academic achievement. I also discuss the education reform efforts in Indonesia designed to raise student achievement. Some scholars claim that focusing on the academic climate in school is an effective approach to increasing student achievement at the macro level; however, other studies counter that such approaches have detrimental effects on student well-being in school.

Framed within the context of Indonesia’s education system, and from a perspective that considers the importance of student well-being at school and acknowledging whole child development, I first outline the problem. This is followed by a synopsis of the purpose and significance of the study. The chapter concludes with an outline the thesis structure.

1.1 Learning context in Indonesia

Since 2000, international benchmarked testing has been popularised as an effective measure of the quality of education (Burgess, 2014). In particular, the Programme for International Assessment (PISA) has gained worldwide recognition. PISA tests the
mathematical, scientific and reading literacy of 15-year olds in Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) member countries and other participating countries (OECD, 2014). Similar studies include the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), which are conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. The promulgators of PISA claim that the student achievement tests measure benchmark the quality of education of any given country (Zhao, 2014).

Despite strong critiques on the content and approach of PISA and the interpretation of the results, many countries still rely on its claims, and the annual tests have high international status. As a consequence, these internationally benchmarked assessments have the effect of feeding political, societal, and community pressure on local educational systems to increase student achievement to a world-class standard (Burgess, 2014). Many educational systems, including the system applied in Indonesia, use student achievement as a dominant indicator of school effectiveness. For example, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) initiative used in the United States of America (USA) exclusively measures school success based on student achievement in an array of standardised tests (Tenney, 2011). In Australia, the National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) test results are published on the My School website, so the public can identify high and low-performing schools (Lingard, 2010; Lobascher, 2011; Redden & Low, 2012).

As a result of participating in PISA and TIMSS throughout the 2000s, the Indonesian Central Government became concerned about the achievement of Indonesian students in these tests, which indicated a comparatively low rank, even when
compared to other similar developing countries (Tjala, 2010; OECD, 2014). Moreover, despite a low reference criterion (5.5/10; the Ministerial Decree 97/2013, p. 5) for passing the National Examination (NE) being set, there is a substantial cohort of students who struggle to achieve this minimum score. In response to this low student academic achievement against national and international standards, the Indonesian Government enacted Law 20/2003 (Undang-undang Republik Indonesia No. 20, 2003) as a revision of a previous law of the national education system to further improve standards. In addition, the national education standard (the Government Act 19/2005 in conjunction with the Government Act 23/2013) was released as an initiative for enhancing the quality of education through improving eight standards in education. Moreover, the Ministerial Decree 67 (2013d, p. 2) explicitly used Indonesian student achievement in PISA and TIMSS as one of the considerations for designing strategies to improve the Indonesian educational system. This kind of consideration likely relates to political and economic policy and a fear of becoming a loser in the international competition (Tenney, 2011).

The dynamic of Indonesia’s education became prominent in 2003 when the Central Government implemented a new standardised and centralised NE, which has routinely been undertaken at the end of secondary school. For primary school (Year 6), the NE was applied during 2008–2013, but this was discontinued in 2014. Indonesian policymakers believe in using the NE to press teachers and students to work harder in order to increase student achievement (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). In response to the NE, teachers and schools face increased demands to meet the required academic standard, commonly this is addressed under an authoritarian system in schools (Zhao, 2014). When school members (teachers and students) conform to specific academic standards and experience a normative emphasis on
academic excellence, the school has applied what is known as *academic press* (Dever & Karabenick, 2011; Gill, Ashton, & Alginab., 2004; Murphy, Weil, Hallinger, & Mitman., 1982). In school effectiveness literature, increasing academic demands on students is regarded as an approach to improve the quality of education (Middleton & Blumenfeld, 2000; Phillips, 1997).

There is a general view that pressure to achieve academically is most noticeable within urban contexts, where often parents’ educational achievement is generally higher than adults in rural contexts. Most urban parents and schools are primarily concerned about how to ensure students achieve high academic scores (Kaluge, Setiasih, & Tjahjono, 2004). One way parents or schools in urban settings make sure their children are well prepared for tests or exams is by sending their children to cram schools for after-school intensive study activity. Cram schools, or private tutorials or tuition classes, are very common in urban contexts in Indonesia, and common throughout Asia – particularly in South Korea, where they are called *hagwons*. Tutorial institutions have thus become de facto school partners in boosting student achievement (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). Schools also strive to increase student achievement in order to be recognised as a prestigious school, as this may affect student enrolment in subsequent years (Kaluge et al., 2004). These phenomena occur at all levels of education, from primary school through to middle school and high school. As a consequence, many children in urban settings are under a great deal of pressure from their parents, teachers, schools and the broader society to boost their academic results.

The exam-dominated culture in the Indonesian education system drives educational practices, as is the case in most Asian countries (Tan & Samudya, 2009). Multiple
choice questions are frequently used in these examinations, with questions focused on factual recall, and constructed in ways that at times are more about interpreting language and applying logic than actually demonstrating understanding. Basic knowledge and skills are addressed in these questions, but little attention is paid to higher order thinking skills (Kaluge et al., 2004). In other words, assessment is primarily about what the children can recall, and less about what they understand or how they might apply information, or how they might create new knowledge (Awartani, Whitman, & Gordon, 2008). These processes also do little to help student meta-learning skills, except for honing skills for success in examinations. Because of the dominance of examinations that require factual recall through multiple choice questions, the result is that students are more likely to be successful if they are able to memorise subject content.

In Indonesian schools, teacher-centred approaches are a deeply embedded cultural phenomenon (personal and institutional) that drives learning and instructional processes. Most teachers use this approach as their fundamental teaching style, and the ordinary classroom in Indonesia is characterised by traditional didactic approaches. Such activity occurs against a rigid time limit and structure, generating passive students who are not actively engaged in the learning process, where students are restricted and constrained in their interactions and movements, and where there is often no alternative activities, learner engagement, collaboration or negotiation possibilities (Epstein & McPartland, 1976; Kaluge et al., 2004). Most of the time, the process of learning is spent on preparing for tests and exams rather than on actual learning content for understanding (Schreuder, 2011). The biggest concern of teachers is that their students have accomplished the basic standards of competence and the teachers have met their responsibility by transferring to the learner the entire
learning materials embedded in a scheduled curriculum. There is little concern as to whether or not the students really understand the content (Schreuder, 2011). As a consequence, education in schools tends to be restricted in scope, just focusing on baseline academic achievement or requirements of the curriculum (Allodi, 2010c). Large class sizes are common in Indonesian schools, so the instructional process is delivered to the class as a whole and is not adapted to the needs of individual children (Kaluge et al., 2004).

With teacher-centred approaches, power and responsibility belongs almost exclusively to teachers (Harmon & Harumi, 1996, as cited in Harsono, 2006). In a study about teacher-student relationships (TSRs) in Indonesia, Maulana, Opdanakker, den Brok, and Bosker (2011) found that even though Indonesian teachers are perceived to be cooperative, they also are perceived as domineering because they display quite high levels of behaviour control. Moreover, the degree of co-operation between Indonesian teachers and students is rather low compared to teachers in some other countries such as Australia, Singapore and Turkey (Maulana et al., 2011). Indonesian teachers mostly maintain their distance from the students, both physically and psychologically. Not surprisingly, an unequal power relation between student and teacher sometimes becomes a source of conflict between them. The pattern of interactions between teachers and students in Indonesia is linked to the cultural context of Indonesian society. The conservative interactions between younger and older generations are influenced by power distance relationships (Hofstede, 2001), such as respect for older people.

With regard to the routine instructional practices in the Indonesian education system, there are disparities between what is stated in the policies and the implementation of
these policies in reality. The Education Act (Undang-undang Republik Indonesia No. 20, 2003) states that the objectives of Indonesian education are to develop learner’s potential:

... so that they become persons who are faithful to God the Almighty and hence possess moral and noble character, become healthy, knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent, and would be democratic and responsible citizens. (Law 20/2003 Chapter II, Article 3, p. 3)

This objective is in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child of the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (1989), Article 29 that states the education of the child shall be directed to the development of the child’s personality, talents and abilities to their fullest potential. However, the implementation of these objectives has a much higher focus in practice on the achievement of academic outcomes, and practitioners pay little attention to other facets of learning such as aesthetic appreciation, social interaction, affective development and moral outcomes (Kaluge et al., 2004).

1.2 Academic press and relationships in the learning environment

Learning environments do not merely refer to physical space, such as school buildings, or materials used in instruction, but also include interactions between and among students and teachers (Frenzel, Pekrun, & Göetz, 2007). Some researchers describe the latter aspects of the learning environment by different terms, such as: psychosocial school environment (Haapasalo, Välimaa, & Kannas, 2010; Samdal, Wold, & Bronis, 1999; Takakura, Wake, & Kobayashi, 2005), classroom social environment (Patrick, Ryan, & Kaplan, 2007; Ryan & Patrick, 2001), or school psychological environment (Roeser, Eccles, & Sameroff, 1998; Roeser, Midgley, & Urdan, 1996). These terms generally consist of dimensions of academic climate, which are related to the goal or demand to promote academic achievement, and
dimensions of social climate, which are related to relationships between teacher and student and among students. The main issue addressed in this study is how students experience their learning environment at the classroom and school level through two dimensions: academic press and relationships in school.

Phillips (1997) argues that academic press is an approach in school reform to increase student academic achievement. Common strategies in this approach include more time allocation for instruction, more homework, clear achievement goals, and high expectations for student achievement (Phillips, 1997). Lee and Smith (1999) state that academic press can be enhanced by high stakes testing (HST) in an educational system. According to Anderman and Midgley (1997), academic press can also manifest as a school achievement goal structure in which academic goals are emphasised by the principal and home-room teacher through school policies and instructional practice. An ability goal or performance goal structure emerges when school policies and practice encourage competition among students, putting emphasis upon getting the highest grades and recognition of superior relative performance (Roeser et al., 1998), and giving special privileges or incentives to high achievers (Roeser et al., 1996).

In contrast to an academically oriented school environment (or school academic climate) that gives rise to academic press, a socially oriented school environment is characterised by positive social relationships between teachers and students and among students. The environmental approach focuses on satisfying student social and personal needs through a caring learning environment that also facilitates achievement of academic outcomes (Griffith, 2002). Some studies have used the terms communitarian organization, social support, and communal values to describe
this approach (e.g., Lee & Smith, 1999; Phillips, 1997; Shouse, 1996). Other researchers use *social climate* (Allodi, 2010c) or *school social climate* (Emmons, Comer, & Haynes, 1996, as cited in Kuperminc, Leadbeater, & Blatt, 2001) to describe the quality of relationships between teachers and students and among students. Dever and Karabenick (2011) use *teacher caring*, while Ryan and Patrick (2001) use *teacher support* to describe the establishment of personal and supportive relationships with students.

Another key aspect of learning environment is *peer relationships* which refer to several aspects of experience with peers (Kerns, Klepac, & Cole, 1996, p. 457). The ambit of the literature covering peer relationships reveals several forms, such as peer acceptance, peer support, peer rejection or peer victimisation, and is further elaborated upon in Chapter 3.

### 1.3 The effect of the interaction of academic press and relationships in school

Several researchers have studied the interactive effect of academic press and relationships in school to student academic and affective outcomes, revealing somewhat mixed results. Some studies report the positive effect of academic press because it places value on student achievement (Griffith, 1999; Phillips, 1997). Other researchers correlate the positive effect of school social climate on student outcome (Battistich, Schaps, & Wilson, 2004; Griffith, 1999). This ongoing debate comparing academic press and school social climate as competing perspectives can be counterproductive (Gill et al., 2004). Some studies report the interactive effects of academic press and school social climate on student achievement (e.g., Lee & Smith, 1999; Shouse, 1996), while Takakura et al. (2005) demonstrates the interactive effect of academic press and psychosocial school environment on student school.
satisfaction. The students with the highest level of school satisfaction are the group of students who perceive their psychosocial school environment as high demand and high support, while the lowest levels of school satisfaction are found in those who perceive high demand and low support, or low demand and low support.

Despite some studies reporting the positive effect of academic press (Suldo, et al., 2009) conclude from studies across cultures that schools with a high emphasis on academic achievement diminish student life satisfaction. This is in stark contrast to the intentions of school reform to increase student achievement; HST can also endanger student well-being (Tenney, 2011). The focus on academic assessment alone leads the teacher to focus on effective ways to produce good test results rather than being concerned about student well-being and learning (Awartani et al., 2008). Moreover, the whole process may not only have a negative impact on student learning, but also on the teaching corps, manifesting as stress, dissatisfaction, alienation, decreased self-efficacy and a feeling of helplessness on behalf of the students who cannot cope with this kind of approach in the educational system (Awartani et al., 2008). The outcomes of students who experience school pressure beyond their coping level, combined with poor teacher and peer support and school satisfaction, will likely be low (Baker, Dilly, Aupperlee, & Patil, 2003). Likewise, school practices that place emphasis on competition, relative ability and rewards for high achievers are associated negatively with student academic motivation and emotional well-being over time (Roeser, et al., 1998).

Indonesia has undertaken education reform movement since early 2000s. It started with the enactment of education Law 20/2003 as a revision of previous law. This law states that the goal of the national education system is to develop individual learner potential so that everyone can become “persons who are faithful to God the
Almighty and hence possess moral and noble character, become healthy, knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent, and would be democratic and responsible citizens” (Chapter II, Article 3, p. 3). Undoubtedly Indonesian policymakers have good intentions in the stated education reform effort; their stated ideals and objectives for Indonesian education in the education policies demonstrate this. However, with regard to the context of learning in Indonesian schools outlined above, it could be assumed that academic achievement is increasingly perceived as a critical, perhaps even the sole, component of school success. This view appears to be flawed. Indeed, academic achievement does not describe the full scope of what educational outcomes need to include. Leonard, Bourke, and Schofield (2004) and Clement (2010) contend that school quality and effectiveness have to include student affective outcomes. Affective outcomes for students are important because they impact on cognitive outcomes (Elias et al., 1997; Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007) and on quality of life in the long term (Wirth, 1988, as cited in Leonard et al., 2004). Among several affective outcomes, I chose to focus this study on student well-being in school which can also be understood as school satisfaction or happiness in school. These terms are often interchangeable in the relevant literature (e.g., Huebner, 2010a; Samdal et al., 1999; Tenney, 2011).

More than four decades ago, Epstein and McPartland (1976) conceptualised school satisfaction as an outcome of schooling. Baker et al. (2003) also proposed school satisfaction as one measure of positive school outcomes. Ramsey and Clark (1990, as cited in Konu & Rimpela, 2002) argue that the importance of student feelings of well-being in school is more critical than formal academic achievements. Noddings (2003) contends that happiness should be an aim of education. The implication is that happiness and educational experiences should be addressed together. In other words,
academic and affective aspects are not regarded as a contradictive or competing constructs. Noddings’ notion is in line with expectations most parents have for their children; that is, their children’s well-being (Seligman, Ernst, Gillham, Reivich, & Linkins, 2009) or enjoyment of school experiences (Guay, Ratelle, & Chanal, 2008). One study in the USA actually showed that on average parents regard their children’s school satisfaction as important as academic achievement (Jacob & Lefgren, 2005). Moreover, parents also want teachers to promote student satisfaction conjointly with academic achievement, showing their expectations are in agreement with the concept of positive education defined as education for academic skills and for happiness (Seligman et al., 2009). Even though teachers and parents might have a belief that student enjoyment in learning and feeling positive and safe at school is an important goal of education (Eynde & Turner, 2006), student well-being is not always achieved. Student well-being in school has not gained central attention in school programs, because it is still mainly regarded as subsidiary – as separate from the comprehensive goal of education (Konu & Rimpela, 2002).

1.4 School well-being

Some studies have used the term school well-being to describe satisfaction with school/education (e.g., Engels, Aelterman, Van Petegem, & Schepens, 2004; Opdenakker & Van Damme, 2000; Tian, Liu, Huang & Huebner, 2013; Van Petegem, Aelterman, Van Keer, & Rosseel, 2008; Vyverman & Vettenburg, 2009). As a domain specific approach of subjective well-being (SWB), school well-being consists of three components: school satisfaction, positive affect in school and negative affect in school (Tian et al., 2013). School satisfaction is defined as a cognitive evaluation of overall satisfaction with one’s school experience (Baker & Maupin, 2009; Long et al., 2012; Tian, Chen & Huebner, 2013). Positive affect in
school refers to student experience of frequency of positive emotions in school, such as feeling pleasant, relaxed, or happy. Negative affect in school refers to the frequency of negative emotions, such as feeling depressed, upset, or bored (Tian, Chen et al., 2013).

In much of the relevant literature, school well-being has been primarily studied from a quantitative perspective (Tenney, 2011). The measurement of school well-being by using the school satisfaction scale (SSS) and positive affect and negative affect scale (PANAS) are assumed to be indicative of the levels of well-being by many studies (e.g., Long et al., 2012; Tian, Chen, et al., 2013). This concept is closer to the definition of well-being from a hedonic perspective (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Measuring school well-being by such an instrument could not capture aspects of the school and learning environment related to positive and negative emotional experiences.

Combining the quantitative with the qualitative approach, this study has been designed to find out how school experiences are perceived by students. Student perceptions of their school experiences through the qualitative approach are used to identify what factors of the learning environment stimulate positive and negative emotional experiences, and the extent to which school provides a learning environment that fulfils basic psychological needs. Student satisfaction of their basic psychological needs is one of the central aspects of well-being from a eudaimonic perspective as articulated in self-determination theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The eudaimonic conception of well-being is more than just happiness, but adds the extent dimension of self-realisation to which a person is fully functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Similarly, Seligman et al. (2009) define happiness as more than positive emotions, but as also including engagement and meaning.
School experiences necessarily involve student happiness, and Seligman et al. (2009) note the link with the high prevalence of depression and the decline in life satisfaction among young people worldwide. Students spend much of their waking time in school, so that school becomes an important dimension for student psychological well-being and quality of life (Kim & Kim, 2012). Students experience school as satisfying or not, and this is a major determinant of their happiness in school, which in turn influences their general happiness (Chen & Lu, 2009; Hui & Sun, 2010) or general life satisfaction (Huebner & Gilman, 2006).

Importantly, Noddings (2003) and Seligman et al. (2009) conclude that better well-being is synergic with improved learning. When students are happy, they will learn best. Samdal et al. (1999) found that student satisfaction with school is the most reliable predictor of academic achievement. The higher the student level of satisfaction with school, the greater is the likelihood of academic success. When students are feeling good about themselves and highly satisfied with school life, there is a concomitant increase in stimulus or readiness to learn and active participation in the classroom, and this in turn has a positive impact on their academic achievement (Ladd, Buhs, & Seid, 2000; Leonard et al., 2004; Williams & Roey, 1996). Moreover, based on her observation over many years of teaching, Noddings (2003) also identifies that happiness is related to student character – happy students are rarely mean, violent or cruel.

Conversely, for students who achieve high academic results it cannot necessarily be assumed that they also have a higher sense of well-being. Marks, Shah, and Westall (2004) state that many students at primary schools who could be seen as “academically-top-performing” have a significantly lower sense of well-being than
students in other primary schools. A similar finding was reported by Park (2005); Korean students have lower levels of school satisfaction than USA students, despite Korean students being typically more persistent in school achievement goals. Pekrun, Frenzel, Göetz, and Perry (2007) found that students in higher-achieving classrooms feel more pressure to do well, so that they experience slightly more negative emotions, and slightly fewer positive emotions.

Experiencing positive emotions and negative emotions in school have different effects on students. Positive emotions are regarded as the markers of an individual’s overall well-being or happiness (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009). Within a school context, positive emotions increase student engagement in learning, which in turn results in higher levels of school-related positive functioning (Reschly, Huebner, Appleton, & Antaramian, 2008). Similarly, Lewis, Huebner, Reschly, and Valois (2009) report that positive emotions demonstrate significant incremental validity in predicting school satisfaction, adaptive coping and student engagement. People who experience positive emotions tend to have thinking processes that are flexible, creative and holistic (Fredrickson, 1998, 2003; Pekrun, 2009).

Alternatively, negative emotions are believed to inhibit an individual’s thoughts and behaviours and are associated with disengagement behaviour (Reschly et al., 2008). Neuropsychology theorists explain that under conditions of negative emotions, such as threat or high anxiety, the foci of learning processes and flexibility of thinking are both lessened (Elias et al., 1997). Negative emotions also influence attention bias by forcing the person to pay attention to other aspects of the situations that are particularly consistent with those kinds of emotions. Consequently, negative
emotions affect student learning and performance in school (Roeser, Eccles, & Strobel, 1998).

Since the affective states of students in school are related to their well-being and to the learning process, teachers could provide learning environments that are conducive to increasing the likelihood of students experiencing positive emotions. Positive emotions of students are likely to be responsive to any changes in the instructional practices and interpersonal relationships in school (Reschly et al., 2008). Schools can function as psychologically healthy environments if they provide appropriate opportunities for the fulfilment of student developmental needs (Baker et al., 2003; Roeser, et al., 1998). According to SDT, these are the need for competence, autonomy and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). According to World Health Organisation (WHO, 2003) one of the key features of a healthy psycho-social environment in school is a warm, friendly and supportive environment. This is in line with a socially oriented approach that was discussed in Section 1.2. With regard to application of the SDT principles in the classroom context to promote student well-being, this study investigated the extent to which the Indonesian educational system and schools have provided a psychologically healthy environment that nurtures student psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness.

In order to delineate specific school and learning environments that relate to student affective experiences in school, student perceptions become important. Ryan and Glornick (1986) argue that studies of children’s development in school settings have to examine student perceptions of their classroom and school experience. The meaning of the learning environment per se is crucial to understanding the effect of perception on students, particularly in studies of motivation and personality. Frieberg
(1998, as cited in McCombs, 2004) also states that all school reform efforts should take into account student perception about school, because each student’s perspective is critical as a source of feedback.

The implication for educational practitioners and researchers is that “any attempt to modify academic environments in order to produce better achievement results must consider the simultaneous impact on subjective well-being” (Suldo, Riley, & Shaffer, 2006, p. 577). Therefore, in understanding school functioning and children and adolescents’ quality of life, school well-being can be regarded as an important construct to be further studied (Whitley, 2010).

Over a period of nearly four decades, there have been limited and discontinuous studies of learning environment issues in Indonesia. Even though some studies suggest that learning environments determine student achievement as well as student well-being, there is no significant attempt to take into account this issue as a component of discourse in Indonesian educational development (Wahyudi & Treagust, 2004). In Indonesia, teacher professional development is mainly devoted to improvement of teaching skills or administration strategies, rather than addressing teacher awareness of how to create a positive learning environment. Indeed, the physical and psycho-social aspects of a learning environment not only play a critical role in developing an educated person, but also in determining the health of the next generation in terms of the body, mind and spirit (WHO, 2003). Therefore, there is a need for further study to better understand the characteristic of learning environments that best promote, and are most predictive of, student learning and well-being.
1.5 Research focus

The purpose of this study is to assess the level of school well-being of primary school students in Jakarta. School well-being comprises the level of school satisfaction and associated positive and negative emotions experienced. Comparative analysis based on demographic variables, such as gender, informs the findings. This study focuses on what aspects of learning environments – such as academic pressure and relationships in school – impact upon student school satisfaction and their emotions. How student school experiences are related to their achievement outcomes is closely examined. Drawing upon self-determination theory (SDT) as a theoretical framework and mixed-methods design as an appropriate research approach, this study thus informs what students think and feel about their school experiences by examining their perspectives about learning environments to determine what best fits their needs as learners and children in such a developmental period.

The review of the literature, detailed in Chapter 3, shows that most school climate and school satisfaction studies have been conducted in Western settings; however, many underlying assumptions are not necessarily appropriate in many Asian settings. Moreover, studies of school satisfaction are generally conducted as quantitative research. There is, therefore, a gap in the literature on school satisfaction studies using qualitative or mixed-methods approaches. This study accommodates and has encouraged the exploration of student perspectives of their school experiences and has facilitated expression of their opinions concerning school and learning improvement.

Furthermore, most school well-being research has been conducted on adolescents, while studies that investigate school well-being among primary school students are
limited. Identifying student well-being at the elementary school level is, however, a critical point because it can be a predictor of their school commitment in later educational stages (Ensminger & Slusarcick, 1992). Feelings of well-being during childhood provide critical foundations for positive mental health in later developmental periods (WHO, 2003). Using a qualitative methodological framework as one of the approaches in this study contributes to the body of knowledge concerning how student views about their school experience impact upon their school well-being. Perspectives of children with different experiences are important in understanding the characteristics and the deficits of the educational environment.

Fraser (2002) reports that several studies of the learning environment reveal differences between student and teacher perceptions of the same actual classroom environment. Similarly, Wahyudi and Treagust (2004) replicated previous findings that teachers tend to perceive more positive views of the actual learning environment than their students. Building upon these findings, this study also explores teacher perceptions of the learning environment and related issues of the Indonesian education system that they perceive influence their instructional practices.

1.6 Statement of the problem

Positive learning environments can be seen as a necessary pre-condition for student learning – when students have a positive perception of their learning environment, they learn better (Dorman, 2003). In understanding student perceptions, the voices of children should be sought and heard, because it is they who personally experience the process of education, who are the ultimate consumers of education, and who therefore provide a rich and authentic source of data (Davie, 1993, as cited in Maxwell, 2006). Students can teach us much about learning, based on what works or
does not work for them as learners (SooHoo, 1993, as cited in Thomas, Smees, MacBeath, Robertson, & Boyd, 2000). They can also tell us a great deal about what conditions of school help them feel emotionally comfortable. Students who feel positive about their school experience will often be happy and will learn because of this (Noddings, 2003). Therefore, it is logical that promoting student happiness or subjective well-being in schools is consistent with promoting educational achievement (Huebner, 2010a; Noddings, 2003).

Following on from these issues, this study explores student experiences of school and identifies what factors in the learning environment enhance or diminish their school satisfaction and positive emotions. Specifically, this study:

1. Investigates the level of well-being experienced by primary school students including their perceptions of school satisfaction and kinds of positive and negative emotions they experienced at school.
2. Explores what factors of the learning environment can stimulate positive and negative emotional experiences.
3. Examines how academic press and relationships at school impact upon student school satisfaction, their emotions, and their academic outcomes.
4. Explores student perspectives about what school principals and teachers should do to promote school experiences in which the students enjoy studying more.

In order to address these issues, the following questions are posed:

1. Are students satisfied with their school experiences?
2. What kind of positive and negative emotions do students experience frequently in school?
3. What factors of the learning environment affect student emotions in school?
4. How do academic press and relationships at school affect student school experience?

5. How does student school well-being affect learning outcomes?

6. What are the characteristics of an enjoyable school and learning environment?

7. What is the extent to which schools have provided a psychologically healthy environment for students?

1.7 Significance of the study

Evaluation of the learning environment cannot be limited to observable characteristics, such as instructional process or observed interaction between and, among students and teachers, but also requires consideration of subjective indicators, such as how students or teachers perceive their learning settings (Frenzel et al., 2007). Exploring student satisfaction by incorporating both their positive and negative emotions in school will describe a more comprehensive assessment of student school experiences.

This study provides new perspectives of student well-being in Indonesian settings through focusing on student emotions in schools and learning environments at four different levels (individual, classroom, school and system policy):

1. Assessing student school well-being can be an indicator of an individual’s general well-being and mental health. As stated by Huebner (1994), school satisfaction is a major contributor to children’s overall life satisfaction, and therefore, it impacts on their learning outcomes (Suldo et al., 2006).

2. Understanding student school well-being and aspects of the learning environment that can impact this is beneficial for teachers. By identifying student emotions,
teachers might be more aware of school experiences that trigger specific emotions either positive or negative.

3. For schools this study can inform school principals concerned with transforming school culture, such as developing a caring community school and appreciating individual differences.

4. For policymakers in the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC), the findings detailed in this study might provide directions for ongoing reform of schools. Specifically, the findings point to the need for policy that readily facilitates balanced emphasis on children’s social and emotional well-being, as well as their intellectual development. These findings can also guide the content of teacher professional development and pre-service teacher education programs. Such programs could aim to prepare qualified teachers with good pedagogical knowledge as well as enabling them to create a caring and supportive learning environment.

In addition, this study fills the gaps within the literature of school well-being, particularly that which relates to research findings in a specific context. Moreover, this study challenges the research orthodoxy within Indonesia whereby the student voice is rarely heard within research activities.

1.8 Organisation of the thesis

Chapter 1 of this study presented an overview of the issues of learning environments in the local context of the study and factors related to student school satisfaction. The importance of student affective status in respect to school satisfaction and positive emotions as student affective status to measure of school effectiveness have been discussed.
Chapter 2 describes the policy context in the Indonesian educational system and related topics, such as national education standards, history of curriculum and standardised testing. Additionally, this chapter discusses the influence of culture on the Indonesian education system.

Chapter 3 reviews relevant literature drawn from educational theory and research. The review includes the topics:
1. school well-being that comprises school satisfaction and positive and negative emotions in school
2. academic press and relationships in school between teachers and students and among students. In addition, these topics are discussed within broader theoretical perspectives such as SDT and the contexts of school as a multilevel environment.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology applied in this study, including the research design, sample and sampling procedure, instrumentation, procedures for analysing the data, and ethics in research.

Chapter 5 presents the research findings, followed by analysis and discussion of student satisfaction and emotions in school. The chapter presents quantitative as well as qualitative data analysis.

Chapter 6 addresses the topic of academic demand in educational settings. Most of the data and results are discussed from a qualitative approach.

Chapter 7 describes the findings associated with student and teacher perceptions of relationships in school. Additionally, it discusses data analysis based on my own (researcher’s) perceptions.
Chapter 8 provides a deeper analysis of the findings from Chapter 5 to Chapter 7 using the theoretical lenses of SDT and the contexts of school as a multilevel environment.

Finally, Chapter 9 presents the conclusions and recommendations for future study, and the implication for instructional practices in the Indonesian educational system.
Chapter 2   Contextualising the study
This chapter provides further context, particularly with respect to the educational system. Educational practice in Indonesia typically focuses on student academic achievement, and predominantly uses didactic teaching practices. This chapter also reviews the Indonesian education policy literature, and highlights how global and local contexts influence policies.

This chapter is organised into three main sections. The first section discusses the Indonesian national education system focusing on the national education standard and the history of curriculum development. The second section discusses the global education reform movement, the implementation of standardised testing, and the impact of the Indonesian national examination (NE) on teachers, students and learning. The third section discusses the general features of Indonesian culture and its influence on the Indonesian education system. Additionally, this chapter identifies which theories of learning have guided local practice and the emergent conflict between official policy and its daily implementation in school practices. Further, student voice is discussed as an essential consideration, consistent with humanistic principles in education.

2.1 The Indonesian national education system

The foundations of contemporary education in Indonesia can be traced back to the period of Dutch colonialisation (Belen, 2010). Historically, there have been three educational systems: traditional education, conducted by the religious community; Western education managed by the Dutch government; and nationalist education implemented by the nationalist organisation. During the colonial period, the education systems were discriminative, with schools based on race and divided into
European, East Asian and indigenous. When Japan colonised Indonesia during World War II for 3.5 years, only indigenous schooling existed.

Since proclaiming its independence on 17 August 1945, Indonesia started to manage its school system through Indonesian state authorities. The Republic of Indonesia’s State Constitution of 1945 (*Undang-undang Dasar Republik Indonesia 1945*) and the state’s basic philosophy (*Pancasila*) jointly supply the basic guidance for government in managing the united system of national education (Soedijarto, 2009). *Pancasila* comprises five moral principles: belief in the one and only God, just and civilised humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy and social justice (*UUD RI, 1945*).

Historically, Indonesian governments have enacted a law of education on three occasions. First, *Law 4/1950* originally was unveiled as the *Law of Education and Teaching System*. This was then revised with an updated focus on equal opportunity for education with the addition of *Law 12/1954* and *Law 22/1961* (Djojonegoro, 1996). The first Law of 1950 stated that an educated Indonesian should be “an intelligent, moral, responsible and democratic citizen” (Soedijarto, 2009). Second, in 1989, the national education system was described by *Law 2/1989* with the objective of providing education to the nation in order develop the whole person, demonstrable by “belief in God the Almighty, having knowledge and skills, being healthy both physically and mentally, having a sound and self-confident personality, and having responsibility to society and nation” (*Undang-undang Republik Indonesia No. 2, 1989*, p. 2). Third, the most recent education law is *Law 20/2003* (*Undang-undang Republik Indonesia No. 20, 2003*). This law defines the national education system as the best integration of the elements of the entire educational components to achieve
the national education goal (Article 1, p. 2). The national education system functions to develop individual learner potential so that everyone can become “persons who are faithful to God the Almighty and hence possess moral and noble character, become healthy, knowledgeable, competent, creative, independent, and would be democratic and responsible citizens” (Chapter II, Article 3, p. 3). Using these three education laws, Indonesian education has focused on developing the whole person, comprised of three dimensions: intellectual, physical and personality (Soedijarto, 2009).

Indonesia’s national education system has three pathways: formal education, non-formal education and informal education (Law 20/2003, Chapter VI, Articles 13-14, p. 6). Moreover, there are three levels of education: basic education, secondary education and higher education. Basic education consists of six years of elementary education and three years of junior secondary schools, declared the nine-years of compulsory education from 1989 (Djojonegoro, 1996). Secondary education consists of three years of schooling at a general senior secondary school or a vocational senior secondary school. Higher education includes diploma, bachelor, master and doctoral programs.

The underlying dynamics of Indonesian education today began with the strategies for decentralisation of authority implemented during the early 2000s on the basis of Law 22/1999 (Bjork, 2004). In effect, this meant delegating authority to the local level, and was driven by neoliberal economic theory (Bjork, 2004). It was argued that decentralisation would lead to increasing the participation of citizens in local government, and more efficiency of financial, material and human resources. Previously, the Indonesian Government was characterised as highly centralised or
This shift from centralisation into decentralisation has significant implications for the educational system.

Additionally, the enactment of Law 20/2003 provided a significant influence on the dynamics of Indonesian education (Firman & Tola, 2008). This law addressed several issues in the context of decentralisation of education in Indonesia by focusing on school-based management (SBM), school-level based curriculum (SBC), teacher professional development, teacher certification, international benchmarking and an NE system. The introduction SBM and SBC are regarded as two major reforms (Raihani, 2008). These reform efforts were introduced with the expectation of improving the quality of education (Firman & Tola, 2008).

2.1.1 The national education standard

In order to regulate the process of standardisation of Indonesian national education, the Government Act 19/2005 (Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia No. 19, 2005) was implemented. This act was subsequently revised in 2013 by the Government Act 32/2013 (Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia No. 32, 2013) and in 2015 was revised as the Government Act 13/2015 (Peraturan Pemerintah Republik Indonesia No. 13, 2015). The 2013 revision considers the need for flexibility required by the changing dynamics of local, national and global society, and for increasing quality and competitive advantages for the nation. The 2015 revision considers the important components for improving the quality of education, such as standard of graduand competence, school accreditation, and the curriculum. Both revisions represent an ongoing commitment to reform and continuity of vision.
The national education standard is articulated as a minimum criterion of the educational system in Indonesia (the Government Act 13/2015, Article 1, p. 3). It consists of eight standards, as shown in Table 2.1.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name of standard</th>
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The primary objective of a national education standard is the guarantee of quality of national education in order to educate the nation, creating character of the nation and to develop dignified nationals (The Government Act 19/2005, Article 4, p. 6). The standard of national education also functions as a reference point in planning, acting and controlling of the education system (The Government Act 19/2005, Article 3, p. 6). In other words, these standards are used as a reference for quality assurance and quality control of education (Firman & Tola, 2008). Moreover, the administration used these standards as a reference point in developing the curriculum.

In order to have a more comprehensive understanding of the culture of Indonesian national education, a description of the curriculum in the Indonesian education system becomes important. The following section provides some historical perspective and the specific characteristics of Indonesian curriculum.

2.1.2 The history of Indonesian curriculum

Since 1945 the Indonesian education system has applied 10 iterations of curriculum. The nomenclature of these curricula derived from the year of unveiling: 1947, 1952, 1964, 1968, 1975, 1984, 1994, 2004, 2006, and 2013, as shown in Figure 2.1. Most of the revisions can be seen as arising from political expediency generated by the prevailing national and international context (Belen, 2010).

![Figure 2.1: The Indonesia curriculum timeline](image-url)
Since the first curriculum, the need for a student-active approach emerged; however, a content-based approach persisted until 1994. In fact, in the 1984 curriculum the approach of how students learn was emphasised more than what students learn. In the 1994 curriculum, student-active learning became an important component, and the focus aligned closely with the constructivist theory of Vygostky (Belen, 2010).

The 2004 curriculum is popularly termed as competence-based curricula (CBC) due to its focus on competency, and the description of the learning process became the input-process-output model. While the 2006 curriculum still used the competence-based approach, schools were given greater latitude to manage themselves through SBM and modify the curriculum based on the predominant characteristics of their students. The popular name of the 2006 curriculum thus became school-based curricula (SBC). Throughout the 2004, 2006, and recently the 2013 curricula, the student-centred approach has consolidated as one of the core principles of curriculum development.

In 2013, the announcement of Government Act 32/2013 paralleled the release of the 2013 curriculum. Its objective is to prepare Indonesian students to be skilled, independent, personable individuals who believe in God, and are productive, creative, innovative and overt contributors to society, nation, state and the world (Ministerial Decree 67/2013, p. 4) (Permendikbud, 2013d). The shift in 2013 was aimed at correcting the weaknesses of the previous curricula. Several factors emerged in response to internal and external challenges as considerations that influenced the change. Internal challenges included demands to meet all the standards of education, while externally, the ranking of Indonesian students in the international assessment benchmarking tools such as PISA and TIMSS was crucial.
An added focus in this revised curriculum was the improvement of the process of learning and thinking at the personal level. The 2013 curriculum thus explains the planning and management of content and the goal of learning, as well as how to implement lesson plans (Ministerial Decree 67/2013, p. 2). The learning processes in the 2013 curriculum are in line with several related shifts in educational thought deriving from Vygotsky’s constructivism and cognitive development theory, and include contextual learning, discovery learning, cooperation and problem-based learning (Marsigit, 2013).

The 2013 curriculum began as a pilot project in a number of schools in July 2013. It was nationally implemented from July 2014; however, an abundance of complaints came from many schools, teachers and scholars in education regarding the issue of teacher understanding of the implementation of the curriculum, book distribution and training for teachers (Muljati, 2014). These complaints were mainly due to the short time involved in the development of the curriculum, writing the textbooks and dissemination of information to teachers, which gave little opportunity for teachers to engage in the process (OECD/ADB, 2015).

These events reflected the position of many schools being unprepared or only partially ready for its implementation. In responding to these situations, in December 2014 Baswedan, the new Minister of Education and Culture of Indonesia, unveiled *Ministerial Decree 160/2014* (Permendikbud, 2014) that explicitly linked re-implementation of the 2006 curriculum as a re-arrangement of the implementation the 2013 curriculum. For schools that had implemented the 2013 curriculum for three semesters, support was provided to continue its use; whereas schools that had only implemented the 2013 curriculum for one semester (since July 2014) were mandated
to re-implement the 2006 curriculum. To date, only 3% of schools (6221) in Indonesia use the 2013 curriculum. The Ministry of Education and Culture has adopted a gradual approach in choosing schools that are ready to implement the 2013 curriculum. The official target of ready schools is 15% in 2016, 45% in 2017, and all schools by 2018 (Zubaidah, 2015).

In reviewing the history of the curriculum in the Indonesian education system, student-centred approaches have emerged as one of the core principles of the learning process. Two significant changes occurred in 2004, shifting from content-based curricula to competence-based and from centralised curricula to school-based curricula. However, the evidence is strong that student-centred approaches are difficult to implement. The vast majority of teachers predominantly use transfer of knowledge approaches, are textbook-oriented in instructional practices, with most believing that a student is an empty vessel to be filled by instruction (Marsigit, 2013). With some notable exceptions, teacher-centred approaches prevail in Indonesia’s education system (OECD/ADB, 2015), due to assessment assumptions (Zulfikar, 2009) and Indonesian teacher and institutional culture (Bjork, 2005). Moreover, teacher educators have not used student-centred approaches in conducting pre-service training. As a consequence, pre-service students are not exposed to the pedagogical expectations of the curriculum (Bjork, 2013; OECD/ADB, 2015).

These tensions can also be seen as arising from the influence of the global educational reform movement and its impact on the assessment system used in Indonesian education.
2.2 The global education reform movement

Raising the standards of achievement has become a globalised education policy discourse as a response to the challenge of globalisation (Lingard, 2010). Since it emerged in the 1980s, the global education reform movement has influenced the educational policies and strategies of many countries around the world (Sahlberg, 2007), including Indonesia.

There are three common features of global education reform trends: standardisation of education, increased focus on literacy and numeracy, and consequential accountability (Sahlberg, 2007). Sahlberg argues against reliance on a singular standardised testing. He also states that standardisation of education is primarily intended to improve the quality of education through setting clear, high and centrally accepted standards of performance for student, teachers, and schools. Standardised testing is used as an evaluation system to assess how well attainment or outcomes match the base-standard of performance. Furthermore, increased focus on literacy and numeracy means that the prime target in education is basic knowledge and skills in reading, writing, mathematics and natural sciences. This accountability system brings a number of consequences to student achievement for schools and teachers, such as accrediting, promoting, inspecting, and rewarding or punishing schools and teachers (Sahlberg, 2007). The following section discusses strategies for measuring standards of student performance through standardised assessment.

2.2.1 Standardised testing

In the globalised education reform movement the evaluation system manifests as national high-stakes testing (HST), and this becomes a driver of all the processes in education systems around the world (Lingard, 2010). As three systems in schooling –
curriculum, pedagogy and evaluation – have symbiotic relationships with each other (Berstein, 1971, as cited in Lingard, 2010), it is understandable that when an education system adopts an evaluation orientation, this has an impact on the pedagogical practices and the curriculum.

Citing Bobbitt’s 1913 conception of education, Au (2011) argues that any education system controlled by HST has applied the principles of scientific management in factory production to their system of education. According to Bobbitt, the end-point or the objectives and the standards of output together determine the educational process (Au, 2011). Students become the input that will produce specified outputs measured according to specific standards. Teachers are the ‘workers’ who produce ‘the standardised students’ using the ‘most efficient methods’. Administrators are the managers who determine the acceptable methods employable to teachers. All these processes take place in schools, just as they would in factory assembly plants. Therefore, all aspects of education must serve to attain the ends the education process. The underlying logic of these arguments underpins Indonesia’s education system and practices, particularly in applying the competence-based approach in the 2004 and 2006 curricula, and in implementing a centralised NE for standard assessment.

2.2.2 The Indonesian National Examination

The goal of raising the quality of education is a prominent reason guiding every change in Indonesian educational policies. Tjala (2010) argues that an objective assessment vindicates claims of increased quality of education demonstrable by the quality of the output. Moreover, Tjala argues that in order to create qualified output, a national education system should facilitate the process of quality assurance and quality control. Any effort to control quality implies all supports for achieving the
standards associated with the process. Moreover, the qualification of the output of education has to be verifiable by a qualified and credible evaluation system. In other words, an evaluation system’s purpose is to control the quality of education and provide a public accountability system to all educational stakeholders (Law 20/2003, Chapter XVI, Article 57, p. 18).

In the Indonesian education system this tool for evaluation is the implementation of the NE. As a component of the eight standards of national education first implemented in 2003, the standard of assessment became a big issue characterised as an HST tool that exerts disproportionate pressure on all levels of educational activities. According to Au (2011), a standardised test is regarded as HST is an instrument that is used for measurement, selection and categorisation, and has significant consequences for students based on the standardised test results. Further discussions of the significant consequences of HST continue in Sections 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.2.2.

The Indonesian education system has implemented national school exit standardised examinations at the end of each level of education: at primary school – Year 6, middle school – Year 9, and high school – Year 12. While the history of standardised and centralised testing in Indonesia began in 1965, Indonesia also implemented non-standardised testing during 1972 and 1979.

In 1980, Indonesia implemented a newer centralised examination system, renaming it Evaluasi Belajar Tahap Akhir (EBTANAS). According to this examination scheme, the school determines student graduation. A student’s score on the examination is largely irrelevant, because schools can implement a specific formula to increase the final score. Therefore, the number of students who fail in the examination remains
almost zero, even when they come from the worst schools. As a consequence, unclear standards of quality emerged, and the quality of education in Indonesia declined (Firman & Tola, 2008). This system was applied for 21 years, until 2002 (Syahril & Lesko, 2007).

As the educational reform movement in Indonesia developed in the early 2000s there was an opportunity to increase the quality of education. The Indonesian Government calculated that an efficient standardised test would rapidly raise overall student academic achievement. In 2003–2004, this new national standardised examination was named National Final Examination (Ujian Akhir National/UAN) (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). The score of UAN was the sole determinant of student graduation, regardless of prior performance during the school years. From 2005–2010, this UAN was renamed, National Examination/NE (Ujian Nasional/UN). Over time, the NE raised the minimum threshold to \( \geq 4.25/10 \) (2005–2007), and \( \geq 5.50/10 \) (2008–2010) (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). Since 2011, student graduation has been determined by combining the school examination score and NE score applying a 60% and 40% ratio respectively. In addition, the minimum threshold for each subject tested in UN is \( \geq 4.0/10 \) and the combined average minimum threshold for success is \( \geq 5.5/10 \). Therefore, a single score below 4.0/10 can disqualify high average scores \( \geq 5.5/10 \), bringing overall failure to the NE (Ministerial Decree 97/2013, Article 6, p. 5) (Permendikbud, 2013e). Consequently, such students cannot graduate.

There are three subjects tested in the primary school NE (Indonesian language, mathematics and natural sciences) (the Government Act 19/2005, Article 70, p. 51), four subjects in middle school (Indonesian language, English, mathematics, and natural sciences), and six subjects in high school. Core subjects tested in high school
are Indonesian language, English and mathematics; whereas the other subjects depend on the study program in the high school (Government Act 32/2013, Article 70, pp. 16-17). In 2014, however, the government discontinued the NE in primary school. Primary schools went back to using school examinations based on the central now determined solely by the school (Ministerial Decree 102/2013, Article 9, p. 5) (Permendikbud, 2013f).

Following this evolution of standardised testing, the test-result orientation has become deeply entrenched in Indonesian society. The NE has four purposes (Government Act 19/2005, Article 68, p. 50), with the second and third purposes being to select students for next level of education, and to determine whether students can graduate or not, and these are often deeply intimidating to the general public. Thus, the NE determines who passes and who fails. Moreover, because of a limited number of qualified schools, only students with excellent examination results garner the few places available in top schools and universities to continue their education. In 2015, however, the NE discontinued this approach to determine student graduation (Government Act 13/2015), but has reserved it as an indicator of increased quality of education (Ministerial Decree 5/2015) (Permendikbud, 2015).

There is a general belief in Indonesian society that good education can enhance employment opportunities. Society regards the standardised as tests still providing upward social level mobility for their children (Au, 2008, as cited in Au, 2011). Therefore, demands for academic success come from every component of society: employers, school institutions and parents. Students are viewed as occupying the lowest position of the educational system, so they do not have choice or voice, and have to comply with mandatory regulations, such as the NE, reflecting an
authoritarian education system (Zhao, 2014). Students have to follow society’s mainstream mindset of having to get excellent academic results as shown by their NE score. The NE thus becomes a dominant driver that determines student learning activities and learning goals (Natal, 2014). Furthermore, and a key theme of this thesis, the NE drives academic pressure in education.

Debates and critiques over the NE are discussed in Indonesian newspapers, discussion forums and in academic journals. Despite heavy critiques of the NE, Indonesian policymakers still hold a strong assumption that central government needs the NE as a tool to measure student performance, and thus improvement of educational quality, as is clearly stated in the first purpose of the NE. It believes that the NE can motivate teachers and students to work harder through increasing student test scores. Nuh (2013) – the former Minister of Education and Culture – argued that the NE is a tool to control the quality of education. Despite these efforts, Indonesian student achievement is currently still low compared to other developing countries, even compared to Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries (Tjala, 2010). Indonesian policymakers regard that the low level of student performance in the International test, such as in PISA or TIMSS, is a consequence of teachers and students not working hard enough. Therefore, the standard of performance places added pressure on students to perform well in the NE (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). The opinion that student performance will not improve without standards is also revealed by policymakers in the USA, showing the presence of high standards is seen as important in improving student performance for both high-achieving and low-achieving students (Darling-Hammond, 1994). Research findings concerning the impact of the Indonesian NE on school life corroborate with the findings from related research predominantly conducted in the USA or United
2.2.2.1 The impact of standardised testing on curricula and teaching

There has been much debate over HST with opponents challenging the presumed positive value of standardised testing. Several researchers, such as Amrein and Berliner (2002), Madaus, Russell, and Higgins (2009), and Polesel et al. (2012), identify the benefits of the implementation of standardised testing in education systems on teachers, curriculum and students. The proponents believe that standardised testing is a good measure of student performance and provides information on progress. They say that teachers can use the testing as a diagnostic tool to identify learning needs of individual students and then design a remedial program. Further, the alignment of curriculum and testing requirements provides information for teachers about what is important in the curriculum, motivating teachers to implement better instruction to students. They argue there is a greater consistency of curriculum within and across the schools. For students, the claim is advanced that HST increases motivation to learn more, work harder, and do their best in the tests. In addition, the tests, the proponents posit, can enhance student confidence and thinking skills.

The opponents of HST are critical of the test itself, presenting findings of the negative impact of the test on curricula, teachers and students. In contrast to the proponents, reviewing research done by Boston College over the past 30 years, Madaus and Clarke (2001) come to the conclusion that HST does not have a greatly positive impact on teaching and learning. In addition, the tests cannot motivate students who are unmotivated, despite also arguing that HST has a power to change instruction and learning. Au (2011) reports similar findings from research about HST.
in the USA, and research on the impact of the NE in Indonesia confirms similar issues (e.g., Hendayana, Supriatna & Imansyah, 2010; Sukeyadi & Mardiani, 2011; Sulistyo, 2010; Zamroni, 2008). The positive impacts of the NE on teaching and student learning are only experienced in Indonesian schools with high-level achievers, whereas the low-achiever schools experience a negative impact (Sukeyadi & Mardiani, 2011).

Previous research (e.g., Au, 2010; Au, 2011; Koretz, McCaffrey, & Hamilton, 2001; Madaus & Clarke, 2001) has identified a number of negative effects of HST on curriculum and learning. When a test has an important consequence, teachers will teach to the test. The curricula of instructional practices are narrowed in varying degrees because teachers change the structure and content of curriculum to match the test requirements. Schools reduce, or even cut completely, allocated time for subjects that are not included in the tests. As HST is conducted over a number of years, teachers review the kind of intellectual activities required by previous tests. The tests mostly require lower-level thinking skills, superficial learning and rote memorisation, which leads to teachers adopting a corresponding pedagogical strategy. This pedagogical trend manifests in increased allocated time for drilling, and practising simulated tests to ensure that students are familiar with test questions and develop skills and strategies for taking tests. These findings confirm that HST has a significant influence on what things are learnt by students and how they are taught by teachers (Au, 2010; Madaus & Clarke, 2001).

In Indonesia, Marsigit (2013) argues, teaching for the NE is a source of pedagogical problems. Teachers become focused on learning goals for performance rather than learning for understanding (Natal, 2014). This leads to what Lingard (2010, p. 137)
calls a culture of performativity that glossifies school achievement. Teachers have limited opportunities to design lesson plans that can stimulate student engagement and enjoyment (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). They cannot implement constructivist or student-centred practices as they are being pushed to teach in the way tests require. Such pedagogical practices contradict the standard of process for national education (Ministerial Decree 41/2007 in conjunction with the Ministerial Decree 65/2013) that states that the learning process in each level of education has to be designed to develop and integrate attitude, knowledge and skills (see Table 2.1 Indonesian National Education Standard).

The impact of the NE on parents can be identified in parental involvement. In order to ensure their children have the capabilities to pass the NE or to achieve excellence in the NE score, parents send their children to take extra lessons in cram schools after school hours. Many parents perceive that their children need more test practice. Tutorial institutions, particularly in urban settings, have become school partners in boosting student achievement (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). Parental perceptions of school reputation may therefore be affected by HST results, and parents use the results as a consideration when choosing a school for their child (Minarechová, 2012; Polesel et al., 2012). This also occurs in Australia, where the My School website publishes the NAPLAN test results – essentially a league table of performance – enabling the public to identify the high and low-performing schools (Lingard, 2010; Lobascher, 2011; Redden & Low, 2012). The consequences of HST can therefore be seen as having widespread influence on all those involved in the education process (Minarechová, 2012).
Despite most studies of the impact of HST on students originating from the USA and the UK (Polesel et al., 2012), the negative impact of HST on student well-being can be predicted, and has happened across countries over the years (Madaus et al., 2009). In the USA, Madaus et al. (2009) report that while some students have motivation to take the tests, other students develop sleeping problems or stomach-aches, and ask to stay home from school. In the UK, some students feel stressed by the tests because their performance determines their school’s status (Gregory & Clarke, 2003).

Studies of HST in Asian settings also found similar issues. A study in Singapore by Gregory and Clarke (2003) found that one third of Singaporean primary school students feel that their life is not worth living because of excessively long hours studying after school, lack of time to play, and physical punishment by parents for poor performance. A significant number received psychiatric treatment. These cases are a consequence of intense competition in the Singapore educational system. In Singapore, examinations become a gateway to each level of education because only a small percentage of students are selected in the top stream of the education system.

Detrimental effects of HST that manifest in the NE also occur in Indonesia. A number of studies reported the impact of the NE on students in different levels of education. However, most studies have been conducted in high schools, where the NE is regarded of more importance than in the lower levels of education. Some researchers report that the NE does not impact negatively on levels of anxiety because students have high levels of motivation to learn when facing the NE (Agustiar & Asmi, 2010; Suardana & Simarmata, 2013). In contrast, other studies reveal that the NE can lead some students to develop psychological problems, such as feeling anxious, worried and under pressure (Kinantie, Hernawaty, & Hidayati,
2012; Maisarah & Falah, 2011; Pranadji & Muharrifah, 2010). Moreover, these studies indicate that more than 50% of student participants had stress levels between moderate and severe. In addition, some students may have physical problems, such as pain in the back and neck, and poor concentration (Pranadji & Muharrifah, 2010). In extreme cases, as reported in newspapers, some students attempt or commit suicide (Laksana, 2013; Syahril & Lesko, 2007).

It is a paradox that despite the impact of the NE on curriculum, teachers and students, the Indonesian Government still has a firm commitment to implementing the NE. Madaus and Clarke (2001) argue that improving education policy and raising standards of education is important; however, any effort to increase academic achievement should not be simplified through setting academic standards in examinations. Moreover, Darling-Hammond (1994) argues that instead of starting with the standard of performance and the curricula content, the starting point for changing the educational system would be better focused on improving teacher knowledge and building school capacity. In addition, in the process for achieving the objectives of education reform, there should be no negative consequences for students (Madaus & Clarke, 2001).

2.3 General features of Indonesian culture and its effect on the education system

Characteristics of the school and educational system cannot be separated from the environment, including the culture of a school (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006; Eccles & Roeser, 2011b). The school and its classrooms can be regarded as a social unit in society; therefore it may also reflect unique features of such society. According to Hofstede (1984, p. 82) culture can be defined as “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group or society
from those of another”. Culture consists of collective patterns of acting, thinking and feeling that are transferred from parents to children, teachers to students, friends to friends, leaders to followers, or followers to leaders.

Drawing upon Hofstede’s study on the dimensions of culture across nations (Hofstede, 1980, 1984), Indonesia can be assumed to be a society with characteristics of large power distance, strong uncertainty avoidance index, collectivism and masculinity. Hofstede (2001, pp. 100-101) describes the impact of these dimensions of culture on teaching and learning context.

Large power distance refers to the level of inequality between the less and more powerful members of society (Hofstede, 1980, 1984). Hofstede (2001, pp. 100-101) also describes schools and educational systems in terms of displaying large power distances, characterised by a teacher-centred approach. Teachers outline the lesson plan, which typically requires rote learning. There is a strict order in which teachers initiate all communication in class. In teacher-student relationships, students are dependent on teachers and treat teachers with respect. In Indonesia, the teacher is called guru, a term from the Sanskrit word meaning honourable. Corporal punishment at school is also more acceptable because it is regarded as good for children’s character development.

A strong uncertainty avoidance index illustrates the level of tolerance society members have for ambiguity and unknown situations (Hofstede, 1980, 1984). In schools and educational systems, a strong uncertainty avoidance index is indicated by several features that reflect the amount of structure in the teaching process (Hofstede, 2001, pp. 162-163). Both students and teachers like learning situations with clear objectives, detailed assignments and strict timetables. Teachers are
supposed to have all the answers and students prefer to find one right answer and get rewarded for accuracy. Students also prefer low risk and low ambiguity tasks (Dolye, 1985, as cited in Pollard, 1990). In this pattern of relationships, there is pressure for students to conform to their teachers’ instructions. Students are not in a position to voice intellectual disagreement or agreement. Teachers are sources of information for parents because teachers are experts who know more. However, parents are also supposed to control their children’s motivation and achievement at school, for example by signing children’s homework/assignment and achievement reports.

In a society characterised by collectivism, individuals have tightly defined relations with in-groups and are expected to take care of their relatives (Hofstede, 1980, 1984). Hall (1966, as cited in Maulana et al., 2011) states that interpersonal closeness is highly valued in a collective society. Hofstede (2001, pp. 234-235) describes society with a low index of individualism as collective. In collective society, teachers relate to the students as a group. The purpose of education is learning how to do and not learning how to learn. Students from similar backgrounds often form subgroups in class because they have to associate according to the in-group. Students show low levels of individual initiative, and they only speak up in class when the group encourages it. Certificates awarded as a result of study accomplishment is also an honour to the holder and provides an entry ticket to higher-level status in society.

Hofstede also characterises society according to a dimension of masculinity versus femininity (Hofstede, 1980, 1984). Masculinity refers to a preference to strive for achievement, assertiveness, and acquisition of money and things. Femininity stands for a preference for caring for others, modesty and the quality of life. This dimension also addresses the ways society allocates social roles of gender. The masculinity
dimension in schools and educational systems is described by Hofstede (Hofstede, 2001, pp. 303-304) as admiration for brilliant teachers, academic reputation and student academic achievement. In contrast, friendliness, social skills and adaptation play a smaller role. In a masculine society, there is a norm in class to compete to become the best student, public praise for being a good student, and avoidance of poor achievement because failing is regarded as a disaster.

In addition, Hofstede (2001) differentiates society into a dimension of long-term versus short-term orientation. This dimension measures the extent to which members of society focus on future desires, or with more orientation to fulfil present needs. This fifth dimension was not included in his previous studies, and there is no information about which society can be categorised as having long-term or short-term orientation. Nonetheless, and despite Indonesia not participating in the survey, Hofstede (2001) reports long-term orientation index values of 23 countries. Hofstede (2001) describes this orientation in relation to teaching and learning. In long term orientation, studying hard becomes a norm to achieve success and high performance in mathematics is important. Even though the educational system of Indonesia stresses the importance of mathematics because this subject is examined in the NE, average student performance in mathematics is still low (Tjala, 2010).

A sixth dimension of culture was added in 2010, described in terms of indulgence and restraint (Hofstede, 2011). Indulgence refers to a society in which gratification of human desires for enjoying life and having fun is relatively free. Restraint describes a society that uses strict social norms to control gratification of needs. Hofstede indicates that restraint prevails in Asian countries and in the Muslim world. As Indonesia is a Muslim country in Asia, it follows that Indonesia exhibits restraint.
Using Hofstede’s dimensions, the reasons the Indonesian education system focusing on academic achievement, predominantly using teacher-centred approaches, and preferring memorisation and rote learning methods of instruction, are understandable. The characteristics are ingrained in Indonesian society’s cultural patterns of thinking, feeling and acting. The following section discusses in further detail how these national cultural characteristics impact school and classroom culture.

2.3.1 Indonesian school and classroom culture

As described in Chapter 1, Indonesian school culture is characterised by teacher-centred and rote learning (Zulfikar, 2009). Schuh (2004) summarises several studies and details the characteristics of teacher-centred practices. Similarly, Adams and Sargent (2012, p. 4) describe an application of traditional teaching practice in China, which shows many similarities to teaching practices, in Indonesia. According to this research on teacher-centred practices teachers transmit information to the learner by talking to and questioning the students. Teachers present knowledge in front of the class and students are expected to receive the information by listening to the teacher. Teachers use questions to help students review the lesson content. Students rarely argue, or ask either other students or the teacher critical questions. The knowledge identified in the curriculum comes from expert perspectives. Teachers rely on the textbooks, and other sources, such as media, are used as support. The textbooks and teachers therefore function as the key sources and transmitters of knowledge. This model of teaching requires students to recall factual information. As a consequence, teachers frequently conduct rote memorisation and drills to support students master knowledge. The teacher’s role is a controller of the learning process, giving
directions to the whole class, with students undertaking the same tasks at the same time.

Teacher-centred approaches in Indonesian education are underpinned by an assessment system (Zulfikar, 2009) and institutional culture (Bjork, 2005). The symbiotic relationship of the three important components in the education system – assessment, curricula and pedagogy (Berstein, 1971, as cited in Lingard, 2010) – also occurs in the Indonesian education context. Figure 2.2 is a representation of these relationships based on Zulfikar’s (2009) analysis of the dynamic relationships of these components.

Institutional culture also influences the prevalence of teacher-centred approaches in Indonesia, defined here as systems embedded within the Indonesian education system consisting of the teacher recruitment system, teacher performance appraisal system, and common practices in the Indonesian school system (Zulfikar, 2009).

Most public school teachers are central government employees and are recruited through a general recruitment system for government employees, a system that does
not measure their basic pedagogical ability (Zulfikar, 2009). As civil servants, teachers are required to obey the rules and regulations of government institutions. Teacher performance is evaluated based on their progress in transmitting and meeting the curriculum schedule and other bureaucratic requirements (Bjork, 2005). The measurement tool used to appraise teacher performance is the same as for other civil servants, and is unable to measure teacher performance in terms of actual teaching. Instead, this tool measures loyalty to nationally designed policies (Pradhan & de Ree, 2014). Teachers therefore place a higher priority on their duty as civil servants than on their role as educators (Bjork, 2004, 2005, 2013).

Since SBM and SBC were enacted in 2003, the government has expected teachers to act more as professional educators. Indeed, teachers have more space to be creative in their teaching. However, evidence shows that many teachers have been either unprepared for, or uninterested in, changing their instructional practice (Bjork, 2004). In fact, many teachers who lack competence in pedagogical knowledge also do not have sufficient intention to empower themselves (Zulfikar, 2009). They remain within the bounds of school practices of the past (Bjork, 2004, 2005). This is a big challenge, because teachers have to feel confident they can deliver the pedagogical approach in line with the new curriculum, otherwise they are likely to use traditional recitation approaches (OECD/ADB, 2015).

Bjork (2004, 2005) observed that the central of power in the Indonesian education system is held by the central government. While other factors contribute to educational outcomes and can influence teachers to modify their behaviours – student and parent views and teachers’ values towards education – cannot influence the centralisation of power. As a result, the central government still monopolises
influence over Indonesian schools. Despite strong critiques of the implementation of the NE, it has endured. The central government appears to have neglected all stakeholder views regarding the negative impacts of the NE. Moreover, the implementation of the NE indicates that the central government would not be satisfied with decentralised authority, so that it intends to maintain control and authority over the management of Indonesian education (Zulfikar, 2009).

The Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC) provided packaged books for teachers to support the new 2013 curriculum in order to also ensure the standard of teaching. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the MOEC regarded the implementation of SBC as unsuccessful and so moved back to a more centralised curriculum (OECD/ADB, 2015). This means teachers seem unlikely to be considered as professional educators by the central government (Bjork, 2004, 2005). This argument corroborates with Bobbit’s argument (1913, as cited in Au, 2011) that teachers are not capable of determining appropriate methods of teaching themselves and therefore must follow pre-determined methods of teaching. Moreover, the objective of this approach has been to explicitly reduce teacher workload in designing lessons and searching for related sources of knowledge. Challenging this logic, Au (2011) argues that by providing a scripted curriculum, the MOEC de-skills and disempowers teachers.

In summary, teacher-centred approaches and rote learning continue in Indonesian school practices despite the Indonesian education system having undergone a number of reforms. General cultural characteristics of Indonesian society remain deeply embedded in institutional and school culture. Decentralisation of education in Indonesia was conducted as a strategy for empowering teachers, but with a long
history within a fully centralised and top-down education system, Indonesia needs much more time to shift from teacher-centred to student-centred approaches.

2.3.2 Theories of learning in the Indonesian education system

Each educational system commonly takes into account several theories of learning and how they might be applied to their educational context. They may apply specific theories of learning, and may additionally adopt others – in the literature of education and psychology there is much to choose from. This section discusses common practices in the Indonesian school systems that relate to three major theories of learning: behaviourist/associationist, social-constructivist and humanist.

Reviewing the policies and practices in the Indonesian education system as outlined in the first sections of this chapter, it can be assumed that the Indonesian education system has been predominantly guided by behaviourist approaches. Despite many Western educators describing the principles of these approaches as a deficit model in learning, the behaviourist approach still plays out within the Indonesian education system. It is also the case, however, that social-constructivist approaches and the humanistic paradigm have been considered closely by the Indonesian education authorities as evident in the articulation of policy.

2.3.2.1 The behaviourist approach

Indonesian teachers commonly hold beliefs about teaching, learning and students that are underpinned by behaviourist principles. The domination of direct instruction and textbook orientation in learning practices (Marsigit, 2013) indicates that the existence of knowledge is seen apart from the learner. In this paradigm, knowledge consists of collections of links between external stimulus and internal mental responses (Resnick & Hall, 1998). Students are regarded as empty vessels who passively receive the
knowledge (Freire, 1970), so that teachers take on the role of the person who transfers knowledge. Learning occurs by accumulating bits of knowledge and changing the strength of bonds (Resnick & Hall, 1998; Shepard, 2000). In short, learning is seen as the accumulation of stimulus-response association (Shepard, 2000).

The use of honours to signify student achievement and the use of corporal punishment to manage student behaviours are examples of the application of a reward and punishment system. Thorndike (1962, as cited in Ryan & Brown, 2005), states that behaviour reflects a law of effect, which shows something is more likely to recur in the future when it is followed by satisfying consequences or providing reward. In contrast, when behaviour is followed by unsatisfying consequences or punishment, the probability of occurrence will diminish (Ryan & Brown, 2005). Under this premise, a learned behaviour is always and functions of external control. The goal of teaching is to strengthen the correct behaviour and diminish the incorrect behaviour by means of a reward and punishment system (Resnick & Hall, 1998).

In Indonesian education practice, drilling and repetition in a worksheet or workbook activities, indicates the application of Thorndike’s laws of frequency in learning. The law of frequency states that the more a stimulus-response association is repeated, the more likely it is to recur in a similar condition (Ryan & Brown, 2005). Textbooks and workbook practice that require correct responses with little higher-order thinking are mainly used in schools. In addition, teachers use terse and disconnected questions directed at individual students to other students. These practices lead students to use a form of recitation (Lee, 2003; Resnick & Hall, 1998). Multiple-choice questions are largely used in tests, leading students to memorise factual knowledge. This
pedagogy ignores the need to assist students construct or consolidate their understanding. Students are only taught a few strategies for problem solving and creative thinking (Lee, 2003).

Associationists suggest testing to ensure which links have and have not been learned (Resnick & Hall, 1998; Shepard, 2000). Testing is regarded as isomorphic with learning (Shepard, 2000). As learning is tightly sequenced and hierarchical, frequent testing is used to ensure student mastery before proceeding to the next objective (Resnick & Hall, 1998; Shepard, 2000). In addition, continued practice should be taken on the bands not yet mastered (Resnick & Hall, 1998). In Indonesian education, the use of remedial testing for students who have not yet achieved a minimum standard is another example of the application of this principle.

Indonesian policymakers also rely on behaviourist principles of learning. For example, the NE is regarded as a credible way to increase Indonesian student achievement and to improve quality of education. Policymakers believe that the consequence of failing in the NE can motivate students and teachers to study harder. Student motivation to learn for the NE aligns with what is called by Skinner (as cited in Ryan & Brown, 2005) programmed learning, in which motivation to learn can be induced by a well-structured instruction and systematic application of contingent reinforcement, not based in relationships and interest. Drilling and practising tests is regarded as the best strategy to develop student skills in taking tests.

2.3.2.2 The social-constructivist approach

In contrast to the associationist theory of knowledge acquisitions, the cognitivist view of learning moves beyond an accumulation of information (Shepard, 2000). Piaget (1964) claims that in learning, people do not just absorb and then simply
register information given to them. Even for memorisation to be effective or to know something, people must construct their understanding (Resnick & Hall, 1998). For constructivists, knowledge is constructed in the mind of the learner (Broadner, 1998). The constructivist learning theory underscores how interaction with new learning will reshape, expand and deepen the current mental schemata (Lee, 2003). The process of mental construction and sense-making actively occurs. When an individual interacts with the phenomena, an individual builds personal interpretations of the phenomena through developing logical structures and reasoning capacities. Furthermore, competent learners engage in self-management cognitive process through metacognitive and self-monitoring (Resnick & Hall, 1998). Vygotsky (1978) also argued that social and cultural inputs determine construction of knowledge while Piaget (1964) argued that development of cognitive abilities is supported through social interaction.

In educational practices, the student-centred approach is a form of constructivist pedagogy where the learners are actively involved in meaning-making activities (Lee, 2003). Shepard (2000), explains that in a constructivist framework, teachers and students can develop dialogue in order to help students experience ways of thinking and speaking in academic contexts. Dewey (1938) suggests that dialogue and social interaction in school should be a transforming of real society so that students can learn knowledge and reasoning in a contextualised form, making them good democratic citizens. Moreover, by making school learning authentic and related to the real world, learning becomes more interesting and challenging. It also fosters student abilities to apply their knowledge in real settings.
The principles of social-constructivism described above have been adopted in curriculum documents worldwide. However, implementation of these principles is rarely displayed in Indonesian classrooms. As described in the previous section, teachers mainly use lecturing methods, and students are expected to listen to teacher presentations. Moreover, students spend much of their time in individual activities by answering questions in their workbook rather than working with a group of students. Despite Indonesian teachers predominantly use of lecturing, a study by the World Bank (2010, as cited in Pradhan & de Ree, 2014) indicates that Indonesian teachers speak much less than teachers in developed countries, and Indonesian students speak one word for every 28 words spoken by teachers. These situations discourage dialogue and social interaction in learning process between teachers and students and among students. The assessment system in Indonesia leads teachers and students to focus on achievement results rather than to the process of learning. Indeed, the centralised and standardised testing does not substantially support the student-centred paradigm that has been promoted in the curriculum (Marsigit, 2013).

2.3.2.3 The humanist approach

Scholars from the humanist paradigm have recognised the importance of cognitive learning. However, in the process of learning, educators have to know what students want and need, because students will learn more easily and quickly if they want to know (Cruickshank, Jenkins, & Metcalf, 2006; Huit, 2009). Humanists perceive that schools focus too much on accumulation of knowledge or skills. They argue that in the current society where knowledge requirements change rapidly, knowing how to learn is more important than acquiring a lot of knowledge (Gage & Berliner, 1990, as cited in Huit, 2009). These arguments are in stark contrast to Indonesian school practices. Having lots of subjects in school indicates that students are required to
learn a lot of information. As student-centred approaches cannot be well implemented, Indonesian students do not learn how to learn.

Humanists underscore the importance of student development aimed at becoming a psychologically healthy person (Cruickshank et al., 2006). In order to accomplish this goal, teachers in the humanistic paradigm hold two core beliefs: first, accept each child as they are because each one possesses unique behaviours, feelings and ideas; and second, believe that each child counts because they can do it in their own way. In agreement with humanist beliefs about children, it is essential for students to have good feelings about themselves and others because it relates to their positive personal development (Cruickshank et al., 2006). It follows that schools must then have the following characteristics:

- Schools help students to satisfy their basic psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

- Schools should be physically and psychologically non-threatening environments (Gage & Berliner, 1990, as cited in Huit, 2009).

- Schools should fit with student expectations of a learning environment. Schools should, therefore, take into account student perspectives (Cruickshank et al., 2006).

The humanistic concept of student positive feelings outlined above is in line with positive psychology, a field described as study of positive emotions, positive character and positive institutions (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) and the study of the conditions and processes that afford the optimal functioning of
individuals, groups and institutions (Gable & Haidt, 2005) (see Sections 3.5.2.3 and 3.6.3.1).

The Indonesian education system explicitly acknowledges the importance of whole person development that is stated in the objective of Indonesian national education. The standard of process in national education also states how the process of learning in school should be conducted. Moreover, in the newest Indonesia curriculum 2013, the assessment system in school has been revised, shifting from focus on cognitive development to all aspects of student development (knowledge, skills and attitude). However, implementations of the 2013 curriculum still face many constraints due to a lack of support.

In summary, the context of Indonesian education is one shaped predominantly by behaviourist principles and one that has implemented very few principles of social-constructivism and humanism. As such, it displays a stark difference in school culture compared with education in other jurisdictions that apply best practices of learning principles. With these characteristics, student experiences require further investigation. In Indonesia, there is much educational research that investigates student experiences in school, although most studies use students as the subjects of research. Due to the limitations of data specifically relating to research in Indonesia, there appears to be no study that yet explores student perceptions of their learning environment, particularly about what they think and feel about their learning experience. This current study addresses this gap and incorporates humanist principles that underscore the importance for teachers to know what students want and need (Cruickshank et al., 2006; Huit, 2009), and how to design school environments that align well with students expectations of learning (Cruickshank et
al., 2006). In order to understand student perspectives, schools must actively listen to student voices.

2.3.3 Student voice

Student voice can be understood as student expressions of feelings and thoughts about their experiences in all aspects of school (Robinson & Taylor, 2007). There are many ways in which students can choose to express this; through speech as well as visual, tactile and experiential dimensions (Robinson & Taylor, 2007). Student voice is not a new concept in education. The idea that students have a right to participate in decisions about their own education has emerged in the student power movement of the late 1960s and early 1970s (Levin, 2000). In 1989, children and young people’s participation rights emerged from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child that gives children a right to express their views, to be heard, and to take part in decisions that affect them (1989). Nevertheless, in the early 1990s, a number of educators and social critics noted the voices of students have been missing from the conversation about learning, teaching and schooling (Cook-Sather, 2006). In response, the term student voice has appeared in the discourse of educational research and reform since the late 1990s.

Even though all stakeholders in education would commonly share the belief that school exists for students, Indonesian students are still treated as passive recipients of education (Levin, 2000). They are the object of instruction from above, where educational issues are directed by government to school districts, and then schools districts give instructions to schools, principals and teachers. As the primary stakeholders of education, students are generally left out of any consultation (Oldfather, 1995). The potential for children to participate in the construction of their own learning, however, is consistently underestimated (Taylor, 1993, as cited in
Oldfather, 1995). In many educational settings, children are not regarded as having capability, competency, responsibility, or ability to contribute to decision making (Smith, 2007).

Over the last 15 years, research on student voice has attempted to reposition students in educational research and reform (Cook-Sather, 2006). Students must have some authority to be the authors of their own educational experiences and to represent their experiences (Cook-Sather, 2007). This educational research on student voice has been guided by the premises that first, young people have unique perspectives on learning, teaching and schooling, second, their insights not only warrant the attention but also the responses of adults, and third, they should be afforded opportunities to actively shape their education (Cook-Sather, 2006, p. 359). Levin (2000) argues that classroom and school processes can be made powerful by talking and listening to the students. Teachers can invite students to talk about learning, such as what makes learning difficult for them, or what make them unmotivated in learning (Rudduck, 1996, as cited in Levin, 2000).

### 2.4 Summary

Since Indonesia Independence Day on 17 August 1945, the central government has enacted laws in education several times. Emerging needs to revise the law has been driven by changes in global and local contexts, and underpinned by good intentions to improve the quality of Indonesian education. Indonesian policy documents demonstrate some common features in relation to trends in global education reform; in particular, ways in which Indonesian education may be improved through increasing student achievement. These policies suggest that the implementation of HST (the NE) is an effective strategy to increase student achievement. Moreover,
international benchmarking testing, through instruments such as PISA or TIMSS, is used as a reference to consider any changes to the Indonesian curriculum. However, implementing change presents many challenges, and only some issues are addressed in this study. Opponents of the NE have argued that it is a source of pedagogical problems in Indonesian education. Policymakers appear to have ignored the evidence in Indonesia and from other national systems of all the negative effects of HST on pedagogies, curricula, as well as teacher and student well-being.

The national approach to assessment is a major steering mechanism in the education system. As the Indonesian education system is more focused on test or exam results as indicators of quality, teacher pedagogical practices and student learning has been aligned to that goal. Therefore, any reform effort to transform pedagogical practice, such as accommodating student-centred approaches, is difficult as long there is no change in the evaluation system. Hence, up to now the Indonesian education system is still characterised by teacher-centred approaches and rote learning. With these characteristics, it is interesting to investigate student experiences and how such school contexts impact their well-being. Stimulated with a spirit to incorporate more humanistic principles into the education system, this study acknowledges the importance of the student voice, and reports on findings from students as key sources of feedback that might improve the Indonesian education system.
Chapter 3  Theoretical perspectives
In situating this study within an academic discourse this chapter reviews relevant research and theoretical literature. Discussion first begins with a focus on school as a primary context for student development, in which student experiences at school can be seen to take place in a multilevel context: classrooms, schools, and within the broader educational system. While some literature on academic press was foregrounded in Chapter 1 to establish the context of this study, this chapter provides detailed discussion focusing on this topic and key relationships at school (teacher-student relationships (TSRs) and peer relationships).

The next section discusses the effect of school context on student well-being. With student well-being the key theme of this study, the review of literature on SWB is prominent in this chapter. Closely related is the topic of school well-being, a domain-specific approach of subjective well-being (SWB).

Current research on well-being typically considers two perspectives: hedonic approaches that focus on subjective happiness; and eudaimonic approaches that focus on self-realisation – more than just happiness. The concept of eudaimonic well-being (EWB) embraced by self-determination theory (SDT) is chosen as a theoretical lens for analysis and discussion. Because positive and negative affect are expressions of well-being, this chapter also discusses theory of emotions, especially emotions in academic settings.

3.1 School as a context for student development

Schools are embedded in a macro social context (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Eccles & Roeser, 2004) and they operate within an education system. Schools provide proximal contextual processes in classrooms, and exist in a multilevel environment consisting of the classroom, the school and the community (Eccles & Roeser,
2011b). The local culture has a significant effect on all aspects of schooling (Bronfenbrenner, 1997).

Research indicates that all levels of the school environment have similar influence on student academic, social-emotional and behavioural development (Roeser & Eccles, 2000). The processes within different levels of school organisation interact dynamically with each other – whether complementary or contradictory, and they may influence student experiences directly or indirectly (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). Articulating this in slightly different terms, Eccles and Roeser describe different levels of school context that include three broad levels: the classroom within the school, the school as an organisation, and the school in the larger community’s district and nation) (Eccles & Roeser, 2004, 2011a, 2011b) (see Figure 3.1)

![School context diagram](image)

**Figure 3.1** School context

### 3.1.1 School in the larger context (district, state, nation)

Much of what happens in a school is influenced by the national policy agenda and the local community (Eccles & Roeser, 2004), which is itself also influenced by global education reform movements. Therefore, upper-level contexts influence
lower-level contexts (the school level and the classroom level) (Bronfenbrenner, 1993; Eccles & Roeser, 2004, 2011a). Several issues of upper level contexts influence lower context in Indonesia education have become clear. Examples of these are: decentralisation, funding structure and assessment system.

Within the policy context, *school autonomy* is a strategy of decentralisation that aims to enable schools to more efficiently manage resources, such as finance, materials and human resources (Bjork, 2004). Research concerning the impact of school autonomy upon student achievement reveals various findings linked to the development level of country – in developed countries, school autonomy improves student achievement, but in developing countries, autonomy reforms undermine it (Hanushek, Link, & Woessmann, 2013).

Funding structures of schools determine the allocation of resources, and therefore school building conditions and the availability of extracurricular activities in schools (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). Gibbons, McNally, and Viarengo (2011) found that school resources have an important role in improving student academic achievement at the end of primary schools in the UK. In contrast, a study in California, USA, shows no relationship between budgetary allocation and student achievement (Persons, 2014). Such variation is not the focus of this study, but it must be noted that correlations are contestable.

Research on the impact of assessment, particularly of standardised testing reveals a wide variety of intended and unintended consequences of instructional practices upon student well-being (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b; Jones, 2007; Madaus et al., 2009; Ryan & Brown, 2005). Detailed descriptions of the impact of assessment were discussed in Sections 2.2.2.1 and 2.2.2.2.
3.1.2 The school context

The following discussion is focused on academic press, academic tracking and school features within the school context.

3.1.2.1 Academic press

Academic press arises as a consequence of school reform to increase student academic achievement, and a number of strategies are typically adopted to achieve it (Phillips, 1997). Academic press is commonly driven by factors beyond the school level, such as global or national education reform movement. Detailed discussion of academic press is presented in Section 3.2.

3.1.2.2 Academic tracking

Academic tracking, or ability grouping, is the practice in education of placing students of similar ability into particular groups. It takes different forms, ranging from restrictive within-class ability grouping to extensive between-class ability grouping (Eccles & Roeser, 2011a; Ross & Harrison, 2006). Schools can apply curricular differentiation policies that refer to different kinds of academic work, teachers and teaching methods for students of different ability levels (Eccles & Roeser, 2004).

Results of the effect of ability grouping on students are varied and depend on the characteristics of the research, such as the type grouping used, the level of student ability, the curriculum used, the instructional practices used, and the outcomes assessed (Ross & Harrison, 2006). Drawing from several studies, Eccles and Roeser conclude that differentiated curricula elicit different experiences for students with respect to the quality of learning, peer relationships and academic self-concept (Eccles & Roeser, 2004, 2011a). Research indicates that whole-class ability grouping
is ineffective in improving student achievement (Ross & Harrison, 2006). Nevertheless, other studies have found that students placed in high-ability classrooms show more motivation to learn because they experience instructional practices that are adjusted to their competence level. In contrast, students placed in low-ability classrooms often have a negative long-term effect associated with negative achievement outcomes due to low support and inferior educational experiences (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b).

Classroom ability grouping has also been shown to impact peer group relationships (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b). Students in a particular group tend to develop relationships with other students who have a similar level of achievement and engagement in school. Moreover, tracking also promotes students to interact with others with similar behavioural dispositions. Research shows consistent findings that whole class-ability grouping negatively affects student social emotional functioning, such as self-esteem, self-concept, aspirations and attitude towards school (Ross & Harrison, 2006). Pekrun et al. (2007) found that students experience slightly more negative emotions and slightly fewer positive emotions in higher-achieving classrooms because they feel more pressure to achieve.

3.1.2.3 School features

School features include school size and school resources. Lee and Loeb (2000) suggest that school size directly and indirectly influences student achievement through its effect on teacher attitudes. Reviewing a body of research related to school size, Cotton (1996) concluded that the school climate and student outcomes in smaller schools are better than larger schools, particularly in terms of student achievement and attitude towards schools and subject matters, attendance and social behaviours. The positive effect of small schools on student motivation to learn
manifests in teachers expressing responsibility towards student learning (Lee & Loeb, 2000). In a smaller school organisation, school members can develop personalised interactions. Teachers also have more opportunities to participate in school life – they can closely monitor the students and develop positive relationships (Eccles & Roeser, 2011a). Moreover, in smaller classes there are more opportunities to use group-work; as a result teachers and students have more opportunities to become involved in individual interactions in instructional matters (Folmer-Annevelink, Doolaard, Mascareño, & Bosker, 2010). Many researchers indicate that an appropriate and effective school size for elementary school is 300–400 students (Cotton, 1996), whereas for secondary school it is 400–800 students (Cotton, 1996) or 600–900 students (Lee & Smith, 1997). However, Wyse, Keesler, and Schneider (2008) critically observed that many studies that investigated the effect of small school size on student achievement were based on a correlation method that did not control for selection effect in the data. They argue that smaller school size may not be the best mechanism to increase student achievement.

School resources that are defined in terms of adequate materials, a safe environment, and the qualifications of teaching staff are important for student learning and well-being (Eccles & Roeser, 2011a). Likewise, Roeser, et al. (2009) conclude that school resources, appearance of the physical plant of the school, the cleanliness of the school building and decoration inside the building may influence student motivation and behaviours through several causal pathways. Similarly, Konu and Rimpela (2002) argue that the physical environment, both external and internal, is one of key indicators of school well-being. Various considerations of the physical environment are safety, cosiness, noise, ventilation and temperature. According to ecological paradigm, aspect of the physical environment influence classroom climate such as
appearance and furnishing in the classroom, classroom size and physical resources (Evans, Harvey, Buckley, & Yan, 2009).

3.1.3 The classroom context

The classroom is the most proximal and immediate school environment for students (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). Brofenbrenner(1997, p. 38) argues that such enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment can be described as a microsystem, and it is a key factor of development (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009) gaining the attention of educational psychologists (Eccles & Roeser, 2009). Several aspects of classrooms are discussed below, including academic work and curriculum, classroom management, teacher-student relationships and student-student relationships.

3.1.3.1 Academic work and curriculum

Two important aspects of academic work that can influence student cognitive, emotional and moral development are the content of the curriculum and the design of instruction. The content of the curriculum refers to what is taught in school, whereas, the design of instruction refers to how things are taught in school. Beyond the traditional subject matter, the school can broaden the academic curriculum (Eccles & Roeser, 2004, 2011a) to be inclusive of other things, such as student social emotional learning (SEL). Research shows evidence that students receiving SEL programs are significantly more likely to attend school, achieve better results, and are less likely to have behaviour problems (Elias et al., 1997). Subject matters in school influence student attitudes or preferences toward the subjects. For example, George (2000) found that the most positive attitude toward science is experienced by students in Grade 7 compared to the higher grade level. Science, reading, and mathematics are perceived as among the important subjects than other subjects (Andre, Whigham,
Hendrickson & Chambers, 1999). Moreover, George (2000) found that boys have more favourable attitudes toward science than girls. In contrast, another study showed that there are minimal differences of attitude toward science between boys and girls students in elementary school (Friedler & Tamir, 1990, as cited in Andre et al., 1999).

The design of instruction has also been shown to be critical for developing and maintaining student attention, interest and cognitive efforts. In order to promote student engagement in learning, teachers can scaffold learning through several teaching strategies, such as providing materials with the appropriate level of challenge for each student, or designing learning activities that require various cognitive levels or cooperation among students (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). In a longitudinal study involving middle schools students (Roeser et al., 1998) found that curricular meaningfulness is a positive predictor of students valuing commitment to school. Related research also suggests that students feel joy of learning and are more engaged when they are actively involved in learning, either in group or individual activities, rather than just listening to teachers lecture (Rantala, 2005, as cited in Kangas, 2010; Shernoff, Csikszentmihalyi, Shneider, & Shernoff, 2003). In contrast, students get bored when they do not opportunity to discuss or to express their opinions (Mitsoni, 2006), or when teachers are over-talking and explaining (Hopkins, 2008).

3.1.3.2 Classroom management

Classroom management can be considered in terms of two classroom dimensions: structure and control/autonomy. Structure is defined as the ways teachers communicate what they expect students to do to achieve academic goals (Reeve, 2004). This structure ranges in a continuum from high structure to low structure.
Control/autonomy refers to the extent to which teachers provide freedom of choice, voice and initiative (Reeve, 2004). The continuum is from high to low. Both controlling and autonomy-supportive environments can present as high or low structured classroom environments for students, and the classroom environment can therefore be further classified as autonomy-supportive, controlling, permissive, or demanding. These kinds of classroom environments reflect the quality of TSRs and teacher motivation styles (Reeve, 2004) that influence the quality of student motivation (Eccles & Midgley, 1989, as cited in Reeve, 2004). Optimal student motivation manifests when students prefer challenges, achieve highly, learn conceptually, generate creative products and enjoy school (Reeve, 2004).

3.1.3.3 Teacher-student relationships
A key aspect of the classroom climate is the quality of TSRs (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). In addition, the quality of the relationship is exhibited through the structure of instructional contexts (Davis, 2003). Detailed descriptions of TSRs are discussed in Section 3.3.

3.1.3.4 Student-student relationships
Within most educational psychology literature, discussion of teacher interactions with students dominates discussion on student-student relationships (Johnson, 1981). Johnson argues that despite student interactions having received less attention, student-student relationships have a significant effect on student development. This is further discussed in Section 3.4.

To summarise, the influence of school context on student development is better understood when schools and the education system are seen in a comprehensive way because of interdependency across of the whole schooling system. What happens at
each level of the schooling system is influenced by other levels of school context. Eccles and Roeser’s (2009) conception of school context aligns with Bronfenbrenner’s bio-ecological theory that stresses process-person-context-time interrelatedness (Tudge et al., 2009). This bio-ecological model is concerned with the process of interactions between people, the context, and timing of interactions. Therefore, the entire ecological system in which a person grows must be considered in understanding their development (Bronfenbrenner, 1997).

In the bio-ecological model, experience is a critical element that influences human development (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). This indicates that the influence of the environment for human development not only comprises the impact of the external environment, but also how the individual subjectively experiences the environment. Both the external (objective) and subjective elements are necessary for driving human development. Eccles and Roeser (2004) also identify the critical role of student subjective experience within the school environment. The influence of the objective characteristics of school on student feelings, beliefs and behaviours are mediated by student constructions of meaning of the school environment. The importance of subjective experiences is acknowledged by famous psychologists, such as William James, John Dewey, and Abraham Maslow (Rathunde, 2001).

A wide range of student responses to their school experiences is discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Additionally, a discussion of the impact of each level of school context on students is described in Chapter 8 (Section 8.2).

3.2 Academic press

School places many demands on students (Claxton, 2013; Kaplan & Maehr, 1999), although there are different views of the kinds of demands that schools and
classrooms place on students. When children begin school, they must cope with many new environmental demands, such as adjusting to new school buildings and classrooms, seeking out acceptance from peer groups, dealing with new academic challenges and meeting teacher expectations. Moreover, they must negotiate with the more complex academic tasks and interpersonal relationships as they progress through the school year (Ladd, 1990).

Environmental demand has been defined as press (Murray, 1938, as cited in Middleton & Blumenfeld, 2000). The term academic press is further defined as the concept of press within an academic environment and is used in a number of school effectiveness studies (e.g., Lee, Smith, Perry, & Smylie, 1999; Phillips, 1997; Shouse, 1996). There is a belief in school effectiveness literature that increasing academic demands on students is regarded as an approach to improve their achievement (Middleton & Blumenfeld, 2000; Phillips, 1997). Building on this, Lee and Smith (1999) argue that academic press can be enhanced by HST in an education system. Therefore, schools are driven by academic press to increase student academic achievement.

3.2.1 Defining academic press

Academic press is defined within this thesis as the extent to which school members (teachers and students) conform to specific academic standards and experience a normative emphasis on academic excellence (Dever & Karabenick, 2011; Gill et al., 2004; Murphy et al., 1982). Other researchers use the term academic emphasis, which has a similar definition (Goddard, Sweetland, & Hoy, 2000; Hoy, Tarter & Hoy, 2006), or academic climate (Shouse, 1996). Academic emphasis refers to the extent to which the school focuses on intellectual activity and student achievement (Hoy et al., 2006, p. 434).
According to Phillips (1997), common strategies of academic press used in school practices include the amount of time allocated for instruction, the amount of homework, clear achievement-oriented goals and high expectations for student achievement. Similarly, Hoy et al. (2006) describe several indicators of academic emphasis, such as setting high but achievable academic goals, providing an orderly and serious learning environment, and students who show motivation to work hard and respect academic achievement.

Murphy et al. (1982) argue that academic press is broader than high academic expectations of school staff and is driven by various other forces, such as school policies, practices, social norms and reward, that reveal the academic environment that leads students to respond to this press. From achievement goal perspectives, academic press relates to the implementation of achievement goal structure in school. Achievement goal structure describes the academic goals emphasised by the principal and teachers through school policies and instructional practice (Anderman & Midgley, 1997). Within the research literature several scholars use different terms, such as learning goal and performance goal, task involvement and ego involvement, mastery goal and performance goal; however, categorisation of mastery and performance goal is most widely adopted (Elliot, 2005; Schunk, Pintrich, & Meece, 2010). Common school practices that promote performance goals include class ranking on reports, public honour rolls and assemblies for the highest achieving students, and other practices that value the importance of academic results, such as encouraging competition among students, putting emphasis upon getting the highest grades, and recognition of superior relative performance (Roeser, et al., 1998; Meece, Anderman & Anderman, 2006). In contrast, focus upon mastery goals is indicated by school practices that emphasise recognition for academic improvement,
non-competitive fairs, and using project-based learning as examples of practice (Roeser, et al., 1998).

Middleton and Blumenfeld (2000) reveal another form of academic press: press for completion, performance and understanding or thoughtfulness. A press for completion is driven by the curricula in which teachers are expected to complete the list of objectives during specific timeframes of the course. In the classroom, a press for completion manifests in the amount of work completed, such as the number of hours of homework (Phillips, 1997; Shouse, 1996). Press for performance demands that students aim for better grades or test scores than their own previous scores or than others’ achievements (Middleton & Blumenfeld, 2000). A press for understanding or thoughtfulness requires students to engage thoughtfully in their study by using higher order thinking skills (Middleton & Blumenfeld, 2000; Middleton & Midgley, 2002).

3.2.2 The effect of academic press on student outcomes

Research reveals that academic press does increase student achievement. Phillips (1997) demonstrates that schools can be effective when they have demanding curricula and high expectations, and a study of 23 middle schools found that academic press improved mathematics achievement. In another study of mathematics achievement in high schools, Shouse (1996) found that students with low socioeconomic background experiencing academic press and strong communal values achieved four points higher on a test than other students in schools with low academic press. In a study focused on elementary schools, Goddard et al. (2000) found that academic emphasis positively differentiated student achievement between schools, and that a strong climate of academic emphasis influences not only teachers
and student behaviours but also reinforces a pattern of collective beliefs that are good for a school.

In related research, Dever and Karabenick (2011) conducted a study of the influence of different teaching styles on academic achievement and interest in a mathematics class of middle school students. A dimension of parenting styles – demandingness and responsiveness – was used to differentiate the teaching styles. In this study, responsiveness was labelled as teacher caring or support, while demandingness was used to describe academic press or teacher control. It found that across all groups of students, regardless of ethnicity, academic press was positively related to both interest and achievement in mathematics. In contrast, higher levels of teacher caring were associated with lower mathematics achievement. Similarly, Gill et al. (2004) found that school responsiveness was not related to student achievement in mathematics, and was only moderately positive when associated with student engagement and internal control. This study did not find a relationship between demandingness and mathematics achievement.

Despite some differences, the studies described above provide some evidence of positive influences of academic press on student academic achievement in elementary, middle and high schools. Academic press is also typically regarded as an effective approach to increase student achievement. As stated by Lee et al. (1999) academic press influences student achievement in two ways. First, it provides information regarding what students and teachers need to achieve, so it directs their effort. Second, incentives of achievement can motivate students and teachers to raise their achievement level. In short, academic press pushes students to work harder and, because of this assumption, students learn more.
On the other hand, the positive influences of press are not experienced by all students. For some students who experience academic difficulty and failure of exams, academic *press* induces academic *stress*. Stress occurs when the demands made on individuals exceed their resources to meet them (Claxton, 2013; Takakura et al., 2005). Freeman, Samdal, Băban, and Bancila (2012) define *school pressure* as being when school demands are experienced as too much by students. A continuing imbalance between demands and resources can lead individuals to have feelings of inadequacy, anxiety and being out of control (Claxton, 2013; Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Moreover, due to their bad performance, students may feel unmotivated, alienated and disengaged, and eventually drop out of school (Lee et al., 1999). In contrast, students feel good about school when they are able to adjust to school expectation and demands (Van Petegem et al., 2008).

Research on goal structure provides evidence that the most positive motivation and learning patterns are shown by students in schools that emphasise mastery, understanding, and improving skill and knowledge (Meece et al., 2006). In comparison, the performance classroom orientation may enhance student motivation and achievement, but typically only for high-ability students. For those who lack ability, performance goal structures impact on decreasing student intrinsic motivation, using maladaptive coping patterns in facing challenge and failure, and processing learning material superficially. Moreover, performance goal structures are positively correlated to cheating and disruptive behaviours in the classroom (Meece et al., 2006). A perceived emphasis on performance orientation in school is related to diminished feelings of academic competence and valuing the school, increased feelings of anger and depressive symptoms, and decreased grades over time (Roeser et al., 1998).
Interestingly, students who can perform well and show outstanding achievement in international standards of assessment may experience emotional problems as a result of academic pressure. Research on academic pressure and its negative consequences on student development are reported by several researchers (e.g., Bossy, 2000; Lin & Qinghai, 1995; Park, 2005) who conducted research in Asian contexts (Japan, China, and Korea). These and other studies indicate that academic achievement is perceived as extremely important in Asian cultures; therefore, the need to succeed academically is a major source of stress for Asian students and may contribute to mental health problems (Ang & Huan, 2006). Pressures are not only imposed externally by school standards from the district or the nation, and expectations from teachers, peers, or parents, but also from self-expectation (Ang & Huan, 2006; Lee & Smith, 1999).

Bossy (2000) reports that in Japan, success in school (i.e., academic achievement) is all that matters. As a result of fierce competition in university entrance examinations, many students experience severe anxiety and even more serious consequences, such as suicide. Similarly, Ling and Qinghai (1995) report that primary and middle school students in urban settings in China experience academic pressure. Driven by the annual entrance exam, parents, teachers and schools have an obsessive concern with achieving high scores in examinations. Additionally, pressure from teachers takes various forms, such as excessive assignments, frequent testing, requirements for routine recitation of subject matter, and using textbooks specified for a higher grade. Double pressures from parents and schools impact on student physical and psychological development, and many students experience physical problems, for instance insomnia, memory loss and short attention span, as well as physical violence from parents due to poor test performance. Psychologically, academic press turns student life into one of depression, nervousness and dissatisfaction with life.
In South Korea, academic success is regarded as a means for personal achievement as well as a means to fulfil obligations to family and larger society. High school is regarded as a period of the highest pressure on academic achievement. Many students experience stress, depression, and even suicide (Park, 2005; Park & Huebner, 2005). Similar cases occur in Indonesia where academic press is enhanced by the NE. The impact of the NE in Indonesia is discussed in Section 2.2.2.2. Discussion of student perceptions of academic demands is presented in Chapter 6.

To summarise, despite being considered as an approach to raise student academic achievement, academic press may also be detrimental when academic expectations are set unrealistically and exceed student resources to meet them. Thus, while maintaining high expectations for student achievement McCombs (2004) argues that attention should be given to students as the learners, and to school environments where the learning process occurs. Aside from academic press as an approach that is directly focused on the activities or program and student performance, however, another approach of school effectiveness research emphasises social relationships between teachers and students, and among students in school. Such relationships impact affective school outcomes, such as liking for school and enjoyment in class, which in turn, affects student achievement. Further discussion of TSRs and its influence on students are discussed later in this thesis – in particular, student emotional experiences due to academic press are discussed in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.2.1) and student perceptions of academic press in school are presented in Chapter 6.
3.3 Teacher-student relationships

Reviewing a range of studies of teacher-student relationships (TSRs), Davis (2003) concludes that understanding this phenomenon depends on the conception of what constitutes a positive relationship, and who drives the quality of the relationships between teachers and students. Three perspectives related to this current research are discussed below.

Attachment perspectives are concerned with the role of teachers as nurturers and describe the quality of relationships as being influenced by teacher responsiveness to children’s needs and the emotional quality of interactions with children (Davis, 2003). When students have positive relationships with teachers, they feel more emotionally secure. Feelings of security can foster students to explore the environment and deal with the demands of the school context. On the other hand, lack of security is a reflection of negative TSRs, and can undermine student efforts in dealing with school demands (Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, & Oort, 2011). According to these perspectives, students also contribute to the quality of TSRs through their relationship history with their primary caregiver, their relationships with previous teachers, and through their own social competence (Davis, 2006).

Motivational perspectives are more concerned with teachers as effective instructors in educational contexts; therefore, good relationships with teachers reflect their support for student motivation and learning (Davis, 2003). Thus the quality of interaction between teachers and students can be influenced through the teacher’s role in creating supportive instructional and affective contexts (Davis, 2003). Therefore, relationships with teachers could either stimulate or undermine motivation and learning. Following a review of previous studies, Davis concludes that in the
instructional context a number of variables can influence the quality of TSRs, such as teacher beliefs, behaviours and pedagogical approaches. Citing Hoy, Davis and Pape (2006), Davis (2006) states that research on motivation provides evidence that teacher beliefs about learning, subject matter, students and themselves as teachers determine the instructional practices used, which then affects their relationships with students. Students also have an important role in shaping the quality of interaction with teachers as students enter the classroom with their expectations, attitudes and behaviours (Davis, 2003). Student perceptions on specific teacher-student dyads will influence the quality of TSRs, as do student perceptions of whether teachers build closer relationships with specific students, such as high achievers, in which case students may have negative reactions to teachers (Babad, 1995).

Socio-cultural perspectives recognise that separating an individual student from classroom and school context is not regarded as possible (Davis, 2003, 2006). These perspectives consider the reciprocal interactions between student and teacher as well as the relationship embedded within the classroom, the school and the academic culture in society (Davis, 2003). Socio-cultural perspectives can also comprise ecological and social-constructivist approaches. Ecological perspectives take into account the role of the physical setting of the classroom, class size, and external and internal social pressure on the quality of interaction among students and teachers (Davis, 2003). Social-constructivist approaches reveal that knowledge in the classroom is jointly constructed within relationship contexts (Davis, 2003) and the socio-cultural contexts where learning and teaching occurs are regarded as critical (Palinscar, 2005). Moreover, socio-constructivist approaches recognise that in the process-making meaning of both cognitive and non-cognitive activities in the classroom, teachers and students engage in processes of negotiation with respect to
language, activities and power (Davis, 2003, 2006). Students also play a role as active participants in developing the quality of TSRs. Davis (2001) found that social self-concepts of students and how they value the importance of relationship with teachers are related to the quality of their relationships.

Several related studies of TSRs have been investigated using different terms as a focus, such as teacher support (e.g., Ming-Te, 2009; Patrick et al., 2007; Ryan & Patrick, 2001; Suldo et al., 2009), teacher caring (e.g., Wentzel, 1997), student-teacher relationships (Hamre & Pianta, 2005), communal school (e.g., Battistich et al., 1995; Phillips, 1997), and school responsiveness (e.g., Dever & Karabenick, 2011; Gill et al., 2004). According to Ryan and Patrick (2001), even though the terms differ slightly, generally it is the characteristics of caring, friendliness, understanding, dedication and dependability that seem to be key.

Teacher support refers to the extent to which students perceive that teachers establish personal relationships with them and will help them (Trickett & Moos, 1973). Malecki and Demaray (2003) distinguish the types of support as emotional, instrumental, appraisal and instrumental. However, most studies measure teacher support through two distinctive types – emotional or personal support and academic support (e.g. Patrick et al., 2007; Roeser et al., 1998; Ryan & Patrick, 2001). Other studies have measured a single form of teacher support (e.g. Wentzel, 1997), because these two types are highly correlated.

Teacher emotional support describes the extent to which teachers are perceived as supportive, responsive and committed to student well-being when students face personal and social problems at school (Ming-Te, 2009; Patrick et al., 2007; Roeser, et al., 1998). Classrooms that provide high emotional support can be identified by the
absence of negativity among students, and between teachers and students, together with the presence of a warm emotional climate in classroom interactions. Moreover, teachers show their responsiveness to students and provide some freedom and choice for students (National Institute of Child, 2002). Wenzel (1997) found that students characterise caring-supportive teachers by several features, such as through showing an open and reciprocal communication style, treating students with equality and respect, being concerned with a student’s non-academic functioning, developing expectations based on individuality, providing constructive evaluation feedback, and focusing on making their class interesting. One of effective ways to create a positive classroom environment is teacher humour (Banas, Dunbar, Rodriguez, & Liu, 2011; Wanzer, Frymier, & Irwin, 2010).

In another study, Suldo et al. (2009) explored student perceptions of teacher behaviours that convey high and low social support. Themes of high support behaviours that often emerged include being sensitive and responsive to the class, understanding of the academic material, using varied teaching strategies, providing positive comment on student performance, and encouraging student questions. In contrast, low support for teacher behaviours often mentioned include contributing to student negative moods, treating students unfairly, discouraging students from asking questions, punishing improperly and showing disinterest in student academic progress.

A measure of teacher academic support includes student perceptions that teachers care about student learning and want to help students to learn and do their best (Johnson & Johnson, 1983; Patrick et al., 2007). Griffith (2002) defines academic support of learning as the extent to which students perceive that their teachers help
students think about new ways to do things, learn more about subjects, and whether their teacher does a good job in teaching the subjects (reading, writing, math and computers). Classrooms that provide high instructional support reflecting the quality of interactions between teachers and students are marked by the richness of instruction and feedback to improve student performance (National Institute of Child, 2002).

In contrast to offering high academic support, teachers often hold differential expectations of students within the same classroom, paired with differential treatment, which, in turn, are related to differential student outcomes (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b). Several studies confirm that teachers show differential behaviours to high and low achievers (e.g., Babad, 1993; Brophy & Good, 1970; Stipek, 2006). Brophy and Good (1970) found that teachers demand better academic performance and give more praise to higher-ability students than those with lower ability. In contrast, teachers are more likely to accept poor performance and are less likely to praise the good performance of lower-ability students. Similarly, teachers are perceived as expressing warmer emotional support towards high-achieving students and are more negative towards students who are low achievers (Babad, 1993; Stipek, 2006). Moreover, for the students who achieve less, teachers tend to display less patience, particularly when there is pressure for the students to accomplish the desired achievement (Stipek, 2006). Differential teacher behaviours towards the most able students elicit student perceptions of the quality of the TSRs as being less warm and supportive (Roeser et al., 1996).
3.3.1 Influence of teacher-student relationships on student cognitive outcomes

A number of studies report the positive influence of TSRs on various learning outcomes; some have focused on the impact of relationships on cognitive outcome, whereas others report its influence on affective outcomes. As noted earlier, these studies include broad usage of related terms associated with TSRs.

Lee and Smith (1999) found that social supports are positively related to student achievement in reading and mathematics. In their study, social support refers to personal relationships with people students may get to help them do well in school, including teachers, parents and other students. Griffith (2002) reports that student perceptions of expressive support are positively and significantly related to academic achievement (grade-point average) at all levels – individual, classroom and school. Expressive support (communal relationships) consists of relationships with school staff, teachers and classmates. This can measure whether teachers are nice, helpful, and treat them fairly, and whether their classmates are friendly and they feel comfortable sharing their ideas. Furthermore, in a study with elementary school-aged students, Baker (2006) found that quality TSRs are indicated by high closeness and low conflict, and associated with positive school adjustment of students across grades. Students with closer TSRs tend to have better academic performance. Moreover, positive TSRs can serve as a protective factor for children with behaviour problems (Baker, 2006). In a longitudinal study with middle school students, Roeser and Eccles (1998) found that students who perceived positive teacher regard, tend to increase academic value, have feelings of more competence in academic tasks, are more task focused and at the end of the year have increased their academic achievement.
In contrast to these findings, several studies report that positive relationships in school are not associated with student achievement. Battistich et al. (1995) reveal that student perceptions of caring and supportive relationships have positive effects on academic attitude and motivation, such as enjoyment of class and liking of school, but are not associated with student achievement. Furthermore, Phillips (1997) found that communal organisation is not related to mathematics achievement. In her study, *communitarian climate* was measured by teacher perceptions of shared values, democratic governance and positive teacher relationships, and by student perceptions of teacher behaviour in terms of caring. Gill et al. (2004) also found that student perceptions of school responsiveness are not related to achievement. In their study, school responsiveness includes principal and student perceptions of positive teacher attitudes towards students and responsiveness to student needs. Findings of these studies support an argument that satisfying human relationships are a necessary, but insufficient, condition for student learning.

### 3.3.2 Influence of teacher-student relationships on student affective outcomes

Research on the impact of TSRs on affective outcomes reports a wide range of affective results associated with student engagement, emotion, social competence, school satisfaction and well-being. As teachers spend a significant amount time with students and they have power to regulate day-to-day activities in school, they can become the most influential person to students (DeSantis King, Huebner, Suldo, & Valois, 2006). This is especially so in a primary school context where children are typically more attached to teachers, with teacher support important for school satisfaction (Baker, 1999; Hui & Sun, 2010; Samdal, Nutbeam, Wold & Kannas, 1998). Likewise, for early and middle adolescence, several researchers suggest that
support from teachers significantly predicts school satisfaction (Casas, Bălţătescu, Bertran, González, & Hatos, 2013; Tian, Han, & Huebner, 2014) and positive affect (Roeser et al., 1996; Tian et al., 2014). Moreover, Roeser and Eccles (1998) report the impact of student perception of positive teacher regard on decreasing depressive symptoms and anger over time. In a context where students perceive that their teacher cares about them, and helps them in academic learning and social-emotional problems, students experience a sense of school well-being (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). Several studies (Danielsen, Hetland, Samdal, & Wold, 2009; DeSantis King et al., 2006; Hui & Sun, 2010; Suldo et al., 2009) found that support from teachers shows a stronger association with student well-being than other sources of support (peers and parents).

Gläser-Zikuda and Fuß (2008) confirm that student perceptions of teacher competencies have an impact on student emotions. Teacher motivational competence and caring behaviours shown towards students are highly associated with student well-being. On the other hand, student feelings of anxiety and anger are related to lack of support from teachers, performance pressures from teachers, and lack of clarity and structure. Students experience emotional stress when teachers communicate to their students with less regard and affection, when teachers underestimate student capabilities, or when teachers show less warmth and more hostile behaviours (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997).

In a study of first grade elementary students, Wilson, Pianta, and Stuhlman (2007) found that enrolment in different types of classrooms can affect student social and behavioural adjustment. Students who enrol in classrooms marked by high-quality emotional and instructional support display significantly better social competence
than students in other types of classrooms. Malecki and Demaray (2003) reveal that compared to support from parents, classmates and close friends, emotional support from teachers is a significant predictor of student social skills and academic competence. Wentzel (1997) suggests that perceptions of teachers as caring are related to student academic effort and the pursuit of pro-social and social responsibility goals. Gill et al. (2004) found that student perceptions of school responsiveness are moderately related to student engagement and internal control. Patrick et al. (2007) found that teacher emotional support is related to student engagement indicated by self-regulation and task-related interactions, and then in turn, is related to student achievement. Demaray and Malecki (2002) showed that students who are perceived as having low social support display higher behaviour problems than students with higher social support. High social support is also associated with higher level of student self-concept.

The research discussions of the TSRs in this present study consist of student perceptions of relationships in interpersonal interactions as well as in the context of instructions. Chapter 7 presents the findings (Section 7.1), while Chapter 5 discusses the kinds of student emotional experiences due to TSRs (Section 5.3.2.2).

3.4 Student-student relationships

The literature relating to peer relationships and interactions provides significant evidence that peer-related activities are associated with multiple aspects of development and adjustment, including social and behavioural competence, and academic performance in school (Gifford-Smith & Brownell, 2003; Johnson, 1981; Roseth, Johnson, & Johnson, 2008; Wentzel et al., 2014).
The term *peer relationship refers* to several aspects of experience with peers (Kerns et al., 1996, p. 457). Researchers typically studied children’s experience with peers at school in two ways: within the contexts of relationships, and within structured interaction related to instruction (Wentzel et al., 2014). Within the broader context of relationships, peer relationships are generally conceptualised and studied in different ways, as either group-based relationships or dyadic peer relationships. Within group based relationships, peer relationships can be further characterised in several ways, such as peer acceptance or rejection, peer group membership, and status or reputation within the group. In a dyadic context, researchers predominantly study friendships (Gifford-Smith & Brownell, 2003; Wentzel, 2005). Within structured interactions, peer relationships are studied in the context of instructions, for example competitive, cooperative, and individualistic goal structures (e.g. Johnson, Johnson, & Anderson, 1983; Roseth et al., 2008).

Peer acceptance pertains to the degree to which an individual is liked or disliked by the others in their peer group (Gifford-Smith & Brownell, 2003, p. 237). The assessment of peer acceptance or rejection is typically based on the information obtained from the larger peer group through socio-metric indicators. The categories from socio-metric tools reveal several kinds of status: *popular* individuals are frequently nominated as best friends and rarely disliked by their peers; *rejected* individuals are frequently disliked or not well-liked; *neglected* individuals have very few peers who either like or dislike them; *controversial* individuals are both liked and disliked; and, the rest are categorised as *average status* (Gifford-Smith & Brownell, 2003; Wentzel, 2005). Group membership reflects affiliation with a small self-selected group in which group members frequently interact with each other (Wentzel & Caldwell, 1997, p. 1198).
Peer relationships are also studied in terms of peer support. Peer support refers to feeling accepted by and getting assistance from peers (Freeman et al., 2012). Such support can be differentiated into emotional and academic (Patrick et al., 2007; Rowe, Kim, Baker, Kamphaus, & Horne, 2010). Peer academic support pertains to student perception that classmates care about their learning, whereas emotional support refers to the students who feel their friends care about them as a person (Patrick et al., 2007; Rowe et al., 2010). In contrast to peer support, relationships with peers can take other forms, such as peer victimisation and peer conflict. Peer victimisation refers to a relationship in which children are teased, isolated, bullied or not accepted in play by peers, and are targets for name calling (Hui & Sun, 2010; Ladd, Kochenderfer, & Coleman, 1997; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). Peer victimisation has been hypothesised as promoting a negative affective state, such as insecurity, mistrust and fearfulness (Ladd et al., 1997).

### 3.4.1 The importance of peer relationships

Relationships with peers are significant and important to children throughout childhood and adolescence (Wentzel, 2005). Relationships with peers at school may function as a source of support or stress depending on the type of relationship formed (Ladd, 1990). The literature on peer relationships identifies that the qualities of children’s social relationships are likely have motivational impact (Wentzel, 2005). Wentzel and Watkins (2002) suggest that a student’s subjective perception of relationships is the most likely predictor of motivational behaviour, rather than the actual relationships per se.

Students who have a sense of community, for example those who are accepted by peers and perceived by their friends as sources of personal support, are found more likely to enjoy class, feel happier at school and develop positive attitudes towards
school (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1997; Ladd, Kochenderfer, & Coleman, 1996; Osterman, 2000). Positive relationships with peers are also likely to promote a sense of emotional well-being and social relatedness (Wentzel, 2005; Wentzel & Watkins, 2002). In turn, when students have a positive sense of self and relatedness at school, they will be motivated to engage in social and cognitive activities within the school setting (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Wentzel & Watkins, 2002).

In research focused on peer relationships, motivation and academic performance, students who are sociometrically popular reported higher satisfaction with school, higher perceived academic competence and more frequent pursuit of academic goals (Wentzel, 2005). Wentzel and Caldwell (1997) found that peer relationships and academic achievement are related in complex ways. While group membership is the most consistent predictor of student achievement, peer acceptance and reciprocated friendship are related less consistently to student grades.

In the kindergarten level, Ladd (1990) found that children who have existing friends and are able to make new friends tend to show better school adjustment than those who have no friends. In elementary and middle school, having friends is positively related to student grades and test scores. Students with friends are likely to be more involved and engaged in school-related activities than those who do not have reciprocated friends (Wentzel, 2005). In contrast, however, Ladd, et al. (1996) suggest that exclusivity in friendship also fosters student involvement in activities that distract them from academic tasks, such as talking too much, and may decrease support networks from classmates. This then, interferes with their academic performance in school.
Students who perceive negative peer relationships, such as low levels of peer support or peer rejection are likely to experience psychological distress. As a consequence, they may feel alienation and then disengage from classroom activities and interaction (Wentzel & Watkins, 2002). Verkuyten and Thijs (2002) found that experience with peer victimisation was an important determinant of school dissatisfaction. In another study, peer conflict and peer victimisation were found not to be significant predictors of school satisfaction despite a correlation (Hui & Sun, 2010). Conflict with peers is associated with higher levels of loneliness and lower level of students liking of their school (Ladd et al., 1996).

Peer relationships also occur in the context of instruction. A number of peer-related outcomes are associated with instructional practices and teacher characteristics. Donohue, Perry, and Weinstein (2003) show that learner-centred pedagogical approaches have positive effects on reducing the number of students with interpersonal behaviour problems, decreasing classroom rates of peer rejection, and increasing empathy with less anger towards disruptive peers. Teacher strategies in grouping students in instructional practices, such as seating arrangements and small group assignments, has been shown to promote a more egalitarian status hierarchy among students (Gest & Rodkin, 2011). The achievement goal structures are positively or negatively related to achievement and quality of peer relationships. A meta-analysis of 148 studies provides consistent evidence that higher achievement and more positive peer relationships are associated with cooperative rather than competitive or individualistic goal structures (Roseth et al., 2008). Competitive academic standards that heighten social comparison among students have thus been shown to have a negative impact on student interaction (Wentzel et al., 2014).
Teacher characteristics can also affect peer relationships in the classroom. Teachers who are perceived as providing high levels of emotional support to students had classrooms in which students are rated showing more reciprocated friendship (Gest & Rodkin, 2011). Similar findings have also been reported by Luckner and Pianta (2011), that the quality of TSRs is associated with peer behaviour. Specifically, a high quality of organisation within interactions is related to positive peer interactions and lower aggressive behaviour. In addition, emotional support interactions are related to students displaying higher pro-social behaviours. Thus, teacher emotional support could be a good model for students and can provide a warm and supportive context in which students can safely practise positive peer relationships skills (Gest & Rodkin, 2011; Luckner & Pianta, 2011). Student school outcomes including academic and peer-related competencies can be predicted up to eight years later by the extent to which the affective quality of early TSRs was present (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Mikami, Griggs, Reuland, and Gregory (2012) reported that teacher practices may relate to social preference among students. Social preference is assessed by student nominations of whom they like and dislike. Teachers who show that they value all students through emotionally supportive relationships increase the possibility of changing social preferences. In contrast, teachers who favour the most academically talented students promote an academic status hierarchy and therefore lower average social preferences.

Chapter 4 presents student emotional experiences due to peer relationships, and Chapter 7 further discusses student perceptions of peer relationships.
3.5 School well-being

The term *school well-being* is grounded from theoretical and empirical literatures of subjective well-being (SWB) from Diener (1994). SWB refers to individual evaluation of the quality experience of student lives, in terms of the judgement of global and domain-specific life satisfaction, and their emotional responses (Diener et al., 1999). SWB consists of three components: life satisfaction, the presence of positive affect, and the absence of negative affect in life (Baker & Maupin, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2001). These three components together are often summarised as happiness (e.g., Deci & Ryan, 2008a; Tenney, 2011).

Life satisfaction is defined as global judgement about one’s life as a whole (Diener, 2000, p. 34). Life satisfaction also can be referred to the specific domains of life such as family, environment, friends, self and school (Huebner, 2010a). Positive affect includes positive emotions such as joy, and negative affect includes negative emotions such as sadness (Baker & Maupin, 2009; Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Gracia, 2014).

3.5.1 Defining school well-being

The term *school well-being* is used in some studies to describe satisfaction with school or education (e.g., Engels et al., 2004; Opdenakker & Van Damme, 2000; Tian, Liu, et al., 2013; Van Petegem et al., 2008; Vyverman & Vettenburg, 2009). In other studies, there are multiple related terms that may or may not have the same definition, for instance, the quality of school life (Epstein & McPartland, 1976), pupil liking for school (Ireson & Hallam, 2005), and feeling about school (Valeski & Stipek, 2001). Even though there are various definitions of school well-being,
generally the concept emphasises the student’s value judgment as to whether or not they like going to school (Vyverman & Vettenburg, 2009).

As a domain-specific aspect of SWB, school well-being consists of three components: school satisfaction, positive affect in school, and negative affect in school (Long et al., 2012; Tian, Liu, et al., 2013). As a major component of school well-being, school satisfaction has received attention from scholars (e.g., Baker, 1999; Huebner & McCullough, 2000). Some define school satisfaction as cognitive evaluation of overall satisfaction with one’s school experience (e.g., Baker & Maupin, 2009; Tian, Chen, et al., 2013), while others conceptualise school satisfaction as consisting of both cognitive and affective appraisal (e.g., Huebner, Ash, & Laughlin, 2001; Huebner, Gilman, Reschly, & Hall, 2009). Likewise, Samdal et al. (1998, p. 384) state that school satisfaction also refers to emotional responses such as happiness, enjoyment of school and a sense of well-being at school. Thus, school satisfaction can be conceptualised as comprising either cognitive, or both cognitive and affective components. As SWB and happiness are often used interchangeably (Deci & Ryan, 2008a; Tenney, 2011), school well-being and school happiness can be regarded as synonymous.

Drawing from conceptualisations of school-well-being by Tian, Chen, et al. (2013), this thesis refers to school satisfaction in terms of a global cognitive evaluation of school experiences, whereas affective components are measured by the experience of positive affect and negative affect in school. Positive affect in school refers to student experiences of the frequency of positive emotions in school, such as feeling pleasant, relaxed, or happy. Negative affect in school refers to the frequency of experiencing negative emotions, such as feeling bored, depressed, upset, or bored.
Current research on well-being is derived from two distinct general perspectives (Biswas-Diener, Kashdan, & King, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2001; Tian, Chen, et al., 2013; Waterman, 1993). The first is the hedonic approach, which focuses on subjective happiness and defines well-being in terms of attainment of pleasure and avoidance of pain (Ryan & Deci, 2001), or sometimes characterised by socio-economic status (SES) (OECD, 2013). Most research of well-being from hedonic perspectives also typically uses the term SWB to measure the index of happiness (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). Thus, increasing well-being can be viewed as optimising feelings of happiness (Deci & Ryan, 2008a). The second perspective of well-being is eudaimonic, and concerned with living well and fulfilling or actualising one’s human potential (Ryan, Huta, & Deci, 2008; Waterman, 1993). Eudaimonic well-being (EWB) has been defined as the extent to which a person is fully functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2001). From a eudaimonic perspective, subjective happiness is not sufficient in describing well-being because well-being consists of more than happiness. Individuals who experience EWB will necessarily also experience SWB; however, experience of high levels of SWB does not necessarily correspond with high levels of EWB. People who feel happy may not necessarily feel psychologically well (Deci & Ryan, 2008a; Waterman, 2008).

According to self-determination theory (SDT) and aligned with eudaimonic perspectives, well-being is not simply a subjective experience of positive affect, but is also indicated by the presence of vitality, psychological flexibility and a deep inner sense of wellness (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Likewise, Seligman et al. (2009) conceptualise happiness in terms of three different aspects: positive emotion, engagement and experience of meaning. Positive emotion refers to the hedonic view of a pleasant life. Engagement is much closer to state of flow (Seligman et al., 2009),
which can be defined as the experience of complete absorption in the present moment (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009, p. 195). Flow is experienced when there is balance between challenge and the required skills. Meaning is experienced when individuals know their highest strengths and attach their aspirations to something larger than themselves (Seligman, 2002).

The literature on well-being indicates that conceptualisations from eudaimonic perspectives have been used in varied ways. Several terms from different scholars are noted, such as psychological well-being (Ryff, 1989), personal expressiveness (Waterman, 1993), social well-being (Keyes, 1998), SDT (Ryan & Deci, 2001), and authentic happiness (Seligman, 2002). As a consequence, critiques of eudaimonic perspectives often highlight this inconsistent usage of conceptual theory and measurement to capture the essence of EWB (Kashdan, Biswas-Diener, & King, 2008; Ryan et al., 2008). Regardless of the debate between hedonic and eudaimonic perspectives in determining the scope of happiness and well-being, a number of researchers show evidence that hedonic and eudaimonic conceptions of well-being can best be conceived as the same multidimensional phenomenon (Ryan & Deci, 2001). The experience of hedonia and eudaimonia, therefore, may involve a substantial overlap or can operate in tandem (Biswas-Diener et al., 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

In addition to SWB, this thesis uses the eudaimonic concept of well-being embraced by SDT (Deci & Ryan, 2008b; Reeve, 2004; Reeve, Deci, & Ryan, 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2000b, 2001; Ryan & Deci, 2004). However, this thesis does not focus on the measurement of EWB, but on the principal factors that foster personal growth and well-being (Ryan & Deci, 2001). SDT focuses on the social environment that either
facilitates or thwarts the fulfilment of basic psychological needs (see Figure 3.2 and Section 3.7). Because of this, SDT has strong implications for educational practice and policies, especially in the context of schools that apply pressure and focus on student outcomes (Ryan & Brown, 2005). SDT assumes that satisfaction of basic psychological needs fosters two types of well-being: SWB and EWB. SDT research has typically used SWB as one of several indicators of well-being, and supplements measures with additional assessment of self-actualisation, vitality and mental health. SDT posits that there are different types of positive experience and that some conditions may yield SWB only, but may not necessarily foster EWB (Deci & Ryan, 2008a; Ryan & Deci, 2001).

In this thesis, the term school well-being is used, although this term is not broadly used in the literature, apart from a few exceptions, such as Long et al. (2012) and Tian, Chen, et al. (2013). Most studies have examined school satisfaction in terms of cognitive appraisal and not included positive and negative affect. Importantly, school satisfaction can be studied as both a determinant and the outcome variables. Figure 3.2 illustrates the concept of well-being.
3.5.2 Determinants of school satisfaction

The issue of students experiencing lower levels of school satisfaction has intrigued scholars to examine the factors promoting or hindering it. For instance, a study in South Carolina, USA, showed that 23% of students reported a level of dissatisfaction (9% felt ‘terrible’, 7% ‘unhappy’, and 7% expressed ‘dissatisfaction’) with their school experiences (Huebner, Drane, & Valois, 2000). Finnish student responses to school experiences are varied, with some students showing positive affect to aspects of school such as experiencing fun, and feeling motivated, encouraged and challenged. On the other hand, others felt school as boring; the teachers treated them unfairly, their classmates’ behaviour was depressing, and their school days were uninspiring (Linnakyla & Malin, 1997, as cited in Haapasalo et al., 2010). Similar results have been reported in Belgium, where only 15% to 20% of Belgian young people really like going to school (Bradshaw et al., 2006, as cited in Vyverman & Vettenburg, 2009). A number of other studies of school satisfaction indicate several determinant variables of school satisfaction, which can be categorised into

Figure 3.2  Well-being and school experience
demographic characteristics, personality characteristics and contextual characteristics.

3.5.2.1 Demographic characteristics

Demographic characteristics include variables of gender, grade and SES. Research on the influence of gender on school satisfaction demonstrates disagreement among findings. Some studies found no difference in school satisfaction based on gender (Elmore & Huebner, 2010; Hui & Sun, 2010; Tenney, 2011; Zullig, Patton, & Huebner, 2011), while other researchers found that female students reported slightly higher levels of school satisfaction than males (DeSantis King et al., 2006; Engels et al., 2004; Karatzias, Power, Flemming, Lennan, & Swanson, 2002).

Findings across numerous countries, however, show that student satisfaction correlates negatively with grade level. In China, the higher the grade, the lower the level of student school satisfaction (Tian, Wang, & Gilman, 2010). In Croatia and Connecticut samples, as students progressed through the grades from elementary school to high school, satisfaction with school declined (Malley et al., 2003). Kong (2008) reports that primary school students in Hong Kong feel better about their learning experiences and quality of school life than those of secondary students. Middle school students in the USA reported higher levels of school satisfaction than high school students (DeSantis King et al., 2006). An explanation for these findings is that as students get older more pressure is placed upon them, such as more homework, more examinations and more standardised tests. The atmosphere of learning is more competitive and many teachers in the higher grades are less supportive and interested in student development (Malley et al., 2003).
Similarly there are inconsistent findings about the influence of SES on school satisfaction. School economic conditions normally determine the type of environment they provide for students. For low SES schools, satisfaction with school relates to structural aspects of school, whereas for high SES schools, satisfaction with the structural aspect was not significantly associated with the sense of school belonging (Cemalcilar, 2010). Haapasalo et al. (2010) found that more favourable socioeconomic backgrounds explain more positive experiences in school. In contrast, Vyverman and Vettenburg (2009) and Zullig et al. (2011) found that SES was not related to any of the school climate or school satisfaction variables.

3.5.2.2 Intrapersonal characteristics

Research on school satisfaction provides evidence of the contribution of intrapersonal variables (i.e. personality characteristics) on school satisfaction. In their study of secondary schools in the USA, Huebner and Gilman (2006) found that students who reported very high levels of school satisfaction demonstrate significant higher scores of hope and internal locus of control. Hui and Sun (2010) found that the role of hope was as a mediated variable in the relationship between peer support, peer victimisation and school satisfaction. A study by Huebner et al. (2001) shows that hope also functions as a psychological strength between positive and negative school life events and student well-being. Karatzias, Power, Flemming, Lennan, and Swanson (2002) show that self-esteem is a good predictor of school satisfaction, and therefore, any attempt to increase levels of school satisfaction should consider how self-esteem might be enhanced through teaching practices.

Research on the relationship between school satisfaction and academic achievement reveal unpredictable findings. Some studies show a positive relationship between school achievement and school satisfaction, with higher achievement tending to be
correlated with more satisfaction with school (Cook & Halvari, 1999, as cited in Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002; Zullig et al., 2011). In a study of Hong Kong elementary school students (Hui & Sun, 2010) – a culture that emphasises learning and academic achievement – perceived academic performance is a significant predictor of school satisfaction. However, in the similar culture of Korea, even though educational achievement is the proudest achievement in student life and a key reason why they aspire to do well in school and acquire higher education, students showed lower school satisfaction than USA students (Kim & Park, 2003, as cited in Park & Huebner, 2005). Similarly, despite success in assessment of achievement, the findings of a Finnish study also show a remarkable proportion of students did not enjoy school activities, or going to school, or being at school (Haapasalo et al., 2010). Likewise, Whitley (2010) found that students with the highest levels of school satisfaction did not show statistically higher or lower level of academic achievement. Therefore, school satisfaction is not significantly associated with academic achievement. Moreover, children’s judgement of academic competence is likely to be more indicative of the quality of their school experience than objective indicators, such as test scores or grades, because academic competence represents perceptions of fitting in with the school curriculum (Baker, 1998).

3.5.2.3  Contextual characteristics

Research examining the association of environmental factors and satisfaction with schooling experience uses various terms describing school climate, for example, *perceived social support* (Vieno, Perkins, Smith, & Santinello, 2005), a *psychologically safe and caring classroom* (Baker, 1998), *social interaction with teacher* (Samdal et al., 1998), *school psychological environment* (Roeser et al., 1996), or *environmental events of schooling* (Huebner & McCullough, 2000).
Results from Baker (1999) confirm that students who like school and those who dislike school have different social experiences with teachers from when they are in the early stages of school (Grade 3 elementary school). Schools characterised by care and respect, and as supportive, will also be perceived by students as providing positive TSRs and peer relationships, and they will report greater school satisfaction (Ryan & Patrick, 2001). Teachers can create a culture for sensitive and responsive interaction among everyone in the school environment by personalising the school environment, making individual students feel valuable, and building self-esteem through acknowledging them (Danielsen et al., 2009). Likewise, students experience higher levels of school well-being when their teacher cares about them, and helps them in both academic learning and dealing with social-emotional problems (Eccles & Roeser, 2004).

Classroom instructional methods also contribute to school satisfaction. Through teaching practices, teachers can create a non-competitive, collaborative and task-focused atmosphere in their classrooms, which is conducive to producing better results in terms of educational achievement and well-being of their students (Meijer, 2007). Moreover, classrooms with a good academic climate indicated by high engagement in learning, may also lead to greater school satisfaction because they offer better opportunities for learning and developing capacities and interest. Shernoff et al. (2003) found that students feel most engagement and satisfaction in learning when they are involved in active learning.

In general, school satisfaction could be enhanced through providing a psychologically healthy educational environment (Baker et al., 2003; WHO, 2003). Huebner et al. (2009) propose the term positive school to explain school
characteristics that move their focus on wellness away from problem-centered approaches. Drawing from school satisfaction literature, they propose several key attributes of positive schools. First, a positive school underscores the importance of SWB to student academic achievement. Thus, schools that monitor student SWB by frequent and systematic assessment also show a belief that schools must be inhabited by emotionally healthy students. Second, in order to maximise the fulfilment of student needs, positive schools put their attention on student strengths and provide environmental support that match student needs. Positive schools treat students based on their individual differences in personality, abilities and interest. Third, positive schools facilitate supportive relationships among everyone in a school, particularly relationships between teachers and students. Finally, positive schools set the instructional tasks that promote student involvement, such as applying curricula that promote social-emotional learning, using challenging and interesting activities, emphasising creativity, and promoting intrinsic motivation. Similarly, the WHO (2003, p. 1) has defined characteristics of a healthy psycho-social environment in school as one that enhances social and emotional well-being by providing a friendly, rewarding and supportive atmosphere, promoting cooperation and active learning, rather than competition, facilitating supportive and open communications, valuing the development of creativity, preventing physical punishment, bullying, harassment and violence, and promoting equal opportunities for boys and girls.

3.5.3 The importance of school satisfaction on student outcomes

The promotion of the importance of student well-being is seen in a range of school literature (Konu & Rimpela, 2002). A number of studies provide evidence that school satisfaction can be a supportive or protective factor for specific student outcomes. Huebner, Suldo and Gilman (2006) reported the importance of happiness
at school as well as at home and community. Drawing from several studies, they indicate that happier students show active participation in classroom and extracurricular activities, behave appropriately, have better physical health, have better relationships with teachers and peers, and show higher school achievement. In contrast, students with lower levels of happiness are more likely to have problem behaviour expressed by peer victimisation, alcohol and drug use, poor relationships with teachers and parents, and disengagement from school (Huebner et al., 2006).

Student school satisfaction is also an important indicator of school adaptation (Baker & Maupin, 2009). Huebner and Gilman (2006) report that students who like school demonstrate significantly higher function on all psychosocial and academic variables compared to students who report low school satisfaction. Students with high levels of satisfaction demonstrate high levels of personal adjustment. High scores of adjustment reflect optimal social emotional functioning measured by interpersonal relations, relations with parents, sense of self-esteem and self-reliance. In academic outcomes measured by grade point average (GPA), there is a significant difference across high, average, and low levels of school satisfaction. These findings provide support to a previous study by Samdal et al. (1999) that found student satisfaction with school is the most likely predictor of academic achievement – the more students feel satisfied with school, the better their academic achievement.

School satisfaction also acts as a predictive factor of problem behaviour. Higher levels of satisfaction are associated with lower levels of problem behaviour. Elmore and Huebner (2010) found that school satisfaction predicts subsequent negative behaviour including withdrawal, and resistant and aggressive behaviour. DeSantis King et al. (2006) found that students who were satisfied with their school
experience reported lower levels of externalising and internalising behaviour. Externalisation is characterised and measured by delinquent and aggressive behaviour, and internalisation is assessed by behaviours that are withdrawn and express somatic complaints, anxiety or depression. In contrast, the lowest school satisfaction group reported a significantly higher clinical adjustment and emotional symptoms index which is used to indicate emotional disturbances (Huebner & Gilman, 2006).

3.5.4 Measures of school well-being

In response to finding the measures of positive SWB appropriate for children as limited, Huebner (1994) constructed the Multidimensional Students’ Life Satisfaction Scale (MSLSS) for children. This scale measures general or overall life satisfaction, as well as satisfaction with important specific domains (family, friends, school, living environment and self) and has been validated for students in Grades 3–12. Originally, the school satisfaction domain consisted of eight items in which students evaluated their satisfaction with school experiences as a whole. Each item is rated on a 6-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). The coefficient alpha for the school satisfaction item for this sample is .83, which indicates adequate reliability for this scale in this study (Huebner, 1994).

Tenney (2011) found that studies of school satisfaction have been primarily quantitative in design. Furthermore, most research on school well-being or school satisfaction uses all eight items of MSLLSS – SSS (e.g., Baker, 1999; DeSantis King et al., 2006; Zullig et al., 2011), whereas related research has removed the three reverse-keyed items of SSS (e.g., Long et al., 2012; Tenney, 2011). Other studies use a modified version of SSS or another measurement of school satisfaction (e.g.,
Epstein & McPartland, 1976; Samdal et al., 1999; Tian, Liu, et al., 2013). However, none of these studies have collected qualitative data.

To measure school well-being that comprises both school satisfaction and positive and negative affect, some studies used an additional measurement to assess to what extent an individual experience positive and negative affect at school during a certain period of time (Long et al., 2012; Tian, Liu, et al., 2013). Measures of positive and negative affect are described further in Section 3.6.4.

These measures of well-being are also typically based on self-reporting. Despite critiques of self-report measures, its use has been found to be essential in studies of well-being (Kashdan et al., 2008). This is because well-being is considered subjective – individuals construct their own perceptions (Deci & Ryan, 2008a), and this subjective perception is better explored by directly asking them about their satisfaction of life and related affects (Kashdan et al., 2008).

Chapter 5 presents the levels of school well-being reported by students, and Chapter 8 discusses EWB and related school experiences.

3.6 Emotions in academic settings

The significance of emotional experiences in educational settings has been recognised by researchers in different fields, including personality research, achievement motivation research, and educational studies focusing on a variety of emotions in education (Pekrun, 2009). Research focused on emotions in education show that students experience a wide range of emotions in academic settings (Pekrun, 2009), while the sources of these emotional experiences vary (Järvenoja & Järvelä, 2005). Emotion relevant to education settings are not only related to achievement contexts, but also to the content of learning and teaching, to the process
of cognitively generated knowledge, and to social interactions in the classroom and school (Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Gracia, 2014).

3.6.1 Defining emotions, moods and affects

A variety of definitions of emotions exist (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981) and in their analysis on 92 definitions and nine sceptical statements of emotions, Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) identified 11 categories based on the emotional phenomena and theoretical approaches emphasised. Park (2004) states that different definitions of emotions emerge from different theoretical approaches that describe or explain the emotional process from different perspectives: phenomenological, behavioural, physiological, cognitive, developmental, or clinical, as well as through theories outside psychology. Cabanac (2002) found no consensus in the literature on a definition of emotion. Moreover, the term is taken for granted in itself and, most often, defined in terms of reference to a list of expressions such as anger, disgust, fear, joy, sadness and surprise.

It is also the case, however, that many researchers reveal a working definition of emotions where there is consensus that emotions are best conceptualised as multi-component response tendencies (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009; Shuman & Scherer, 2014). Thus, emotion comprises subjective feelings, facial expression, cognitive processing, physiological change (e.g., cardiovascular and hormonal change), and occurs over a relatively short time span (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009; Fredrickson, 2001). In addition, Scherer, Schorr, and Johnstone (2001) suggest that other than these components above, emotions also consist of motivational components that comprise behavioural impulses and wishes (e.g., avoidance motivation in anxiety).
It is also of significance that the terms *emotion* and *affect* are often used interchangeably in the research literature. However, the emerging consensus is that emotions are but a subset of the broader class of affective phenomena (Fredrickson, 2001). Affect is present within emotions and other affective phenomena, such as physical sensations, attitudes, moods, and even affective traits (Fredrickson, 2001). Other researchers refer to affect in terms of feeling or mood (Russell & Barrett, 1999). Izard (1971, as cited in Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981, p. 349) defines feelings as the elementary subjective experiences which precede the more complex processes called emotion. Pekrun (2006) regards mood as low intensity emotions while Diner et al. (1999) use affect as a label for emotions and moods, and, from yet another perspective, Pekrun and Linnenbrink-Gracia (2014) regard affect as a more general construct that compiles various emotions and moods.

For the emotion theorists that emphasise the subjective or experiential aspect of emotions (Kleinginna & Kleinginna, 1981), an emotion typically begins when the individual evaluates situations either consciously or unconsciously, and constructs personal meaning from them (Fredrickson, 2001), or assesses whether the situation significantly affects their personal well-being (Lazarus, 1991). This then triggers a multi-response tendency that manifests into a multi-component system explained above, such as subjective experience, facial expression, cognitive processing and physiological change. In other words, the process of appraisal or the subjective evaluation of situations determines different emotional reaction and experience (Scherer et al., 2001).

### 3.6.2 Classification and variety of emotions

Different researchers define different kinds of emotion/affect based on discrete or dimensional approaches to conceiving of emotions. According to discrete
approaches, different emotions are experientially separate from one another (Barrett, 1998); therefore they are regarded as distinct or discrete phenomena (Pekrun, 2009). Research of motivation and emotion in learning contexts has broadly used discrete emotions in classifying emotions (Park, 2004). In the dimensional approaches, the two most important dimensions are valence (positive/negative) and activation/arousal (activating/deactivating) (Barrett, 1998; Pekrun, 2009), which produce four broad categories: activating positive, activating negative, deactivating positive, and deactivating negative emotions. However, most researchers used two broad terms: positive and negative emotions/affects (Izard, 2007). Both discrete and dimensional approaches can be used as complementary approaches rather than contradictory (Izard, 2007).

Lazarus (1991) defines positive and negative emotions based on the sources of emotion. Positive emotions refer to emotions resulting from benefits, such as attaining or subjectively advancing towards a goal, including happiness, joy, gratitude, or love; whereas negative emotions resulting from harm, loss, and threats are defined as negative emotions. Watson (1988, p. 1020) defines positive affect as something that reflects one’s level of pleasurable engagement with the environment or the extent to which an individual feels enthusiastic, energetic and alert; whereas negative affect reflects a general dimension of subjective distress and un-pleasurable engagement with the environment that comprises a broad range of aversive mood states (Watson, 1988; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988).

Based on exploratory research, Pekrun et al. (2002a) conclude that in academic settings students frequently experience emotions of enjoyment, hope and relief, as positive emotions, and anger, anxiety, hopelessness, shame and boredom, as negative
emotions. Academic settings comprise several achievement situations, such as attending class, studying, and writing tests and exams. Astleitner (2001) identifies five basic emotions that should be understood during instruction (the FEASP approach): fear, envy and anger as negative emotions, and sympathy and pleasure as positive emotions. Fredrickson (1998), in her broaden-and-build model of positive emotions identifies four positive emotions – joy, interest, contentment and love. These emotions do not represent a single affective state, but to closely related emotion terms.

3.6.3 Relationship between emotion, cognition and motivation

More recently, there seems to be agreement among scholars that emotion, motivation and cognition are overlapping constructs that are closely connected in many cases (Pekrun, 2006). By implication, even though it could possible to analyse these three constructs separately, it is often difficult to set them apart empirically.

Pekrun (2009) explains the relation of emotion and motivation in three ways. First, most emotion theorists regard specific motivational impulses as an integral part of emotions – for example, anxiety and anger are associated with flight and fight behavioural tendencies. Second, emotions can be preceded, triggered and modulated by motivational processes; in this situation, emotion is the outcome of motivation. Third, emotions can also influence subsequent motivational process – for example, when students feel enjoyment in learning, this feeling can motivate them to creatively engage with the material.

Lazarus (1991) argues that emotion and cognition have bi-directional relationships. On the one hand, emotion is a response to cognitive activity, which generates meaning. Emotion is the result of a process of appraisal to a condition that
significantly affects personal well-being. On the other hand, emotion may influence
the individual’s subsequent thoughts and emotions. Moreover, Lazarus (1991)
highlights the role of cognitive activity in motivation and emotion. Cognitive
activities generally guide the individual to determine the goal and means, to evaluate
the values and alternative actions, and to choose the action. Emotion without thought
would be mere activation impulse without direction. Motivation without cognition is
a state of activation, but is diffuse and undifferentiated. Therefore, emotion and
motivation include cognition. Neuropsychology research has also reports a strong
association between student emotion and thinking processes (Elias et al., 1997)
Learning activities cannot be considered in their cognitive aspect only, because the
emotional centre and cognitive aspect of the brain are interwoven and work
synergistically in the learning process.

Fredrickson’s theory of emotions (2001) articulates the different roles of positive and
negative emotions on human adaptation. Park (2004) cites arguments from several
studies that positive and negative emotions play different roles in cognitive
processes. These different roles are described in the following section.

3.6.3.1 The effect of positive emotions

Positive emotions are regarded as the markers of an individual’s overall well-being
or happiness (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009). Positive emotions are also claimed to have
more adaptive responses because they broaden an individual’s cognitive abilities and
behaviours (Fredrickson, 2001). However, positive emotions are marginalised by
research on emotions. Compared with negative emotions, positive emotions are few
and are discussed with a relative lack of differentiation (Fredrickson, 1998).
Fredrickson (1998) proposes a broaden-and-build model of positive emotions. She claims that positive emotions broaden the individual’s momentary thought-action repertoire, and in turn builds the individual’s enduring personal resources. Drawing on numerous experimental studies, Fredrickson (1998, 2003) concludes that positive emotions broaden the scope of attention, the scope of cognition, and the scope of action. People who experience positive emotions tend to have a broader pattern of thinking. When they face a problem, they think differently and perform better on creative thinking tests. Their problem-solving thinking is flexible, creative and holistic (Fredrickson, 1998, 2003; Pekrun, 2009).

Moreover, Fredrickson (1998, 2003) suggests the effect of positive emotions in building personal resources includes physical resources (developing coordination, strength and cardiovascular health), intellectual resources (developing problem solving skills and learning new material), psychological resources (developing resilience, optimism, sense of identity and goal orientation), and social resources (solidifying bonds and making new bonds). Furthermore, positive emotions undo the after effects of negative emotions and protect health, affecting individual longevity. In summary, positive emotions change how people think and how they act (Fredrickson, 2003).

In regard to the school context, positive emotions increase student engagement in learning, which results in higher levels of school-related functioning (Reschly et al., 2008). Karatzias et al. (2002) found that positive and negative emotions correlate with school satisfaction. Similar results are also reported by Lewis et al. (2009), with positive emotions demonstrating significant incremental validity in predicting school satisfaction, adaptive coping and student engagement. Moreover, Pekrun, Göetz,
Titz, and Perry (2002b) report significant relationships between positive emotions and intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, and academic achievement.

Even though positive emotions are assumed as the emotions that help learners concentrate on learning (Park, 2004), experimental mood research has assumed that positive emotions can also have a detrimental effect to motivation and cognitive performance (Pekrun, 2009). People with positive emotions tend to appraise a situation unrealistically, process the information superficially, and lessen their motivation in pursuit of a challenging goal (Pekrun, 2009). In an experimental study, Seibert and Ellis (1991) found that compared to control group students with a neutral mood, happy and sad students produce greater irrelevant thoughts – thoughts that do not facilitate successful task performance – and that impacts their performance on memory tasks.

3.6.3.2 *The effect of negative emotions*

Negative emotions are believed to inhibit an individual’s thoughts and behaviours (Reschly et al., 2008). Neuropsychology theorists explain that when people experience negative emotions, the older limbic brain takes over the thinking brain, with the consequence that there is a reduction in focusing on task and flexibility of problem solving (Elias et al., 1997). Negative emotions affect cognition in two specific ways, through the activation of memory biases and the activation of attention biases (Roeser, et al, 1998). Students tend to recall memories of negative emotional events, and these negative memories seem to maintain or foster negative affect. Moreover, emotions can force a person to put attention on other aspects of a situation that are particularly consistent with those emotions, consequently affecting student learning and performance in school (Roeser et al., 1998). Experiencing frequent
negative emotions during school has also been associated with disengagement behaviour (Reschly et al., 2008).

Other researchers argue that positive and negative emotions play different roles in cognitive processes (Bolte, Goschke, & Kuhl, 2003; Pekrun, 2009). The experimental research on moods reveals that negative affect supports analytic processing so that thinking becomes more focused and detail-oriented (Pekrun, 2009). Because of different roles between positive and negative emotion, Boekaerts (2007) suggests that the presence of mild negative emotions under sub-optimal learning is beneficial to reduce the chance of students relaxing combined with overestimation and insufficient effort. Similarly, Fredrickson and Losada (2005) propose a good ratio of positive and negative emotions for optimal mental health that is more than 2.9:1.

3.6.3.3 Relation of school and learning environment and emotions

The significance of emotional experiences on student motivation, cognitive performance and personality development has been clearly recognised in the research literature. However, research specifically on student emotions in education is still neglected (Pekrun, 2009). Park (2004) identifies that research on emotion in learning contexts has been conducted actively from two approaches. One approach has concentrated on fostering affective dimensions of human learning, including moral development, spiritual development, aesthetic development, motivational development, social development, and emotional development. An example of a program that promotes social-emotional development can be seen SEL curricula (Elias et al., 1997). The other approach is focused on student emotional states in the learning context (Park, 2004). Pekrun (2005) argues that research on emotional states is more focused on the interrelationship between emotions, and academic learning
and achievement. In comparison, the impact of classroom instruction, learning environments and social context on student emotions has been largely unexplored. Therefore, base rates of knowledge concerning the occurrence, frequencies and variety of emotions in different kinds of learning environments is limited (Pekrun, 2005). Moreover, most studies addressing the impact of student perceptions of learning environments on student emotions also focus on anxiety, while other emotions have received little attention (Frenzel et al., 2007).

There were few studies of the impact of learning environments, classroom instructions, and social context on student emotions until the 1990s (Pekrun, 2005; Pekrun & Linnenbrink-Gracia, 2014). Research on the impact of classroom instructions on student achievement and emotions is reported by Gläser-Zikuda, Fuß, Laukenmann, Metz, and Randler (2005). This study measured student emotions through well-being, interest and anxiety. Results show that a student-centred approach that is called the ECOLE (Emotional and Cognitive aspect of Learning) approach has a positive impact on achievement, but has no general effect on student interest and emotions. This study also indicates that emotional interactions between teachers and students are regarded as an important factor for student feelings and motivation. In a further study, Gläser-Zikuda and Fuß (2008) found that the instructional quality of teacher influenced student well-being.

Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, and Milburn (1995) conducted a comparative study between different instructional approaches on young children’s learning outcomes. Compared to students engaged in teacher-centred instruction, students in child-centred programs showed higher academic achievement and rated higher with a set of motivational variables that included higher expectations for success with school-like tasks, ability
to tackle more challenging math problems, showing more pride in their accomplishments, having less dependency on asking adults for permission and approval, and worrying less about school.

Assor, Kaplan, Kanat-Maymon and Ruth (2005) report the impact of directly controlling teacher behaviour (DCTB) on student emotions and engagement in learning. In this study, teacher behaviours included not letting students progress at their preferred pace, giving frequent directives to students, or not allowing students to have different opinions to those of the teacher. The study found that DCTB can arouse negative student emotions, such as anger and anxiety, and in turn these emotions restrict student academic engagement.

Pekrun, Elliot, and Maier (2006) report that mastery of achievement goals were positive predictors of course-related enjoyment of learning, expressing hope and pride, and negative predictors of boredom and anger. Performance-approach goals were positive predictors of pride, whereas performance-avoidance goals were positive predictors of anxiety, hopelessness and shame. Göetz, Pekrun, Hall, and Haag (2006) indicate that perceived positive reinforcement of achievement, teacher enthusiasm, and elaborative instructions are positively related to student enjoyment and pride, and negatively related to anger and boredom. Similarly, Frenzel, Göetz, Lüdtke, Pekrun, and Sutton (2009) found that teacher enjoyment and enthusiasm during teaching are associated positively to student enjoyment, suggesting transmission of positive emotions from teachers to students.

3.6.4 Measures of emotions

There are various methods for assessing student emotions, such as self-reporting, physiological measures and psychophysiological measures (Wosnitza & Volet,
Of these assessment types, self-reporting is the easiest method to administer. This method is usually used before and after the learning process, but it can also be used to access the emotion during the learning process. However, this method has several limitations, such as reporting for high social desirability because of its reliance on the tendency of respondents to average their ratings (Wosnitza & Volet, 2005). In addition, this method does not account for subconscious processes, and cannot access directly the process of emotion arousal, so it is not appropriate for examining rapid emotional process (Wosnitza & Volet, 2005).

Several self-report emotion measures are used in research on emotions. The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) developed by Watson et al. (1988) was designed as a brief, easy-to-administer scale that reliably measures positive affect and negative affect. PANAS-C was developed particularly for children by Laurent et al. (1999). This measure is useful to measure an individual’s overall level of positive and negative affect. The Achievement Emotion Questionnaire (AEQ) is other self-report that measure emotions that are frequently experienced by students in achievement settings (Pekrun, Göetz, et al., 2002). This instrument typically assesses emotions of anger, anxiety, boredom, enjoyment, hope, hopelessness, pride and shame.

Alternative techniques for measuring emotions include physiological measurements that involve neuroimaging techniques and analysis of peripheral physiological responses (recording of heart rate, skin resistance, cortisol levels, etc) (Pekrun, 2009). Other psychophysiological measurements may be better at measuring covert emotional arousal over time, such as facial electromyography and Facial Action
Coding System (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009). However, these alternative assessments are not commonly used in research.

3.7 Self-determination theory

Self-determination theory (SDT) is a macro-theory motivation theory developed to understand human motivation (Reeve et al., 2004). The theory assumes that people have inherent growth tendencies and innate psychological needs. This theory also addresses how these tendencies and needs interact with social-contextual conditions that nurture or hinder these inner resources (Reeve et al., 2004; Ryan & Deci, 2000b). When these needs are satisfied by the social context, intrinsic motivation, positive function and psychological well-being are facilitated. In contrast, when thwarted, intrinsic motivation, self-regulation and well-being are undermined (Reeve et al., 2004;Ryan & Deci, 2000b).

According to SDT, the three basic psychological needs are the need for autonomy, the need for competence and the need for relatedness. Similar to SDT, Connell and Wellborn (1991) propose the self-system processes theory. This theory views that the development of self is influenced by active processes in which the individual seeks out experiences in social contexts that facilitate the fulfilment of the three fundamental needs of competence, autonomy and relatedness. In addition, the individual evaluates their status with respect to the extent to which the social context supports these needs.

The need for autonomy is also a need to experience behaviour endorsed by the self (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2004). An autonomous individual has a high degree of sense of choice with respect to initiating and regulating their own behaviours (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Jang, Reeve, Ryan, & Kim, 2009), and
experiencing connectedness between their actions and personal goals and values (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). The need for competence refers to feeling effective in their interactions within social environments and experiencing optimal challenges that exercise capacities and skills (Jang et al., 2009; Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2004). Moreover, Connell and Wellborn (1991) point out that this need is related to capabilities that produce desired outcomes and avoid negative outcomes. The need for relatedness is the need to feel worthy, caring for and being cared by others, having a sense of being secure, and belongingness and connectedness with other individuals and community (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Jang et al., 2009; Ryan & Deci, 2004).

SDT assumes that the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness are universal psychological needs (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Reeve et al., 2004). A number of studies provide evidence that these needs are valid cross-culturally, not only embedded in individualist cultures but also in collectivist culture (e.g., Jang et al., 2009; Sheldon, Elliot, Kim, & Kasser, 2001; Tian, Chen, et al., 2013). In both individualist and collectivist cultures, unique variance in student optimal learning and emotional well-being can be explained by experiencing satisfaction of these three needs (Sheldon et al., 2001).

3.7.1 Self-determination theory in an educational context

In many societies, school is the central cultural social context for children and adolescents (Connell & Wellborn, 1991). When students walk into a classroom, they are energised by a set of needs, interests and values (Reeve et al., 2004). In addition, students innately possess curiosity and love of learning (Ryan & Deci, 2004). Therefore, it is assumed in this thesis that the educational environment should function as a support system to facilitate this innate nature and self-determined
striving. When a classroom acknowledges and supports these needs, students experience satisfaction and their behaviours reflect active engagement, positive emotionality (interest, excitement, confidence) and psychological growth (Reeve et al., 2004). On the other hand, classroom environments that are not supportive require students to put aside their personal preferences and instead follow the instructional agenda of classroom activities (Jang et al., 2009; Reeve et al., 2004).

Specifically, SDT assumes that contextual elements that nurture the psychological needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness provide support for autonomy, structure and involvement respectively (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Reeve, 2004). In the school context, the need for autonomy can be supported by teachers through support for student autonomy. Support for autonomy refers to the extent to which students have freedom to determine their own behaviours (Skinner & Belmont, 1993) and have a sense of connection between action and individual goals (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). The important learning condition that supports autonomy is the minimisation of the use of evaluative pressure, the sense of coercion and control, and external rewards (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Skinner & Belmont, 1993).

Comparing research on what teachers are doing during teacher-student interactions, Reeve (2004) concludes that autonomy-supportive teachers and controlling teachers can be distinguished through the set of instructional behaviours, the set of conversational statements, and the set of subjective impressions. Specifically, teacher behaviours that support student autonomy include providing opportunities for students to voice and make choices in their school activities and work in their own way, fostering student interest in academic learning with a rationale for why a
learning activity is relevant and useful (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Reeve et al., 2004; Skinner & Belmont, 1993), involving students in meaningful decision making (Roeser & Eccles, 1998), arranging learning materials and seating arrangements to encourage active learning, encouraging effort, praising progress, listening carefully, replying wholeheartedly to student questions, relying on informational and non-controlling language, acknowledging student perspectives, and accepting the expression of negative affect (Reeve et al., 2004).

In contrast, a typical teacher-student interaction that undermines student autonomy is coercion. In this interaction, students are pressured and forced to accept certain goals and behave in a certain way (Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). In the classroom, controlling teachers take the dominant role (e.g., hold the instructional materials and use directives or commands), direct students towards a right answer, evaluate using critiques, and motivate through demands and control (Reeve, 2004). Pelletier and Sharp (2009) argue that controlling teachers use authoritarian styles. Within the flow of instruction, the teacher utters directions and makes commands such as *should, have to, must,* or *got to* to direct student work. They use controlling questions (e.g., ‘Can you do what I showed you?’) (Reeve & Jang, 2006). They do not allow students to work at their own pace and their motivational statements are threats, criticisms and deadlines (Assor et al., 2005). In order to ensure that learning occurs, educators also make use of external controls to shape the learning climate. In such controlling conditions, students show lack of engagement, superficial learning, challenge avoidance, and proneness to negative emotionality (Jang et al., 2009; Reeve et al., 2004). Feelings of enjoyment, enthusiasm and interest in learning are frequently replaced by feelings of anxiety, boredom or alienation (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009).
The need for competence can be facilitated by the classroom with an optimal level of structure. Structure refers to the amount and clarity of teacher expectations about what students should do to achieve desired academic outcomes (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Reeve, 2006; Reeve et al., 2004; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Teachers can foster student feelings of competence by providing learning activities and teaching strategies that are developmentally appropriate to the level of students but optimally challenging, thereby students can expand their capabilities. Moreover, teachers can promote student feelings of efficacy by providing activities that students can master and actually understand (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Skinner & Belmont, 1993), clearly stating required procedures, organising classroom activities, pacing instruction, asking questions, and providing help and assistance (Reeve et al., 2004). When teachers convey feedback, teachers display positive regard to students (Roeser & Eccles, 1998), downplay evaluation and provide the feedback that consists of relevant information to help and support the students (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Skinner & Belmont, 1993).

In contrast, the need for competence can be threatened by social contexts that are characterised by chaos (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). Chaos in social contexts occurs when situations are non-contingent, inconsistent, random, arbitrary, discriminatory, or unfair. Essentially, chaos happens when students do not have sufficient information about how to achieve desired results, such as teachers not providing sufficient rationale for rules, specific strategies to accomplish tasks, opportunities for practicing independently, giving challenging tasks, or guidance and informative feedback for better improvement knowledge about, interest in, and emotional support for, better improvement (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997).
The need for relatedness is nurtured by teacher involvement. Involvement refers to the extent to which teachers have knowledge about, interest in, and willingness or dedication of psychological resources for their students (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Reeve, 2004). Teacher expressions of liking, valuing and respecting their students are associated with student feelings of relatedness (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009). In the classroom context, teachers can demonstrate their involvement through several behaviours, such as expressing affection, providing time for, being attuned toward, enjoying interactions with, and dedicating resources (aid, time, effort) to their students (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Reeve, 2004; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). The need for relatedness can also be supported through teacher messages to promote social interaction and mutual respect among classmates (Ryan & Patrick, 2001).

On the other hand, social interactions that undermine student needs for relatedness is the absence of involvement, and can be described in terms of neglect (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). In school contexts, these situations can be seen when teachers ignore or overlook students, when teachers show disregard, hostility and disaffection in communicating with their students, and when the general classroom or school climate is cold, distant and uncaring (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997).

3.7.2 The effect of satisfying basic psychological needs on student well-being

SDT contends that the three basic psychological needs are essential because all contribute to healthy psychological development (Ryan & Deci, 2000b). Much of the research guided by SDT provides the evidence of the role of each of these needs in psychological health and well-being in several life domains and situations, including in educational contexts.
Niemic et al. (2006) found that high school students who perceived their parents as providing for their needs and supporting them are likely to experience higher autonomous self-regulation for learning, greater psychological health (vitality and life satisfaction) and lower ill-being (depression, externalising problem). In a longitudinal study with secondary school students in Austria, Stiglbauer, Gnambs, Gamsjäger, and Batinic (2013) found a reciprocal and stable effect of positive school experiences and student happiness – a dimension of affective well-being. In this study, positive school experiences were measured by the extent to which students experience the three fundamental needs according to SDT at school. Positive school experiences promoted happiness over time, and in turn, happiness facilitated future positive school experiences.

In China, Tian, Chen, and Huebner (2013) examined the relationships between basic psychological needs satisfaction at school and school-related SWB. The findings provide evidence of significant bidirectional longitudinal relationships between satisfaction and the need for autonomy, competence and relatedness, and school satisfaction. Furthermore, satisfaction of the need for competence has significant bidirectional relationships with positive affect in school. In another study, Tian, Liu et al. (2013) found that satisfaction of the need for relatedness through experiencing social support from important persons in school are associated with student school well-being. In this study, sources of social support for early adolescents are parents and teachers; whereas for middle adolescents, friend and teacher support are significantly related to school well-being.

In their study with Korean college students Jang et al. (2009) discovered that most satisfying learning experiences are associated with perceived high levels of
autonomy together with high competence and relatedness. Furthermore, they found that student satisfaction of the need for autonomy is related to student academic achievement, learning engagement and lower negative affect. A longitudinal study by Roeser et al. (1998) examined the relation between the fulfilment of a sense of competence, autonomy and relatedness and student psychological adjustment. Based on the stage-environment fit approach this study shows that perceptions of positive teacher regard decrease depressive symptoms and anger, and increase self-esteem over time. In contrast, when students perceived that their sense of competence was not supported, this situation diminished self-esteem, and increased anger and depressive symptoms over time.

Considering the effect of satisfying basic needs on student well-being, it is important to explore the extent to which the context of schools in this present study have provided opportunities for students to satisfy their needs. As a school exists within a multilevel context, the discussions of the application of SDT in the educational context are also linked to each level of school (see Section 3.1), and are presented in Chapter 8.

3.8 Summary

Chapters 2 and 3 reviewed the literature from several sources: theoretical academic discourse, research findings, public policy documentation, news media, and informal commentary from blogging. The theoretical literature suggests that learning environments in school are critical for determining positive development of students. Among all aspects of learning environments this chapter focused discussion on academic press and relationships in school. Research on academic press reveals both positive and negative impacts on student achievement and well-being. Many studies
show evidence that relationships in school also have significant influence on student academic achievement and social emotional development. SDT and the contexts of school as a multilevel environment are used as theoretical lenses for this study. These theories are regarded as the most relevant when discussing student experiences in school, and in evaluating the extent to which these experiences support or undermine the fulfilment of basic psychological needs and the impact of these on student well-being.
Chapter 4  The research methodology
This chapter details the study design and its implementation in eight primary schools in an urban setting of East Jakarta, Indonesia. After listing the research questions, I discuss my approach to the research and its design. Finally, I discuss the methods used in each phase of study to gather, analyse and interpret the data. Primarily, the data comes from student perspectives, but the study also explores teacher responses to gain different perspectives on the issues addressed. In addition, this chapter discusses how the study deals with ethical issues, especially with children as the main respondents. The last section is a chapter summary.

4.1 Research questions

This study investigates the following question:

How do Indonesian primary school students in Jakarta experience their school?

While this question provides a focal point for the study, a number of more specific issues and questions are also relevant – most identified at the beginning of the study and another that emerged as the study progressed. The sub-questions identified at the beginning of the study are:

1. Are students satisfied with their school experience?
2. What kind of positive and negative emotions do students experience frequently in school?
3. What factors of the learning environment affect student emotions in school?
4. How do academic press and relationships at school affect the student’s school experience?
5. How does student well-being affect learning outcomes?
6. What are the characteristics of enjoyable school and learning environments?

During the process of data collection and analysis, a further question arose:

7. What is the extent to which schools have provided a psychologically healthy environment for students?

4.2 Approach to research

According to Creswell (2009), designing a research project requires the researcher to make explicit the worldview assumptions they bring to the study, their procedure of inquiry, as well as specific methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation. This is because the nature of the research problem and the issue being addressed, the researcher’s personal experiences, and the audience for the study, all affect selection of the research design.

Worldview, philosophical assumptions and paradigms all consist of beliefs or assumptions that guide inquiry (Creswell, Plano Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003, 2003). Mertens (2003, p. 139) defines a paradigm as “a conceptual model of a person’s worldview, complete with the assumptions that are associated with that view”. The classification of paradigms is debatable, but according to Cresswell and Plano Clark (2011), there are four main paradigms: post-positivism, constructivism, advocacy and participatory and pragmatism. Typically within educational and social research, all worldviews are further described in terms of five different elements: ontology (what is the nature of reality); epistemology (what is the relationship between the researcher and that being researched); axiology (what is the role of values); methodology (what is the process of the research); and rhetoric (what is the language of the research) (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).
The four commonly used paradigms identified above are each generally related to a certain kind of research methodology (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Post-positivism is often associated with quantitative approaches; constructivism is typically associated with qualitative approaches; advocacy and participatory worldviews are more often associated with qualitative approaches than quantitative approaches; and pragmatism is typically associated with mixed methods approaches. In general, research in social and behavioural science can be categorised into a trilogy of major research paradigms: quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

For more than a century, debate has surrounded the efficacy of quantitative and qualitative research paradigms, and has variously been described as the paradigm debate or paradigm wars (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The debate concerns underlying philosophical and methodological issues between post-positivism and constructivism (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Often, both quantitative researchers and qualitative researchers view their paradigm as the ideal for research. Quantitative researchers announce the superiority of hard and generalised data, while qualitative researchers reveal the supremacy of deep, rich observational data (Sieber, 1973, as cited in Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Moreover, due to the fundamental differences in the paradigms, purists from both sides assume that quantitative and qualitative research paradigms and their associated methods cannot and should not be mixed (Howe, 1988, as cited in Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004), because research paradigms are associated through one-to-one correspondence with the research methods (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). In contrast, as noted by Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003), the debate between the quantitative
and qualitative research purists seems to confuse epistemological beliefs with the research methods; however, epistemological belief does not dictate what particular methods have to be used in research. Further, Denzin and Lincoln (2005, as cited in Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) point out that different types of worldview or philosophical assumptions can be associated with different types of methods.

Beyond the quantitative and qualitative debates, the mixed methods approach emerges as “the third research paradigm” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 15) or “the third methodological movement” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a, p. 5). The mixed methods approach regards both quantitative and qualitative research as important and useful. Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of quantitative and qualitative research and the context of application leads mixed methods researchers to take a balanced or pluralist position. The mixed methods approach can mix or combine strategies in undertaking research, and use what Johnson and Turner (2003, p. 299) call “the fundamental principle of mixed research”. This principle states that using different strategies, approaches and methods in collecting data should likely result in complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses. This principle is also a major source of justification for mixed methods research, because its effective use will direct more effective results than the use of mono-method strategies (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). All stages or components of the research process can apply this principle (Johnson & Turner, 2003).

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) argue that taking a pluralist position reveals several advantages – first and foremost, it will advance knowledge because it improves communication among researchers from different paradigms (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Similarly, Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) argue that greater
dialogue between researchers can accelerate understanding of complex phenomena. Researchers can ascertain that some research questions may be answered using quantitative or using qualitative methods only, whereas others require mixed methods. Second, pragmatism explains how to mix research approaches fruitfully. Third, using a mixed approach can provide the best way to answer research questions, enabling insights provided by quantitative and qualitative research to be fitted together into workable solutions (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

On a philosophical level, mixed methods researchers tend to express a similar paradigm of thinking. Many mixed methods researchers over the years have promoted pragmatism as a philosophical partner of mixed methods for several major reasons. First, it rejects either or choices between constructivism and post-positivism. Second, it provides a search mechanism for practical answers to research questions and real-world circumstances (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Datta (1997) describes these criteria as practical, contextually responsive and consequential. Third, it acknowledges that the values of the researcher play a role in the interpretation of the results (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003b). Pragmatists decide what they want to study and how to conduct the studies based on their personal value system, especially for research that has pivotal societal consequences (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

Even though some researchers promote pragmatism as a philosophical partner for mixed methods, not all within the mixed methods research community agree that pragmatism is the most useful paradigm (Christ, 2013). Pragmatism is not the only philosophical paradigm compatible with combining quantitative and qualitative data in a single study (Christ, 2013), nor is mixed methods alone in its use of pragmatism
as its philosophical underpinning (Hall, 2013). Aside from pragmatism, the transformative-emancipatory paradigm can also work with a mixed methods approach (Hall, 2012). Transformative scholars also reject the either or choices of constructivism and post-positivism; rather they choose any research method, and conduct their research based on the values that enhance social justice rather than individual researcher interest (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009). This paradigm places central importance on the lives and experiences of marginalised groups such as women, ethnic/racial minorities, members of the gay and lesbian communities, people with disabilities, and those who are poor (Mertens, 2003).

Beyond the use of a single paradigm that underpins mixed methods research, there are other points of view regarding paradigm use in mixed methods research. These include the a-paradigmatic stance, the complementary strength thesis, the multiple paradigms thesis, and the dialectical thesis (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009). Hall (2013) classifies these points of view into three basic categories: a-paradigmatic stance, the single paradigm approach and the multiple paradigm approach; while Teddle and Tashakkori (2009) outline three forms—the complementary strengths thesis, the dialectical thesis and the multiple paradigms thesis—categorising the multiple paradigm approach (Hall, 2012). Taylor and Medina (2013) state that research that combines methods and standards of quality from two or more paradigms is characterised as multi-paradigmatic research.

In the a-paradigmatic stance, the paradigm issue is ignored because it is unnecessary to discuss the link between epistemology and methods. Some scholars taking this stance focus on their work and use whatever methods they deem appropriate for their research questions (Hall, 2012; Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009). The complementary
strengths thesis states that when using mixed methods, the quantitative and qualitative components should be kept separate to draw on the strength of each paradigmatic position (Morse, 2003). The dialectical thesis assumes the contribution of the use of multiple paradigms helps develop greater understanding of the phenomena studied. These differences of assumption and perspective in the different paradigms can cause tensions, and so the important component for researchers in this stance is the ability to think dialectically by considering and interacting with opposite viewpoints of the different paradigms (Greene & Caracelli, 2003). Some scholars argue that the diversity of mixed methods may not be applied by a single paradigm. The multiple paradigm thesis therefore, contends that multiple paradigms may be more suitable for some mixed methods designs (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Consequently, the researcher has to decide the paradigm most appropriate for a particular mixed methods design for their study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

4.2.1 Research design

According to Creswell (2009), the nature of the research problem as well as the personal experiences and worldview of the researcher affect the choice of research approach, strategy and method. As a researcher with experience in quantitative design, I am more comfortable with the procedures of quantitative research. However, in undertaking the processes of qualitative research, I have discovered that qualitative methods of inquiry provide the opportunity for deeper understanding about the phenomena being studied.

In adopting a pluralist paradigm in this research, I have the freedom to choose the procedure and the research methods that best meet the research needs and purposes. According to Christ (2011, as cited in Christ, 2013), the researcher’s philosophical stance or worldview should not be so rigid as to restrict views to a singular paradigm,
nor limit the choice of how methods are conducted. In addition, Howe (1988, as cited in Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) argues that the research procedure or methods should not necessarily link to certain paradigms.

The design of this study can be described as mixed methods research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). There are strengths in using mixed methods research, such as achieving better or stronger inferences, finding greater differences in points of views and, at times, answering the questions better (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a). In other words, mixed methods research can enhance the quality of data interpretation because it generates more meaning and deeper understanding (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

The research problems also influenced the research design of this study. In reviewing the literature on school satisfaction, Tenney (2011) found that most use the quantitative approach, and that no qualitative study had yet been undertaken. However, findings from Thiessen (2006) contradict this position, citing many studies related to student experiences in elementary school that only used qualitative approaches. The questions guiding this study indicate mixed methodology as an appropriate design for this research for several reasons. First, insufficient data can result from a mono-method research. Quantitative and qualitative approaches provide different pictures and perspectives, each with its own limitations. Second, the results of a mono-method research study may provide incomplete understanding of a research problem, with further explanation needed to enhance understanding of the quantitative data by adding a qualitative design, or vice versa (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Inviting diverse ways of thinking, knowing and valuing into the study may achieve better understanding of the phenomena of interest (Greene & Caracelli,
2003). These reasons align to the fundamental principle in mixed methods research described above.

A quantitative approach in Phase 1 of this research identifies student levels of school satisfaction, the kinds of emotions they frequently experienced, and the names of subjects most and least favoured. The data cannot indicate why there were different levels of satisfaction, or why students experienced positive emotions more frequently than negative emotions. Thus, this data cannot be used to analyse why there was a range of school satisfaction levels among students despite studying in the same school and learning environment. Moreover, it is also insufficient in explaining why and how subjective experiences affect student emotions.

The quantitative data provided directions; I then used qualitative approaches in Phase 2 to gain an in-depth understanding of what was happening. The aim of Phase 2 was to explore student perspectives on school experiences, particularly with a view to identifying what factors of school and learning environments lead to students being satisfied with their school experience and having positive emotions in school. Additionally, the research was designed to identify the opposite – what factors of the school and learning environments lead to students having negative emotions and not being satisfied. Moreover, this phase explored student views of how their school and learning environments could be changed so they would enjoy studying. The voice of students in expressing their feelings and thoughts about their experiences in all aspects of school was therefore an important consideration in designing this research.

The research focused on student experiences from their point of view as learners. It was guided by the premise that students have unique perspectives on learning, teaching and schooling (Cook-Sather, 2006). While their views, perspectives and
experiences are paramount, teacher perspectives on teaching and learning were also explored, principally to complement information from student perspectives. Several studies of learning environments reveal differences between student and teacher perceptions of the same actual classroom environment (Fraser, 2002; Wahyudi & Treagust, 2004). Furthermore, I observed classrooms and schools in naturalistic settings in order to provide more insight on the data interpretation from a researcher perspective. The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods provided an approach that would likely deliver more accurate and complete findings of the issue being studied (Johnson & Turner, 2003).

4.2.2 Strategy of inquiry

Designs or models of mixed-method provide specific procedures or strategies of inquiry for conducting the research (Creswell, 2009). Several typologies of mixed methods design have been classified in different but overlapping terms by several authors of mixed methods research (e.g. Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). In general terms, however, the typology of mixed methods is considered by time order, priority of methodological approach, the degree of mixture of the methods used, and the ideological approach to a study (Creswell, 2009; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004).

This study used sequential timing: the quantitative phase incorporating the questionnaire comprised Phase 1, followed by the qualitative phase which aimed to collect in-depth information from the perspective of students and teachers. The priority of methodological approach reflects the status of the quantitative and qualitative components, which can be equal, or one component can be dominant. This research aimed to find a deeper understanding of the issue through the why and
how of the research questions; thus, the qualitative component had a dominant status over the quantitative component. The quantitative approach of this study aimed to find the what and how much of the research questions, so the quantitative data identified sub-samples that were explored more intensively for the qualitative data.

According to Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2011) and Morse’s (2003) classification, this study uses a sequential explanatory strategy, involving the collection and analysis of the quantitative data in Phase 1, followed by Phase 2 to collect and analyse the qualitative data. The forms of quantitative and qualitative data are separate but connected. The notation can be configured as: quan → QUAL (Morse, 2003). The capital letters of QUAL correspond to the priority of the approach in this mixed study, and the arrow represents the sequence of the approaches.

Morse (2003) states that when using mixed methods design, the methodological techniques for data collection should maintain congruence with the main method of the quantitative and qualitative design. The quantitative phase of this study used surveys as the main approach of inquiry. The cross-sectional survey is the most popular survey design in education and this research approach was used to collect data, at a particular point in time (Creswell, 2012). The qualitative phase was not guided by a specific approach or theory as suggested by Creswell (2007), such as phenomenology or grounded theory, and is better categorised as basic qualitative/interpretive research (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010). The goal of this approach is to explore how the events, processes and activities are perceived and understood by participants based on their experiences. This approach is more simplistic compared to other qualitative approaches, and shorter in terms of process as the researcher is not fully involved in the context. However, some
elements of grounded theory analysis were considered in the analysis of the qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Liamputtong, 2013).

The qualitative phase of this study met with characteristics of qualitative research and involved: collection of data in a natural setting; the researcher acting as the key instrument; gathering of multiple sources of data; use of inductive data analysis; focusing on the participant perspectives of meaning; appreciating the process of the research as emergent; use of a theoretical lens to view the study; interpretations based on declaring the researcher’s perspectives; and, aiming to develop a holistic picture of the central issue (Creswell, 2007, 2009). This study has also used the following qualitative inquiry data-collection techniques: narrative story and/or drawing, focus-group interviews and observations.

Data generated in this study was sourced from multiple methods for three reasons. First, to increase the amount of data collected and provide different information enabling data validation; second, such methods were more appropriate for certain sub-contexts of the research (Shaw, 1999); and third, since this study comprises student and teacher participants, mixed methods provides triangulation sources (Patton, 1999). Furthermore, this combination of data collection methods has also been described as useful for gathering both convergent and divergent evidence about the problem (Johnson & Turner, 2003).

4.3 Phases of the study

As discussed, the two phases of the study were sequential. This section describes in detail the settings of the study and the characteristics of the participants, and how the activities were implemented in each phase.
4.3.1 Setting and participants

This study was conducted in urban schools, located in Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia. Jakarta consists of five regions: Central Jakarta, North Jakarta, South Jakarta, West Jakarta, and East Jakarta. I selected an urban setting because it provided greater diversity in school characteristics to that of a rural setting. In Indonesian society, there is a general perception that school success is the entrance to achieving higher social status. While all parents are concerned about their children’s school success, in urban settings there is a higher proportion of parents with higher levels of education. Most urban parents and schools are concerned with how to ensure students get high academic scores (Kaluge et al., 2004), with a consequence that these schools are more demanding in their aspirations and expectations of their children’s academic achievements.

Primary school students aged 10 to 13-years-old in Year 6 and their teachers participated in this study, consisting of 345 Year 6 students and 17 teachers. Out of the 17 teachers, 15 were classroom teachers of the Year 6 student participants.

Participants consisted of 157 (45.51%) male students and 188 (54.49%) female students, with six (35.29%) male teachers and 11 (64.71%) female teachers. More parents of female students were interested in participation, influencing the gender composition of student participants. There are more female teachers in elementary school than male teachers, influencing the gender composition of teacher participants. This situation is in line with the data from World Bank (2015) that across the country and over the years, more than 70% of teachers in primary schools are women.
The age range of student participants was 10–13-years (mean = 11.08, standard deviation (SD) = .35): eight were 10-year-olds (2.32%), 303 were 11-year-olds (87.82%), 33 were 12-year-olds (9.56%), and only one was 13-years-old (.29%).

Investigation of school-related variables in primary school students is important because in this age group students develop their attitudes about schooling and form their identity as a learner (Baker, 1999). In addition, related to the research variable of identifying and investigating emotions, children from 10 to 12 years of age are mature enough to comprehend the concept of emotions. They also have an ability to experience and comment on different kinds of emotions, and an ability to attribute multiple sources of their emotions (Holder & Coleman, 2009).

4.3.2 Phase 1

Phase 1 consisted of selecting the participants for the survey, determining the procedures for developing the instruments and gathering the data, and the process of analysing the quantitative data.

4.3.2.1 Sampling

A multi-stage purposeful random sampling procedure (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2007a) was used because this combination of sampling is very powerful in increasing inference quality (internal validity and trustworthiness) and generalisability (Kemper, Stringfield, & Teddlie, 2003). Specifically, multistage random sampling was first used to select schools for the study.

In Indonesia, there are six types of primary school:

- public school
- public madrasah (religious school)
- private madrasah
• private secular
• private Muslim-affiliated
• private non-Muslim religious school (Newhouse & Beegle, 2006).

However, because only four types of primary school are under the authority of the MOEC (public school, private secular, private Muslim-affiliated, and private non-Muslim religious school) this study did not involve all Indonesian school types. Public and private madrasah were excluded since they are under the authority of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and use a different curriculum (Suryadarma, Suryahadi, Sumarto, & Rogers, 2006). In addition to public or private, school types can also be categorised by accreditation status; in common or popular terms, as excellent and regular schools.

In Phase 1, eight primary schools in one region of Jakarta using the multistage cluster random sampling technique were selected. Cluster sampling was chosen because the sampling unit is a group, such as a school or classroom, and not an individual (Ainley, 2006). The sampling scheme itself consisted of three stages. Stage 1 selected the district; Stage 2 the area; and, Stage 3 determined the schools based on school type and accreditation status.

I selected East Jakarta (Jakarta Timur) as the population for this study. The East Jakarta region consists of 10 districts (kecamatan) and one district with six areas (kelurahan) was randomly chosen in Stage 1 – labelled as PQ (a pseudonym). Not all areas have all school types; however, four of the six areas with all four primary school types were identified.

In Stage 2, I randomly selected two areas, kelurahan RS (pseudonym) and kelurahan JK (pseudonym). These areas have 21 public primary schools, four private secular schools, four private Muslim schools, and three private non-Muslim schools. Schools
categorised as excellent and regular were identified and the categories were used as additional criteria in the selection. Then, in Stage 3, I randomly selected two schools of each school type, with one of each type an excellent school, and the other a regular school. The process of random selection consisted of several steps: I wrote the name of the districts/areas/schools on a small piece of paper, folded these papers, closed my eyes, and then took one of the papers. However, I could not conduct the selection process of excellent private secular schools randomly because this school type was not available in the sampling area. Therefore, an excellent private secular school from another district in East Jakarta was selected. Finally, I had selected four excellent schools and four regular schools.

Prior to the data collection processes, I sought permission to conduct the research from the District Office of the MOEC. I then contacted the school principal for permission to conduct the research in the randomly selected schools. Out of eight schools selected, one school, an excellent private Muslim school, did not give permission, so I randomly selected an alternative excellent private Muslim school with the same criterion. Unfortunately, only 11 students in this school had parental consent forms for participation. Likewise, in one excellent public school, only seven parental consent forms were returned. Consequently, the school principals of these schools (excellent private Muslim and excellent public school) cancelled permission for me to conduct the research. Two more alternative schools needed to be identified. There was still one excellent private Muslim school available in the area, and this school accepted my invitation. However, I could not apply random selection for an excellent public school again, since there was no school of this type available in the area. I thus sought an alternative excellent public school in another district in East
Jakarta and selected one. Finally, I had an excellent public school, from outside the PG district, but still in East Jakarta.

Table 4.1 presents a summary of the multistage cluster random sampling in this study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multistage random sampling</th>
<th>Stage 1</th>
<th>Stage 2</th>
<th>Stage 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Clusters</td>
<td>Ten districts</td>
<td>Six areas/villages</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective</td>
<td>Selection of one district out of 10</td>
<td>Selection of two areas out of six</td>
<td>Selection of eight schools: two of each school type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Selection process</td>
<td>Random</td>
<td>- Identified districts where four school types represented</td>
<td>- Identified school types: 21 public schools, four private secular schools, four private Muslim schools, and three private non-Muslim schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Selected two areas, out of four districts which have all school types</td>
<td>- Identified school status (excellent and regular) in each school type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Selected one excellent and one regular school when more than one school status of each school type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Due to unavailability of school with required criteria, selected an excellent public school and an excellent private secular school from other districts of East Jakarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of cluster selected</td>
<td>PQ</td>
<td>JK and RS</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In each school, I invited Year 6 students to participate in the survey. In total, 345 students were involved in the survey stage. The number of student participants in each school varied. All students were from eight primary schools in Jakarta, with 40 (11.59%) from School A, 72 (20.87%) from School B, 63 (18.26%) from School C,
74 (21.45%) from School D, 43 (12.46%) from School E, 11 (3.19%) from School F, 27 (7.83%) from School G, and 15 (4.35%) from School H (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>11.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>20.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>18.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>21.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>12.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School F</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School G</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School H</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>345</td>
<td><strong>100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students who participated in this survey are from four different school types. Schools C and E are public schools, Schools A and F are private secular schools, Schools B and H are private Muslim schools, and Schools D and G are private non-Muslim schools.

4.3.2.2 Instruments

In Phase 1, data were collected in a survey. Survey design is well known as a time efficient way of collecting data (Creswell, 2009). In this survey, a self-administered questionnaire was incorporated to collect quantitative data, measured by the SSS and the Positive and Negative Affect Scale (PNAS). This questionnaire was designed to be completed by the research participants without intervention from the researchers (Wolf, 2008). Prior to conducting the survey, I developed the instruments by modifying existing instruments from similar studies, followed by testing in a pilot study.
Scale development

The development and translation of the SSS and PNAS into new instruments included several steps: analysing the items in the pre-existing instruments; identifying a number of items that would best measure the constructs; choosing the short list of items; translating the items into Indonesian; and, re-translating the items back into English. The process of re-translation enabled checking for accuracy of the translations.

School Satisfaction Scale: This scale was developed from pre-existing instruments used for measuring school satisfaction, such as the Quality of School Life Scale (Epstein & McPartland, 1976), the School Satisfaction subscale of MSLSS (Huebner, 1994), the Questionnaire Student Satisfaction with school (Samdal et al., 1999), and the Children’s Overall Satisfaction with Schooling Scale (COSSS: Randolph, Kangas, & Ruokamo, 2010). From a set of items from several pre-existing instruments, I selected the items that can generally be categorised as items about satisfaction with school in general. I also included some items related to the learning process. In some cases, I slightly modified the wording of items. An initial instrument tested in the pilot study consisted of 14 items from the SSS. The pre-existing instrument had inversely-scored statements; however, previous studies on school satisfaction in elementary students (Tenney, 2011; Whitley, 2010) found that children have difficulty in responding appropriately to negatively-phrased statements. In addition, when pre-adolescent children are unable to respond appropriately to negative items on rating scale, their responses are biased (Marsh, 1986). Therefore, all statements on the SSS in this study are positive statements, so there are no inversely-scored statements.
Positive and Negative Affect Scale: This scale was dominantly modified from the PANAS-C (Laurent et al., 1999) and the School Children Happiness Inventory (Ivens, 2007). In addition, some of words for emotions were derived from the Academic Emotions Questionnaire (Pekrun, Götz, Titz, & Perry, 2002a). Originally, the response set of items used in PANAS-C measured emotional intensity and consist of values 1 (very slightly or not at all), 2 (a little), 3 (moderately), 4 (quite a bit), and 5 (extremely). In this study, however, I changed the response set of the items to measure frequency: 1 (none of the time), 2 (a little of the time), 3 (some of the time), 4 (most of the time), and 5 (all the time). According to Diener, Sandvik, and Pavot (1991), people are more accurate when estimating frequency of affective conditions and are more biased when assessing the intensity of an emotional experience. Mroczek and Kolarz (1998) used a frequency scale in their study about the positive and negative effect of age.

The translation process of PNAS into an Indonesian version required consideration of the possibility of various meanings of the words, since children’s expression of emotion may be different across cultures. In most cases the Indonesian words for emotions in the PNAS were found to align to the structure of the Indonesian emotional lexicon (Shaver, Murdaya, & Fraley, 2001). Some items in PNAS, however, were seen to be similar in meaning: for example, scared, frightened and afraid. This led to discarding two of these items.

Pilot study
A pilot study was conducted with students in Years 5 and 6 from two primary schools – one public school and one private school. I selected these schools by convenience, but also because of their similar characteristics to the study schools. The age range of the students was 10 to 12-years. I sent the parental consent forms
several days before conducting the pilot study. A total of 113 students with parental consent forms were involved in the pilot study. In this pilot study, the students were assured that their response would be anonymous.

The pilot study proved to be an important stage in scale development. There were several steps in the process of scale development. First, I selected the initial items based on student understandings of the statements or the words in the questionnaire. In the pilot study, the SSS consisted of 14 statements and the PNAS consisted of 44 words about emotions or feelings. The students were instructed to read the instruments and to identify by a circle any statements in the SSS or words about feelings or emotions in the PNAS they did not understand. The students in the pilot study did not have any difficulty understanding any statements in the SSS. In the PNAS, more than five students did not understand nine of the words about emotions or feelings. If more than five children did not understand the meaning of a word, I deleted that word from the scale. Laurent et al. (1999) used this method when they developed the PANAS-C scale. Using this criterion I eliminated nine words, leaving 35 items.

In the second step, I generated a validity and reliability test on the 14 items of the SSS and 35 items of the PNAS. The results showed that all the items in the SSS have item-total correlations that exceed .30. In the PNAS, two items have a corrected item-total correlation less than .30 (item NE19: disgusted and NE32: hopeless). An item is considered as a weak item if it has a corrected item-total correlation less than .30 (Nunnally & Berstein, 1994, as cited in Laurent et al., 1999). However, these two items were not eliminated, and still used in the final instrument. The reliability test of
the instruments of the SSS, PAS and NAS in the pilot study revealed a *Cronbach’s Alpha* value of .75, .74, and .73, respectively.

The pilot study also gathered other information, such as checking the suitability of the format of the questionnaire, testing the administration procedure, and ensuring the students feel comfortable taking the survey.

**Final instruments**

The questionnaire consisted of four sections: demographic data, two open response questions, the SSS and the PNAS.

1. Demographic data included gender, age, grade level and school name.

2. Open questions asked the students:
   a. What are your most favourite subjects at school?
   b. What are your least favourite subjects at school?

3. The SSS measures the students’ level of satisfaction with school. According to Huebner (1994), evaluating school satisfaction as a whole without specifying a particular aspect is the best judgement. Response sets in each item consist of a 5-point Likert response: 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neither agree nor disagree), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree). All statements in the SSS in this study are positive items, so there are no inversely-scored statements. The final SSS instrument consists of 15 statements in Bahasa Indonesia. All items on the SSS have corrected item-total correlations that exceeded .30. The reliability test of the final SSS revealed a *Cronbach’s Alpha* value of .86.

4. The PNAS consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. In this study, the response set of the items were: 1 (none of the time), 2 (a little of the time), 3 (some of the time), 4 (most of the time), and 5 (all the
time). The final PNAS in this study comprised 18 items of positive emotions and 17 items of negative emotions in Bahasa Indonesia. All items are arranged in a balanced order with two positive items followed by two negative items. The corrected item-total correlations of the *Negative Affect Scale* (NAS) exceeded .30; however, in the *Positive Affect Scale* (PAS), there were two items with a corrected item-total correlation less than .30 (item PE17: alert and item PE34: relaxed). If these items were deleted, it increased the internal consistency reliability from .84 to .85. The reliability test of the final instruments of the PAS and NAS revealed a *Cronbach’s Alpha* value of .85 and .86, respectively. Despite the difficulty in specifying a single score of satisfactory reliability level a general rule is that reliabilities of scale should not be below .80, therefore the SSS and the PNAS can meet a satisfactory level (Carmines & Zeller, 1979).

4.3.2.3 *Data collection process*

The process of data collection comprised survey administration, and data collection of student academic achievement from school documents.

*Survey administration*

Following the pilot study, and further development and refinement of the instrument, I conducted the survey. All students in Year 6 in the selected primary schools were invited to participate in the quantitative and qualitative phases, and each provided with a parental permission request. The return rate of parental consent forms varied between schools. In three schools, the parental return rate was almost 100%, whereas in the other schools, it was between 40 and 60%. Even though participation in research is voluntary, in order to interest students in this study, I explained the purpose of the research and directly distributed the parental permission requests to the students in the class. However, since students do not have their own right to give
consent, the return rate depended on their parents. In addition, teachers played a pivotal role in chasing up the returns.

Distribution of the questionnaire was conducted in each school during school hours; although allocation of time for completing the questionnaire differed in each school, depending on time and space availability. In order to keep confidentiality of the data, each student was given a code number, which they wrote on the questionnaire. A link was established between the student’s name and the questionnaire number so the students could be re-identified for subsequent participation in the second phase of the study. However, I kept the data sheet with the student names and questionnaire numbers confidential.

Together with an assistant, I was present in the classroom while the students completed the questionnaire (no teacher was present). To ensure the students understood the questions and gave their responses at a similar pace with others, I read aloud the items one by one. Most participants completed the questionnaire in approximately 30 minutes.

**Student academic achievement data**

As stated in Sub-question 5 (see Section 4.1), this study examines how student school experience affects learning outcomes. In this study, student academic achievement defines the learning outcome. The average score of all subjects (GPA) at the end of Semester 1 was used to determine academic achievement. In addition, I calculated the average score of the three core subjects that are examined in the NE. Therefore, at the end of the semester, I asked the schools to provide academic achievement data for all student participants.
4.3.2.4 Quantitative data analysis

The purpose of the quantitative data analysis was to answer Sub-questions 1, 2 and 5 (see Section 4.1). In addition, quantitative data were also used to select student participants for Phase 2 (qualitative study). The questionnaire revealed numerical data that reflected individual scores of level of school satisfaction, level of positive emotions, and level of negative emotions. All individual data were aggregated into all participant data.

The first step of the quantitative analysis is descriptive data analysis. Frequencies and percentages describe the demographic data—schools, classes, gender and name of the most favourite and the most disliked subjects. Frequencies/percentages, mean and SD, are used to describe the data on the age of students, level of school satisfaction, positive emotions, and negative emotions. Bell-curve distribution of individual scores of school satisfaction, individual mean scores of positive emotions, and individual mean scores of negative emotions describe the range of score distribution. In addition, the mean and SD of every item of SSS and PNAS are displayed.

Furthermore, I executed inferential statistics analysis, such as a t-test and Pearson’s Product Moment correlation of related variables. The t-test examined the difference between school satisfaction and positive emotions based on gender. The t-test analysis was also reckoned to investigate the differences in experiencing positive and negative emotions and the difference in academic achievement between groups of students with the highest level of school satisfaction and those with the lowest. In addition, I computed the correlation to find the relationship between school satisfaction and academic achievement. I used Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer software to assist in the analysis of all these computations. The results of the quantitative analysis are described in Chapters 5 and 6.
4.3.3 Phase 2

This section describes the sampling technique, the process of developing the instrument, the procedure in gathering the data, and the process of analysing data qualitatively. In addition, as this study used mixed methods design, the last part of this section describes the process of mixed data analysis.

4.3.3.1 Sampling

I chose a nested sample as the sample selection procedure in this second phase, in which sample members of a group of students in the qualitative phase are selected from the students in the quantitative phase (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007b). I used the student levels of school satisfaction data to select participants for Phase 2. Out of 345 students in the quantitative phase, I selected 67 students for the qualitative phase. The selection of these students used purposive sampling: intentionally selecting participants who experienced the central phenomenon or the key concept being explored in the study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). School satisfaction level is the central phenomenon investigated in this study.

Based on their questionnaire responses, I sorted students in each school in rank order from the highest to the lowest level of school satisfaction. In each school, students selected to participate in focus-group interviews and story writing or drawing were the 10–15% of students with the highest level and the 10–15% students with the lowest level of school satisfaction. Selection of these extremes was expected to achieve comparability information across different groups – students with the highest level of school satisfaction and those with the lowest (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009, p. 175). Due to a small number of student participants in two schools (School F: 11 students and School H: 15 students), the focus-group interviews and story writing or drawing was not conducted in these schools. In one school (School G), even though
the number of students was enough to set up student focus-group interviews (27 students), I only received permission for quantitative data collection. Therefore, out of eight schools, the focus-group interviews and student story writing or drawing took place in five schools.

In addition, groups of teachers participated in focus-group interviews or individual interviews separately to the group of students. Due to a conflict in teaching timetables, I could not hold focus-group interviews with teachers in two schools. Therefore, in those schools the teachers were invited to participate in individual interviews. Out of 17 participant teachers, I interviewed three individually, and 14 participated in five groups of focus-group interviews.

Sample size in this study met minimum sample size suggestions from most common quantitative and qualitative research designs (Creswell, 2007). In this study, 345 students participated in the quantitative phase, and 67 students and 17 teachers engaged in focus-group interviews in the qualitative phase. A summary of numbers of participants in Phase 1 and Phase 2 can be seen in Table 4.3.
Table 4.3 Participants in Phases 1 and 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participants</td>
<td>Methods of data collection</td>
<td>Methods of data collection</td>
<td>Methods to select participants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School Satisfaction Scale and Positive and Negative Affect Scale</td>
<td>Story or drawing and focus-group interviews</td>
<td>Consent Form returned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total participants</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods to select participants</td>
<td>Consent Form returned</td>
<td>Nested sample</td>
<td>Consent Form returned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>School A</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School B</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School C</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School D</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School E</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School F</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School G</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School H</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As this study is conducted only in some primary schools in Jakarta, the scope of this study is limited.

4.3.3.2 Methods of data collection

Data collection in the second phase involved several methods or techniques. I used three methods of inquiry for the students and two for the teachers. For the students, this study used story writing or drawing, and focus-group interviews, with focus-group interviews and classroom observations used for the teachers.

Students were familiar with written and visual techniques in their daily school work. Therefore, these methods are proven as child-friendly. Moreover, using different techniques for children is valuable since children may have different preferences and
competencies (Punch, 2002). Some children may prefer to write, while the others prefer to draw or talk.

**Story writing or drawing about school**

Students were asked to write a narrative story and/or to draw a picture about their experience in school. Presumably, the students will not tell everything and will make a selection about what they will tell. However, the story can give a picture about what and how the students experience school (Allodi, 2002a). Telling or writing stories is one of the methods common to narrative inquiry. Through a story, people interpret their experience of the world and make it personally meaningful, and narrative inquiry is a way to understand this experience (Clandinin & Connelly, 1990, as cited in Clandinin, 2006).

Drawing may be regarded as a natural method of inquiry for school-age children, and also can be used effectively with adolescents (Walker, 2007). The advantage of drawing is that children can actively express their comments or non-verbal expressions while drawing (Einarsdottir, 2010). Furthermore, children have time to think about the picture that they wish to express (Punch, 2002). Children’s drawings can be considered as their expression of meaning and understanding about their lives (Ring, 2006, as cited in Einarsdottir, Dockett, & Perry, 2009, p. 218).

**Focus-group interviews**

Liamputtong (2013) defines the focus-group interview as a situation in which people gather in a group to discuss a focused issue of concern. Similarly, Kitzinger (1995, p. 299) characterises the focus-group interview as a form of group interview that utilises communication between research participants in order to generate data on the issue. In the process of communication, the participants respond to one another’s questions and comment on each other’s points of view. This method is often used to
collect data from several people simultaneously in a single interview setting quickly and conveniently (Kitzinger, 1995, p. 299).

In this study, I chose focus-group interviews as a complementary method to the quantitative data collection rather than individual interviews for several reasons. Dealing with children as research participants I have to consider their characteristics: children have a shorter attention span than adults, so it is not easy to involve them in a long communication, such as in an individual interview. They may also lack confidence or experience in communicating directly with unfamiliar adults, especially in a one-to-one situation (Punch, 2002). With limited research resources this method can generate a collective perspective as well as capturing unique perspectives and the polarity and diversity of participants’ opinions (Davidson, Halcomb, & Gholizadeh, 2010). In addition, this method can be used to examine not only people’s perceptions, but also the how and why of that perception (Kitzinger, 1995, p. 299).

In this study, I conducted the focus-group interviews as semi structured interviews (see Appendix 5). I developed the focus-group questions from pre-existing instruments used for measuring the learning environment, social school climate and academic pressure as my framework for open ended questions. These instruments, were, *Goal & Value in School* (GAVIS): (Allodi, 2010b); *Student Personal Perception of Classroom Climate* (Rowe et al., 2010) and *School Academic Press* (Lee & Smith, 1999). The semi-structured interviews allowed some direction provided by the group (Linnenbrink, 2006). I chose mixed focus-group approaches using both closed and open-ended questions (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003a). Using
this approach, the participants can move the discussion into related areas, but it is also possible to keep the interviews focused on the main topic.

In the student focus groups, I explored their perceptions of academic pressure through questions focused on identifying the most demanding academic experiences they have had and the extent to which their teachers challenged them to reach high levels of academic performance. In addition, I examined their perceptions of TSRs and peer relationships to further explore student perceptions of their school as a caring and supportive environment. Students were asked to describe, “What do teachers and peers do that make you feel like they do or do not care about you”. Furthermore, student views on their preference of school and learning environments were explored through questions such as, “What makes you feel happy in school and in learning,” “What kind of activities in school and learning can enhance your happiness in school,” and, “What should be changed to make school a better place”?

In the teachers’ focus group, I focused the questions on how they provide caring and supportive learning environments for their students. In order to explore teacher views, I asked questions such as, “To what extent do you challenge your students to get highest academic results,” “How do you define academic success,” and “What do you do to create a caring and supportive learning environment”?

**Observation**

In this method, the researcher observes participants in their natural setting (Johnson & Turner, 2003). In the process of observation, the researcher observes without participating (Creswell, 2009). I used observation in this study to portray the learning and teaching processes in the classroom, including the behaviours and activities of teachers and students, and the overall school environment. In the classroom, I
focused my observation on the teacher’s discourse and the student responses. Specifically, the object of observation was to record how the teacher communicated messages about the importance of schoolwork, emphasised importance of a high score in the test, encouraged cooperative interactions between students, and promoted mutual respect in the classroom.

To record information, I used an observational protocol to take notes on the learning and teaching processes. Observational protocols consist of three columns: time, descriptive notes and reflective notes. I divided my observation recording into 10-minute intervals. I descriptively noted every significant event during this interval and then wrote reflection notes about these events. In addition, video recording is an appropriate device for accurate recording. However, I used the recording as a memory prompt only, helping to make my notes into narratives.

4.3.3.3 Data collection process
The following sections describe the process of data collection based on the instruments used for student and teacher participants in Phase 2 of the study.

Story writing or drawing about school
I asked the students to choose an activity: write a story and/or draw about school. I provided a piece of lined paper to the students who preferred writing a story, a piece of A-3 blank paper folded in a half for students who preferred to draw. I also provided a set of black pencils, coloured pencils and crayons. Allodi (2002a) used the technique of writing a story about school in her study about Swedish children’s experience of school. Drawing techniques were used in some studies with young children as a strategy to engage them in the topics about school (e.g. Einarsdottir, 2010; Einarsdottir et al., 2009; Symington & Spurling, 1990).
As a guide, students were asked to express what they think and feel about school. The subject generally was, “Tell us about your school”. Particularly, the students were asked to identify the important aspects of their school and learning environment that generates positive and negative feelings in school, and to provide examples in their stories or drawings.

In providing instructions for drawing, it is important to be careful in wording the instruction, because different words can result in different pictures (Symington & Spurling, 1990). For students who preferred to draw, I asked them to draw in two kinds of situations. On one half of the folded paper, they were asked to draw a picture describing, “At school, I like”; and on the other a picture describing, “At school, I do not like”. Using opposite situations is an opportunity to clarify the meaning of both pictures, both for them and for the researcher (Maxwell, 2006). The overall instruction for the drawing task was: “Think about all of your experiences at school. Draw a picture that describes what you like and do not like, or make you feel happy and unhappy at school.”

In addition, I assured the students that the task was not a test of their drawing skills, but an alternative method to visually express their thinking and feeling about school. This assurance was important because student participants in this study were at the developmental stage of having concern for accuracy and details in drawing. As a consequence, they often stop drawing when they do not see their drawing as looking like the real world (Lowenfeld, 1957, as cited in Walker, 2007).

Out of 67 students in the Phase 2, 48 preferred to write story, while 19 preferred to draw. Initially, more than 19 students chose to draw; however, in the middle of the activity some changed their choice from drawing to writing. Children’s perceived
ability to draw might inhibit them from drawing, influencing their choice. Most students finished writing their story in approximately 30 minutes, while those who preferred drawing needed almost one hour to complete the actual drawing. Most did not have time to use coloured pencils or crayons in their pictures. In order to understand the content of their drawing and the meaning they wish to convey, the children can be asked to talk about or write a short description about their drawing (Walker, 2007). Importantly, after drawing, the children should be asked to explain and interpret the pictures. However, due to the school providing a time limitation for data collection; the researcher did not have time to ask specific questions about their pictures, such as, “Why did you choose this drawing?” or, “How do you think and feel in this drawing?” I did, however, ask them to write the title or several words about what they drew.

**Focus-group interviews**

I conducted student focus-group interviews to collect a range of information about how students think and feel about their school experience, and teacher focus groups to explore teacher perspectives on the educational system and how they provide supportive environments for students. I conducted 10 student and four teacher focus-group interviews. In addition, I individually interviewed three teachers.

The process of developing a group should take into account the homogeneity of the group, for instance, similarity in gender or age. The homogeneity of the group will make the participant feel comfortable and reduce inhibitions in sharing their views and feelings (Krueger & Casey, 2000, as cited in Kidger, Donovan, Biddle, Campbell, & Gunnell, 2009). In this study, I based the homogeneity of the groups of students on their level of school satisfaction. I could not apply these criteria to the group of teachers.
I arranged a comfortable setting to help establish a relaxed atmosphere in order to encourage people to talk openly and freely. For example, the focus-group interviews were located in a locked room where the participants sat in a circle, and I provided refreshments. However, in some schools it was difficult to find appropriate and available spare rooms. In five schools, I held the focus-group interviews in the school library, multimedia room, laboratory room, or the principal’s office. During the process of interviews, the researcher must ensure that there are no other people in the room except the participants.

Prior to focus-group interviews, I ensured that each participant in the focus group committed to the common rules, such as respecting each other and keeping all the information confidential. Particularly in focus-group interviews with the students, to enhance their willingness to express their views, the researcher needs to reassure that there are no right or wrong answers. In establishing rapport with students, I started the conversation about things that students experience in their daily life, such as where they live, their hobbies, etc.

The focus-group interviews lasted approximately one hour to one and a half hours. Students of the age of the participants in this study have a longer attention span enabling involvement in a period of discussion from 30 minutes to two hours (Lee, 2003). Most student focus-group interviews ran well. The students freely expressed their perceptions and experiences of school. One group of students was noisy, with high dynamic interaction, making transcription difficult. In contrast, two groups of students had difficulty expressing themselves. In these groups I tended towards a serial interview, whereby I spoke to each participant in turn and used more closed questions.
When conducting the teacher focus-group interviews, I sometimes had difficulty controlling the discussion at the point of data gathering. Nevertheless, their discussion was important as it related to educational issues.

**Observations**

I conducted the observations in two types of lessons – those most favoured by students, and those least favoured. These classes had been identified through open questions in the Phase 1. In each classroom observation, I took notes to supplement videotapes of the lessons. In each school, I observed two to three classes. In total, I observed 13 classes of 13 teachers in five schools over one to three sessions. I conducted the observation in each class for 35–70 minutes, and I observed three classes twice (see Table 4.4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Teachers’ name</th>
<th>Subject matter</th>
<th>Number of session</th>
<th>Duration (minutes)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>Mr. T</td>
<td>Indonesian Language</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. K</td>
<td>Civics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>Ms. W</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. J</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Jo</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>Ms. P</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. R</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60/session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>Mr. R</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Ik</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. Y</td>
<td>Social</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45 and 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E</td>
<td>Ms. J</td>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70/session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ms. H</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. R</td>
<td>Indonesian language</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Since the teachers determined the schedule of classroom observations, and sometimes there was difficulty arranging research activities, I could not choose the type of classroom activities to observe. Generally, there were three types of classroom activity captured by classroom observations in this study. First, the teachers explained the lesson content through a lecturing activity, while the students listened to the teacher’s lecture at their desks. Second, the students did a test on a paper sheet after the teachers dictated the test questions orally, or the students answered the teacher’s questions voluntarily or as requested by the teacher. Third, the students performed their skills in front of the class, taking turns. In one lesson activity, a couple of students showed their skill in conducting interviews with their classmates. In another class, several groups of students presented their science experiment to their classmates.

Even though the purpose of the observation was to capture all that was happening in the classroom, I focused on what the teachers said and did during lesson activities that supported the findings from the focus-group interviews.

4.3.3.4 Qualitative data analysis

The second step of data analysis was the qualitative analysis. This study used qualitative contrasting analysis (Collins, Onwuegbuzie, & Sutton, 2006) because data analysis in the qualitative phase was only addressed to student participants with the highest and the lowest level of school satisfaction. I analysed the data qualitatively from story writing or drawing, focus-group interviews and observations in order to get a deeper understanding about how students experienced their school and how these experiences were related to differences of school satisfaction level and frequency of positive and negative emotions of these groups.
Since the participants in this study were students and teachers, I examined the congruency and differences between student and teacher perceptions of school and the learning environment based on the responses of groups of students and groups of teachers. According to social cognitive theory, although teachers and their students share a common objective experience, there will be a discrepant perception of school because of their different role within the schools (Bandura, 2001). In addition, some studies empirically identify the differences between teachers and their students’ perceptions of school (DeSantis King et al., 2006).

The approach to analysis of the drawings used content analytical procedures (Gamradt & Staples, 1994). This approach identifies the features of the drawing, or codes, by content (Bland, 2009). There was a limitation in using drawing in this study as there was no opportunity to ask the students to explain what their drawing meant and why they decided to draw such features. Therefore, in order to avoid interpretation bias of the content of the drawings, the students were asked to write the title of images (what they had drawn), and an analysis was developed based on the description of the drawings. The content of the drawings were then categorised into patterns or themes. Examples of the emerging themes included classroom and learning activities, relationships with teachers and peers, physical environments, and related behaviour for learning (Lodge, 2007).

Prior to the analysis process, I retyped the student stories into digital text, transcribed the focus-group interview results into narratives and digital text, and described the observation results in my personal narratives. In the process of reading the transcripts from both students and teachers it was not always clear what was meant. Therefore, I conducted some additional interviews with several students and teachers to get
further information and to clarify their answers in order to ensure no personal bias in interpreting their responses.

I used the technique of data analysis following Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis as the overarching process guiding analysis for the student narrative stories, focus-group interviews and observations. The technique of thematic analysis is a common type of analysis in qualitative research, having broad similarities with grounded theory (Liamputtong, 2013). Thematic analysis is a method for analysing the data in order to identify patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2013). In the process of searching for the themes, this study used an inductive as well as a deductive approach. An inductive approach means that the themes emerge directly from the data (this form bears some similarity to grounded theory). The deductive approach means that the themes were developed based on the research questions and the theoretical framework (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

As suggested by Braun and Clarke’s (2006) thematic analysis approach, six steps were required in the process of making sense of the data: familiarisation of data, generation of initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report.

**Familiarisation of data**

In the first step, several activities assisted me to become immersed in the data. I rechecked the accuracy of the transcriptions whilst listening the data recording. Then, I read and re-read the data to aid familiarisation; the student stories and drawings, the transcripts of student focus-group interviews, the transcripts of teacher focus-group interviews, and the observations notes.
**Generation of initial codes and searching for the themes**

In this stage, I used NVivo computer software as a tool to manage the database. I uploaded the electronic data into NVivo, divided into the categorical sources of data. I then generated the codes. Coding is the process of giving labels or names to the sections of data (Liampittong, 2013). In the beginning stage, I mostly created the initial codes by *in vivo* coding (the terms participant used) (Saldaña, 2009). However, because *in vivo* codes lead to loss of context, I then used descriptive coding (content-based and conceptual phrase of the topic) (Saldaña, 2009). As I also used theoretical or deductive methods, at the same time I approached the data with a specific concept derived from the literature review and related to the research questions, so that I identified specific phrases that I wished to code. Thus, I used both emerging and pre-determined codes. Numerous codes can be created from one sentence or paragraph in the data transcription, for instance, student emotional expressions of a lesson activity in the classroom was attributed to emotional experience as well as perception of the subject matter.

After all the data were coded, I sorted different codes into potential themes. As potential themes are more theory driven, I generated the sub-themes and themes according a review of the literature of related issues of my study. In addition, sub-themes were also generated from the data. Table 4.5 describes how the codes formed the sub-themes and the main theme of the quality of TSRs, as an example.
Table 4.5 Codes, sub-themes and themes for teacher-student relationships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main theme</th>
<th>Sub-theme</th>
<th>Codes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality of teacher-student relationships</td>
<td>High academic support</td>
<td>Encourage to ask</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lesson summary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reminder for study hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Remedial learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cooperative learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Experiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Academic result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Walk around in class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Help for assignment completion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low academic support</td>
<td>Ignoring student questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Differential expectation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>De-valuing non-academic skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Do not provide explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lots of assignment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lecturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Asking silly questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive ability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>High interpersonal support</td>
<td>Nice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Humour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Funny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Term of endearment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Welcoming students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low interpersonal support</td>
<td>Grumpiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Favouritism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Corporal punishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>External controlling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Rarely smile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Angry easily</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not patient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reviewing the themes, defining the themes and reporting

After developing the themes, I reviewed the themes and the sub-themes by going back to the entire data set to ensure that the themes have captured of the data set in relation to my research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2013). As the sub-themes and themes are more generated from the theory, the definitions of the overarching themes in this study are based on the literature review. The subsequent step is reviewing the themes and sub-themes to identify the story that should be told (Braun & Clarke,
2006, 2013) – the story in this study comprising school experience of the students particularly focused on their emotional experiences related to academic demands and relationships at school.

**Mixed data analysis**

Mixed data analysis is a comprehensive technique of data analysis in mixed methods research. According to Onwuegbuzie and Teddlie (2003), in mixed data analysis, the researcher uses both techniques of quantitative and qualitative analysis either concurrently or sequentially, and then the interpretation of data can be parallel, integrated or iterative.

This study used a sequential mixed methods research design. The analysis of data in Phase 1 is quantitative, while Phase 2 is qualitative. Sections 4.3.2.4 and 4.3.3.4 explained the process of data analysis for both phases. I interpreted the findings obtained from both analysis phases separately. However, in the next process I compared data from the quantitative and qualitative sources and interpreted the connected results.

The final step of mixed analysis is data integration (Onwuegbuzie & Teddlie, 2003) whereby the quantitative and qualitative data are merged into comprehensive findings. This step discusses to what extent and in what ways the qualitative results help to explain and add insight into the quantitative results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). I included some illustrations of the narrative data from the drawings, narrative stories, focus-group interviews and observations in reporting the results.

### 4.4 Ethical issues

I obtained permission from the District Area Office of the Indonesian MOEC prior to proposing an application for ethics clearance from Charles Darwin University.
Human Research Ethics Committee (CDU HREC). In addition, I contacted the school principals to get permission to collect data in their school. Then, in order to gain participants for this study, I sent the consent form to the target participants.

When undertaking research, the researcher should take into account the ethics in research. Ethics means a “set of moral principles and rules of conduct” (Morrow & Richards, 1996, p. 90). Generally, ethical issues in research with children and adults are similar, and related to the issue of consent, confidentiality and prevention of risk. Only students and teachers who gave consent were included as participants in this study. However, the central difference between students and teachers is the manner of obtaining consent (Punch, 2002). Students cannot give their own consent; it has to be obtained from their parents or guardians. Related to the issue of confidentiality, prior to data collection process, I conducted training for research assistants to ensure they fully understood ethics in research, and they are bound to keep confidentiality of all information.

In order to keep the students feeling free to complete the questionnaire and express their feelings and thoughts in the stories, drawings and focus-group interviews, no teacher was present in the classrooms during the research.

When conducting surveys and other data collection methods in a qualitative phase, as a researcher I must have an awareness of the possibility of social desirability bias in both quantitative and qualitative data collection (Risjord, Dunbar, & Moloney, 2002). Therefore, in order to gain authentic responses, I have to assure the students that there are no right or wrong answers, and that all their information is treated confidentially. In addition, I should be sensitive in protecting children and teachers from exposure, and moderate the groups to avoid any risk. As a trained psychologist,
I am equipped to ensure that children (and teachers) are protected, and could stop the interview and/or counsel participants as required. Fatter (1996, as cited in Hill, 1997) warns that researchers should be careful not to talk further about a painful or distressing area unless follow up support for the child is available.

All the data use codes that only I can identify. Electronic copies in the computer are protected by an encrypted password. All paper copies (the questionnaires, notes), and CD/DVD recordings are stored in a locked filing cabinet. The audio and videotapes were not used as primary data in the thesis. Therefore, after all the data were analysed, the audio and videotapes were erased.

4.5 Summary

This chapter explained the choice of research design of this study in order to answer the research questions. In each phase, I have described in detail the sample and sampling, the process of instrument development to the final instruments, the data collection processes and the data analysis techniques. The process of qualitative data analysis using a thematic analysis approach was important, because this study has placed dominant status on the qualitative component. However, since this study used a mixed methods design, I presented the mixed methods data analysis processes in the final section.

This study identified several limitations with regards to the methodological issues, such as scope of the study, method of inquiry, and instrument developments. These are discussed further in Chapter 9 (Section 9.5) to point to suggestions for further study.
The next chapters discuss the results of this study, embedding the quantitative and qualitative findings into themes. Chapter 5 presents the first theme, which is school well-being that comprises school satisfaction and emotions in school.
Chapter 5  Student school well-being
Chapters 5 to 8 present the themes emerging from the findings of the study: school well-being, academic demands in instructional practices, relationships among students and teachers, and school as a context of student development.

The first theme, school well-being, is the central issue in this research. It describes the affective status of students as influenced by the context of the educational system in Indonesia. School well-being consists of school satisfaction and positive and negative affect in school as experienced by students. In analysing the data collected, I considered student levels of satisfaction with their school experience and their positive or negative emotional states as signals as to whether schools provide learning environments that fit well with basic student needs or not. The importance of student satisfaction in determining well-being was highlighted by several studies cited in Chapter 3.

This chapter consists of five sections:

1. Section 5.1 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample.
2. Section 5.2 presents the quantitative findings from the SSS and PNAS, describing student levels of school satisfaction and the kinds of emotions they frequently experience.
3. Section 5.3 connects the findings from the student survey to their expressions of satisfaction with school and their emotional experiences derived from student stories or drawings and focus-group interviews. Moreover, this section discusses the factors of the school and learning environments that are most related to student emotional states. The findings are based on the qualitative analyses only.
4. Section 5.4 discusses student emotions in school from the teacher perspectives.
5. Section 5.5 summarises the chapter.
5.1 Demographic characteristics of the sample

As stated in Chapter 4, the 345 student survey participants were from eight primary schools from four different school types in Jakarta. Table 5.1 presents the number and percentage of student participants from each class in each school. Schools A, F, G and H had only one Grade 6 class. School C had two Grade 6 classes: Class a and Class b. Schools B and E had three Grade 6 classes: Class a, Class b and Class c. School D had six Grade 6 classes with three participating: Class b, Class c and Class d.

Table 5.1 Schools and classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>6a</th>
<th>6b</th>
<th>6c</th>
<th>6d</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>37.50</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>49.21</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School E</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34.88</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School F</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School G</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School H</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N = 345

5.2 Student school satisfaction and emotions in school

In this study, I examined both the cognitive and affective components of school well-being; school satisfaction and positive and negative affect. While some researchers define school satisfaction as including both cognitive and affective evaluation of overall satisfaction with school experience (e.g., Huebner et al., 2001; Huebner et al., 2009; Samdal et al., 1999), in this study school satisfaction refers to the cognitive component of school well-being.

I measured student school well-being to address Sub-questions 1 and 2: Are the students satisfied with their school experiences? What kind of positive and negative emotions do students experience frequently in school?
The following sections discuss components of school well-being; first, I discuss student cognitive judgement about school well-being, followed by the affective components related to positive and negative emotions.

5.2.1 Level of school satisfaction

Student levels of school satisfaction were measured by the SSS, using a five-point Likert-scale, 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither disagree nor agree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree. Table 5.2 presents the 15 items in the SSS, with the mean and $SD$ of each item of the scale, and the number of students who answered each item.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SS5: I learn a lot at school</td>
<td>4.43</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS1: I like being in school</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS3: School is interesting</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS15: School is a nice place to be</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS4: There are many things about school that I like</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS6: I enjoy my school activities</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS14: I like school</td>
<td>3.91</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS12: I get enjoyment from being at school</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS10: Learning is nice</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS7: I really like to go to school</td>
<td>3.77</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS2: I look forward to going to school</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS8: School days are nice</td>
<td>3.72</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS13: I get satisfaction from the school work I do</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS9: School days make me happy</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS11: School lessons are fun</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a) Statements are listed from the highest mean to the lowest

b) 1 = none of the time; 2 = little of the time; 3 = some of the time; 4 = most of the time; 5 = all of the time

Table 5.2 illustrate the mean, showing that on average students who responded to each statement rated all items higher than 3 (‘neither agree nor disagree’, ‘agree’, and ‘strongly agree’), with two statements rated higher than 4 (‘agree’ and ‘strongly
agree’): (SS5: I learn a lot at school and SS1: I like being in school). The highest rated item was I learn a lot at school (mean = 4.43). Even though the statement, School lessons are fun, was rated as the lowest of all statements, its mean score was 3.6 (between ‘neither agree nor disagree’ and ‘agree’).

Table 5.3  Percentages of items of school satisfaction scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SS5: I learn a lot at school</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>9.94</td>
<td>36.55</td>
<td>53.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS1: I like being in school</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>28.41</td>
<td>40.87</td>
<td>29.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS3: School is interesting</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>29.86</td>
<td>41.16</td>
<td>27.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS15: School is a nice place to be</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>30.12</td>
<td>38.60</td>
<td>28.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS4: There are many things about school that I like</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>27.70</td>
<td>41.69</td>
<td>27.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS6: I enjoy my school activities</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>31.40</td>
<td>36.92</td>
<td>28.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS14: I like school</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>32.46</td>
<td>35.36</td>
<td>29.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS12: I get enjoyment for being at school</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>33.14</td>
<td>36.63</td>
<td>26.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS10: Learning is nice</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>35.28</td>
<td>37.03</td>
<td>24.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS7: I really like to go to school</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>4.06</td>
<td>36.52</td>
<td>35.65</td>
<td>23.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS2: I look forward to going to school</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>36.81</td>
<td>37.39</td>
<td>21.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS8: School day are nice</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>41.86</td>
<td>32.85</td>
<td>21.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS13: I get satisfaction from the school work I do</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>37.61</td>
<td>35.86</td>
<td>20.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS9: School days make me happy</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>40.87</td>
<td>36.23</td>
<td>19.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SS11: School lessons are fun</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>47.97</td>
<td>37.21</td>
<td>12.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a) N=342-345
b) 1 = strongly disagree; 2 = disagree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 4 = agree; 5 = strongly agree

Table 5.3 shows that 53.2% students rated statement SS5: I learn a lot at school at 5 (strongly agree). The statements of SS1: I like being in school, SS3: School is interesting and SS4: There are many things about school that I like were rated at 4 (agree) by 40.87%, 41.16%, and 41.69% students, respectively. There were 47.97% students that rated at 3 (neither agree nor disagree) statement SS11: School lessons are fun. Most of the students (67-85%) rated the rest of statements at 3 (neither agree nor disagree) and 4 (agree).
I created a new variable, the mean score of school satisfaction (MSSS) by adding the 15 items of the SSS and dividing by 15. Table 5.4 shows the consequent mean and SD.

**Table 5.4** Mean and standard deviation of the mean score of student satisfaction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSSS</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>.45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: MSSS = mean score of student satisfaction

Table 5.4 shows that the mean of student responses is between ‘neither agree nor disagree’ and ‘agree’. This indicates that generally students are satisfied with their school experience. This result supports several previous studies on school satisfaction (Huebner & Gilman, 2006; Ivens, 2007; Long et al., 2012; Uusitalo-Malmivaara, 2011).

Figure 5.1 presents the distribution of the new variable, MSSS. The range of MSSS is from 2.20 to 4.60.

![Frequencies of mean score of school satisfaction](image)

**Figure 5.1** Frequencies of mean score of school satisfaction

The number of students whose level of school satisfaction was found to be below the neutral point (‘neither agree nor disagree’) is less than 10% (27 students). This finding is in contrast to the findings of other studies (Huebner et al., 2000; Huebner, Valois, Paxton, & Drane, 2005) that found students are more likely dissatisfied with
school experience than family, friends, self and living environment. The students who reported dissatisfaction with school comprised nearly a quarter (25%) of the 5,545 students in the study (Huebner et al., 2000).

Since this current study is exploratory, a hypothesis was not posited. However, this study further investigated whether or not there was any relationship between school satisfaction and other variables. The demographic variable gender is investigated in most school satisfaction research. Therefore, I used t-test analysis to identify any association between school satisfaction and gender.

The following sections describe the results of the association between school satisfaction and gender, and the relationship between school satisfaction and academic achievement.

5.2.1.1 School satisfaction and gender

Several researchers show inconsistent findings about the relationship of gender and school satisfaction. In this study, I used t-test analysis (Salkind, 2014) to compare the mean scores between the male and female student participants to determine any differences in school satisfaction.

The t-test revealed no significant difference in school satisfaction between male and female students, \( p = ns \). This finding confirms Elmore and Huebner’s (2010) study. Zullig et al. (2011) report similar findings. Tenney (2011), in a study of elementary school students in the USA, also found no effect of gender on school satisfaction. However, other researchers found that female students show slightly higher levels of school satisfaction than males (DeSantis King et al., 2006; Engel et al., 2004: Karatzias et al., 2002).
In probing the central problem, this study examined Sub-question 4: *How do academic press and the relationships at school affect the student’s school experience?* This question is addressed through quantitative analysis in order to find out the relationship between school satisfaction and academic achievement, whereas student experiences of relationships at school is explored through qualitative analysis.

I used correlation (Salkind, 2014) to establish the relationship between school satisfaction and academic achievement. The computation of the correlation used the data from all student participants in the survey to investigate any significant correlations between school satisfaction and academic achievement. I also used t-test analysis to determine any difference in academic achievement between groups of students with higher levels of school satisfaction and those with lower levels of school satisfaction. I used the MSSS as the dividing point between Group 1 and Group 2. I used the average achievement score of all subjects as well as those of the three NE subjects (math, science and Indonesian) in Semester 1 as an indication of academic achievement.

The correlation between the average achievement score of all subjects and the three NE subjects (math, science and Indonesian) revealed $r = .92$, $N = 342$, $p < .01$ (two tailed), and the t-test showed that the mean average score of all subjects = 80.05, and mean average score of the three subjects = 79.96, $t (341) = .43$, $p = ns$. These results show that there is no significant difference between achievement scores of all subjects and the three subjects. The strong correlation indicates that the students do not only focus their learning efforts on the three examination subjects, but on all subjects.
Table 5.5 presents the correlation between school satisfaction and academic achievement.

Table 5.5  Correlation between school satisfaction and academic achievement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average achievement of all subjects (mean = 80.05)</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average achievement of the three subjects (mean = 79.96)</td>
<td>-.14</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: N=330

Table 5.5 shows that the higher the level of school satisfaction, the lower the achievement in all subjects and the NE subjects, and vice versa. This finding differs to previous studies that report on the positive relationship between school satisfaction and academic achievement although this correlation is weak. In this current study, I found a negative correlation between school satisfaction and academic achievement. The t-test analysis corroborates this, finding a significant difference in academic achievement between groups of students with higher levels of school satisfaction with those with lower levels of school satisfaction. Group 1 students have a level of school satisfaction above the mean score; whereas Group 2 has a level of school satisfaction below the mean score.

Table 5.6  The t-test of academic achievement of high and low school satisfaction students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td>(df)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of all subjects</td>
<td>79.92</td>
<td>80.51</td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement of the three subjects</td>
<td>80.07</td>
<td>80.52</td>
<td>.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Group 1= students with level of SS above the mean score
Group 2= students with level of SS below the mean score
Table 5.6 shows that the mean achievement score of Group 2 is higher than Group 1, that is the happier students show lower academic achievement; however, there is no significant differences in the mean score of academic achievement between these groups. This indicates that even though students feel happy in school, such happiness does not relate to academic achievement. Previous research on the relation of school satisfaction and academic achievement reveals inconsistent findings. Some studies show a positive relationship between school achievement and school satisfaction, whereas other studies found no association. Students with higher achievement tend to be more satisfied with school (Cook & Halvari, 1999, as cited in Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002; Zullig et al., 2011); therefore academic performance is a significant predictor of school satisfaction (Hui & Sun, 2010). In contrast, a comparison study of USA and Korean adolescents showed that Korean student levels of school satisfaction were lower than USA adolescents, despite being the proudest achievement within the lives of Korean students (Park, 2005). Whitley (2010) found that school satisfaction was not significantly associated with academic achievement. Students with the highest levels of school satisfaction do not show statistically higher or lower levels of academic achievement. Hascher (2008) suggests that school well-being is better regarded as a value in education rather than an academic enhancer.

In the present study, student satisfaction with their school experience might relate more to other activities or situations, such as playing with friends, or extracurricular activities. Likewise, even with lower levels of school satisfaction, students can achieve higher academic achievement. This finding is explained through the correlation of individual items of the SSS with academic achievement in all subjects and the three NE subjects. Items SS7: I really like to go to school ($r = - .11, p < .05$), SS8: School days are nice ($r = - .13, p < .05$), and SS12: I get enjoyment from being
at school \((r = -.13, p < .05)\), show significant negative correlation with academic achievement in all subjects, while the other items show no significant correlation. The negatively correlated items reflect student motivation to go to school because of other aspects of the school environment.

I used qualitative findings to explain the reasons behind these phenomena, particularly to determine first, how school environment factors can promote a student’s level of school satisfaction without enhancing their academic achievement, and second, how a student can focus on achieving academic achievement despite dissatisfaction with their school experience.

There are two possible explanations for these findings. The students who have higher levels of school satisfaction are happy in school because of factors unrelated to the learning activities, such as playing with friends. Alternatively, students who have lower levels of school satisfaction are struggling with their learning activities to increase their academic achievement, so perceive learning activities as unsatisfactory school experiences.

The correlation between positive and negative emotions and academic achievement shows no significant correlation \((p = ns)\). This finding does not support the previous study that there is a significant relationship between positive emotions and academic achievement, intrinsic motivation and self-regulation (Pekrun, Göetz, et al., 2002). Fredrickson also claims that people who experience positive emotions tend to have a broader outlook of thinking, so they can develop skills for problem solving and learning new material (Fredrickson, 1998, 2003).

However, some of individual items of PAS and NAS show significant correlations to both kinds of academic achievement. The PAS item with a positive correlation was
Item PE34: relaxed \((r = .11, p < .05)\), while Items PE21: daring \((r = – .13, p < .05)\) and PE33: confident \((r = – .13, p < .05)\) had a negative correlation. This indicates that feeling daring and confident related to lower academic achievement, while feeling relaxed related to higher academic achievement. The NAS items with significant negative correlation to academic achievement were Items NE4: upset \((r = – .11, p < .01)\) and NE16: mad \((r = – .13, p < .01)\). This indicates that feeling upset or mad related to lower academic achievement. These correlations cannot explain cause-effect relationships, but the qualitative findings in the next sections help with understanding the phenomena. Regardless of their level of school satisfaction and level of positive and negative affect, all students in this present study are concerned about their academic achievement (see Section 5.3). This relates to demands of the Indonesian society that underscore the importance of academic achievement.

5.2.2 Affective components

As described in the previous section, school satisfaction refers to emotional responses, such as happiness, enjoyment and sense of well-being at school (Samdal et al., 1999). Therefore, this indicates that school satisfaction includes both cognitive and affective components (Huebner et al., 2001). Other researchers distinguish the cognitive and affective component of school well-being (e.g., Long et al., 2012; Tian, Liu, et al., 2013), and measure the affective component separately to school satisfaction as the cognitive component.

In this present study, I explored the kinds of emotions frequently experienced in schools by students through quantitative and qualitative analysis. The PNAS provided a means for quantitative analysis of student emotions in school. The quantitative results from the emotions scale revealed the mean score of each emotion, the mean score of positive emotions (MSPE), and the mean score of negative
emotions (MSNE). In addition, student stories or drawings about school, and their responses in focus-group interviews, as well as teacher responses in focus group or individual interviews, were explored through qualitative analysis of student emotions related to school. The findings from this qualitative analysis are described in a separate section (see Section 5.3).

To find out what kinds of positive and negative emotions students experienced frequently in school, this study collated a list of positive and negative emotions and their mean scores. To achieve this I provided the students with a list of words describing positive and negative feelings and emotions, and asked them to rate them based upon a 5-point scale, 1 = none of the time, 2 = a little of the time, 3 = some of the time, 4 = most of the time, and 5 = all the time. The 33 items in the PNAS consisted of 16 words indicating positive emotions and 17 words indicating negative emotions.

Tables 5.7 and 5.8 list and rank the positive and negative emotions respectively. Table 5.7 illustrate that the students rated Item PE5: joyful and PE14: lively as the highest (mean = 4.08). Almost all positive feelings or emotions were rated higher than 3 (‘some of the time’). Only Item PE21: daring was rated below 3. Items PE6: happy, PE13: active, PE22: proud and PE33: confident were rated almost 4 (‘most of the time’).
Table 5.7  Students' ranked positive emotions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive emotions</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PE5: joyful</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE14: lively</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE9: delighted</td>
<td>4.07</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE6: happy</td>
<td>3.99</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE13: active</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE26: hopeful</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE33: confident</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE30: concentrate</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE25: calm</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE22: proud</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>342</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE10: energetic</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE2: cheerful</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE18: fearless</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE29: relieved</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE1: interested</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE21: daring</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 
a) Items were listed from the highest mean to the lowest
b) 1 = none of the time; 2 = little of the time; 3 = some of the time; 4 = most of the time; 5 = all of the time
Table 5.8  Students’ ranked negative emotions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative emotions</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NE28: tired</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE31: confused</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE4: upset</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE8: jittery</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE19: disgusted</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE35: bored</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE16: mad</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE15: afraid</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE7: nervous</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE11: guilty</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE20: ashamed</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>.99</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE12: frightened</td>
<td>2.45</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE27: anxious</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE3: sad</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE23: lonely</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.18</td>
<td>345</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE24: restless</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.02</td>
<td>344</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE32: hopeless</td>
<td>2.06</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a) Items were listed from the highest mean to the lowest
b) 1 = none of the time; 2 = little of the time; 3 = some of the time; 4 = most of the time; 5 = all of the time

Table 5.8 shows that all negative feelings or emotions were rated lower than 3 (‘some of the time’), except Item NE28: tired with mean = 3.42. Items NE31 confused and NE4: upset were rated almost 3 (‘some of the time’). Item NE32: hopeless was rated the lowest (mean= 2.06).
Table 5.9  Percentages of positive emotions items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Emotions</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PE5:  joyful</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>19.19</td>
<td>44.77</td>
<td>33.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE14: lively</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>6.09</td>
<td>18.84</td>
<td>35.07</td>
<td>39.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE9:  delighted</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>16.37</td>
<td>43.86</td>
<td>34.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE6:  happy</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>4.09</td>
<td>24.56</td>
<td>38.60</td>
<td>32.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE13: active</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>5.81</td>
<td>26.16</td>
<td>33.72</td>
<td>34.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE26: hopeful</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>8.21</td>
<td>21.11</td>
<td>29.62</td>
<td>39.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE33: confident</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>6.04</td>
<td>27.03</td>
<td>29.94</td>
<td>35.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE30: concentrate</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>51.8</td>
<td>29.65</td>
<td>37.50</td>
<td>25.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE25: calm</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>26.82</td>
<td>39.94</td>
<td>23.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE22: proud</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>8.19</td>
<td>32.46</td>
<td>35.38</td>
<td>21.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE10: energetic</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>12.54</td>
<td>33.82</td>
<td>26.24</td>
<td>25.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE2:  cheerful</td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>11.92</td>
<td>32.27</td>
<td>39.24</td>
<td>15.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE18: fearless</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>35.65</td>
<td>26.67</td>
<td>21.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE29: relieved</td>
<td>3.49</td>
<td>13.08</td>
<td>31.40</td>
<td>37.21</td>
<td>14.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE1:  interested</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>45.06</td>
<td>27.33</td>
<td>11.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PE21: daring</td>
<td>10.47</td>
<td>22.97</td>
<td>33.43</td>
<td>17.73</td>
<td>15.41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a) Items are listed from the highest mean to the lowest  
b) 1 =none of the time; 2 = little of the time; 3 = some of the time; 4= most of the time; 5 = all of the time

Table 5.9 shows that 65-80% of students rated the items of PE5: joyful, PE14: lively, PE9: delighted, PE6: happy, and PE13: active at 4 (most of the time) and 5 (all of the time). The item PE1: interested was rated at 3 (some of the time) by 45.06% students.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Negative Emotions</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NE28: tired</td>
<td>5.23</td>
<td>16.57</td>
<td>29.36</td>
<td>28.20</td>
<td>20.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE31: confused</td>
<td>3.78</td>
<td>26.16</td>
<td>44.19</td>
<td>20.64</td>
<td>5.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE4: upset</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>27.33</td>
<td>43.31</td>
<td>18.31</td>
<td>6.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE8: jittery</td>
<td>8.70</td>
<td>29.57</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>18.84</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE19: disgusted</td>
<td>10.17</td>
<td>32.85</td>
<td>33.14</td>
<td>16.86</td>
<td>6.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE35: bored</td>
<td>15.36</td>
<td>26.09</td>
<td>33.04</td>
<td>17.39</td>
<td>8.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE16: mad</td>
<td>8.41</td>
<td>35.07</td>
<td>35.07</td>
<td>15.94</td>
<td>5.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE15: afraid</td>
<td>11.30</td>
<td>30.43</td>
<td>40.29</td>
<td>12.45</td>
<td>5.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE7: nervous</td>
<td>11.95</td>
<td>29.45</td>
<td>40.23</td>
<td>12.75</td>
<td>4.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE11: guilty</td>
<td>6.16</td>
<td>40.76</td>
<td>39.88</td>
<td>10.56</td>
<td>2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE20: ashamed</td>
<td>13.04</td>
<td>35.94</td>
<td>34.78</td>
<td>12.75</td>
<td>3.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE12: frightened</td>
<td>13.33</td>
<td>42.90</td>
<td>32.17</td>
<td>8.70</td>
<td>2.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE27: anxious</td>
<td>19.48</td>
<td>38.95</td>
<td>27.03</td>
<td>9.01</td>
<td>5.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE3: sad</td>
<td>11.88</td>
<td>45.22</td>
<td>34.20</td>
<td>8.12</td>
<td>.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE23: lonely</td>
<td>23.55</td>
<td>36.92</td>
<td>28.49</td>
<td>7.85</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE24: restless</td>
<td>36.44</td>
<td>32.94</td>
<td>21.28</td>
<td>6.41</td>
<td>2.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: a) Items were listed from the highest mean to the lowest
b) 1 = none of the time; 2 = little of the time; 3 = some of the time; 4 = most of the time; 5 = all of the time

Table 5.10 shows item NE28: *tired* was rated at 4 (most of the time) and 5 (all of the time) by 48.84% students. The items that were rated at 3 (some of the time) by 40-45% students are NE31: *confused*, NE4: *upset*, NE8: *jittery*, NE15: *afraid*, and NE7: *nervous*. There were 50-70% students who rated the items at 1 (none of the time) and 2 (little of the time). These items are NE12: *frightened*, NE27: *anxious*, NE3: *sad*, NE23: *lonely*, NE24: *restless*, and NE32: *hopeless*.

In order to find out the average frequency of experiencing positive emotions, I created a new variable, mean score of positive emotion (MSPE), by adding all items from the PAS and dividing by 16. Table 5.8 shows the mean and *SD* of MSPE.
Table 5.11  Mean and standard deviation of mean score of positive emotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSPE</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>.54</td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: MSPE = Mean Score of Positive Emotion

Figure 5.2 presents the distribution of the new variable MSPE. The range is 2.19 to 4.94.

Figure 5.2  Frequencies of mean score of positive emotions

Moreover, to find the average frequency of negative emotions, I created a new variable, the MSNE, by adding all items of the NAS and dividing by 17. Table 5.12 shows the mean and SD of MSNE.

Table 5.12  Mean and standard deviation of mean score of negative emotion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MSNE</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: MSNE = Mean Score of Negative Emotion
Figure 5.3 presents the distribution of the new variable MSNE. The range of MSNE is 1.29 to 4.24.

![Histogram showing distribution of MSNE](image)

**Figure 5.3** Frequencies of mean score of negative emotions

Tables 5.7, 5.8, 5.9, and 5.10 show that the student PAS responses corresponded to ‘some of the time’ and ‘most of the time’, (mean = 3.74, $SD = .54$) whereas their response to NAS corresponded to ‘a little of the time’ and ‘some of the time’, (mean = 2.65, $SD = .56$). This means that students experienced positive emotions more often than negative emotions in school. This finding corroborates the results of the level of student school satisfaction (mean = 3.60, $SD = .45$), identified in Section 5.2.1. Because positive emotions can be regarded as the markers of an individual’s overall well-being or happiness (Cohn & Fredrickson, 2009), they indicate that generally students in this study are happy in school. This conception refers to SWB from a hedonic approach. However, this current study also examined well-being from eudaimonic approaches to explore student experiences of their school and learning environment. Chapter 8 further discusses these qualitative findings.

In the presence of positive emotions, students also experienced negative emotions. According to Fredrickson and Losada (2005), the optimum effect of positive emotions is associated with a high ratio of positive and negative emotions. In their
study with college students, the optimal mental health of students is characterised by a ratio of positive and negative emotions of more than 2.9:1. This means that mental health is optimally achieved when people experience positive emotions almost three times the frequency of negative emotions. In addition, Boekaerts (2007) states that intensity of negative emotions will benefit learning to a mild degree. In this present study I did not determine the average ratio of positive and negative emotions measured by a repeated measurement similar to Fredrickson and Losada’s study (2005). This present study only measured emotional experience at one point in time.

I conducted further analysis to find out the relationship between emotions and other variables. However, since this study did not posit a hypothesis, the aim of using inferential statistics was to capture the relationship between variables and was not used for testing a hypothesis. The following section describes the association between emotion and gender. In addition, I examined the relationship between emotion and school satisfaction to explore how cognitive judgement of school satisfaction is associated with affective components – positive and negative emotions.

5.2.2.1 Emotion and gender

I used the t-test analysis to identify whether there is any significant difference between the mean scores of positive and negative emotions for males and females. The results show that males and females differ significantly in experiencing positive emotions. Males experienced more frequent positive emotions than females. On the other hand, there was no significant difference between males and females in experiencing negative emotions in school.
**Table 5.13** The t-test for positive and negative emotions according to gender

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Male students</th>
<th>Female students</th>
<th>t (df)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotion</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>3.03 (323)</td>
<td>&lt; .01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotion</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>.65 (331)</td>
<td>ns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This finding contrary to Adler (2013), who reports that there is no significant difference between males and females in experiencing positive and negative emotion. Likewise, Simon and Nath (2004) found that in general, there is no gender difference in the frequency of everyday subjective feelings, despite the cultural belief that males and females differ in their experience and expression of specific emotions, with females being more emotionally expressive.

**5.2.2.2 Positive and negative emotions and school satisfaction**

In order to examine whether students with the highest level of school satisfaction have a higher mean score of positive emotions than those with the lowest, I used the t-test analysis (Salkind, 2014). The results show that students with the highest level of school satisfaction (Group 1) more frequently experienced positive emotions in school than the group of students with the lowest (Group 2).

Likewise for positive emotions, I used the t-test to find out whether there is any difference between mean negative emotions of a group of students with the highest level of school satisfaction and those with the lowest. The findings reveal that the group with the lowest level of school satisfaction (Group 2) experienced more frequent negative emotions in school than the group of student with the highest (Group 1), as illustrated in Table 5.14.
Table 5.14  The t-test for positive and negative emotions of Group 1 and 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>t (df)</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group 1</td>
<td>Group 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive emotion</td>
<td>3.79</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>6.28 (314)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative emotion</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>2.95</td>
<td>2.89 (320)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Group 1= students with level of SS above the mean score
Group 2= students with level of SS below the mean score

Karatzias et al. (2002) found that positive emotions correlate positively to school satisfaction, and negative emotions correlate negatively. Similar results are also reported by Lewis et al. (2009); positive emotions demonstrate significant incremental validity in predicting school satisfaction, adaptive coping and student engagement. Stiglbauer et al. (2013) report a reciprocal and stable effect of positive school experience and student happiness. Positive school experiences promoted happiness over time, and in turn, happiness facilitated future positive school experiences.

To summarise, the quantitative findings on school satisfaction show that the mean level of student satisfaction with their school experience was satisfied. Less than 10% of the student participants were dissatisfied with their school experience. The kinds of student emotions corroborated this finding, with students experiencing more frequent positive emotions than negative emotions. Moreover, the students with the highest level of school satisfaction have higher mean scores of positive emotions than those with the lowest. In contrast, the students with the lowest level of school satisfaction have higher mean scores of negative emotions than those with the highest. The investigation of the relationship between school satisfaction and the kinds of emotions based on gender reveal that there is no difference in the level of school satisfaction and frequency of negative emotions between males and females.
However, males experienced more frequent positive emotions in school than females.

The findings from the quantitative data in this study show that student levels of well-being are comprised of school satisfaction, with emotions indicating happiness in terms of hedonic perspectives. As stated earlier, the SSS examines student satisfaction of school experience as a whole. This scale uses subjective judgement, and hence this scale does not inform specific aspects of schools or learning environments that relate to student feelings or thoughts. Generally feeling happy at school does not mean students feel well at all moments in school. Therefore, in order to gain a deeper understanding and a comprehensive picture of student satisfaction and emotions in schools, the qualitative findings complement the quantitative findings. The qualitative inquiries are used to identify specific situations that make students feel specific positive and negative emotions in school. Moreover, this approach is intended to examine student well-being in terms of eudaimonic perspectives of SDT. The qualitative findings aim to find out the degree to which school has provided the learning environment in which students experience fulfilment of their basic psychological needs.

Many students in this study felt dissatisfaction with their experiences in school. These findings confirm that schools or classrooms are not the same place for every student. Psychological outcomes, such as school satisfaction or emotional experiences, are influenced by individual differences in perceiving the environment and by the average perceptions of the student body in a classroom (Baker, 1998; Frenzel et al., 2007). I differentiated the qualitative findings about the kinds of
emotions experienced by the students into student perspectives and teacher perspectives, as discussed in the following sections.

5.3 Student perspectives of their emotional experiences in school

Students who were involved in the qualitative inquiry comprised 10 groups of students from five schools (i.e., Group 1 and Group 2 in each school). I formed these groups according to their level of school satisfaction. Group 1 consisted of the students with the highest level of school satisfaction, and Group 2 were those with the lowest level of school satisfaction. This study used three methods of qualitative inquiry – student story writing or drawing about school, focus-group interviews with students and teachers, and classroom observations.

Almost all student stories about their experience in school showed emotional tone. There was only one student story written descriptively with no emotional tone. In writing their stories, students made judgements about their school experiences. I had expected the students to write their story in a narrative, but most wrote their text in two parts: things or experiences they like and things or experiences they do not like in school.

This style of expression may have been influenced by the instruction for drawing, where students were asked for two different drawings, things or experiences at school that they like and those they do not. Thus, the emotional tone of the drawings reflected what they liked and disliked. The use of opposite or contrasting situations provides an opportunity to clarify the meaning of both pictures for them and for the researcher (Maxwell, 2006).

One of the 19 students who selected drawing to express their feelings, demonstrated feeling lonely as a situation not liked in school. In the student stories, both groups of
students expressed positive and negative emotions about their school experiences. In the stories, the students covered a range of aspects about their school and their school experiences, including school buildings, classrooms, teacher characteristics, school activities inside and outside class, subjects/lessons, instructional practices, and their relationships with friends and teachers. The kinds of positive emotions most frequently expressed were: ‘delight’, ‘joyful’, ‘happy’ and ‘concentrated’. The emotions ‘delight’, ‘joyful’ and ‘happy’ were also those included in the five most frequent positive emotions in the survey results. The negative emotions most often expressed in the stories were ‘upset’, ‘hate’, ‘annoyed’, ‘bored’ and ‘sad’.

The statements that made up the SSS also emerged in the students’ stories about their school, in which they wrote their expressions freely. For example, School is interesting (Student Story, Aina, School A, Group 2, 23/11/2012), School days are nice (Student Story, Tia, School A, Group 2, 23/11/2012), I like this school and classroom (Student Story, Hani, School B, Group 1, 15/12/2012).

In the student stories, students with the lowest level of satisfaction expressed more diversity and more frequent negative emotions than those with the highest level of school satisfaction. The former group used 23 words describing negative emotions, in contrast to the latter group, which used 11 words describing negative emotions. In particular, the words hate and bored were more frequently expressed in relation to school lessons, while students with the highest level of school satisfaction only expressed these words twice. Those who felt that the lessons were boring did not like the school subjects:

I hate Indonesian language subject because it makes me extremely bored. (Student Story, Adra, School D, Group 2, 30/11/2012)
Calculating and again. Calculating makes me feel unenthusiastic towards math. It makes me weary. Why am I never be able to master this subject? I always have to join a remedial class. Sometimes the teacher is annoying; I have not yet got 100% in math. So, I hate math.
(Student Story, Yoni, School D, Group 2, 30/11/2012)

Students also felt frustrated or bored because of the lesson difficulties:

Math is really frustrating because it is hard to learn.
(Student Story, Adri, School C, Group 2, 19/01/2013)

Even though I do not get math, but I have to be able to do it. Sometimes, I am bored.
(Student Story, Fiona, School C, Group 2, 19/01/2013)

The expressions above confirm that task demands influenced their attitudes towards the learning content or activity, their perceived control of the learning situations, and their emotions about their learning experiences. Eventhough the learning content might be valued, when students cannot engage in the content because it is difficult, they experience frustration. Likewise, if task demands are too high or too low, so reducing the meaning and value of the task, boredom can result (Pekrun et al., 2007).

In the focus-group interviews, most students in both groups were happy at school, even though some expressed negative perceptions. Common negative emotions expressed by both groups were ‘annoyed’, ‘unenthusiastic’, ‘feeling hurt’, ‘sad’, ‘worried’ and ‘depressed’. They also expressed physical problems such as ‘tired’ and ‘headache’.

However, in the focus-group interviews a contrasting expression also emerged. Compares to student stories, the group of students with the highest level of school satisfaction more frequently expressed negative emotions related to school experiences; ‘stress’ and ‘depressed’. Related to these emotions, students in the group with the highest level of school satisfaction were more concerned about their assignment workload, the tight timeframe available to complete assignments and the teacher expectations of them:
I am tired after school hours. Even on Sunday, I have to study, too. I have to prepare for test. (SFGI, Lusi, School E, Group 1, 26/11/2012)

Because I am in higher-ability class. I feel depressed. I have to get higher score to prevent loss of face. (SFGI, Disa, School B, Group 1, 15/12/2012)

... we are under pressure, we do not have enough time for playing. (SFGI, Hani, School E, Group 1, 15/12/2012)

The group of students with the lowest level of school satisfaction have similar concerns about the NE and their achievement. They expressed worry about getting a bad score and felt sad when they got bad scores in tests. Expression of worry aligns to the findings from several studies that the NE leads the students to have psychological problems, such as feeling anxious, worried, and under pressure (Kinantie et al., 2012; Maisaroh & Falah, 2011; Pranadji & Muharrifah, 2010). Related to the assignment task, they felt tired and sometimes confused about the due date of assignments. In addition, they also got in a bad mood when their parents did not show appreciation of their achievements.

Student feelings related to their teacher’s comments about their abilities provided an interesting topic of conversation in the group of students with the lowest satisfaction. The teachers often compared performance and achievement between students or classes. The students felt publicly humiliated; as a result, many students were ‘sad’, ‘feeling hurt’, ‘annoyed’ and ashamed’. Instead of teachers making an effort to motivate and encourage the students, the students were disappointed because of criticism about their inadequacy. When teachers implement competitive structures in the classroom, many of the weakest students perceive this as reducing their control over their success, thus stimulating negative emotions (Pekrun et al., 2007). In classrooms with a competitive structure, success is measured by normative standards. Consequently, a limited number of students can outperform their peers. Moreover, Helme (1983, as cited in Frenzel et al., 2007) reports that pressure for achievement
and perceived competition among classmates is related to anxiety. In contrast, depressive symptoms are less likely experienced by students when they feel less competition, compare academic achievement or pursue high grades (Ming-Te, 2009).

The kinds of emotions pertaining to academic learning, achievement, goal setting and teacher expectations in this study are achievement emotions—emotions tied directly to academic activities or achievement outcomes’ (Pekrun, et al., 2007, p. 15). Achievement emotions can be referred to as positive emotions, such as ‘pride’ or ‘joy’, or negative emotions, for example, ‘anxiety’, ‘anger’, ‘boredom’ and ‘hopeless’. The valence of positive or negative emotional experience depends on the values that relate to the activities and the extent to which the students are able to control the outcome. According to control theory of academic emotion (Pekrun et al., 2007), different patterns of appraisals of the activities and the ability to control the outcome will stimulate different emotions about their achievement. For instance, when students perceive that the activity is important and they can control the outcome, they will normally experience positive emotions, such as enjoyment. On the other hand, negative emotions, such as frustration, will be experienced when students perceive that the activity is important but they have little opportunity to control the outcome (Pekrun et al., 2007).

To summarise, the students expressed a range of positive and negative emotions related to their school experiences. Most students said that they were happy in school. In contrast, lesson difficulties, assignment tasks and teacher expectations were common issues that resulted in negative emotions in both groups of students. However, there were differences in the kind of negative emotions and the expression of their feelings in the different research methods. Students with the highest level of
school satisfaction more frequently expressed ‘stress’ and ‘depressed’ in the focus-group interviews, while those with the lowest level of school satisfaction more frequent expressed ‘hate’ and ‘bored’ in their stories. Teacher expectations were also perceived differently by both groups. Self-perceived competence mediated how students responded to the teachers’ expectations.

The next section describes how factors of the learning environments impact on student emotions in school. In this study, I divided factors in the learning environments into school conditions and psychosocial environments.

5.3.1 School conditions

From the qualitative data, factors in the learning environment related to positive views in one school may be regarded by students in other schools as factors associated with negative perceptions about school. The differences in school settings led to these different perceptions. The eight primary schools involved in this study had various school conditions. School conditions are the physical conditions inside and surrounding a school (Konu & Rimpela, 2002). According to an ecological paradigm, aspects of the physical environment such as appearance and furnishings in the classroom, classroom size and physical resources influence classroom climate (Evans et al., 2009).

From my observation, some of the schools in this study have good school resources, whereas other schools do not. The quality of school facilities include the width of the building and land, the number of classes, seating quality, and other school amenities, such as air-conditioning, an LCD projector, playground, basketball court, canteen, etc. School facilities are only part of school resources. Eccless and Roeser (2011a) define school resources in terms of adequate materials, a safe environment and the
qualification of learning staff, and these are important for student learning and well-being. Konu and Rimpela (2002) state that the school’s physical environment consists of a safe environment, cosiness, noise, ventilation and temperature.

For the students from schools with good facilities, students perceived the physical characteristics of the school as good aspects of the school. School buildings, cleanliness, beauty and facilities were common themes emerging from these student stories and focus-group interviews. In contrast, students from schools with a lack of facilities expressed negative views related to the condition of buildings, school furniture, toilets, canteens and the playground.

While students did not mention these characteristics as directly affecting their specific emotions, the characteristics influenced their perceptions about school positively and negatively respectively. Even though the students did not express their emotions in relation to school conditions, according to Pekrun et al. (2007), there is a short-circuit between perceptions and emotions, so perceptions themselves are sufficient to stimulate emotions. For example, when students experience many positive/negative experiences in a situation, they can experience anticipatory pleasant/unpleasant emotions before entering a situation without any need to evaluate those expectations or values according to the situation. Therefore, positive perceptions can be predicted to stimulate positive emotions, and negative perceptions will activate negative emotions. Tomkins and Izard (1971, as cited in Izard, 1977) stated similar argument about the role of perception on emotion, but they also emphasize the importance effect of emotion on perception and cognition. With regard to the effect of physical environment, Konu and Rimpela (2002) argue that
external and internal physical environments of schools are a key indicator of school well-being.

5.3.2 Psychosocial school environment

According to Gillander, Gådin and Hammarström (2005, as cited in Haapasalo et al., 2010, p. 135) the psychosocial school environment can be defined as, “school’s social situations that are related to students’ work (such as teacher support, task demands, and influence over school work), and also related to student-student relationships (such as bullying, isolation, etc.).”

In this context of learning environments, students experience a wide range of emotions, as mentioned in Section 5.2.2. Identifying student emotions is essential for understanding how the learning context impacts upon school experiences (Meyer & Turner, 2002). The sections below describe the impact of academic demands in instructional practices, relationships between teachers and students, and relationships among students, on student emotions in school.

5.3.2.1 Impact of academic demands on student emotions

Academic demands provide another source of negative feelings. Academic demands are a set of tasks or teacher expectations (Samdal et al., 1999). Student emotions were stimulated by teachers providing limited time to complete a lot of homework. Sometimes, the students had several tasks that had to be finished simultaneously. Students perceived this situation as demanding, feeling tired and stressed (SFGI, Rifa, School A, Group 1, 23/10/2012). When students perceive that school demands are too much for them, the school is applying pressure on students (Freeman et al., 2012). When the demand is higher than student capability, they are likely to feel strain (Takakura et al., 2005). A continuing imbalance between demands and
resources can lead individuals to have feelings of inadequacy, anxiety and lack of control (Claxton, 2013). Several previous studies reveal that students frequently feel alienation and failure when expectations exceed individual levels of capability (Samdal et al., 1999). In the focus-group interviews, some students said that instead of having enthusiasm for finishing such tasks, they were lazy. This behaviour is a goal frustration mechanism (Boekaerts, 2007). When individuals perceive that there is environmental pressure, and they also perceive an obstacle in meeting the goal, their response may be to turn the goal from desired to undesired.

Student drawings also displayed issues about academic demands. The titles of their drawings included: Difficult homework; Difficult lessons; Teacher is getting angry with students; Students cannot answer the teacher’s question; and Students got bad score in the test. These pictures described the experiences students did not like in school. On the other hand, three students drew pictures titled Having a good test score and Getting appreciation from classmates as pleasant experiences (see Appendix 5). This reflects that academic achievement is a critical issue for students.

To some extent, when teachers express expectations, it can be a positive motivation to some students to do their best (Takakura et al., 2005). Obviously, students feel good about school when they are able to adjust to school expectations and demands (Van Petegem et al., 2008). Moreover, positive appraisals of school are associated with classroom practices that afford students opportunities to feel competent (Baker et al., 2003). Student feelings of competence can be fostered by providing learning activities and teaching strategies so that students can master and actually understand the tasks, but are still optimally challenging, thereby enabling students to expand their capabilities (Niemiec & Ryan, 2009; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). However,
other students might experience the inverse of such classroom practices, especially those students with lower ability. Students regard teacher motivating techniques of comparing performance between classes as non-supportive for students. As a consequence, students feel ‘sad’, ‘hurt’, or ‘anger’, because their competences are degraded by the teachers. This finding supports other researchers, who state that many individuals perceive that social comparison performance likely reduces control over success, instigating negative emotions such as anger, anxiety and hopelessness (Pekrun et al., 2007).

5.3.2.2 Impact of teacher-student relationships on student emotions

Teachers are a significant factor in the learning environment, stimulating positive and negative perceptions about school. “How students like teachers” often answers the question, “how do students like school” (Sabo, 1995, as cited in Konu & Rimpela, 2002, p. 84). When students evaluate whether or not their teacher is a good teacher, the interpersonal qualities of their teacher becomes a focus (McGrath & Noble, 2014). In this study, some students responded with, ‘teachers are nice’, ‘teachers are funny’, ‘teachers are caring’ when asked what is good about their school. These characteristics align with the findings from a study by Kangas (2010), where students mentioned the characteristics of their ideal teachers as nice, funny, friendly, have a sense of humour, not easily getting angry, but strict enough.

Student satisfaction with their school experiences are substantively related to perceptions of a caring classroom environment (Baker, 1998). In this study, the students mentioned their teacher’s support as a positive aspect of school, particularly instrumental support for students who have difficulties in learning. However, they also considered teachers as a source of unpleasant experiences in school. Many students voiced negative feelings related to interpersonal teacher behaviours. For
instance, they noticed teachers who showed favouritism to higher-achieving students and conversely, those teachers who underestimated lower-achieving students by giving them lower expectations.

Interviewer: What do you mean “the teacher is not fair”?
Student 1: Teacher maintained close relationships with the clever student, whereas not close to the others.
Student 2: Teacher gave good appraisal to the clever students, but teacher get mad on those who are not clever.
(SFGI, Anna & Anti, School E, Group 2, 28/11/12)

This situation confirms Stipek’s (2006) finding, that teachers often favour high-achieving students and develop more personal supportive relationships with them than with low-achieving students. Skinner and Belmont (1993) also found a reciprocal effect of student behaviours in learning and teacher behaviours towards them, and vice versa. Students who perceive their teachers as providing support and emotional involvement are more likely to be more effortful, persistent, feel happy and show enthusiasm for learning. So too, teacher perceptions of students influence teacher interactions with students. Teachers respond to the students who are engaged in learning with more involvement and support. In contrast, teachers respond to students who lack engagement with less time (neglect) and pressure to participate (coercion).

Students also mentioned teacher comments related to their ability to understand lessons as a cause of dislike. Sometimes the teachers were rude. Interestingly almost all student participants in schools where this occurred (School A and School D), perceived the same teacher as behaving rudely – a shared perception. Personal style is difficult to change, because interpersonal behaviour is connected to a stable trait of personal character (Brekelmans, 1989, as cited in Van Petegem et al., 2008).
Students also expressed their relationship to the teachers in their drawings about school. Three pictures out of 19 described situations when a teacher was getting angry with the students. There were also two drawings showing the student being punished. Picture 1 illustrates a student being punished in a flag ceremony because he did not wear his complete school uniform. Picture 2 illustrates three students standing in front of the school yard (see Appendix 5).

I conducted classroom observations in two types of class with the same students; one in which most students favour the subject and the other in which they least favour the subject. Both the observations and student responses in focus-group interviews indicate that personal teacher characteristics influence student perceptions of the subjects (see Section 6.1.2). The teachers who taught the favourite subjects showed different personal characteristics to those who taught the least favourite subjects, and that impacted on the classroom climate.

Even though the classroom consisted of the same students, the situations were different. The classrooms taught by the favourite teachers looked livelier, and more students showed enthusiasm for learning. In contrast, there were a few teachers who showed limited warm expressions. These teachers taught in a well-managed classroom where the students followed teacher rules. However, I characterised these classrooms as unpleasant for the students because the teachers did not smile at the students and their speaking intonation tended to increase when they found students making mistakes. Their comments on student work were not supportive. For example:

Why do you always make mistakes in solving the math problem?
It is an easy question. How come that it is so difficult for you?
(TO8, Rita, Mathematics class, School C, 11/12/12)
Classrooms can be categorised as having negative climate interactions when teachers display negative regard, criticism, disapproval and annoyance with students (Hamre & Pianta, 2005). Student emotional states are influenced by teacher behaviours. Students experience school well-being more in a context where they perceive that their teacher cares about students, and helps them in academic learning and dealing with social-emotional problems (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). In contrast, students experience emotional stress when teachers communicate to their students with less regard and affection, underestimate student capabilities, or show less warmth and hostile behaviours (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). Detailed descriptions of the TSRs are explained in Chapter 7.

5.3.2.3  Impact of student-student relationship on student emotions

Student stories and focus-group interviews indicate student-student interaction as a significant theme related to their positive perceptions and emotions at school. A relationship with friends was a common topic generating either positive or negative emotions in both students with the highest level of school satisfaction and those with the lowest.

Examples of phrases related to interactions with friends include:

I am happy because I will meet my friends at school.  
(Student Story, Matthew, School A, Group 1, 23/11/2012)

At school, I am happy because I have a lot of friends.  
(Student Story, Fiona, School C, Group 2, 19/01/2012)

I am happy being in school because I have a lot of friends.  
(Student Story, Wina, School B, Group 2, 15/12/2012)

Still, student interactions were also essential factors generating negative emotions. The students told me that being teased by friends, as an example, can make them feel ‘sad’, ‘lonely’, ‘annoyed’, or ‘mad’. This confirms Weiner’s (2007) finding, that the majority of emotions in the school setting are generated by social acceptance or
rejection, social activities and other social concerns. Most children reported that to be with their friends underpinned their intention to go to school. For most children, school is primarily a social experience. Being with friends, playing at recess, chatting about sports, music or other interesting activities are superior to coming to school for learning (Elias, 1989). Students who have sense of community in school are more likely to enjoy class, feel happier and develop positive attitudes towards school (Battistich et al., 1997; Ladd et al., 1996; Osterman, 2000).

The students expressed the phenomena of bullying as a negative experience in school. However, I responded cautiously to the student statements about bullying – this is a sensitive issue involving ethical considerations. Ethical protocols for research with children state that the researcher should not open up discussion about abusive situations unless there is a support service available (Fratter, 1996, as cited in Hill, 1997). I advised the students to report cases of bullying to whoever they needed to, such as their parents, teachers, or the school principal. The students mentioned that teachers were not fully aware of these bullying phenomena. They also said that they need the presence of a school counsellor who is expert in their problems. Koesoema (2015), a character education observer in Indonesia is concerned about the culture of violence in school, as many learners, and even teachers, consider that violent behaviour is normal. Research indicates that students who perceived negative peer relationships are likely to feel alienation, disengage from classroom activities (Wentzel & Watkins, 2002), higher level of loneliness and disliking of their school (Ladd et al., 1996).

The following section describes teacher perspectives about student emotional states and how they identified them through several indicators of student behaviours.
5.4 Teacher perspectives of student emotions in school

In the focus-group interviews, teachers identified several emotional states of students, such as ‘happy’, ‘interested’, ‘bored’, ‘afraid’, ‘depressed’ and ‘tired’. The teachers reported that most of their students were happy in school. The teachers used several indicators to identify positive and negative student emotional states, for example, student motivation to go to school or being in school, their engagement in school activities, and their responses to facing academic challenges. In addition, the teachers indicated their beliefs about the impact of positive emotions on student learning. Each of these topics is further elaborated below.

In relation to student motivation, teachers perceive that school is a place for students to play, which helps to students feel happy. The teachers identified student attendance rates and arriving at school on time as indicators that students like their school. They identified getting school lunch-money from parents or having friends at school as another motivation to go to school. Teachers viewed their role as parent at school and their own varied personal characteristics as factors resulting in student happiness at school (TFGI, Agis, School E, 26/11/2012).

Teachers listed other indicators of student happiness in school, such as student enthusiasm for school tasks, answering the teacher’s questions, and asking questions to fulfil their curiosity. Likewise, they identified that some students are afraid to ask questions of their teachers; however, they were unable to pinpoint the cause, believing they support and encourage students to ask questions (TFGI, Rita, School C, 20/01/2013).

With regard to teacher perceptions of the academic demands faced by students, the teachers identified that at the beginning of Year 6 students indicate a fear of facing
the NE. But, by the middle of Year 6, the feeling of fear lessens due to instructional support through intensive study sessions. However, since these intensive study sessions are conducted by the school, the teachers said that students were bored and tired because most of them had to stay at school to attend the cram sessions after school hours. Teachers also identified depression as a negative emotional state of students (TI, Wita, School B, 20/05/13).

Teachers believe that happiness supports student ability to understand lesson content. On the other hand, they believe feeling depressed decreases their competency to comprehend the lesson. These beliefs align with Fredrickson’s theory of emotions (2001) about the different role of positive and negative emotions on human adaptation. Positive emotions are regarded as adaptive responses because they broaden an individual’s cognitive abilities and behaviours. In contrast, negative emotions inhibit an individual’s thoughts and behaviours. Nevertheless, I believe that the teachers in this study were not sufficiently aware of their students’ emotional states, especially whether they were happy in school or enjoyed their learning. This assumption is line with McReynolds’ (2008) argument, based on her experiences as a psychologist who works with parents, teachers and students. She discovered that few educators in New York City, USA, have taken student states of happiness seriously. From the teacher perspective, they attempt to facilitate student happiness to learn by practising different teaching methods. In the focus group, they did not explain in what circumstances they could provide a caring and supportive learning environment in their instructional practices. Teachers were more concerned about how they could meet learning objectives in their teaching practices through transmission of knowledge to students. I describe the detailed findings related to academic demands...
in instructional practices in Chapter 6 and teachers’ interpersonal behaviours as perceived by the students in Chapter 7 (Section 7.1.1).

5.5 Summary

The quantitative data show that most of the students were happy in school and they experienced slightly more positive emotions than negative emotions. Students from the group with the highest level of school satisfaction experienced significantly more positive emotions and less negative emotions than those from the lowest level of school satisfaction.

The five most frequent positive emotions experienced by students are: ‘joyful’, ‘lively’, ‘delighted’, ‘happy’ and ‘active’. However, students also frequently experienced negative feelings: ‘tired’, ‘confused’, ‘upset’, ‘jittery’ and ‘disgusted’. Analysis of the relationship between school satisfaction and gender revealed no significant relationship. Relationships between school satisfaction and academic achievement showed a negative correlation. This means that students with lower levels of school satisfaction have higher academic achievement and vice versa. The students can achieve higher academic achievement even though their level of school satisfaction is low.

According to quality-of-life perspectives, when students report generally positive emotions and are satisfied with their school experience, a school can be defined as a positive school (Huebner et al., 2009). However, the measures of school satisfaction and related emotions only provide a global evaluation of their school experiences. Even though in this study less than 10% of students have a school satisfaction score below the neutral level, students with higher levels of school satisfaction also conveyed expressions of dissatisfaction with their school experiences. This shows
that students in this study all have some negative school experiences. Therefore, a quantitative assessment of student school satisfaction and emotions should not be used as the sole indicator of a positive school. Other characteristics of positive schools also have to be taken into account to consider a school positive (see Section 3.5.2 – determinants of school satisfaction). The student voices that relate to specific aspects of school should be used to further explore how they experience their schooling.

Student expressions of negative emotions related to the conditions of their learning environment. In this study, I identified the learning environment as including physical and psychosocial aspects. Physical learning environments were not perceived by the students as directly impacting on their emotions, but they influenced student perceptions of what is good or not good about school. The psychosocial environment is a significant factor of the learning environment that influences students’ emotions. A contrasting qualitative analysis of the groups of students with the highest and the lowest level of school satisfaction shows similarities and differences in their responses. Both groups share similar or common issues. For instance, in relation to student-student relationships, most expressed satisfaction and positive emotions. From the teacher perspective, teachers could identify student emotions in school. However, their responses indicate that they use general indicators of student emotions and seem likely to simplify it.

Chapter 6 describes student perceptions about subject matter, academic demands and how they respond to these. In addition, Chapter 6 presents the teacher perspectives on academic demands, and the how and why of implementation in their daily instructional practices. The existing conditions of the Indonesian educational system,
such as curriculum demands and the NE, are significant issues for teachers and parents in terms of academic expectations.
Chapter 6  Academic demand in instructional practice
The previous chapter described the level of student satisfaction with their school experience, their emotions in school, and the learning environment factors affecting student satisfaction and emotions. This chapter details how the educational contexts drives instructional practices, and how these practices affect teacher and parent academic expectations, and student learning.

This chapter presents two sub-themes. The first discusses student perceptions of subject characteristics and the associated factors that influence those perceptions through discussion of the general characteristics of common instructional practices in Indonesian schools. The second discusses national policies in the Indonesian educational system, predominantly driven by the NE, and how they influence curriculum content, teaching practices and other related variables, such as student motivation and classroom goal structures. Both sub-themes are constructed by combining student and teacher perspectives, as each may have different views on similar issues. A summary completes the chapter.

6.1 Subject characteristics

Attitude towards school subjects is an important area for research, with several researchers reporting a substantial causal link between attitude, behaviour and achievement (Andre et al., 1999). However, studying attitude is not simple; relationships between variables are complex and dynamic, with parental expectations and support, student ability, peer and teacher supports, social demands and other contextual variables playing a role (Andre et al., 1999; George, 2000; Rowan-Kenyon, Swan, & Creager, 2012). This study intentionally does not examine student attitudes across subjects; rather it explores student preferences towards school subjects. According to Koballa and Crawley (1985, as cited in George, 2000,
students expressing their feelings through expressions such as ‘I like [subject]’ or ‘I hate [subject]’, indicates general positive and negative feelings towards the subjects, and can thus be considered as expressions of attitude towards those subjects. Nevertheless, this study does not use a specific scale to examine student attitude. In the context of this study, student attitude towards subjects refers to their preferences. The research sought these preferences through both student and teacher perspectives. Student perspectives were explored through the questionnaire, writing stories or drawing about school experiences, and focus-group interviews. Therefore, quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Teacher perspectives were only examined through qualitative data collected through focus-group interviews.

6.1.1 Phase 1: Student questionnaire

The questionnaire asked students to nominate their two most favoured and two least favoured school subjects to establish the percentages of students who nominated particular subjects as their most and least favoured subjects. In the Indonesian educational system, there are general, or core, school subjects across schools. In elementary or primary school, these subjects are Indonesian language, mathematics, social science, natural science, religion, civics, cultural arts and physical education (The Ministerial Decree 22/2006) (Permendikbud, 2006). The school can add other subjects. In the schools in this study, these additional subjects were English language, languages other than English (e.g., Mandarin, Arabic), computer studies, Jakarta culture, Al-Quran and Islamic studies.

The 345 students in the study nominated all of the subjects offered across the schools surveyed; 15 subjects in total. The subjects were natural science, civics, mathematics, physical education, English language, social science, Indonesian language, Jakarta
culture, religion, cultural arts, computer studies, Islamic studies, Al-Quran, Mandarin language and Arabic language.

Figure 6.1 The first most favoured subject

Figure 6.1 shows that of the 345 students, 130 (37.68%) chose natural science as their most favoured subject, while 82 students (23.77%) chose mathematics. Less than 10% of students chose one of 10 other subjects: physical education, English language, social science, Indonesian language, Jakarta culture, religion, cultural arts, computer studies, civics and Arabic language.
As shown in Figure 6.2, in choosing their second favoured subject, 84 students (24.35%) chose natural science, while 39 students (11.30%) chose social science and 37 students (10.72%) chose mathematics. Less than 10% chose English language, Indonesian language, Jakarta culture, physical education, religion, cultural arts, computer studies, civics and Arabic language. Eight students (2.33%) chose only one favoured subject.

Out of the 345 students surveyed (See Figure 6.3), 102 students (29.56%) chose mathematics as their least favoured subject, with social science chosen as the least favoured subject by 56 students (16.23%) and civics by 49 (14.20%) students. Less than 10% of students chose English language, Islamic studies, cultural arts, physical education, computer studies, Arabic language, natural science, Jakarta culture, Al-Quran, Mandarin language or religion as their least favoured subject. Eleven students (3.18%) did not mention their first least favoured subject.
Figure 6.3  The first least favoured subject

Figure 6.4 presents that of the 345 students, 62 (17.79%) chose civics as their second least favoured subject, while 57 students (16.52%) chose social science. Less than 10% of students chose Indonesian language, mathematics, English language, Islamic studies, computer studies, cultural arts, Jakarta culture, Arabic language, Mandarin language and Al-Quran, as their second least favoured subject. Sixty-two students (17.97%) chose only one least favoured subject.
To summarise, this study found that the most favoured subjects were natural science and mathematics. Several researchers, such as Andre et al. (1999) argue that science is typically regarded as among the most important subjects compared to other school subjects, but is less important than reading and mathematics. However, this study found that the number of students who chose mathematics as their most favoured subject was less than those who chose science. Moreover, many students chose mathematics as their least favoured subject.

In a longitudinal study of American youth about student attitudes towards science, George (2000) found that the students in Grade 7 showed the most positive attitudes towards science; however, these attitudes generally declined over the middle and high school years. Drawing from several previous studies, George (2000) concludes that boys have more favourable attitudes towards science than girls, but the differences across grade levels are variable and the effect of size is small (Andre et al., 1999). This current study shows no difference in the numbers of male and female students who prefer science as their favoured subject. Out of 130 students who chose
science as their most favoured subject, 64 were male and 66 were female. As the second most favoured subject, science was chosen by 35 male and 49 female students. This finding confirms Friedler and Tamir’s (1990) study in Israel, as cited by Andre et al. (1999, p. 721), that gender differences in attitudes towards science are minimal in elementary students.

This present study shows that 42 male and 40 female students chose mathematics as their first most favoured subject, and 19 male and 18 female students chose it as their second most favoured subject; showing no gender difference for mathematics as the favoured subject. However, 64 female students chose mathematics as their least favoured subject compared to 24 males. This finding supports Frenzel et al. (2007), who contend that male students report experiencing more enjoyment and less anxiety in learning mathematics than female students. Similarly, Dever and Kababenick (2011) found that female students reported less interest in mathematics on average than male students.

6.1.2 Phase 2: Writing stories or drawing, and focus-group interviews

As described in Chapter 4 (Section 4.3.3.1), in Phase 2 of the study a total 67 students were involved in writing stories or drawing, and focus-group interviews. This study attempted to find if there were different patterns of responses between group of students with the highest level of school satisfaction and those with the lowest. The data show that there was no difference between the groups in how they expressed their feelings about the subjects or explaining why they like and dislike subjects, either in the student stories and drawings or in the focus-group interview responses.
The students mentioned the name of the subjects they liked and disliked in their stories, but most did not explain why they liked the subjects. Out of 46 stories, only two students (4.35%) gave a reason for liking the subjects:

Mathematics is my favourite subject, because learning mathematics is really fun.
(Student Story, Aliya, School B, Group 2, 15/12/12)

I like learning religion and natural science because the teacher and the content of these subjects are enjoyable.
(Student Story, Icha, School E, Group 1, 28/11/12)

These quotes illustrate how these students are intrinsically motivated to learn the subjects. According to Ryan and Deci (2000a, pp. 55-56), intrinsic motivation refers to doing an activity because it is inherently interesting and enjoyable, while extrinsic motivation refers to doing something for some separable consequences, such external prods, pressures, or rewards. Based on this definition, it can be assumed that only a few students have intrinsic motivation. Rowan-Kenyon, Swan and Creager (2012) found that across grade levels, only a few students are motivated to do well in mathematics because they enjoy mathematics or think it is fun. Most students are motivated to learn mathematics because they get parental rewards for their academic performance. Therefore, their motivation is driven by extrinsic, rather than intrinsic, motivation.

In contrast, students in this study more frequently expressed reasons for disliking subjects:

I feel annoyed in learning mathematics or attending mathematics’ intensive study session because the teacher is scary, the lesson contents are boring, and the questions are difficult.
(Student Story, Dani, School E, Group 1, 28/11/12)

I cannot enjoy learning in social science, because it is the most difficult subject in school, I do not like it.
(Student Story, Ari, School D, Group 1, 30/11/12)

I really do not like social science and mathematics. I am confused with these subjects and I must study harder unless I have to join the remedial test.
(Student Story, Wina, School B, Group 2, 15/12/12)
These expressions are exemplars of why many students selected mathematics or social science as their least favoured subjects. They perceived that both are difficult and boring. From the student drawings, two (10.53%) of the 19 figures described classroom situations and the name of subjects they did not like. These subjects were mathematics and social science. A student wrote on her drawing that social science is the most boring and difficult subject. On the other hand, two (10.53%) students mentioned computer studies and cultural arts as the subjects they liked in school.

From the focus-group interviews, most student perceptions towards the subjects, either positively or negatively, was associated with how the teachers explained the subjects. The students had positive perceptions when they regarded the subjects as easy and interesting. On the other hand, negative perceptions were associated with difficult or boring subjects, and ‘serious’ learning conditions.

The students perceived the subject as easy when they did not have to memorise the content of the lessons. Even though learning practices in Indonesia predominantly require students to use rote memorisation (Zulfikar, 2009), such learning is not easy. Subjects were also perceived as easy when teachers explained the lesson clearly, for instance using simple sentences and describing a straightforward way of understanding the lesson content. The students preferred subjects when they could find answers to test questions in the textbooks (SFGI, Tika, Schol A, Group 2, 23/11/12). In traditional teaching practice, textbooks play a dominant role as the source of knowledge (Adams & Sargent, 2012). Students seem likely to seek low risk and low ambiguity tasks (Doyle, 1985, as cited in Pollard, 1990). These student preferences are common in schools in a society with a strong uncertainty index, such
as Indonesia, where students are likely to find the correct answer because they are rewarded for accurate answers (Hofstede, 2001).

Several situations in the learning environment led the students to feel interested in learning. The students preferred unusual situations compared to routine or daily learning activities. These situations were characterised, for instance, by teachers or students using LCD projectors in teaching practices (e.g., SFGI, Lala & Rifa, School A, Group 2, 23/11/12), the teacher explaining lessons using mind mapping, and the teacher offering questions and getting students to compete to answer it (e.g., SFGI, Tika, School A, Group 2, 23/11/12). The students also preferred mobile activities in class so they were not only listening to the teacher at their desk (e.g., SFGI, Anti, School E, Group 2, 28/12/12). Acting, demonstrating and playing sport were examples of activities that some students enjoyed in their learning (e.g., SFGI, Hani & Khansa, School B, Group 1, 23/11/12).

Hopkins’ study (2008) similarly found that Year 4 primary school students enjoy learning activities that require active participation, such as doing experiments, performing, playing sport and engaging in Information Communication Technology (ICT). Likewise, McCallum (2000) found that a majority of older students (Year 6) favoured active learning compared to Year 2 students. Year 6 students found discussion very useful for their learning. In a study with high school students, Shernoff et al. (2003) found that students felt the most engaged in instructional practice that involved active learning, such as group-work or individual activities, rather than the teacher lecturing the class. Student engagement in learning can be promoted by teachers through designing learning activities that require various cognitive level or cooperation among students (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). However,
this present research indicated little opportunity for the students to be involved as active learners. The amount of lesson content influenced how instructional practices were established. Consequently, the teacher just delivered the lesson content to the students rather than involving them as active learners, such as in experiment of natural science. Out of 14 classrooms observed, only three learning sessions involved students as active learners (O1 – School A, O8 – School C, O13 – School E). In School A, students played a role in interview sessions, in School C students learned mathematics through group-work and in School E groups of students presented the science experiment result. This finding corroborated Bjork’s observation that only 5% of the lessons in Indonesian schools involved students in any type of discussion (Bjork, 2013).

Moreover, the students felt enthusiastic about lesson content that was new, easily understood, or could be further explored. They also preferred teachers to explain the lessons slowly (e.g., SFGI, Namira & Syahrul, School C, Group 1, 19/01/12). These students indicated that teachers have to implement effective teaching practices. Teachers should consider the different information processing capabilities of students. Clear explanation and presenting lessons in small steps are needed to ensure that students are not mentally overloaded with information or engaging in complex mental processing beyond their capabilities (Schunk et al., 2010).

In contrast, students perceived subjects as difficult when teachers did not explain the lessons clearly; as a result, students found them difficult to understand:

In fact, the subject is not difficult, but the teacher’s teaching style makes it difficult. (SFGI, Brata, School B, Group 1, 15/12/12)

Student perceptions about the quality of teacher instruction are related to their emotional experiences. When students perceive that the teachers are clear and
structured in teaching, it relates to higher levels of student enjoyment in learning the subject, and lower levels of anger and boredom (Frenzel et al., 2007). In this study, teaching style is related to student perception of difficult subjects. The students also perceived a subject as difficult when they asked questions but the teacher did not answer (SFGI, Helena, School D, Group 2, 30/11/12) or did not involve the students for further discussion of the lesson content (SFGI, Lina, School D, Group 1, 30/11/12). In addition, teachers who often expressed anger while explaining lessons led the students to perceive the lessons as difficult:

She explained the lessons whilst she yelled at students. When she found the students were chatting in the class, she yelled at them, and then … explained the lessons but she also still yelled.
(SFGI, Khaira, School C, Group 2, 19/01/13)

This quote illustrates that students simultaneously received two kinds of information from the teacher; her explanation about the lesson, and comments while yelling at the students. The teacher’s comments while yelling may inhibit students from acquiring information. The students also mentioned that subjects with homework every week were difficult.

There are lots of home works and tests at the same day.
(SFGI, Sheni, School D, Group 1, 30/11/12)

Subjects were also perceived as difficult when students had to memorise lesson content. The Indonesian education system regards rote memorisation as a necessary approach in learning because when students answer test questions they have to answer precisely to the textbook or rely on teacher preferences. If the students cannot give the answer precisely according to the textbook, or their answers do not match the teacher’s preferences, the student’s test scores are reduced (e.g., SFGI, Aina, Ardi, Nana & Raka, School A, 23/11/12). Adams and Sargens (2012) argue that these practices describe a text-driven and teacher-dominated traditional view of
teaching. This practice emphasises the role of the teacher as a transmitter of information and the textbook as the source of knowledge. Teachers are regarded as the experts, with more and deeper knowledge than the accepted text. Therefore, teachers have the authority to decide what is correct or wrong with students’ answers (Adams & Sargent, 2012; Hofstede, 2001; Schuh, 2004). These conditions support rote learning as the dominant method of learning in Indonesia (Zulfikar, 2009). Students have to memorise, practice and drill their knowledge, and then reproduce it in a test.

Such conditions lead to students feeling bored. Drawing on Fisher’s definition (1993), boredom is characterised by a severe lack of interest and difficulty concentrating on the current activity (Nett, Göetz, & Daniels, 2010, p. 627). In this study, several situations caused boredom, for instance, when teachers explained similar content several times (SFGI, Arsyid & Tina, School C, Group 1, 19/01/12), or when the lesson explanations were not really related to the content (SFGI, Disa, School B, group1, 15/12/12). Students also perceived a boring learning situation when the teacher gave an instruction to the students to read the book; as one student said:

Teachers just give us an instruction to read the book. In fact, the content is interesting, but teachers did not further explain the content. (SFGI, Disa, School B, Group 1, 15/12/12)

In comparison to other studies, students also experienced boredom when they perceived teachers applying punishment and competition in the classroom. Frenzel et al. (2007) reports this finding from a study in the mathematics’ classroom environment of students aged 10 to 16 in Germany. In a history class of secondary school students in Greece, Mitsoni (2006) found that students got bored when they did not have an opportunity to discuss things or to express their opinions. This
present study also found that students felt bored when the teacher’s explanation led them to fall asleep. In these situations, the teacher did not use appropriate language for the students. Hopkins (2008) reports a similar situation; the teacher was described as over-talking and explaining, and the students considered it a detrimental factor in their learning.

Serious learning experiences became an issue for the group of students with the highest level of school satisfaction. The term *serious* came from the students, and they described several characteristics, such as a teacher giving difficult problems without allowing students to work together (e.g., SFGI, Davi, School E, Group 1, 15/12/12) or the teacher not having a sense of humour (e.g., SFGI, Alika, School E, Group 2, 28/11/12) and sometimes getting angry with students. One student said:

> When teachers created a serious learning climate, we (students) did not allow doing anything else except paying attention on her/him. Then she/he gave question to each of us, and got angry if we cannot answer the question. (SFGI, Reza, School E, Group 1, 28/12/12)

Limited opportunities for students to work in groups usually occur in an educational system that emphasises competition rather than cooperation, and tends to assess student achievement individually (Mitsoni, 2006). From the 14 classroom observations in this present study, there were only three in which students worked in a group. Additionally, teachers in this study rarely used humour. Indeed, students need teacher humour to make the classroom situation less formal and to reduce their anxiety in dealing with difficult material. Research indicates that humour may be an effective way to create a positive classroom environment. Humour can have a positive effect not only on student enjoyment but also in enhancing student learning. An enjoyable educational experience is helpful for student comprehension and retention of lesson material (Banas et al., 2011; Garner, 2006). Demands to read the lessons on the weekend, prepare for a test or to memorise formulae were also
perceived by students as serious lessons. When the students regarded a teaching practice as too serious, they felt uncomfortable and weary.

Likewise, the group of students with the lowest level of school satisfaction enjoyed classes when they were not required to think or to learn seriously (e.g., SFGI, Nami, School E Group 1, 28/11/12), or they did not have to learn intensely, and were allowed to chat with friends in the class while the teacher was out of the room (SFGI, Stefi, School D, Group 2, 30/11/12). Student expectations of these kinds of enjoyment can be regarded as a shortcut to getting pleasure. A study of motivational value found that Indonesian students endorse hedonism (pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself) in relation to their motivation for learning (Liem & Nie, 2008). In addition to decreasing the serious learning situation, the students expected that teachers would teach with a sense of humour. However, they did not like too much humour, as it distracted them. Drawing from several researchers, Banas et al. (2011) state that students may experience inhibition in receiving information when teachers use humour irrelevant to the purpose of the lesson; students remember the humour better than the academic material. Additionally, too much humour can diminish teacher credibility. Therefore, humour has to relate to the instructional content in order to get a positive correlation with student learning (Wanzer et al., 2010). In fact, the classroom observations in this study show that teachers only provided a few humorous learning experiences. Moreover, some teachers (School A, School C, School E) showed limited warm expressions during instructional practices. Details of these will be discussed in Chapter 7 (Section 7.1.1.2).

Based on the description above, student behaviours in their learning activities represent the outward manifestation of motivation. According to motivational
theorists, student behaviours can be expressed in engagement and disengagement or disaffection. Skinner, Kindermann, Connel, and Wellborn (2009) conceptualise engagement as student participation in learning activities with constructive focus and enthusiasm. From their perspective, the three dimensions of engagement consist of behavioural, affective and cognitive engagement. Behavioural engagement refers to effort in facing obstacles and difficulties with persistence, determination and perseverance. Emotional engagement refers to a student's positive affective reaction in the classroom, such as enthusiasm, enjoyment, fun and satisfaction. Cognitive engagement encompasses focused attention, full participation and a desire to go beyond requirements. The opposite of engagement is disengagement or disaffection. This behaviour can be seen as passive, not trying hard, and giving up easily in the face of challenges (Skinner et al., 2009). Students can present in the classroom with boredom, depression, anxiety, or even anger (Skinner & Belmont, 1993).

In reference to these characteristics of engagement behaviours, the students in this study typically expressed their motivation in behavioural and emotional engagement, but had not yet involved cognitive engagement. Some students could be regarded as disaffected since they felt discouragement and apathy in learning activities. Even though disaffective behaviours were not directly observed in the classroom observations in this study, teacher responses in the focus-group interviews could be seen as evidence of the presence of these behaviours among students (See Section 6.2.6 – teacher perception of students’ motivation). The teachers at Schools B, C and D identified some students with the lowest level of persistence. These students gave up easily when they faced difficult tasks, and did not put maximum effort towards completing tasks. Some students in this study potentially showed these behaviours, since they preferred a non-serious learning atmosphere. However, these student
behaviours cannot be directly portrayed through classroom observations because the observations were only conducted over a short period (one to two segments of lessons). Furthermore, there might be a Hawthorne effect, where the students modified their behaviours because they knew they were being observed (Fox, Brennan, & Chasen, 2008).

From the teacher perspective, students had difficulties learning because the curriculum content of such subject was not suitable for the children’s age. The teachers at School D identified that one of the subjects, civics, contains many abstract concepts. From the survey of 345 students, 49 students (14.20%) and 62 students (17.97%) nominated civics as the first and the second least favoured subject, respectively. Moreover, the teachers received parent complaints about the children’s difficulty in understanding the content of civics. However, the teachers could not change the content because it is a demand of the curriculum. They had to teach the content whilst adjusting it to student capabilities. Because civics comprises abstract concepts, the adjustment did not always work well:

Several years ago, the topic contents of civics were related to daily life, such as cooperation, empathy, teamwork, and tolerance. In contrast, nowadays the topic contents are related to good governance. These topics are difficult for school children. So, this is a dilemma for teachers who have to teach the topics that are not easy for the students.
(TFGI, Iksan, School D, 30/11/12)

In fact, as the age range of students participating in this research was 10 to 13-years, their level of cognitive development was still concrete operational, even though some were about to start the stage of formal operations (Piaget, 1964). Therefore, concrete experience still mostly directs their thinking processes, and consequently it is difficult for them to think about non-concrete problems. In addition, the topics of the lesson are distant from the children’s lives; they cannot find the meaning of the topic because it does not have personal importance to them (Noddings, 2003).
To summarise, some student perceptions on subjects and the reasons underpinning those perceptions confirm the findings from previous studies. However, the different contexts of this study also leads to different reasons for student perceptions compared to other studies. In this study, student perceptions are associated with the characteristics of the subjects and specific learning requirements to master them, teacher teaching style, and teacher behaviours. Student perceptions on the subject or on teachers impacted the level of student engagement in learning.

The following section describes how the students, parents and teachers experienced the demands of academic achievement in educational contexts, and how the teachers and students dealt with these demands.

6.2 Academic demands in school

As children begin school and progress through the school year, they must deal with school demands, particularly academic challenges and teacher expectations (Ladd, 1990). Academic demands can be represented by a set of tasks in school or by teacher expectations (Samdal et al., 1999); however, in the context of this study, academic demands are not only experienced by students, but also by teachers. A set of tasks constructed by the curriculum and the expectation of high student achievement by school principals and the government create demands on teachers. The Indonesian culture and the NE policy that underscores the importance of academic achievement are the drivers for academic pressure on students that are further influenced by a number of contextual factors.

Prior to discussing the themes of academic demands in schools, the following section describes the general characteristics of Indonesian schools where a teacher-centred
approach is predominant. Indonesian culture also influences the characteristics of schools as well as teaching and learning practices in the educational system.

6.2.1 General characteristics of Indonesian schools

Exley and Young (2005) argue that Indonesian schools are characterised by traditional teaching methods and a regimented learning environment. Schools have many institutional rituals, for instance, every Monday students and teachers sing the Indonesian national anthem and raise the flag. Observations from several schools in this study show that every day students march in the school court every day before entering the classroom. They shake hands with the teachers before entering the class in the morning and before leaving school in the afternoon. Students wear similar colour uniforms across the primary schools and in some school students have to wear black shoes and white socks.

Most Indonesian classrooms are large. Despite the Indonesian education standard stating that the maximum number of primary school students in each class is 28 (The Ministerial Decree 41/2007), generally each class comprises 35–40 students. One class at School A in this study was particularly crowded with 57 students.

Classrooms have a traditional design, with student desks arranged in rows and columns facing a board, with the teacher’s desk nearby. Classrooms are decorated conventionally, and the wall in all Indonesian schools must display photos of the President and the Vice President, and the symbol of Indonesia (eagle). A small Indonesian flag (red and white) stands in front of the class. Other decorations, such as the name of a group of students, a map of the world, or the photo of Indonesian heroes, often hang on the walls. Only a small number of student creative works are displayed. The classrooms do not look attractive or stimulating.
Most teachers in Indonesian schools apply teacher-centred instruction (see Section 2.3.1). The teacher explains the lesson in front in the class while students listen at their desks. Instructional processes are predominantly conducted to the class as a whole, which does not cater to the needs of individual children in the learning process (Kaluge et al., 2004). Teachers control the learning process. Lesson activities are dominated by individual seat work and pen-and-paper tasks (Adams & Sargent, 2012; Schuh, 2004).

Data from the classroom observations shows a consistent instructional lesson format across the schools. Even though in some observed classrooms students played an active role, such as practising dialogue or presenting papers in a group, most observed activities in the classrooms show that the students were passive recipients of the teacher knowledge. Typically, the instructional process involved a combination of teacher explanation of the lesson to the entire class while students write, with the explanation shown on the whiteboard. The instructional process was followed by students individually completing worksheets or workbook exercises at their desks. Students would face the front, digest information from the teacher, and sometimes answer the teacher’s questions in a regurgitating fashion.

Freire (1970) states that this instructional process represents a “banking” approach, whereby students are treated as passive, like empty vessels to be “filled up” with knowledge. In this approach, students are asked to absorb, file and store what the educators determine they need. Likewise, Haberman (1991, p. 291) calls instructional practices where the teacher utilises 14 core functions “the pedagogy of poverty”. These core functions include giving information, asking questions, giving directions, making assignments, monitoring seatwork, reviewing assignments, giving
tests, reviewing tests, assigning homework, reviewing homework, settling disputes, punishing noncompliance, marking papers and giving grades. Most of these functions were observed in the classrooms of this study. These functions denote that the teachers are initiators of all activities in the class. As a classroom is a social unit of society, these features describe a dimension of Indonesian culture that Hofstede (Hofstede, 2001) describes as having a large power distance – indicating a high level of inequality between less powerful (students) and more powerful (teachers) members of society.

In this study, the students experienced demands to achieve academically in school due to the interconnected conditions of the educational contexts. The exam-dominated approach used to measure student and school success influenced the conception of student and school success that was defined by teachers, students and parents. Student achievements, especially their scores in the NE, determine whether a student passes or fails, and as a passing grade to enrol in middle school, particularly public middle schools. For individual schools, the NE score also has a significant impact on the school’s reputation. In responding to these requirements, schools take various efforts to boost student academic achievement, such as providing intensive study sessions at school or encouraging parents to send their children to cram schools after schools hours. The curriculum content also directs how teachers implement the curriculum in their daily instructional practices. Because of curriculum overcrowding, Year 6 teachers have to teach Year 6 lesson content in a tight timeframe. They also have to prepare the students with revision of the part of Year 4 and Year 5 lesson content that will be examined in the NE.
Additionally, teacher perceptions of student motivation and school promotion of achievement goals affect how students ascribe meaning to their achievements. The following sections describe student and teacher perceptions about these components of the Indonesian educational system.

6.2.2 Academic achievement as goal of schooling

Student achievement as an indicator of school or student success has been entrenched in Indonesia as part of Asian society. Likewise in other Asian countries, such as China, Japan and Korea, academic achievement is perceived as extremely important (Ang & Huan, 2006). Because of high demand and limited availability of educational opportunities, students have to achieve outstanding performance in school to be successful (Lin & Qinghai, 1995).

The teacher participants in this study defined student success as ideally characterised by a good personality, as well as satisfactory academic achievement. Therefore, teachers were concerned about how to modify student behaviour in order to develop their attitudes and manners. To assist, schools provided intra-curricular or extra-curricular activities and programs to promote all developmental aspects of students. Schools also appreciated student achievement in this broader area, not only academic success. The teachers regarded that academic success was not merely associated with the core academic subjects, but also included success in the other fields, such as art, sport and religion. The other indicators of student success are referred to as student behaviours.

The first indicators of students’ success are politeness, helping friends, learning without any coercion, good academic achievement, respect to elder people. The short-term objective of success is enrolment to middle school, and for the long-term objective they can understand their life goal.

(TI, Tommy, School A, 28/12/2012)
The first indicator of students’ success is achievement. The next indicator is their behaviours. Thus, success means success in studying, and success in developing the student’s personality.
(TFGI, Rita, School C, 20/1/2013)

These quotes from teachers show that the indicators of student success comprise academic aspects as well as behavioural aspects. However, in implementing a school program to achieve educational objectives, schools put less attention on developing aesthetic, social, affective and moral attributes, and more on academic outcomes (Kaluge et al., 2004). Section 6.2.3 discusses common practices in schools that promote performance as a learning goal of students and school, and the findings discussed in Chapter 7 further indicate that some teachers emphasise achieving academic results.

6.2.3 Classroom goal structure and student achievement

Teachers had inconsistent opinions about how they think they should communicate the purpose of achievement to their students. Some said that they do not put high demands on their students to achieve high scores. They stated that they conveyed the importance of learning for understanding rather than for demonstrating ability. They said that the achievement score is a consequence of the learning process, and that student achievement depends to what extent students put effort into the process of learning. The teachers stressed that students have to adopt an achievement goal for mastery rather than for performance. They also stated that students have to show improved academic results. These kinds of messages were intended to maintain academic integrity, and prevent them from cheating:

I always convey the message that it is more important to understand the basic concept. I stress that it is better to get improvement even though just a bit of improvement, rather than they get 10/10 by cheating.
(TFGI, July, School E, 26/11/2013)
We try to build students’ study habits to comprehend the content and to study well. We do not demand the students focus on marks because it can lead students to jump on a shortcut for the results. (TFGI, Hera, School E, 26/11/2013)

Even though teachers conveyed the mastery-goal message, in fact other factors affected student adoption of an achievement goal. According to the goal theory framework, students have different patterns of engagement in learning and in ascribing the meaning of achievement (Turner, Meyer, Midgley, & Patrick, 2003). As explained in Chapter 3, the common terms used in the research of goal orientation are mastery-goal orientation and performance-goal orientation (Elliot, 2005; Schunk et al., 2010). This study did not identify student achievement goals through a specific instrument to measure it, such as the *Pattern of Adaptive Learning Survey* (PALS) (Anderman, Urdan, & Roeser, 2003). However, the student responses in relation to the meaning ascribed to their achievement indicated that they were more likely to adopt a performance-goal orientation.

There were different motives underlying performance goals between groups of students with the highest school satisfaction and those with the lowest. The highest group had intentions to be in the top rank of students or to be in the higher-ability class. They took responsibility for their own academic results. When the individual focus is on gaining favourable judgement of ability, this goal is categorised as a performance-approach goal (Elliot & Church, 1997).

In contrast, the students from the group with the lowest level of school satisfaction were more concerned about how to get good performance in a test in order to avoid anger from their parents or to please them. In addition, these students did not like being compared to other students with higher performance. When students are socially compared to high-achieving peers, it may decrease their self-efficacy.
Some of these students did not receive praise for their achievement from their parents. The parents expected them to gradually improve their results until they finally accomplished an excellent score:

When I get a bad score, my Mum gets mad at me. When I get six, she said why did you not get seven? When I get seven, she said why not eight? When I got eight, she said why not nine? When I get nine, she said why not ten? When I get ten, she just said you should get ten, so do not be so proud. So, how much does she wants me to get? (SFGI, Vivi, School E, Group 2, 28/12/2012)

These parent demands lead students to adopt performance orientation as their learning goal. When an individual focuses on avoiding unfavourable judgement of their competence, this goal is called a performance-avoidance goal (Elliot & Church, 1997). The quantitative findings show that the students with the lowest school satisfaction more frequently experienced negative emotions than those with the highest, which means they may focus on trying to avoid threatening situations (see Section 5.2.2.2). Unpleasant emotion is considered a signal that there is a threat (Linnenbrink, 2007).

Research on goal orientation suggests that it may be shaped by critical dimensions of classroom and school environments (Meece et al., 2006). Teacher behaviours and teaching practices influence student perceptions of the goals that are emphasised in the classroom. In this study, student performance-goal orientation was likely influenced by several conditions. One of these conditions is the use of a minimum standard score as a measurement of student attainment. The minimum score was decided by school policy and influenced by school accreditation status. The higher the accreditation status, the higher the minimum standard score of attainment. When the students could not get the minimum standard score, they had to undertake remedial learning and take re-assessment until they achieved the minimum standard score. While teachers said they promoted mastery-goal orientation, and the process
of remedial learning and re-assessment was intended to promote mastery learning, because a minimum performance standard measured mastery, the process was more aligned to the evaluation criteria in performance-goal orientation. According to Meece et al. (2006), students have a sense of accomplishment when they surpass normative performance standards and do better than others.

As a parent, we were not aware that we often said to our children about our expectations of an achievement score. There is a wrong culture in the education system that the end target is the achievement result. Even though in the process to achieve it students have to understand the content, most of us tend to look for the achievement score. (TI, Kemas, School A, 6/12/2012).

In School B, the teachers explicitly said they challenged their students to achieve the highest, or excellent, score, especially higher-ability students. In contrast, for students who lack ability, the teachers expected them to achieve a minimum standard. The teachers perceived that, by challenging students to get the highest result, student confidence will be enhanced:

In our school, the teachers expect that the student can achieve good marks, 100/100. By mentioning all students’ achievement in public, it will motivate them to increase their achievement. For the higher-ability students, we expect them to achieve the maximum score 100/100. This target can promote their confidence in attaining it. However, for those who have academic difficulties, we expect them to achieve the minimum requirement score. If they cannot achieve the minimum requirement score, they will join remedial learning and re-assessment. (TFGI, Elis, School B, 24/12/2012)

I usually convey my message to the students: ‘Try to achieve more than minimum requirement’. If the minimum score requirement is 75/100, I say that students should put their effort to get 90/100. I found that many students want to have a good score. We [teachers] cannot ignore the facts that the end of the goal is the achievement score. (TI, Kemas, School A, 6/12/2012).

The teachers perceived that publicly discussing student achievement motivates students (TI, Kemas, School A, 06/12/12). The teachers appreciated the highest achiever by praising them, but for lower-achieving students, the teachers attempted to motivate them by connecting the result to their effort, not to their ability.

The teachers said that they treated all students with similar high expectations. Nevertheless, the students perceived the teachers’ messages of their expectations
differently. In schools that implement an ability grouping class, such as School B, most students in the group with the highest level of satisfaction came from the high-ability class. In response to teacher expectations, these students put their effort towards gaining the highest results, so their expectations aligned to teacher expectations (e.g., SFGI, Disa & Hani, School B, Group 1, 15/12/12). In contrast, students who came from the lower-ability class perceived that the teachers did not believe they had ability, so the teachers expected less. In addition, the students perceived that the teachers compared the academic results between the classes and showed their pride in students from the high-ability class (e.g., SFGI, Anna, School E Group 1, 28/11/12). For students from the lower-ability class, teacher behaviours reduced their motivation for learning (e.g., SFGI, Calista & Sheni, School D, Group 1, 30/11/12).

These findings confirm the results of research on classroom goal structure that the performance-classroom orientation may enhance student motivation and achievement for high-ability students. However, for those who lack ability, performance-goal structures decrease their intrinsic motivation, increase the use of maladaptive coping patterns in facing challenge and failure, and promote surface learning. Performance-goal structures are also positively correlated to cheating and disruptive behaviours in the classroom (Meece et al., 2006).

Observations of teacher instructional practices indicate that the schools and classrooms in this study implemented performance-oriented goals. Examples from the observation of teaching practices in some classes support this assumption. From classroom observations at Schools A and D, the teachers offered questions to all students in class and the students had to answer the questions. Student achievement
scores depended on the numbers of questions they answered correctly. Teachers had several ways of offering questions. One was to give the questions to all students and ask them to compete against each other by raising their hands to answer the questions. Others included offering different questions to particular students, or dictating the questions and the students directly writing the answers in their workbooks. The teachers used question types that require students to give facts, which require a memorising and rehearsing learning strategy; it does not require conceptual understanding. There is evidence from research that this surface-level learning strategy is associated with performance goals (Meece et al., 2006).

With reference to instruments that measures classroom goal orientation as either mastery or performance, such as PALS (Anderman et al., 2003), items that measure performance goals were evident during classroom observations in Schools B and C: *The teacher points out those students who get good grades as an example; the teacher calls on smart students more than on other students; the teacher compares with other students.* In contrast, items that measure mastery were negatively associated with teacher behaviour, for example, observations in Schools C and D: *The teacher does not think mistakes are okay when students are learning.* The observations show that the teachers criticised the students who still made mistakes in solving mathematics problems or could not answer the teacher’s questions (See Section 7.1.1.2).

The other indicator of mastery-oriented goals is when teachers give students time to really explore and understand new ideas. This situation was less likely happen in the instructional practices in this study because the subjects were scheduled in a rigid timetable. It was difficult to provide an extended time for the students, particularly in
schools that used different teachers for different subjects. The teacher and students had to finish the activities in such lessons because the students had to move onto the next timetabled lessons.

The classrooms in this study were categorised as uni-dimensional (Rosenholt and Simpson, 1984, as cited in Schunk et al., 2010). In a uni-dimensional classroom, students work on similar tasks simultaneously, do activities as a whole class, and have little choice about what, when and how to complete tasks. Because students are graded on the same assignment, there are greater opportunities for social comparisons among the students to determine how well they perform. When students perceive their school and classroom environments as focused on testing and evaluation, competition for grades, and social comparisons of ability, students are more likely to adopt performance-oriented goals (Roeser et al., 1996; Meece et al., 2006). A study by Liem and Nie (2008) about values, achievement goals and motivation among Chinese and Indonesian secondary school students found that Indonesian students strongly endorse the value of achievement that is positively related to performance goals and social-oriented goals. A social-oriented achievement goal refers to the tendency to achieve goals that are externally determined in a socially desirable way (Yu & Yang, 1994, as cited in Liem & Nie, 2008). Moreover, Indonesian students hold a conformity value to comply with normative expectations of learning and schooling that is commonly communicated or determined by teachers or parents, and they would feel secure if they could achieve it (Liem & Nie, 2008).

To summarise, what the teachers say in communicating the purpose of learning, and what teachers do in their instructional practices, influence student perceptions of the
goals emphasised in the classroom. This perception influences personal-achievement goal orientations that are reflected in student behaviours in learning activities. In this study, teacher belief in student motivation and classroom organisation type indicate that teachers emphasise performance as their achievement goal. Furthermore, it can be predicted that most students in this study seem likely to adopt performance goals as their personal achievement goals. Roeser and Eccles (1998) state that school practices commonly either implicitly or explicitly promote a performance-goal structure.

6.2.4 The National Examination, curriculum and pedagogical practices

As discussed in Chapter 2 (Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2), evaluation systems influence pedagogical practices and curriculum. Standardised testing leads schools to focus their attention on student learning and school performance (Sahlberg, 2007). Consequently, educational objectives tend to become narrowed to the measurement. A high score in the national standardised test becomes an indicator of school and student success. The government applies pressure to achieve academic outcomes, instructing school districts, principals and teachers. The following section describes how the NE shapes curriculum content and structure, and teaching practices.

6.2.4.1 The National Examination’s impact on curriculum and pedagogical practices

Teachers had contrasting opinions about the NE according to whether they were proponents or detractors. The proponents perceived the NE as having a positive effect in motivating teachers to teach better, pushing lazy teachers to work harder. They also perceived that the NE portrays student achievement (e.g., TI, Wita, School B, 02/05/12). Amrein and Berliner (2002), Madaus et al. (2009), and Polesel et al. (2012) cite similar arguments from supporters of HSTs; for instance, HSTs give information to teachers about what is important to teach, or motivates teachers to
provide better instruction to students. Furthermore, proponents posit some arguments in relation to students, believing they will learn more, work harder and be motivated to do their best in HSTs. Proponents believe that HSTs are a good measure of student performance.

In contrast to the arguments of teachers who support the NE, a teacher at School E perceived that the examination score was not the result of academic attainment, but rather the result of drilling practice. His opinion aligns with Lingard (2010) that student capacity to take tests is enhanced when teachers focus their effort in improving test scores. In addition, students will focus their efforts on developing strategies to take the examination rather than having motivation to master the subject matter and associated competencies (Madaus & Clarke, 2001). Moreover, the teacher at School E was concerned about the negative impacts of the NE on teaching practices. In response to the NE, he believed the teachers focused on the guidelines for the contents of the examination. As a result, they did not give full attention to student learning in their instructional practice, but focused on examination preparation. However, as a teacher, he did not have the power to voice his disagreement about the implementation of the NE. In an authoritarian education system, teachers have to comply to mandatory regulations (Zhao, 2014). However, it also reflects teacher loyalty to regulations enforced by the government (Zulfikar, 2009). This teacher’s view was supported by the findings of the study about the influence of HST policy; increasing test scores are a result of test preparation.

Several studies found that time spent reviewing and practicing for testing drove out other instructional activities (Amrein & Berliner, 2003; Au, 2010; Madaus et al., 2009; Ryan & Brown, 2005). The NE can be regarded as an HST, because the
students who cannot meet the minimum requirement will be categorised as failed.

Stipek (2006, p. 46) states that when tests become high-stakes or become all that matter, teachers naturally focus on the skills and knowledge that are measured to produce higher test scores, as reflected by this teacher:

> The NE does not reflect students’ achievement, but a result of a drilling practice. It has a detrimental effect on the learning process. Most teachers ignore the other subjects that are not included in the NE … Society expects good scores in the NE, so the teachers feel afraid if their students cannot achieve a good score. Therefore, the teachers focus on the guideline content of the NE and then preparing the students for examinations.
> (TI, Tommy, School A, 26/11/2012)

A similar situation occurs in many schools in Indonesia, especially in classrooms taught by one teacher. In this study, two schools (School A and School C) have one classroom teacher for almost all the core subjects, while other schools (School B, School D and School E) had a subject teacher that only taught one subject in several Year 6 classes. Tommy (teacher in School A) knew that teachers in many schools, particularly in schools with one classroom teacher, were likely to ignore the other subjects and focus on the subjects that were examined in the NE. For example, these teachers might replace cultural arts in the timetable with mathematics because mathematics is the one of the core subjects tested in the NE. Tommy thus regarded the NE as having a detrimental effect on the teaching process.

At School E, the students in the focus-group interviews expressed that they learned mathematics every day and they were bored because of it. Mathematics was scheduled every day because the regular time allocation of mathematics is not enough to cover all the curriculum content. A similar situation occurred in a study by the USA Centre on Education Policy; 71% of school districts replaced teaching time in at least one other subject for reading and mathematics as these subjects were tested for accountability purposes (Sahlberg, 2007). Global education development policies increase the focus on literacy and numeracy. Targets to elevate basic knowledge and
skills in reading, writing, mathematics and natural sciences indicate education reform (Sahlberg, 2007).

With regard to preparing students for examination, teachers attempt to find out variations of the examination questions. This effort is intended to ensure the students can achieve good scores in the examinations. Furthermore, in terms of the NE, the students are involved in more than four try-out examinations, consisting of two try-outs from the district, one from the city and one from the province office of education. In addition, there are one or more examination try-outs conducted by the school. The objective of try-out examinations is to help the students become familiar with the types of questions and test procedures. On the other hand, the frequency of tests can lead the students to feel bored:

We [teachers] can guarantee for the students to pass the examination, however we do not want them just to pass, because we are concerned about the school rank, we are ashamed if our school gets a lower rank compared to other schools, especially when the parents know about it.
(TFGI, Yani, School D, 30/11/12)

We [school] have good scores on the NE, as the first rank in District Area compared to other schools. Most of our students continue their study in the excellent middle school.
(TFGI, Rasin, School E, 26/11/12)

In responding to these expectations, the teachers of Year 6 in this study felt that they had full responsibility for their students to achieve excellent scores in the NE. The score related personally to teachers and principals, as well as to school prestige (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). This situation aligns to a common feature in the global education reform movement in which the external evaluation and external standardised test determines success or failure of schools and teachers (Sahlberg, 2007).

Even though we do not like it, officially the demand for academic achievement always becomes a discourse in the district office of education. When school achievement shows degradation, they asked why did this happen?
(TFGI, Endang, School E, 26/11/12).
Even though the objective of education is the development of the character of students, society just focuses on academic achievement, such as the NE score or how many students who can enrol to a prestigious middle school. In the district office of education, such schools are acknowledged based on these criteria. (TFGI, Rasin, School E, 26/11/2012)

In this study, teachers and parents perceived that the NE score is important for enrolment in a prestigious or favoured middle school, particularly public schools. Private middle schools usually use their own enrolment tests. Therefore, the students believed that it was important for them to achieve good academic results in primary school. They were worried about getting a bad examination score because it would make it difficult to enrol in middle school (e.g., SFGI, Afgan & Rasyid, School B, Group 1, 15/12/12). Moreover, most students wanted to continue their study in a middle school perceived by society as prestigious. These kinds of schools require the highest score in the NE.

The reasons students want to go to prestigious middle schools vary; they want to be clever, get qualified lessons, have proud parents or primary school (e.g., SFGI, Anna & Vivi, School E, Group 2, 28/11/12)., or just because their parents demand they go to that school (SFGI, Julian, School E, Group 2, 28/11/12). As with student and parent expectations, student enrolment in public middle schools rather than private middle schools also became an issue for teachers. The teachers felt that they had a responsibility to fulfil parent expectations. Some teachers in this study were concerned that their students could continue further education in an excellent middle school, regardless of whether it was private or public. Other teachers were just concerned about public middle schools because many students were from a lower social economic background, and could have their tuition fees waived:

There is a demand from society to send their children to a good middle school. So, we [teachers] try to fulfil this expectation. (TFGI, Agis, School E, 26/11/12)
Generally, most of our students want to continue their education in a favourite middle school, as indicated by society. If they have to go to public middle school, it should be an excellent school.

(TI, Kasta, School B, 24/12/12)

Generally, schools strove to increase student achievement in order to be recognised as a prestigious school, in order to attract new student enrolments in subsequent years (Kaluge et al., 2004). This relational situation is influenced by the consequential accountability systems for schools in global education reform. School performance – particularly raising student achievement – has consequences for the process of promoting and accrediting schools (Sahlberg, 2007)

In Indonesia, policymakers and politicians are satisfied with the results of the NEs because they are only concerned with the scores. Examples of their satisfaction about the number of students who pass the examinations have been exposed in newspapers or online media, for example, www.liputan6.com (Alvin, 2014). However, the NE has negatively affected how teachers implement the curriculum in their teaching practices (Hendayana et al., 2010). They argue that teachers tend to teach students to memorise the content of textbooks and apply a drilling approach about how to answer multiple-choice questions in order to increase the percentage of students who pass the examination. Indeed, students do not learn for understanding in mathematics and science, but only to memorise mathematical and scientific formulas for the examinations. Just as in the USA, on the basis of analysis across 18 states, as Amrein and Berliner (2002) found, there is no impact of HST policies upon increased student learning. Student performance remains at the same level or even declines when HST policies are implemented.

The impact of standardised testing on the content and the structure of the curriculum indicates the process of disempowering and deskilling teachers (Au, 2011) and the
denigration of teaching (Shepard, 2000) because teachers shape the content and the structure of curriculum to match test requirements.

6.2.4.2 The overcrowded curriculum

Curriculum content influences the requirement of teachers to deliver lessons in a certain time. Some of the components of teacher performance evaluation in the Indonesian education system are teacher commitment to government regulations and their progress in transmitting and meeting the curriculum schedule (Bjork, 2005). Especially in Year 6, the teachers have to deliver the entire curriculum quickly. Most schools in this study delivered all the lessons of Semester 2 in Semester 1, in order to prepare students for their examination try-out and NE in Semester 2. This situation aligns to what is called *press for completion* (Middleton & Blumenfeld, 2000).

Even though the MOEC published guidance for the content of the NE, the teachers perceived the curriculum content as broad. Furthermore, as stated earlier, they had to re-teach parts of the curriculum content of Year 4 and Year 5 because it was included in the NE. Some teachers in this study said that many Year 6 students had forgotten or not yet understood the lesson content of Year 4 and Year 5.

The teachers perceived that the curriculum content was both overcrowded and too broad for primary school students. Consequently, students learned the lesson content at surface level, which is easy to forget. As discussed in Chapter 2 after 2006, the centralised curriculum was gradually changed into a decentralised curriculum through the use of SBC. The schools were given freedom to create their own curriculum that is relevant to the needs and conditions of their students. However, a number of schools faced obstacles to applying SBC, therefore it was not fully implemented (Firman & Tola, 2008). In this present study, the teachers perceived
that the content of the NE was still the dominant guideline for developing SBC (e.g., TI, Iksan, School D, 02/05/13). Given limited time, teachers are likely to teach all of the curriculum content in a rush. So, even though the students do not fully understand the lesson, the teachers feel they must move to subsequent content. Therefore, even though the content was part of the curriculum in the previous grade, and the teachers have taught it, student knowledge of the basic concepts remained weak:

The curriculum content pushes the teacher in teaching practice. We [teachers] feel that we have to finish the target of the curriculum, so we have to speed up delivering the curriculum content. Consequently, the students get the impact of this situation and become the victims of it.
(TFGI, Susan, School D, 30/11/2012)

Noddings (2003, p. 260) criticises developing student intellect by “stuffing children’s heads” with arbitrary content chosen by education experts. With the content-oriented curriculum, the teachers in this study used the pedagogy of transmission of knowledge, with students then demonstrating their acquisition of that knowledge through tests. This kind of pedagogy inhibits meaningful and experiential learning (Barth, 2001, as cited in Tenney, 2011), as one teacher explains:

Because of the curriculum content, the teachers have to teach the content in a rush. In natural science, for example, ideally we explain the content, and then do practical learning. However, because of the time constraint we often cannot apply our learning plan. We have seven modules in natural science, while the natural science timetable is only twice a week.
(TFGI, Wita, School B, 19/12/2012).

The teachers realised that it was not easy for primary school children to learn lots of subjects with broad content. Therefore, it was important for them to get learning support from parents. The teachers heard about student complaints of too much lesson content, many assignments and the high frequency of tests. The students expressed their negative emotions about these conditions, as described earlier in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.2.1), as sad, bored, tired, stressed, depressed and worried.
However, some teachers at School B did not really consider lesson content load as a serious problem for the students, especially as the students were getting learning support from their parents at home and they still showed good academic results. To help students catch up on lesson content, the teachers used worksheets as one technique to engage the students with the lesson. They also tried to divide the content into small sections, which meant that students had to be frequently evaluated, thereby trapping teachers into constantly reviewing tests. These approaches indicate that the teachers adopted several key assumptions of the behaviouristic model of teaching and learning (Resnick & Hall, 1998; Ryan & Brown, 2005; Shepard, 2000).

The teachers also identified curriculum content as a problem for specific students; those having difficulty understanding the lesson, achieving lower grades, not receiving parent involvement in learning activities at home, or getting parent demands to achieve excellent academic achievement without providing significant supports for them. However, the teachers at Schools D and E identified that only a small number of students (less than 20%) could be categorised as having a problem with academic demands. A teacher at School B gave two student cases as examples. The first describes a student who felt afraid to go home if he did not achieve test score of 100/100. The second describes a student who did want to engage in a task when he found there were many things to do in that task. The first case portrays an unrealistic demand from the parent, and the second shows a student response to the overloaded content of a lesson. The latter felt apathy and discouragement when he had to be involved in a complex task. The teacher perceived that when parents do not support their children, the students tend to react with ‘do not care’ responses to learning activities.
In addition to the curriculum demands, some teachers at School E expressed complaints related to additional tasks. In some public schools that applied SBM, some teachers had additional management tasks, such as accounting and administration. Originally, SBM was intended to improve the quality of school services by providing more autonomy to schools and the school community (principals, teachers, students, staff, parents and society) in making decisions (Firman & Tola, 2008). However, the teachers felt that these additional tasks influenced their teaching effectiveness. Their activities in the classroom were often disrupted by incidental and urgent managerial tasks. They had expected that their role was as a teacher with the main role of teaching students.

The next section discusses the impact of the NE on school and parent efforts to help students master strategies for the examination.

6.2.5 Intensive study sessions and cram schools

In responding to the demand for academic achievement, especially in preparing students to face the NE, most schools provide an intensive study session. In most of the schools in this study, this program usually started in October, Semester 1. All students in Year 6 were involved in this mandatory school program. Some schools conducted this program two to three times a week for two hours after school hours, but School B conducted it every Saturday. The teachers perceived that intensive study sessions are important in preparing Year 6 students for the NE. Therefore, the school adjusted the lesson plans in intensive study sessions to match the content guidelines for the NE.

However, most parents perceived that it was not enough to rely on the school to increase their children’s achievement, therefore they still sent their children to study
at cram schools or provided a private tutor at home. Many students joined the cram schools or had private tutorials from Year 4 or Year 5. The teachers also heard comments from parents that they underestimated the teacher’s role in boosting their children’s academic results. Therefore, many students who joined the cram schools were not those with academic difficulties, but those who wished to boost their academic achievements. These phenomena are indicative of parent expectations of their children’s academic achievement. In this study, the numbers of students who joined cram schools or private tutorials varied between schools. At School C, due to students coming from lower socio-economic backgrounds and cram schools charging expensive tuition fees, only 20% of students in Year 6 joined. In contrast, at Schools A, B, D and E approximately 70% attended cram schools. According to the teachers, most parents sent their children to cram schools or provided home tutors because the parents did not have time to support their children learning at home, or they did not enough knowledge to help their children in completing homework. Mostly students intended to join cram schools because their parents demanded it, although some said that they wanted to attend cram schools because they needed it. This research was conducted in an urban setting where most urban parents and schools are concerned about how to ensure students get high academic scores (Kaluge et al., 2004). Many parents internalise the competitive values embedded in the examination, so that they do not consider the sum of money paid for their children’s attendance at cram schools, or tutorial expenses (Madaus & Clarke, 2001). Tutorial services or cram schools have become more dominant in the landscape of the Indonesian education system, particularly in the urban setting (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). They have become partners with government and schools in helping students boost their academic
achievement. I assume that many schools in Jakarta cooperate with tutoring institutions to teach the students at intensive study sessions after school hours.

Students perceived that the cram schools were really helpful for getting a good test score. Usually, the students joined private tutorials or cram schools two or three times a week after school hours. Sometimes, the tutorial was held at the weekend if the students could not arrange another suitable time. Obviously, the weekend is a school holiday, and this is a time when students need refreshing activities, such as sports or playing games, but their parents still required them to study at home:

- I want to have refreshing activities on Saturday, such as sport, but my parents always give instruction to study. (SFGI, Hilma, School E, Group 2, 28/10/2012)

- I study in a whole week, from Monday to Saturday, so I feel tired (SFGI, Helena, School D, Group 2, 30/11/2012)

The students expressed several reasons for joining the cram schools. Most of their intentions were related to academic achievement, such as passing the examination, increasing their grade, or being cleverer students. These reasons align to how achievement is defined by parents, teachers and the government – the student’s test score. Sahlberg (2007) indicates that in most instances, student achievement shows what students have gained, not necessarily what they have learned. Moreover, their achievement may be the result of activities not only in school but out of school as well, because students join cram schools or private tutorials after school. He also points out that private tutorials or cram schools intend to raise a student’s scores, not necessarily their learning for knowledge and understanding.

Many students perceived that learning at cram schools was more enjoyable than learning at school. They found that cram-school teachers treated the students differently compared to school teachers. Cram-school teachers explained the lessons
more clearly and created relaxing learning circumstances through using a sense of humour, making it easier for students to understand the lesson content. Some students also perceived the classroom climate at cram schools as more relaxing than regular teaching sessions. The teachers were more patient when they taught intensive sessions.

At cram schools teachers teach students with sense of humour. They are nicer than teachers at schools, so that it is more comfortable to ask them.
(SFGI, Anna & Anti, School E, Group 1, 28/11/12)

A teacher at School E also admitted that she fitted these student perceptions (TI, Hera, School E, 03/05/13). She showed different behaviours or approaches when she taught after school hours in intensive study sessions compared to her regular teaching sessions in the morning. In regular teaching sessions, she felt under pressure to deliver lesson content in a tight time schedule, which affected her teaching style. In the intensive study sessions, she realised that students were already tired so she tried to establish more relaxing learning conditions. Nevertheless, some students still did not like intensive study sessions at school:

Tired! ... I have to join intensive study sessions in which I have to answer a lot of worksheet questions. Mathematics computations always make me feel weary.
(SFGI, Adra, School D, Group 2, 30/11/12).

I feel really reluctant to attend intensive study sessions. I do not like this activity, especially if I have to attend it every day.
(Student Story, Yoni, School D, Group 2, 30/11/12)

Expressions of feeling tired in the focus-group interviews and a student story corroborated the survey findings from the emotions scale. ‘Tired’ was rated as the highest negative feelings by the student participants in the PNAS (see Section 5.2.2).

Intensive study sessions or cram schools are intended to fulfil teacher or parent expectations about student achievement, that is, the students experienced academic demands that were set by parents and teachers. Two of primary schools in this study
School B and School E applied ability grouping to classes based on student academic achievement in the previous grade. Incidentally, most of the students in a focus group at School E came from the highest ability class. They expressed a feeling of pressure due to being students of the excellent class and in responding to teacher expectations. The teachers expected them to achieve better academic results than other classes to prevent them losing face. The teachers were also likely to compare student achievement scores among classes.

In addition to demands from parent and teacher expectations, the students also experienced academic demands that were represented by a set of tasks (Samdal et al., 1999). The students complained about the load of assignments and the difficulty of completing them. The obstacles in completing assignments related to physical tiredness or time constraints in managing several assignments at the same time. The students perceived that school tasks were too much. Moreover, the teachers conducted formative tests for several subjects on the same day. Lack of coordination among teachers affected the schedule of assignments or tests. These findings confirm Ling and Qinghai (1995) study in China that students experience several forms of pressure from teachers, such as excessive assignments, frequent testing, routine recitation of subject matter, and using textbooks specified for a higher grade. Furthermore, in this present study after school hours most students had many activities set by their parents, such as religious class, music course, or sport activities. The most common student activity after school hours was attending cram school or private tutorial. As a consequence, joining cram school after school hours led the students to perceive that they had a tight time to complete all the assignments or to prepare for tests:
After school, I have to join cram school or another course for two hours, then I still have homework to be completed … and other assignments. It is really hard … aaaaargh … (SFGI, Sera, School D, Group 1, 30/11/2012)

I feel stress because I feel tired. I have three activities: tutorial class, English course, and religion class. These activities hold down until night, so I cannot have a nap time. (SFGI, Rifa, School A, Group 1, 23/10/2012)

Sometimes, I have tests for all the subjects in a day! (SFGI, Sinta, School A, Group 2, 23/10/2012).

Undoubtedly, the teachers knew that the students sometimes were tired because they had to join intensive study sessions and then attend the cram schools. However, the students had to ignore their tiredness because they needed intensive study sessions or cram schools to face the NE.

Even though some teachers were concerned about these challenging conditions, some also viewed that attending cram schools was better for students than just spending their time sleeping or playing games at home. Moreover, a tutor at home or in a cram school can take over the parent’s role in supporting their children’s learning.

I realise that the students feel tired, particularly when they have to attend intensive study sessions. However, they might have awareness that they need it in preparing themselves for the NE. (TFGI, Rasin, teacher, School E, 26/11/2012)

Most students in this era are tired. The school curriculum is overloaded. Students are like a robot, go to school in the morning and back home at night. At home they feel tired as well as their parents. They feel depressed so it inhibits their understanding in learning. (TFGI, Wita, teacher, School B, 24/12/12)

These teacher perceptions show that some did not pay sufficient attention to the children’s physical needs and their feelings.

6.2.6 Teacher perceptions on student motivation

Some teachers perceived that many students were highly motivated to learn. Teachers observed student indicators of motivation to learn through involvement in the classroom – showing curiosity by asking questions, paying attention when the teacher explained the lessons, and completing assignments. In contrast, some teachers had the view that most students showed reluctance in asking teachers when
they did not understand the content of lessons (TFGI, Puri, School C, 21/01/13). Students, however, were worried about making mistakes if they asked questions, so they pretended to understand. The teachers knew that the students were afraid of asking the teacher questions, but they did not fully realise the underlying reasons for this situation. The classroom observations showed that teachers offered opportunities for students to ask questions after their explanation; however, students did not take this opportunity. In some classrooms (e.g., School B and School E), some students showed active involvement in answering the teacher’s questions, albeit in a regurgitating fashion.

Moreover, the teachers perceived that it had become increasingly difficult in recent times to find students with internal motivation to learn. From the teacher perspective, internal motivation to learn was reflected in indicators such as student effort to learn at home without coercion from teachers or parents, or spending their break time reading a book. Since the teachers perceived that the students did not have enough responsibility for their learning, they considered that they needed external control from teachers and parents. In particular, when parents did not pay attention to their children because of lack of awareness of the importance of education or insufficient knowledge to support their children, the teachers felt that they had to take the role of controller:

Students’ responsibility to their own-learning is still low. (TFGI, Puri, School C, 20/01/2013)

I acknowledge that students still have lower internal motivation, such as a lower persistence level in facing the challenge. It is difficult to make them have an internal desire for learning without coercion. Therefore, they still need external control from teachers and parents. (TFGI, Iksan, School T, 7/12/2012)

Several years ago, there were lots of students who spend their break time reading a book. Actually, teachers do not force students to read the books. In contrast, nowadays, it is difficult to find the students who behave like that. There are lots of students who spend their break time just running around. (TFGI, Yuni, School T, 7/12/2012)
Educators prefer to use external controls to ensure that learning occurs, such as the use of reward and punishment, close monitoring and supervision (Reeve et al., 2004). Teacher belief in controlling strategies is influenced by cultural values. Societies such as the USA, regard controlling strategies as optimal in motivating students to achieve maximal performance (Barret & Bargiano, 1988, as cited in Reeve, 2009, p. 165). In Indonesia, the large power distance between teacher and student indicates that teachers and parents are supposed take the role of controlling their children’s motivation and achievement at school (Hofstede, 2001).

A teacher at School A (Tommy, 28/11/2013) believed that learning at school should not be conceived as an activity to repeat at home. He regarded learning as a process of connecting new knowledge with one’s prior knowledge. A learning process could be indicated, for example, when students showed their involvement in further discussion of the topic lesson, asked questions, or brought something that related to the lesson. According to him, in order for students to become attached to the content of lessons, they should be provided with questions in worksheets. By using this approach, the students have to read the content of the lessons to answer the questions; therefore, they indirectly have to read their books. He argued that the workbook or worksheet exercise is an appropriate approach to student learning. The use of questions to help students in reviewing the lesson content of the textbook reflects the traditional model of learning (Adams & Sargent, 2012).

This conception of learning refers to associationist instructional theory (Resnick & Hall, 1998; Shepard, 2000). According to associationist theory, knowledge consists of a collection of bonds or links between an external stimulus and an internal mental response. The goal of teaching is to strengthen the correct bonds by means of
rewards, and diminish the strength of incorrect ones by punishments. Teaching based on associationist theory applies a form of recitation of knowledge or uses workbook drilling. Teachers ask questions that are narrowly designed to trigger correct responses. Learning only requires minimum intellectual engagement because students use little creative thinking, problem solving, or strategies for conceptual understanding (Lee, 2003). Undoubtedly, basic knowledge and factual recall are addressed in these exercise questions, but little attention is given to higher order thinking (Kaluge et al., 2004). The questions in the workbook frequently use multiple choice questions similar to those used in the standardised tests. Bookshop shelves across Indonesia, many workbooks for students aim to improve students’ skills for success in standardised tests or the NE.

To summarise, this study confirms that teachers in the educational system put the supremacy of academic achievement as the main indicator of school or student success. In this system, teachers receive pressure or demand for results from above – principals, school districts and parents – as well as pressure from below – students. Pelletier and Sharp (2009) state that pressure from above or administrative pressure, or bureaucratic control, occurs in the context of teachers having to deliver a certain curriculum in a specific time, conform to certain teaching methods, and attain specific performance standards. On the other hand, pressure from below is exposed when teachers perceive that their students have a lack of self-motivation towards learning, and teachers believe they are responsible for students meeting administrative standards. Pelletier, Séguin-Lévesque, and Legault (2002) argue that the more teachers perceive pressure from above and below, the less they have control of their own teaching, and as a result, the more they become controlling towards students. Teachers become less patient – particularly with the students who lag
behind – and show more controlling behaviours, when they feel pressure to produce higher student test scores (Stipek, 2006). Assor et al. (2005) found that controlling teacher behaviours arouse anger and anxiety in students and in turn, these emotions undermine student academic engagement.

Data from classroom observations show that teacher participants in this study have the characteristics of controlling teachers. Their behaviours are described in detail in Chapter 7 (Section 7.1.1.2).

### 6.3 Summary

The themes in this chapter described a dynamic interaction among several components in the educational system. Policies from above, such as the NE and curriculum decentralisation, as well as conditions from below, such as learner motivation and parent expectation, affect teacher, student and parent responses. Their responses are implemented in teaching and learning processes in school and out of school. In school, the impact was seen as academic demands on students and teachers, while the impact of outside of school was seen as lots of cram schools or private tutorial services.

This chapter also described what teaching practices influence student attitude to specific subjects. In addition, this study explored student conceptions about characteristics of learning processes that lead to their specific feelings, such as being bored, difficult or interested. Any attempt to interpret the findings should consider the socio-cultural perspectives of this study. The students and teachers are not only members of classrooms and schools, but also members of society. Therefore, dynamic processes between students and teachers in school are influenced by societal norms. Hofstede’s theory (2001) about the dimensions of culture is used as a
reference to understand the findings of this study compared to previous studies conducted in different social contexts.

The next chapter discusses in more detail the pattern of relationships between students and teachers and among students, and how these relationships affect student satisfaction and emotions in school. The patterns of relationships are not only seen in personal relationships but also in the interactions between various components in instructional practices.
Chapter 7  Relationships at school
The previous chapter discussed the academic demands experienced by students and teachers. Interconnected factors in the Indonesian educational system were shown to influence how achievement orientation has become an important issue for students, teachers and parents.

This chapter investigates the impact of relationships on student satisfaction at school through two lenses: teacher-student relationships (TSRs) and student-student relationships. The first focuses on student perceptions of relationships with their teachers and discusses perceptions of teacher instructional practices and interpersonal behaviours. Two main themes that emerged from the data to describe behaviours that students regard as providing high or low support for learning are the academic and emotional support teachers provide. In analysing these themes this study first explores teacher perceptions of their relationships with students. In addition to student and teacher perceptions, the findings incorporate perspectives from the researcher as an observer.

In exploring the relationships between students in their daily school interactions, this study also describes the occasions when students provide and receive academic and personal support from one another. In addition, experiences of peer conflict and peer victimisation at school are described.

7.1 Teacher-student relationships

As discussed in the literature review (Chapter 3), various studies about TSRs have provided a range of ways of conceptualising the relationship is conceptualised (e.g., Baker, 1999; Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Suldo et al., 2009; Wentzel, 1997). Broadly speaking, this construct is useful for determining what constitutes a positive relationship. Drawing from Doll, Zucker, and Brehm (2004, as cited in Suldo et al.,
positive TSRs refer to the degree to which students feel respected, supported and valued by teachers. This definition implies that student point of view is important.

As discussed in Chapter 3, TSRs can be viewed from three dominant approaches – attachment, motivational and sociocultural perspectives (Davis, 2003). These approaches should not be regarded as mutually exclusive as they share a great deal of conceptual overlap. This current study has mainly focused on the motivational perspective.

From a motivational perspective, good relationships with teachers are reflected by the extent to which teachers support student motivation and learning in the classroom. The relationship can be assessed by observing how teachers drive the quality of interactions through the structure of instructional context and the general affective climate of the classroom (Davis, 2003). Reviewing previous studies, Davis concludes that variables in the instructional context, such as teacher beliefs, behaviours and instructional pedagogies, can influence the quality of TSRs. In this study, the variables influencing TSRs are discussed based on the themes that emerged from the research data. Generally, these themes describe how teachers provide academic and emotional support to students.

While the findings from the three data sources (students, teachers and the researcher as observer) might provide different perspectives on the same theme, they also complement each other. As the main recipient of education, students have unique perspectives of their interaction experiences with their teachers. Teachers also have their own perspectives of the quality of their relationships with students. As a research observer, I may have a more objective view of the classrooms; certainly that
was my intent. However, my perspective was also constrained because of the limited time I had to understand classroom culture and underlying causes that might be affecting classroom norms. Nevertheless, my observations provide an additional perspective and can support or contradict the expressed opinions of students and teachers in their respective interviews.

The following sections first describe the findings from student views, followed by teacher perspectives. My *in situ* observations are discussed as additional information throughout.

7.1.1 Student perspectives

“How students like school” can typically be inferred from the student answers to the question “how students like teachers” (Sabo, 1995, as cited in Konu & Rimpela, 2002, p. 84). Teachers are pivotal to how satisfied students are with school (DeSantis King et al., 2006), with several studies showing the common finding that students who like going to school are those who like their teacher (Baker, 1999; Natvig, Albrektsen, & Qvarnstrøm, 2003; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002).

Student perceptions of teachers are usually shaped in the context of interaction with their teachers in the classroom and their general beliefs about teachers (Chong, Huan, Quek, Yeo, & Ang, 2005). Every teacher has different interpersonal behaviours: some teachers are seen as friendly, whereas others are thought of as distant and aloof; some are dominant, while others are more democratic. This study describes and discusses student perceptions of their relationships with their teachers. Themes that emerged through data analysis include teacher supports and interpersonal behaviours. These themes are discussed based on student perceptions of what they consider high or low support from their teachers. According to Ryan and Patrick (2001), teacher
support refers to “the extent to which students believe their teachers value and seek to establish personal relationships with them” (p. 440). Generally, support involves characteristics such as caring, friendliness, understanding, dedication and dependability. However, the types of behaviours that constitute these characteristics vary among studies, as different studies use different sample characteristics, such as level of education and cultural background.

7.1.1.1 **Teacher academic support**

In the present study, student perceptions of teacher support is differentiated into academic and emotional support, and categorised into high support and low support. High teacher support is represented in the ways teachers show their interest in student academic problems and how they provide help for them to achieve satisfactory academic results. On the other hand, teachers discouraging student questions and showing differential expectations in their instructional practices are perceived by students as providing low support. The personal characteristics perceived as providing high support are caring behaviours that involve being nice, humorous or having a smiling face. Grumpy teachers and those who show favouritism are regarded as providing low support. The following section describes a theme regarded by students as providing high and low teacher academic support.

**Teacher interest in student academic problems and achievement**

Students indicated that teacher interest in their academic problems and achievement provided academic support. In order to ensure satisfactory academic achievement, teachers provided additional materials to help students learn at home, such as worksheets and summaries of lessons. The students also identified teachers who recognised the level of their accomplishment and encouraged them to increase their achievement as providing high support (SFGI, Nadila, School E, 28/11/12). High
support was also characterised as teachers suggesting that students study hard, or join cram schools or private tutorials out of school. Students perceived remedial learning in school as an essential activity of teacher support. Remedial learning refers to teachers providing additional time and effort for those students who need tutorial support to master lesson content. This activity was usually conducted in the morning before class started or after school hours.

Our [students] achievements are controlled by the teacher. If a student has to join remedial learning or test, the teacher would help him or her. (SFGI, Disa, School B, Group 1, 15/12/12)

The students perceived that tutorial activity could help them improve their grades. This finding supports Baker (1999), who states that teachers recognise that less competent students need additional instruction and regard tutorial activity as a teachable moment when students ask for help. Similar results from Suldo et al. (2009) show that providing additional academic assistance and checking for student understanding are perceived by students as teacher interest in their academic endeavours.

On the other hand, as shown below, several situations undermine the quality of relationships with teachers. The students perceived that teachers showed low-support behaviours when they discouraged student questions and were unfair in conveying expectations. The following sections describe each theme of low teacher support behaviours.

**Teachers discouraged student questions**

When students had difficulty understanding lesson content, they were more likely to seek additional explanation from their peers rather than asking their teachers. Students felt afraid to ask questions, even though the teachers suggested they do so. The students had their own experiences or noticed their friend’s experiences when
they asked the teacher questions. Sometimes teachers appeared angry if students asked silly questions, and replied that they had explained the lesson clearly:

When we asked the teachers, sometimes the teachers got angry. The teacher said, ‘This is an easy problem, why cannot you solve it by yourself’. The teacher did not understand that it is difficult for us [the students].
(SFGI, Lina, School E, Group 1, 28/11/2012)

The teacher’s comment in Lina’s quote shows disrespect for student cognitive limits. The teachers did not take into consideration that children cannot solve problems the way adults can (Willingham, 2009).

The students reported further teacher responses that discouraged them from asking questions in class, for example, by responding to questions with a short answer, such as, the teacher said “I do not know”, accompanied by a bad facial expression; ignoring questions by instructing students to search for the answer by themselves (SFGI, Anna, School E, Group 1, 15/12/12); or saying this was an easy problem so the students should not raise questions.

Students perceived these examples as the teachers not being concerned about their need for further explanation. Similar findings from Suldo et al. (2009) suggest that teachers are identified as discouraging questions when they ignore students, look angrily at students after they posit questions, and punish students for apparent bad questions. In contrast, this study revealed that students perceive or experience high support when teachers display positive responses to student questions, such as when they answer all student questions thoroughly and provide time to address their questions in class and after class.

Differential expectations of achievement and perceptions of ability

Student beliefs about their academic competence influenced their view of teacher expectations. This study found two types of student responses about teacher
expectations. The group of students in the higher-ability class perceived that the teachers expected them to achieve their best, because they recognised them as high-ability students. Their teachers expected them to get better academic results than the other class (e.g., SFGI, Hani, School B, Group 1, 28/11/12; many students, School D, 30/11/12). Even though these students felt more pressure from the teachers, they put maximum effort towards gaining the highest academic results – their expectations aligned to the teacher expectations.

In contrast, the second group of students perceived that some teachers are more likely to accept minimum levels of achievement. Because those teachers were not sure their students had the ability to achieve a higher level, the teachers put less pressure on them for higher achievement. In addition, students perceived that the teachers appeared to be proud of the other class and said their class was the worst class. Such student perceptions are consistent with findings from several studies that teachers show differential behaviours to high and low achievers (e.g., Babad, 1993; Brophy & Good, 1970; Stipek, 2006). Within the same classroom, teachers often hold for differential expectations for different students, incorporated with differential treatment, and these can lead to differential student outcomes (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b). Similarly, Brophy and Good (1970) found that teachers demand better academic performance and give more praise for higher-ability students than those with lower ability, where the teacher was more likely to accept poor performance and less likely to praise good performance.

Students perceived that teachers valued academic skills more than non-academic skills. The students at School D talked about a teacher commenting that the students could be singers if they failed the exam (SFGI, Helena, School D, Group 2,
30/11/12). This comment reflects the teacher’s belief that being a singer is not worthwhile, and shows a lack of focus on learning and development outside of core academic pursuits. The teacher also commented that students should consider their academic ability if they want to continue their study in a prestigious middle school. The students perceived this to mean that the teacher was not sure of their ability to enrol in a prestigious middle school. The teacher’s statement affected student perceived competence.

This teacher’s statement reflects a belief about the nature of student academic ability and competence. This belief influences their pedagogical strategies and student-goal orientation (Dweck & Leggett, 1988). Moreover, if teachers believe that intelligence is fixed rather than malleable, they are likely to apply ability-focused or performance-goal orientation (explored in Section 6.2.3).

Additionally, one teacher often made a contradictory statement accompanied by a nasty tone, such as: “Actually you are clever, BUT YOU ARE LAZY” (Sera, School D, Group 1, 30/11/12) (Words in capitals indicate that the teacher raised her voice for emphasis). A student also mentioned that a teacher said, “Your class is the worst class” (Helena, School D, Group 2 30/11/12). These teacher statements indicate that they do not have an awareness that their messages in public, and their behaviours, hinder the development of student self-esteem and academic self-concept (Horowitz et al., 2005).

7.1.1.2 Teacher interpersonal behaviours

In this study, a teacher’s personal characteristics were regarded by the students as contributing factors towards positive and negative perceptions of school. The interpersonal qualities of their teacher became a focus when students evaluated
whether or not their teacher was a good teacher (McGrath & Noble, 2014). Students perceived caring to be a positive characteristic. In contrast, students noticed non-supportive teacher behaviours towards them. Teacher interpersonal behaviours that influenced negative experiences in school were grumpiness and favouritism. The students identified grumpy teachers based on their bad-tempered facial expressions, rare smiles and getting angry too easily. Further, this section discusses controlling teacher behaviours, predominantly based on the data from classroom observations.

**Caring teachers**

Generally, the students perceived that teachers in their schools showed caring behaviours towards them. They indicated on a number of occasions how the teachers took care of them. For example, when students were not well at school, the teacher would send them home (SFGI, Tika, School A, Group 2, 23/11/12), or when a student could not attend school because of sickness, the teacher would visit and help them to catch up and complete their assignments (SFGI, Disa, School B, Group 1, 15/12/12). Students also described teachers as nice, funny and caring (e.g., SFGI, Alika, Anna, & Anti, School E, Group 2, 28/11/12), representing personal characteristics of the teachers and reflecting what students like about school. While students perceived that some of their teachers were firm (e.g., SFGI, Sheni, School D, Group 1, 30/11/12), the attribute of being firm can be interpreted as a positive personal attribute as well as a negative attribute. It was seen as positive because the teachers encouraged the students to achieve higher marks; however, some students viewed it negatively because it related to strict discipline.

In a study of interpersonal behaviours of Indonesian middle school teachers, Maulana et al. (2011) found that generally, students perceived Indonesian teachers as showing more positive interpersonal behaviours than negative. However, students
also rated quite high levels of strictness in teacher behaviours. According to Ang & Goh (2006), in Asian society, strictness can be perceived as a positive characteristic that means caring, concern or involvement; whereas for other cultures, it may be equated with negative characteristics, such as hostility, aggression or dominance. In a study of student perception of school experience by Kangas (2010), the students characterised their ideal teachers as nice, funny, friendly, having a sense of humour, not prone to getting angry, but strict enough. Wentzel (1997) describes caring teacher behaviours, as perceived by students, as showing democratic interaction styles, providing different expectations for student behaviours based on individual differences, using caring words in communicating with students, and providing constructive feedback.

**Grumpy teachers**

In this current study, negative perceptions of school were related to characteristics of the grumpy teacher. The students did not like teachers who were too serious when teaching, did not have a sense of humour, and got angry easily (SFGI, Keanu, School D, Group 1, 30/11/12). The situation in the class was perceived as annoying when a teacher got angry with one student, then reprimanded all students in the class (SFGI, Nami, School E, Group 1, 28/11/12). This finding aligns with a study by Hopkins (2008), that when a teacher screams at all students in the class because of only a few students who are being naughty, the situation is perceived by the students as creating a terrible classroom climate. Grumpy teachers inhibited students from asking questions, or even disclosing their feelings to the teacher. Sometimes, the teacher got angry when a student asked an inappropriate question, even though it was because they did not understand the lesson content. In these situations, the students preferred to not ask questions, despite not understanding the lesson. There were also instances
of the teacher reprimanding students during the whole lesson (SFGI, Chaira, School C, Group 2, 19/01/13). In another situation, a student observed a teacher who was angry and threw away the student’s book because the student did not do their homework (SFGI, Helena, School D, Group 2, 30/11/12).

The students also remarked that teachers got angry with students who got bad scores in a test or had difficulty understanding the lesson. The teachers lost their patience when the students still did not understand despite being given further explanation. This finding confirms the finding from Stipek (2006) that teachers tend to display less patience with students who achieve less, particularly when there is pressure for the students to reach a particular standard. The students reported that the teachers told students that they were ‘stupid’ when they did not understand, or used other sarcastic words when students showed inappropriate behaviours in class.

When there is a student who does not understand, the teacher gives comment on him as ‘stupid’ (SFGI, Lusi, School E, Group1, 28/11/12)

The teacher often mentioned students’ names that got bad score in test, and then the teacher gets mad at them. When students still did not understand the lesson, the teacher got more mad … Teacher seems to like comparing students to each other and did not take into account those students. (SFGI, Anneke, School E, Group 2, 28/11/12).

These situations led to negative feelings, such as shame, hate or annoyance towards the teachers (as discussed in Section 5.3.2.2). These teacher responses indicate that they do not show genuine caring behaviours to students. Caring happens when one can accept and respect others regardless of any particular talent others have (Elias et al., 1997). Moreover, Goldstein (1999) argues that caring can be demonstrated by using scaffolding techniques, for example, teachers matching each task demand with student needs and interests, and providing instrumental support to maximise student opportunities for success.
Thus, it appears that the teachers in this study were not taking a developmental perspective in understanding student development. According to Horowitz et al. (2005), teachers have adopted the perspective of development when they understand that an individual has a number of different dimensions – physical, cognitive, social, emotional and linguistic – and that development along these dimensions does not occur in the same time within the same person, or at the same age for each child.

**Teacher favouritism/teacher pet phenomenon**

Generally, the students perceived that their teachers did not have most loved or best liked students. However, the students recognised that the teachers still showed differential behaviours towards high and lower-achieving students. The students noticed that the teachers were more likely to maintain closer relationships with the clever students. The teachers tended to offer more opportunities for clever students to do everything in class and gave them praise. On the other hand, the teachers seemed impatient when explaining the lesson to lower-ability students. When students needed more time to understand the lesson, the teachers easily got angry with them. The teachers also often compared high and low-ability student achievement. In an attempt to motivate students, the teachers used high-achiever results or efforts as a model for other students. Instead of being motivated, the low-ability students felt that the teachers showed favouritism only to high-achieving students.

> When there are many students who do not understand the lesson, teachers ask us to imitate the clever students in class. Teachers always talk about him or her. (SI, Davi, School E, 01/05/12)

These findings contrast with Baker (1999), who found that teachers strive to treat students equitably when giving academic support to both students who are highly satisfied with school and those who are dissatisfied. Samdal et al. (1998) also found
that the feeling of being treated fairly is the most important predictor of school satisfaction.

Teacher behaviours in this present study confirm previous studies showing that teachers show differential behaviours to high and low achievers (Babad, 1993; Stipek, 2006). These studies found that even though teachers attempt to provide more learning support to low-achieving students, the students perceive that teachers express warmer emotional support towards high-achieving students and are more negative towards students who are low achievers. Roeser et al. (1996) found a similar result: students who perceive that teachers only recognise the most able students and give rewards and support to them feel that the quality of the TSRs in the school is less warm and supportive.

**Teacher controlling behaviours**

Teacher interpersonal behaviours can be identified through the sets of instructional practices and conversational statements used during student-teacher interactions (Reeve et al., 2004). The quality of TSRs is influenced by teacher interpersonal behaviours (Pelletier & Sharp, 2009) or motivational style (Reeve, 2006). These styles range in a continuum from highly controlling to highly autonomy supportive (Reeve, 2006). Teacher responses to student questions represent their level of responsiveness to students. The ways in which teachers answer student questions (see Section 7.1.1.1) show that teachers are not responsive to student needs or their perspectives. These teacher behaviours are in contrast to the characteristics of teachers who support student autonomy where they reply wholeheartedly to student questions and acknowledge student perspectives (Reeve et al., 2004).
As described in Section 6.2.1 on general characteristics of Indonesian schools, the seating arrangements in the classroom setting is not conducive to supporting students as active participants in learning; and, despite the teachers sometimes using active learning approaches, they predominantly used traditional didactic approaches. They talk in front of the class while the students watch and listen from their desks. These instructional practices provide limited opportunities for students to talk or to work in their own way. Although the students have textbooks as their learning materials, the teachers monopolise the learning process. Based on these characteristics, I observed that the classroom practices in this present study represent a controlling classroom. Reeve et al. (2004) characterise these kinds of classrooms as thwarting student autonomy.

From the set of conversational statements I observed during instructional practice, some teachers in this study showed an authoritarian approach to teaching. In some schools (e.g., School A and School D), students had a general perception of particular teachers as being firm and always applying strict discipline to manage the classroom and student behaviours. From some classroom observation sessions I noticed that teachers who were perceived as firm showed an authoritarian style in their communication statements.

Pelletier and Sharp (2009) argue that an authoritarian style is usually used by controlling teachers. Within the flow of instruction, the teacher utters directions and commands: should, have to, must, or got to statements to direct student work. They use controlling questions (e.g., “Can you do what I showed you?”) (Reeve & Jang, 2006). They do not allow the students to work at their own pace and their motivational statements are threats, criticisms and deadlines (Assor et al., 2005). The
students in this study confirmed that some teachers used threats or criticism in their communication style with students (see Section 7.1.1.1).

The following statements of a teacher at School D in social science display teacher controlling behaviours:

Put your bag in the centre of your desk! Then, open your textbook and exercise book … put your stuff neatly.

When you have finished answering the question, it doesn’t mean that you can close your book except when you finish your school day. So, read it!

You have to remember that if you want to master the lesson of social science, you have to learn it part by part. You cannot master a huge amount of social science content by learning it in one moment of time; it is impossible!

(TO11, Social Science classroom, School D, 21/11/2012)

Other examples of controlling behaviours were also presented by a teacher at School C when she taught mathematics:

Use a direct way to solve the problem/question. Don’t use another way, because it takes time!

Have you finished it? Why does it take so long? This is an easy one, why don’t you still understand it?

What happened with you? Can you still not find the right answer? It means that you don’t understand the problem!

You are already at Year 6, so you have to work thoroughly and use your time efficiently!

(TO8, Mathematics classroom, School C, 18/11/2012)

These statements indicate that teachers have more power over students, reflecting the power distance relationships between teachers and students (Hofstede, 2001). Moreover, teacher controlling behaviours were indicated through using corporal punishment. The students said that certain teachers used corporal punishment on particular students in order to manage student behaviours and the teaching process. The students noticed several occasions when a teacher pinched someone (e.g., SFGI, Raka, School A, Group 2, 23/11/12), hit them with a whiteboard pen (e.g., SFGI, Hani, School B, Group 1, 15/12/12), or threw a book at a student’s desk.
When school becomes a threatening place for students they cannot enjoy it (Samho & Yasunari, 2010). However, some students perceived that threatening behaviours were acceptable as long as they were not painful. They sometimes perceived that it was just acting – that the teachers did not really get angry. Additionally, it was regarded as a good way to manage discipline and student behaviour. In contrast, other students argued that teachers should not behave in this way. A previous study by Lee, Statuto, and Kedar-Voivodas (1983) reports similar findings, that the students regarded physical and verbal harassment in school as a daily annoyance with no significant consequences. Therefore the majority of students still perceived school as a safe place.

Even though the student voices about the quality of TSRs is the focus of this study, teacher perspectives also contribute to the findings and are a source of good information for the implications of this study. Furthermore, observer perspectives of teacher methods of establishing and maintaining their relationships with students may support or contrast with teacher perspectives. The following section discusses the teacher perspectives of their relationships with their students.

7.1.2 Teacher perspectives

From teacher focus-group interviews, the teachers perceived that they were caring towards the students. They not only promoted student academic achievement, but were also concerned about how to manage student behaviours. The theme of teacher perspectives was categorised into teacher academic support and emotional support.

7.1.2.1 Academic support from teachers

The teachers in this study said they attempted to treat all students with similar high expectations; however, the students perceived messages about teacher expectations...
differently (see Section 7.1.1.1). Additionally, in order to motivate students to achieve good results, the teachers explained that their expectations were adjusted according to each student’s ability. Teachers thus communicated inconsistent messages to students, influencing student perceptions of their teachers. This finding supports Reeve’s (2004) argument that student perceptions are affected more by what the teacher does than what they say. Likewise, Brophy and Good (1970) state that teachers are frequently unaware that they systematically convey different expectations to different students.

The teachers said that they provided some academic support in the form of activities for students. The standard of achievement requires all schools to cater for those students who cannot achieve the minimum standard of accomplishment, and all schools in this study provided remedial teaching sessions for particular students. In addition, the teachers were concerned about students with motivational problems, such as a reluctance to learn. As described in Chapter 6 (Section 6.2.5), all schools also provided intensive study sessions to prepare for the NE. In School A, a classroom teacher (Tommy, classroom teacher of Year 6) promoted peer-tutoring activities to support student learning. In this school, the teacher supported high-ability students to help the lower-achieving students in completing school tasks. The teacher appreciated that students were learning cooperatively.

From the classroom observations, I noticed several teacher behaviours that could be described as academic support. For instance, after explaining the lesson materials, some teachers asked the students whether they had been given a clear explanation and provided them with an opportunity to ask questions. However, students were
unlikely to take this opportunity to respond and request further explanation. The reasons underlying such reluctance were discussed previously (see Section 7.1.1.1).

In explaining the lesson in a mathematics class, one teacher showed how to solve the problem by writing the steps in the process on the whiteboard. However, this teacher faced the board while he was writing, so he could not identify student expressions to determine whether or not they understood his explanations (TO6, School B, Mathematics class, 12/11/12). Several times, I observed teachers praising students who correctly answered their questions by inviting the class to applaud those students (e.g., TO1, Tommy, School A, 22/11/12).

In other instances, while students were doing individual tasks at their desks, the teacher walked around student desks, asked questions, or gave comments or further explanations. However, some teachers only gave attention to the students seated in the rows nearby the teacher’s desk (e.g., TO14, School E, Indonesian language class, 16/11/12).

As described in Chapter 6 in relation to academic demands in school, the teachers in this study mainly focused on curriculum delivery because they were under pressure to teach the lesson content within a certain time. Even though the teachers attempted to support student academic progress, they encountered obstacles—while they knew some students needed more attention to improve their academic competence, they perceived that they did not have enough time for such support:

Personally I admitted, I know that a certain student cannot master the particular lesson content. In this case, as a teacher I have to help them to catch up. However, because of limited time to teach the following lesson content, I let them to catch up by themselves. (TFGI, Agis, School E, 26/11/12)
While different researchers define emotional support slightly differently (e.g., Hamre & Pianta, 2005; Rowe et al., 2010; Suldo et al., 2009) it is generally viewed as involving characteristics such as caring, friendliness, sensitiveness and responsiveness. In responding to the issue of emotional support provided by teachers, most of the teachers talked about friendliness. They said that in order to develop a close relationship with their students, they took various roles in their interactions with students. These roles were not only as a teacher in the class, but also as a parent and a friend for the students. These various roles are understandable, as an elementary school teacher usually wears many hats in school, such as friend, mentor, protector, disciplinarian and gatekeeper, in order to support student academic success (Davis, 2006). Ki Hajar Dewantara (2013) – regarded as the founding father of Indonesian education – also adds that teachers do not use force and punishment, but should show emotional support to their students.

In maintaining close relationships with students as their friends, teachers use strategies such as learning how to use slang, having a connection to the students through social media, or chatting informally with the students at recess time. Across the schools in the current study, it is common convention that students shake hands and kiss the teacher’s hands when they arrive and depart from school and whenever they meet teachers in school. In several schools (e.g., School B, School D and School E), a team of teachers stood at the school gate in the morning to welcome students. In School D, the teachers of lower classes (Years 1–3) brought the students to the school gate when the class finished. In scout activities, students can call their teacher brother or sister instead of miss or mister. The purpose of changing the term was to lessen the hierarchical position between teacher and student, and develop closer
TSRs. A teacher at School B (Wita, mathematics teacher) usually used a term of endearment to build close relationships with students, such as *pretty* or *dear* when addressing individual students. Yan, Evans, and Harvey (2011) also found the use of endearment as a strategy to foster emotional interaction between teacher and student.

The teachers perceived that generally the students had a positive emotional state in school and only identified a small number of students who displayed negative emotions. For these students, the teachers arranged a meeting with the parents to discuss their children’s problem or made a referral to a professional, such as a medical doctor or psychologist. In focus-group discussions and classroom observations, I indicated to teachers that some seemed to have relatively little awareness of their role in providing emotional support for learning to students. They acknowledged that a positive emotional state impacted on student engagement in learning. A teacher at School D stated that in order to create student enjoyment in learning, the teachers have to develop a positive relationship with the student. Teachers across the study mentioned how they promote student happiness in school: using a particular name for students to make them feel special, creating an unpressured learning climate, not publicly mentioning the names of students with bad test scores, not always using strict discipline, using a reward and punishment strategy, or providing complete learning materials and support (e.g., TFGI, Wita, School B, 19/12/12).

It was clear, however, that teachers and students had different perspectives regarding these issues. The students noticed that the teachers did not apply all they said they did in promoting student enjoyment in school (see Section 7.1.1). The students also reported that some teachers showed different behaviours during classroom
observations, illustrating the Hawthorne effect. The Hawthorne effect refers to improvement or modification of some aspect of behaviour because the subjects know they are being studied (Fox et al., 2008). Thus, the presence of observers in the class could influence teachers to show their best behaviour in dealing with students. Therefore, as an observer, I cannot directly determine if teacher behaviour has a significant negative impact on student feelings as described by the students.

The teachers also perceived that using humour could encourage student enjoyment in learning, and that it would affect student learning. Research suggests that the use of humour by teachers represents caring, and Davis (2006) points out that students and teachers can use humour in developing connections with each other. Moreover, humour can be a means of maintaining student interest in academic material and facilitating learning goals. A teacher at School D said he used humour to promote student enjoyment in learning. However, he underlined that the use of humour in instructional practice could be risky – students may remember the humour better than the academic materials. That might happen when teachers use humour irrelevant to the learning purpose (Banas et al., 2011). One teacher explains the use of humour:

> When I promote student happiness in learning by using humour, I do not want them feeling happy because of the humour only. It is terrible for me when students cannot catch up with the learning material and remember the humour better. I hope by using humour, students like teachers and then also like the lesson. When students enjoy their learning, it is easier for them to understand the lesson content.
> (TFGI, Iksan, School D, 7/12/2012)

Despite this, based on classroom observations across all the schools, I identified that the teachers rarely used humour in their instructional practices. Feeling worried about the risk diminished their intention to use humour in the teaching process.

Even though some teachers in the present study recognised the importance of positive emotional states to learning, other teachers were not especially concerned
about the issue of student enjoying learning. The teachers were worried that the students who just enjoyed classroom activities would not catch up on the lesson content. Based on their experiences in using alternative teaching methods, such as cooperative learning or group-work, the teachers knew that their students could enjoy the learning process. However, as the classrooms were so large (35–40 students or more), the teachers encountered difficulties in managing students in anything other than lecturing mode. The teachers perceived that they communicated clearly what Reeve (2006) defines as structure – offering plans, goals, standards, expectations, schedules, rules, directions, challenges, reminders, prompts, models, examples, hints, suggestions, learning strategies, rewards, feedback and other sources of direction and guidance as the students attempted to make progress towards their academic goals (Reeve, 2005, as cited in Reeve, 2006, p. 232). Nevertheless, the teachers still found that students did not achieve their learning goals well:

When we arranged the teaching process by using alternative teaching methods, such as group-work or using LCD, we supported students to be active participants in learning. We found that students enjoyed the group-work. However, we cannot exactly identify the result of their enjoyment; either they really enjoy the learning process or they enjoy just being in group-work with friends but they cannot catch up the academic content. (TFGI, Susan, School D, 07/12/2012)

When we planned the most appropriate teaching method for the particular class, we considered the student characteristics in that class. However, we seem likely to focus on how to achieve academic goals rather than to pay attention to students’ feeling, whether or not students will enjoy it. (TFGI, Susan, School D, 7/12/2012)

These statements portray that the teachers did not really consider student feelings in their instructional practice. They concentrated more on how to achieve academic goals. Even though teachers admitted that happier students learn better, their sensitivity to read and sense student emotional states had been degraded by academic demands. Moreover, the teachers had limited perception about supporting student positive emotional states through the use of various teaching methods only. They did not have a great awareness that the quality of TSRs is an important component for
student happiness in school. The central component in developing a meaningful, supportive, rewarding and supportive relationship is caring behaviour (Elias et al., 1997). The teachers often did not realise that their discourses in interaction with students and their non-verbal behaviours (e.g., facial expressions) have a great impact on student learning and well-being.

Reeve (2006) notes that four qualities of teaching – attunement, supportiveness, relatedness and gentle discipline – can influence the quality of TSRs and contribute to student learning and well-being. Based on teacher responses in discussion and observing what the teachers did in developing closer relationships with the students, I pinpointed that most teachers in the current study seemed to have a sense of relatedness – a sense of being close to the students (Furrer & Skinner, 2003). Additionally, the teachers often sent messages to students about what they have to do and not do. This means that the teachers also applied gentle discipline as a strategy to manage children’s behaviours by explaining why a specific way of thinking or behaving is right or wrong (Kochanska, Aksan, & Nichols, 2003). Some teachers (e.g., TO1, School A, Indonesian Language classroom, 22/11/12; TO4, School B, Science classroom, 06/11/12) stimulated a positive classroom climate where the teachers displayed warm interaction with students and the students spontaneously laughed in response to teacher humour.

This was not always the case, however; from the classroom observations I noted that some of the teachers still demonstrated detachment or lack of emotional involvement (Hamre & Pianta, 2005) with the students. Some of the observed classrooms (e.g., TO3, School A, Civics classroom, 08/11/12; TO8, School C, Mathematics classroom, 18/12/12 and TO11, School D, Social Science classroom, 18/11/12) could
be characterised as having a negative classroom climate because the teachers displayed hostility, negativity, criticism and controlling interactions (Hamre & Pianta, 2005) (see Section 7.1.1.2). Generally, classrooms in Indonesian schools are organised rigidly and are over controlled. As the classrooms are teacher-centred, the teachers take control of student learning. The students do not have choice or options for activities and just participate in a regimented way (Hamre & Pianta, 2005). In controlling students to comply with teacher demands, some teachers still apply power that involves forceful or insistent commands (Kochanska et al., 2003). These classroom characteristics do not support the development of teacher sensitivity (Hamre & Pianta, 2005) or attunement (Reeve, 2006) that is characterised by awareness of student needs, moods, interests and capabilities, and adjusting instructional practice accordingly. According to Wilson et al. (2007), a classroom with high emotional support is characterised by teachers who display warmth, and are emotionally sensitive and responsive to student emotional needs. This kind of classroom generally uses student-centred activities. Therefore, a teacher-centred approach such as that dominantly used by Indonesian schools, undermines the opportunity for teachers to be sensitive.

The teachers had limited awareness of the importance of relationships with the students and their impact on student emotions. As described in Chapter 5 (see Section 5.4) the teachers seemed likely to identify student emotions in general, such as students saying they like staying at school, or take an extreme indicator, such as saying no student stopped going to school (TFGI, Agis, School E, 26/12/12), as an indicator of happiness.
To summarise, the teachers perceived that they provided academic and emotional support for their students. However, the students perceived that the teachers did not do well what they said. Some observational data partially confirmed the student perceptions of the teacher behaviours. The following section elaborates upon this and discusses how TSRs influence student learning and school experiences.

7.1.3 The influence of teacher-student relationships on student learning and school experiences

Over the past 20 years, considerable research has investigated the influence of TSRs on the quality of student motivation and classroom learning experiences (Davis, 2003). Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.2.2) discussed the impact of TSRs on student emotional experiences. The following discussion elaborates further upon the impact of the relationships on student attitudes towards subject matter, student comprehension on the lesson content, and students liking being at school.

Most student participants in School A and School C had a negative attitude towards a particular subject because they perceived that the teacher of that subject showed unpleasant interpersonal behaviours. This perception became shared by other students. In School A, the students did not like civics, and in School C social science. The reason behind this phenomenon appeared to be the poor relationship between these teachers and students. One teacher (TFGI, Iksan, School D, 07/12/2012) argued that in order to make students like the school subject, it was important to make students like the teacher. Students liking the teacher affected their liking of the subject matter taught. His statement is supported by Brophy (1998, as cited in Davis, 2001) that in the subjects where the students just have a little interest, a supportive relationship with teachers will motivate students to increase their participation. Increased participation may lead to a changed attitude to the subject, such as more
interest, higher efficacy, improved perception of the subject’s utility and better academic performance.

On the other hand, Davis (2006) found other interactions between relationships and attitude towards the subject. Davis found that student academic motivation was a significant predictor in shaping their relationship with teachers. How much students like or dislike the subject will impact on how much they like or dislike the subject teacher. Students who liked the subject matter reported more supported relationships with teachers. Simply, there is a cyclical pattern of influence. Supportive relationships with teachers may increase the likelihood that students like the subject. A positive attitude to the subject matter then increases good relationships with the teachers (Davis, 2006). Midgley and Edelin (1998, p. 200) note that the extent to which “relationship[s] are enhanced when children are truly learning, and learning is enhanced when children are in a caring environment”. These arguments indicate that teachers have to be responsible people who ensure positive relationships with their students.

Teaching behaviours also influence student learning. In School C, the students mentioned a subject (mathematics) as a difficult subject because they could not easily comprehend teacher explanations. The teacher explained the lesson whilst she reprimanded the class because some students misbehaved. In this situation, the students felt irritated, and their feelings affected the learning process (SFGI, Chaira, Group 1, School C, 20/01/13). Neuropsychology research reports a strong association between student emotions and their thinking processes. The older limbic brain takes over the thinking brain, and consequently there is a reduction in focusing on the task and in flexibility of problem solving (Elias et al., 1997). Negative emotions affect
cognition in two specific ways, through the activation of memory biases and the activation of attention biases (Roeser et al., 1998). The students tend to recall memories of negative emotional events, which seem to maintain or foster a negative effect. Moreover, emotions can force the person to pay attention to other aspects of the situation consistent with the emotion being experienced. Consequently, emotions affect student learning and performance in school (Roeser et al., 1998).

In School D, in attempting to make students feel more relaxed in the class, the teacher used a funny non-verbal expression while he explained the lesson. This class was full of laughter but it interfered with student learning. Instead of feeling happy in the class, the students felt annoyed because there was lots of laughter in the class. In this instance, the students perceived that they just remembered the jokes, but not the lesson content (SFGI, Sheni, Group 1, School D, 30/11/12). This situation is consistent with Banas et al. (2011) that when teachers use humour irrelevant to the learning purpose, the student will remember the humour more than the lesson content.

Teachers in the current study perceived that relationships between students and teachers affected whether students liked being at school. One teacher said that students enjoyed being at school because it was a place for them to play. The students did not have a playground in their neighbourhood area (TFGI, Puri, School C, 20/01/13). Other teachers identified that some students enjoyed being at school because they had a close connection with the teacher and they felt lonely at home as both of their parents were very busy with their work (TFGI, Herlina, School E, 26/11/12). Teachers were not only educators, but also played a parent role (TI, Kemal, School A, 6/12/12). Teachers identified the importance of various personality
types, because different types of students can interact with different types of teachers (TFGI, Rasin, School E, 26/11/12). Students could choose with whom they may develop closer relationships. For instance, a student may have a new opportunity to develop a secure relationship with a teacher that complements an insecure relationship with their parents (Davis, 2003).

The following section discusses the quality of relationships between students in school. This theme is explored through student and teacher perspectives.

### 7.2 Student-student relationships

The student stories and focus-group interviews indicate student-student relationships as a significant theme related to their positive perception about school and positive emotional experiences in school. *Meeting friends* or *having a lot of friends* were the phrases expressed spontaneously by the students about what made them feel happy in school. Consistent with a previous study by Lee et al. (1983), student evaluations of school are strongly influenced by school being a place where their peers and friends are. The students in this present study mentioned situations when they received support from friends. Peer support refers to feeling accepted by, and getting assistance from, classmates (Freeman et al., 2012). These supports can be differentiated into emotional support and academic support (Patrick et al., 2007; Rowe et al., 2010).

Emotional support refers to students feeling that their friends care about them as a person (Patrick et al., 2007; Rowe et al., 2010). The students mentioned occasions when their friends received emotional support, such as when someone was injured at school many students would help them (e.g., SFGI, Rifa, School E, group 2, 28/11/12), when they visited their sick friends at home (e.g., SFGI, Yuka, School C,
Group 2, 19/01/12), and feeling accepted as a new student at school or being a motivator to classmates (e.g., SFGI, Palupi, School D, Group 2, 30/11/12).

The students also perceived receiving academic support from their friends. They felt that their friends cared about how much they learned and wanted to help them in learning (Patrick et al., 2007; Rowe et al., 2010). Examples of such occasions include:

- Receiving academic support from their friends – when someone was absent from school, their friends would tell them about the homework or assignment for the following days (SFGI, Aida, Hani, School B, Group 1, 15/12/12).

- When someone did not understand how to complete an assignment or did not understand the lesson, their friends would help by explaining how to complete the assignment or how to comprehend the lesson (e.g., SFGI, Disa, School B, group 1, 15/12/12).

Even though some students wanted to be the best student in class, they still helped each other in learning. In School A, the students said that their homeroom teacher promoted peer support. This teacher gave praise to the students who helped their friends learn.

The students also mentioned that not all their friends were nice. They perceived that some of their friends were naughty. Peer conflict sometimes happened, but they resolved their conflict quickly. They noticed that some friends preferred playing with a certain peer group (SFGI, all students, School E, Group 1, 28/11/12). During early adolescence, students usually choose friends who are similar to them (Eccles, 1999).
In addition, some students in this study identified peer victimisation in school. They had seen a friend who was crying because they were teased by other friends, or experienced being rejected by their classmates from play, or were bullied by other students. Peer victimisation refers to being teased, isolated, bullied or rejected by peers and being called names (Hui & Sun, 2010; Ladd et al., 1997; Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). The issue of peer victimisation was expressed mainly by the group of students with the lowest level of school satisfaction. This is consistent with the study by Verkuyten and Thijs (2002), who found experience of peer victimisation to be an important determinant of school dissatisfaction. In another study, peer conflict and peer victimisation were not significant predictors of, but still correlated to, school satisfaction (Hui & Sun, 2010). In this current study, I did not further explore student experiences of peer victimisation as it is a sensitive issue involving ethical consideration. The students said that the teachers were either not fully aware of peer victimisation in school or just assumed it was ordinary peer conflict.

In comparison to student perceptions, the teachers were actually aware of peer victimisation in school. In School E, a teacher indicated peer group exclusivity in an earlier grade (Year 3). The teacher identified this exclusivity through a sociometric indicator when the students were involved in group-work. The teacher found that some students were not accepted to be a member of group-work. Members of peer groups usually take control of the dynamics of the relationships and sometimes establish member hierarchies within the group (Eccles, 1999). In order to solve this problem, the teacher formed various workgroups in different subjects, so the students would develop interaction with lots of students in different groups.
The teachers acknowledged the negative impact of peer rejection. Conflict with peers is associated with higher levels of loneliness and lower levels of students liking their school (Ladd et al., 1996). In contrast, students who have sense of community, for example those who are accepted by peers and perceive their friends as sources of personal support, have been found more likely to enjoy the class, feel happier at school and develop a positive attitude to school (Battistich et al., 1997; Ladd et al., 1996; Osterman, 2000).

In order to inhibit the frequency of peer conflict, the teachers conveyed the message to the students to respect each other (e.g., TFGI, School E, 26/11/12). In School D, respect is one of the explicit school values disseminated through school character education. Patrick et al. (2007, p. 85) define mutual respect as valuing one another and their contributions, being considerate of others feelings, and prohibiting making fun of each other. In this present study, even though teachers said that they promote mutual respect, I noted that some teachers showed disrespectful behaviours to their students. The students recognised these behaviours as discussed in the previous sections (e.g., Section 7.1.1.2). Therefore, these teachers were not good role models for their students in promoting mutual respect. Teacher emotional support could be a good model for students and provide a warm and supportive context in which students can practice safely positive peer relationships skills (Gest & Rodkin, 2011; Luckner & Pianta, 2011). For learning, respect is also critical in order for studying to be meaningful (Konu & Rimpela, 2002).

At School A, the students said that their homeroom teacher did not allow students to have a special friendship, and that they could only participate in mutually reciprocal friendships with a specific peer group. Their teacher promoted friendship creation
with all classmates. His suggestion is understandable, as he did not want the students creating exclusivity in their friendships or peer group. Ladd et al. (1996) suggest that exclusivity in friendship fosters student involvement in activities that distract them from academic tasks, such as talking too much with friends, and may decrease support networks from classmates. It then interferes with academic performance in school.

7.3 Summary

The theme findings in this chapter describe the quality of relationships between teachers and students and the relationships among students. Some of the findings confirm previous studies on the same issue of the relationships in school, whereas other findings describe specific issues related to the specific context of this study. The different sources of data – from the student perspectives as the main voices, the teacher opinions, and the research observer – serve to improve the results.

This chapter has identified that relationships in school occur within the entire school context. They take place in a dyadic interaction between teacher and student and among students as well as during instructional practices. Teachers reported that they take a great deal of action to establish and maintain relationships with students and promote relationships among students. However, student perceptions are quite different, and they reported that they are generally dissatisfied with teacher interpersonal behaviours. Despite teachers being key to establishing and maintaining the quality of TSRs and influencing student-student relationships, students also have responsibility and a role to play, and this is affected by their needs, expectations, previous experiences and personal characteristics. TSRs are important for student learning, because through these relationships students can have either positive or
negative emotional experiences of their schooling. Positive experiences promote positive attitudes towards teachers and subject matter, and schools can broaden cognitive processing and so lead to improved learning outcomes. In contrast, negative emotional experiences inhibit student interest towards subject matter and can foster a dislike of teachers, which in turn can negatively affect their learning processes and outcomes.

The next chapter (Chapter 8) discusses the key findings from Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Using SDT as a theoretical lens, this study attempted to view the extent to which aspects of the school environment facilitate or undermine the fulfilment of student basic psychological needs. As suggested by Eccles et al. (1993), assessment of school environments depends on generalised prescriptions for developmentally appropriate affordances as well as individual subjective appraisal of the quality of the school environment and their needs.
Chapter 8 The role of the school in student development
Student experiences in school have the capacity to promote positive development of cognitive, social and emotional functioning, as well as being a source of difficulties (Roeser & Eccles, 2000). Therefore, as a context for student development, schools have an important role to fulfil in providing a good environment for students. This chapter discusses the extent to which the school participating in this study provided a good context for student development.

The first section provides a detailed discussion of student expectations about teacher characteristics, learning experiences and the school environment, based on student perceptions and how they could be improved. The second section discusses the extent to which schools in this study functioned to promote a psychologically healthy environment for students. Self-determination theory (SDT) and the context of schooling in a multilevel environment are used as the theoretical lenses to evaluate the fit or mismatch between student needs and their school contexts.

8.1 Student expectations of teacher characteristics, learning experiences and school environment

Students themselves have different characteristics in terms of their needs and interests, beliefs in their ability, personality traits and family background. They also have previous experiences in learning. They come into their classroom with a complex and unique set of expectations of what makes a good teacher. As a consequence, different students expect different treatment from teachers, so it is difficult to generalise what makes for an effective teaching style (Evans et al., 2009). However, in terms of aiming for an optimum situation, educational stakeholders could listen to what students say about what aspects of school would enhance their satisfaction, support their capabilities, and enable them to learn better.
In this present study, student expectations of teacher characteristics are drawn from their dissatisfaction with their existing teachers as well as their expectations of teachers in general. The previous chapter (Section 7.1.1) discussed what are regarded by students as examples of low teacher support. Mentioning these implied that students expected their teachers to show the opposite – high-support behaviours. There was no significant difference in the themes or pattern of expectations between the group of students with the highest level of school satisfaction and the lowest. The emerging themes comprised the expectation about teacher behaviours in instructional practices and personal teacher characteristics. However, the group of students with the lowest school satisfaction more often expressed expectations about fair treatment and respect, which related to their need for competence.

Student expectations regarding their school experiences are related to a range of school environment aspects. They include teacher behaviours, task demands, enjoyable classroom climate and school facilities. The following section discusses the fit and mismatch between school context and student needs of the students interviewed.

8.1.1 Teacher behaviours

Most students expressed their dissatisfaction about teacher favouritism, teacher grumpiness and the use of corporal punishment (see Section 7.1.1.2). They hoped there would be no differential teacher behaviours between high and low achievers, indicating an expectation of fair and respectful treatment. They hoped that teachers would respect them for who they are (SFGI, Anna, School E, Group 1, 18/11/12). Some students indicated that they preferred their teachers to be more patient in dealing with them. They also indicated that the teachers should not get angry too easily, or frustrated when asked to provide further explanation or respond to student
questions, particularly with those students who have difficulties understanding the concept. Moreover, students did not want teachers to use coercion to motivate them, for example, a student being required to show how to solve a problem in front of the class if in fact they cannot do it (SFGI, Raven, School E, Group 1, 28/11/12). Importantly, students wished that teachers did not use corporal punishment as a disciplinary strategy to manage their behaviours.

These expectations of teacher behaviour suggest that the students preferred teachers who can establish effective communication with their students. Effective communication can be supported, for example, through using clear and simple sentences, providing a slower pace when explaining the lessons, giving more detailed information and showing more enthusiasm (SFGI, Chaira, School C, Group 2, 19/01/12). Clear explanations and presentation of the lessons in small steps are needed to ensure that students are not mentally overloaded with information or engage in complex mental processing beyond their capabilities (Schunk et al., 2010). Willingham (2009) suggests that preventing overloading information in the working memory, teachers should slow the pace and use memory aids, such as writing explanations on the board. Teacher enthusiasm in dealing with academic materials can also foster students in absorbing academic values (Pekrun, 2006).

8.1.2 Task demands

Students expected that teachers would match task demands with each student’s ability in order to complete the tasks. Task demands are implied by the difficulty level of learning materials, as well as by lots of assignments and homework (Pekrun, 2006; Samdal et al., 1999). Students expected that teachers would consider their ability to comprehend the learning materials or how to solve problems or questions.
These expectations are based on the situations explored in Section 7.1.1.1. Teachers should be aware that there are various cognitive abilities among students in the class. It seems likely that the teachers in this study do not have sufficient knowledge of developmentally appropriate practice. Developmental knowledge is essential for enabling teachers to select and set up particular kinds of learning activities that match student attention spans and readiness (Horowitz et al., 2005). According to Pekrun (2006), learning materials will be valued as important when there is a close match between the task demands and individual abilities. In addition, matching task demands to student abilities will influence student task-related achievement emotions and support cognitive learning (Pekrun, 2006). Moreover, as students in this study sometimes had difficulties accomplishing their assignments within a tight timeframe, they expected their teachers would respond by reducing the amount of assignments or homework (e.g., SFGI, Sheni, school D, Group 1, 30/11/12). If task demands are significantly higher than individual abilities, the students experience stress (Claxton, 2013; Takakura et al., 2005).

In addition, the students did not want their teachers to compare student achievements between high and low achievers – either by student or class. The students expressed their desire to be treated individually, indicating that they expected their teachers to respect their individual differences. The students revealed that they can be affected by negative emotions such as anxiety, hopelessness and shame when they learn that school environments represent too much of a challenge or provide unfavourable social comparison (Pekrun, 2006). The emotional experiences of students in relation to social comparison were discussed in Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.2.1).
In elementary school, student status depends on performance evaluated against a preset standard of excellence. Moreover, student success and failure tends to be recognised in public. Competition and social comparison are keys threads of development in student self-concept in the period of late childhood and early adolescence (Eccles, 1999). Over the elementary school years, student expectations of success and their self-concept regarding their ability tend to decline. Therefore, in order to eliminate the opportunity for comparison between classes, the students wanted academic tracking or classification based on their ability levels terminated (SFGI, some students, School B, Group 1 and Group 2, 15/12/12). Research on the impact of ability tracking practices shows that students who are subject to low-ability practices experience a negative long-term effect because they receive poor educational experiences (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b). These impacts are related to negative attitudes towards school, low sense of competence, dropping out, and delinquent behaviours (Oakes, 2005, as cited in Eccles & Roeser, 2011b).

8.1.3 Enjoyable classroom climate

The students showed their expectation of an enjoyable classroom climate through their perception that the teachers often expressed anger, rarely displayed a smiling face, and used minimal humour when they taught. These situations undermined student intentions to ask questions. The students hoped their teachers would more often appear with a smiling face and use humour in class. A study of Finnish primary school student perceptions of the ideal school by Kangas (2010) found similar findings – students wished that the teachers would be kind, nice, not get angry easily, funny, friendly, have a sense of humour, and be pedagogically gentle while also being strict enough. Moreover, an ideal school was associated with positive emotions, such as: satisfaction, smiling, beautiful, happy, cool, nice, amusing and
funny. The message from students in this study is that teachers should consider using appropriate and relevant humour. Paired with their expectations of their teachers, the students at School A and School B also indicated that they preferred other adults at the school, such as security staff and office staff, would show respectful behaviours towards them. Instead, they experienced anger or rudeness from some teachers and other adults at school. These comments indicate that the students expected that their school should be a safe and learning community for students (Battistich et al., 1997; Kangas, 2010). Ryan and Patrick (2001) found that in a safe school environment, students feel respectful, experience less anxiety, have more confidence in their ability, and therefore are more engaged with learning.

The students expected that teachers would provide learning experiences that support cooperation between students and stimulate their interest in learning. In cooperative learning situations, the students felt that they could help each other. Cooperative learning supports the need for social relations (Pekrun, 2006). For students from a collectivistic culture, experiences of relatedness in learning are more satisfying and produce positive affect, even though autonomy experiences may also be perceived as satisfying (Sheldon et al., 2001).

In addition, the students preferred unusual situations, compared to their routine or daily learning activities that also required active participation, such as acting, demonstrating, playing, or using information and communications technology. An example of this feeling is:

I wished involvement in movement activities, not just sitting in our desks. (SFGI, Anti, School E, Group 2, 28/12/12).

This finding is in line with Rantala (2005, as cited in Kangas, 2010) who showed that students experience joy of learning through having an active role in learning, not by
just listening to the teachers. Other studies also found that by involving students in active learning or in demonstrating their skills, within group-work or as individual activities, the students feel more engaged in instructional practice than when they are limited to teacher lecturing activities (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009; Shernoff et al., 2003). However, as the students in this study were used to being involved in teacher-centred approaches, they preferred the teaching style where teachers explain the lesson in front the class before having to be involved in an individual worksheet activity. The students also wanted enough time for taking notes after the teacher explained the lesson. They hoped that teachers would write their explanations on the whiteboard neatly, so they could copy it easily (SFGI, Anneke, School E, Group 2, 28/11/12). Indeed, they were more likely to get teacher support to achieve the highest score in tests through such learning style preferences.

We prefer teachers explain the lesson, provide the summary and the worksheet, that the questions inside can be answered by just looking in the summary, and the test questions are similar to the worksheet questions, so we can easily achieve 100/100. (SFGI, Hani, School B, Group 1, 15/12/12).

These student preferences indicate that they still enjoyed teacher-centered approaches. They also preferred learning styles that rely on memorisation of facts, probably because they had been conditioned by the paradigm of learning for the test. As the test questions require students to give direct and correct answers, the rote learning approach can guarantee students will get a high test score. Despite these preferences contrasting with student-centered approaches that are regarded as the best practices, such student preferences are understandable given their predominant exposure to teacher-centered approaches. Norms related to these approaches seem deeply entrenched within Indonesian school society. This is also consistent with the Indonesian cultural characteristic described by Hofstede (2001) as a strong uncertainty avoidance index. The features of this index are characterised by student
and teacher preferences for structured learning situations with clear objectives, detailed assignments and strict timetables. Teachers are supposed to have all the answers and students prefer to find one right answer and get rewarded for accuracy.

8.1.4 School resources

With regard to school physical settings, some students wanted more sports facilities while also indicating a wish for environmental comfort. These students came from School A, School B and School C. From my observations, I identified that these schools only have a limited outdoor area where students can play games or engage in sports activities. Classrooms at School A were also very crowded (more than 50 students in a class). Therefore, the students enjoyed extra-curricular activities or PE because these activities were conducted outside the class. They wished to have the freedom to run around and play games whenever they wanted. Some students from School E wanted another kind of extra-curricular program, such as participation in a cheer group and school band.

Student expectations regarding environmental comfort were associated with cleanliness of classrooms, toilets and canteen; good conditions of student desks and the school roof; and the beauty of school yards. Students felt that existing conditions were dirty and messy. These findings are not those of an ideal learning environment that provides physical well-being and environmental comfort, as described by Kangas (2010). Konu and Rimpela (2002) argue that the school environment including the physical conditions inside and surrounding a school is typically how school well-being is conceived. Likewise, Fatorre, Mason, and Watson (2009) found that a good physical environment where students can engage actively and safely, is one of the indicators of what constitutes children’s well-being.
A few students commented on what they perceived to be arbitrary ideas concerning school rules and instructional practices. Instead of complying, they wanted to do whatever they wanted, for example, sleeping in class while the teacher explained the lesson in the form of storytelling, chatting with friends while the teacher talked on their mobile phone, bringing their own mobile phone and camera to school, not receiving punishment for not completing their homework, or chatting with friends when the teacher left the class. In addition, one student wished the school would provide an elevator because it was tiring climbing the stairs. These statements are typically comments of children.

8.2 School as a psychologically healthy environment

Students spend a considerable amount of time in school, and their experiences there influence every aspect of their development, including academic, social-emotional and behaviours. As described in Chapter 3, the context of schooling is likewise shaped within the overall schooling system. Research on school effect suggests that all levels of school context have similar influences on students (Roeser & Eccles, 2000). Furthermore, Roeser and Eccles argue that student perceptions of the classroom and school environment are more significant predictors of their school adjustment than observable characteristics. Student perceptions and their motivational beliefs, goals and emotions are thus mediators of their achievement-related behaviours.

Following the findings of Chapters 5, 6 and 7 and by integrating the insights from SDT, the following discussion summarises the extent to which schools in this present study can be characterised as a positive psychological environment for students. Analysis of the school context is based on general perceptions of student
participants; however, in conducting this research, it has also been necessary to consider divergent and different individual responses. This approach is supported by an argument that students possess individual differences and dispositions in how they make meaning of their school experience (Roeser et al., 1998; Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). In addition, the discussion of the findings is structured according to the different levels of school system.

According to Huebner et al. (2009), one characteristic of positive school is when students in such a school report generally positive emotions and school satisfaction (p. 563). As reported in Chapter 5, student levels of school satisfaction is weighted at 3.6 on average on a scale of 0–5 (see Tables 5.3), and their positive and negative emotions are 3.67 and 2.65, respectively (see Table 5.8 and 5.9). Additionally, the number of students whose level of school satisfaction is below the neutral point is less than 10%. With regard to well-being interpreted according to hedonistic approaches that focus on happiness (Ryan & Deci, 2001), student levels of satisfaction and positive emotions in this study indicate student happiness. Therefore, this finding suggests that students feel happy in school. In terms of a positive school defined above, schools in this study showed one key attribute; however, according to eudaimonic approaches that focus on self-realisation, student happiness is not identical with well-being because EWB is conceived as more than just happiness (Ryan & Deci, 2001). High levels of school satisfaction and positive emotion may indicate student SWB or student happiness, but may not necessarily yield EWB (Ryan & Deci, 2001). As noted in Chapter 3, the concept of EWB from SDT is focused on the principal factors that foster well-being. Therefore, this study has focused on identifying what factors of school contexts facilitate or undermine students in experiencing fulfilment of basic psychological needs.
Guided by qualitative findings that students who expressed either high levels or low levels of school satisfaction still expressed dissatisfaction with their school experiences, this study explored what aspects of school and learning environments instigate student feelings of dissatisfaction. The qualitative findings of positive and negative emotional experiences in relation to school and learning environments supplement the quantitative measures of school well-being. Using both kinds of data aligns with Hascher (2008) who suggests that combining quantitative and qualitative approaches can provide a more context-sensitive understanding of emotions in school. This study, however, is not intended to measure the degree to which students experience well-being from eudaimonic perspectives. Instead, the qualitative findings are used to find out what aspects of the school and learning environment hinder students from experiencing well-being from a eudaimonic perspective. School can function as a psychologically healthy environment if student developmental needs are accommodated (Baker et al., 2003; Roeser et al., 1998). According to SDT, student needs are comprised of the need for competence, autonomy and relatedness. On the other hand, school contexts can be stressful places for students if they challenge or threaten these fundamental needs (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). Moreover, characteristics of a positive school (Huebner et al., 2009) and a healthy psycho-social school environment (WHO, 2003) are used as references in assessing any mismatch between the findings and these characteristics.

Processes within different levels of school organisation interact dynamically with each other as either complementary or contradictory, and may influence student experiences directly or indirectly (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). Findings of this study presented in previous chapters focused on the identification of negative characteristics of school and the learning environment that hindered student well-
being. A summary below is presented according to the framework of the influence of different levels of school contexts on human development proposed by Eccles and Roeser (1999, 2011a, 2011b). Understanding the interactions of each level of schooling is critical to gain an understanding of the role of schooling in the development of young people (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). In the following sections, the practices of the schools in each level of schooling that affect student experiences on a daily basis are discussed. The discussion starts from the distal component followed by the proximal contextual process in the classroom. The distal component here is Indonesian culture and national education policy; however, these components also become dominant drivers of other components of education.

8.2.1 National culture of nation and education policy

Schools are embedded in a larger social context (Connell & Wellborn, 1991; Eccles & Roeser, 2004). Much of what goes on in the school is influenced by the characteristics of the nation and communities where school exist (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). According to Brofenbrenner’s definition of macrosystem as a context for human development, specific value or belief systems in particular cultures can influence personal development in one or more of the microsystems in which a person is situated (Tudge et al., 2009). The value of the importance of academic success in Asian cultures, including Indonesia, influences the ways in which schools or parents define student success. This value is then implied within national educational policies, school policies and parent expectations. The values of power-distance relationships in a collectivistic culture influences the culture of relationships at school; for instance, how schools apply instructional models in teaching (e.g., teacher-centred approaches) and how teachers take on the role of controller of student behaviours (Hofstede, 2001). The values of a strong uncertainty index
influence teachers, parents and students in determining whether to take a risk (Hofstede, 2001). In order to ensure that their students can achieve good academic results in tests, teachers provide students with drilling practices and frequent tests. Parents are also involved in providing supplementary tutors or after-school classes for their children. This study found that most students like teachers who give them clear ways to accomplish the tasks or to achieve satisfactory academic results.

Global education reform strategies that focus on standardisation of education, increased focus on literacy and numeracy, and consequential accountability (Sahlberg, 2007) influence Indonesian educational policies. As described in Chapter 2, the Indonesian national educational standard (the Government Act No. 19/2005) has an objective to guarantee the quality of national education. The NE is utilised as a tool to measure improvement of the quality of national education. From 2008 to 2013, the NE was implemented in primary schools, but since 2014 the Indonesian government stopped using the NE in primary school (Government Act No. 32/2013 as a revision of the Government Act No. 19/2005), with primary school students participating in a school level exit examination only.

Stopping the NE for primary school has decreased the barrier for entry to middle school, which may increase student participations rates in compulsory education. However, the school examination score is still used as a basis to determine whether students can be accepted in a particular middle school. Most students want to enrol in a favourite or prestigious middle school, but schools sort students based on rank of examination score. Therefore, school level exit examinations still have HST characteristics as upper levels of education provide few places for new students
(Wall, 2000). While not tested empirically, the negative impact of school examinations is assumed to be that of an HST, just like the previous NE.

Despite lots of public debate about the NE among educational practitioners and policymakers, the Indonesian government has retained a firm commitment to implement the NE as a way to improve the quality of national education. Indonesian policymakers counter the findings of the negative impact of the NE with other studies of the positive impact of the NE (Syahril & Lesko, 2007). Statements of Indonesian policymakers in newspapers indicate their belief that the NE can promote more challenging forms of learning for students. Teachers and students should be pressured to perform well in the NE (Syahril & Lesko, 2007).

A number of studies in Indonesia on the impact of the NE (e.g. Sukyadi & Mardiani, 2011; Sulistyo, 2010) reveal similar findings to related research in other countries, such as the USA, which has a long history of standardised testing. Reviewing several commentaries in Indonesian newspapers, Syahril & Lesko (2007) and Sulistyo (2010) report on the negative impacts of the NE on student well-being. Moreover, some studies as reported in Section 2.2.2.2 provide evidence of the detrimental effect of the NE on students (e.g. Kinantie et al., 2012; Maisaroh & Falah, 2011; Pranadji & Muharrifah, 2010). Increasing the minimum threshold for passing the NE over the years constitutes a stressor for the students. They are worried about failing the NE, experience stress, are physically tired, and in some extreme situations students attempt suicide. In this current study, the negative impact of the NE was reported in Section 6.2.4 where student participants expressed their worry about passing the NE and in gaining admission to public middle school. They are also tired because many of them have to participate in intensive study sessions or cram schools. Teachers feel
under pressure to teach the curriculum content in a tight time frame while at the same time they have to prepare their students to face the NE. They are concerned about student achievement in the NE as the results can also affect the school reputation or school ranking.

The situations outlined above describe an argument used by policymakers that the NE can be used as a push factor to motivate students and teachers to increase academic achievement. In the development of selective and competitive schools, Indonesian policymakers seem to apply an approach of ‘no pain no gain’ – that has dubious impact upon learning achievement (Guay et al., 2008). The HST is based on a behaviourist view of motivation in which reinforcement and punishment are contingent on outcomes (Ryan & Brown, 2005). In addition to motivating students and teachers to improve test scores, the HST also activates a fear of failing (Ryan & Weinstein, 2009). Within SDT, such approaches are considered to be a controlled form of motivation (Ryan & Weinstein, 2009). Some studies show that teachers under controlled conditions and pressed towards higher standards of performance are more likely to engage in a controlling style of teaching (Deci, Spiegel, Ryan, Koestner, & Kauffman, 1982; Flink, Boggiano, & Barrett, 1990; Pelletier et al., 2002). The impact of this style of teaching on students is discussed in Section 8.2.3.

From an SDT perspective applying controlling strategies to change behaviours or enhance outcomes is typically ineffective over the long term (Ryan & Weinstein, 2009). This argument is contrary to findings from PISA study in 2009 that students from countries that use standard-based external examination show better academic performance overall (OECD, 2010). HST practices may lead schools to focus on outcomes rather than behaviours, taking an expedient way to achieve the outcome. In contrast, PISA study in 2012 (OECD, 2014) reported that better performance is
identified in schools which have more autonomy over curricula and assessment. In Indonesia, MOEC (Kementrian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2014) reported the positive impact of HST is more students who can pass the NE despite the average of the NE score is inconsistent over the years. The negative impact of HST can result in a wide variety of potentially undesirable behaviours, for example, cheating across all levels of education activities, teaching to the test, and narrowing of the curriculum (Madaus et al., 2009; Ryan & Weinstein, 2009). In this current study, similar findings were explored in Section 6.2.4.

The use of the NE in Indonesia indicates an authoritarian educational system as described by Zhao (2014). In an authoritarian education system, a high expectation is defined externally by government, but is not necessarily intrinsically accepted by students and requires mandatory conformity. This present research identifies that despite student efforts to work hard, the risk of failure leads them to feel low confidence and this impacts on their low self-esteem (Zhao, 2014). Moreover, it also identifies emotionally stressful school conditions may be counter-productive to supporting student ability to learn (Sylwester, 1994). SDT studies report a clear finding that when students feel unduly pressured, their performance is impacted (Guay et al., 2008).

8.2.2 The school level

Several aspects of schools that do not support the fulfilment of student psychological needs were identified in this study: academic press and school goal structure, academic tracking, and school features.
Teachers in this study said that they appreciate individual effort and improvement in academic mastery. However, some school practices demonstrated that schools emphasise performance goal orientation, for example, explicit class ranking on reports, public honour rolls and assemblies for the highest achieving students, and other practices that value the importance of academic results above other achievement. Roeser and Eccles (1998) argue that it is common for schools to promote performance goal structures. As reported in Section 7.1.1, some students mentioned that teacher expectations towards them with regard to achieving academic excellence motivated them to increase their performance; whereas some students also complained that such conditions diminish their motivation. Such findings corroborate with Meece et al. (2006), who conclude that a focus on demonstrating high ability and competition for grades in school can motivate efforts to increase academic performance while also undermining the motivation of other students.

As described in Section 6.2.4, a pressure to perform well in the NE leads students and teachers to adopt a performance orientation in school (Ryan & Weinstein, 2009). The NE creates conditions where teachers are pushed to teach for the tests while also trying to teach for learning for understanding (Au, 2011; Natal, 2014). In most cases, though, teachers become more focused on teaching to the tests in order to make sure students get excellent results. They feel that designing lessons that stimulate students engagement is useless when such lessons are not included in the NE (Syahril & Lesko, 2007).

A longitudinal study by Roeser et al. (1998) found that when students perceived that school emphasis is on performance orientation, they experience diminished feelings of academic competence and valuing the school, and also feel anger and depression,
with their grades decreasing over time. As explored in Section 5.3.2.1, the current study reveals that social comparison of ability may lead students to feel sad, hurt and angry. Students in this study are in late middle childhood or early adolescence. This period is a time when children become increasingly self-aware (Eccles, 1999). Performance orientation practices do not support students in satisfying their need for competence. They need a school environment where the teachers display high expectations for all students, regardless of their current ability, and do not make academic comparisons (Roeser et al., 1998).

In this study, school practices can be seen as promoting school success as identical to academic achievement. Doing so is aimed at facilitating student motivation in learning to get a higher test score. Formative tests were often conducted to measure student achievement, as mentioned by both students and teachers from some schools. Moreover, students have a preference for teaching practices that provide them with the easiest way to get the correct answers in the tests. This preference may corroborate with student levels of positive emotions. In situations when the task challenge is lower than student skills, however, students can also experience feelings of relaxation (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009). Thus, accounting for all the dynamics involved presents a challenge.

In summary, drawing upon the characteristics of what constitutes an optimal learning environment (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009), I identified two contrasting conditions of the learning environment in Indonesian educational contexts.

First, the exam-oriented learning environment involves high levels of academic intensity or academic emphasis, but reveals low levels of positive emotion. The culmination of this learning climate happens when students are at the end of Years 6,
9 and 12. This condition stimulates students to experience anxiety, because the level of challenge is higher than student perception of their skills.

Second, learning environments are preferred by students in which positive emotions are stimulated, but involve low levels of academic intensity. This is in line with an argument that people with positive emotions tend to process information superficially with decreased motivation to pursue a challenging goal (Pekrun, Elliot, & Maier, 2009). I indicated that this learning environment may foster student happiness (SWB). Findings from a PISA study 2012 indicate that even though Indonesian students score poorly in the PISA test, they are on the highest levels of happiness at school (OECD, 2014). With regard to SDT, student experiences in school may foster student happiness, but it may not necessarily yield EWB that fosters self-realisation (Ryan & Deci, 2001). Self-realisation occurs when an individual stretches their potential to strive towards excellence (Waterman, 2008). This condition can be cultivated by an optimal learning environment in which students experience the flow – when the challenge of the activity is well matched to individual skills (Shernoff & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

This second kind of learning environment aligns to the findings that motivation for learning by Indonesian students is characterised by hedonism values (pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself). This disposition leads students to pursue a performance avoidance goal, but undermines the adoption of both the performance approach and the mastery approach (Liem & Nie, 2008). Furthermore, Liem, Martin, Porter, and Colmar (2012) explain that this disposition relates to collectivist culture where educational expectations are set and pressured by significant others (parents, teachers and schools). Such conditions increase fear of failure, which in turn leads
students to adopt avoidance performance goals, and as a consequence, results in lower achievement.

8.2.2.2 Academic tracking

In this present study, two schools sorted students according to their ability. While they received similar curriculum to other classes, students in these classes had higher ability than other classes. Eccles and Roeser (2011b) conclude that the impact of ability tracking practices produces elusive results, depending on the type of grouping used, student ability levels, the curricula used, the instructional practices used, and the outcomes assessed (Ross & Harrison, 2006). Students placed in high-ability classrooms and receiving a differentiated curriculum are more motivated to learn because they experience instructional practices that are adjusted to their competence level. In contrast, students placed in low-ability classrooms can experience a negative long-term effect that is associated with negative achievement outcomes because they are provided with low support and inferior educational experiences (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b).

Some students in this current study recognised that their friends from high-ability classes tended to maintain relationships with students with similar levels of achievement. Research supports this finding that classroom ability groupings impact upon peer group relationships (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b). Students in a particular group tend to develop relationships with other students who have similar levels of achievement and engagement in school. Negative impact can occur when students also prefer to interact with those who have similar behavioural problems.

In this present study, some teachers also commented that the low-ability class was the worst class compared with other classes. The students also noticed that a teacher
sometimes called students who cannot easily comprehend the lessons “stupid” (explored in Section 7.1.1.2). These experiences degraded student feelings of competence. Oakes (1992, as cited in Eccles & Roeser, 2004) reports on studies demonstrating that when students from lower academic rankings are labelled as ‘dumb’ by teachers and peers, they feel less engagement with school, and feel less competent academically.

This current study also provides evidence of emotional experiences of students who are in placed in class ability groupings. As explored in Section 5.3, in schools that implemented ability grouping classrooms, on some occasion a group of students with a high level of school satisfaction were formed from those from a high-achieving classroom. However, those students more often expressed that they were stressed and depressed about academic expectations. This finding is consistent with Pekrun et al. (2007) that at the individual level, students experience slightly more negative emotions and slightly fewer positive emotions in higher-achieving classrooms because they feel more pressure to achieve.

8.2.2.3 School features

Schools in this study belong to schools with different features in terms of school status (private, public, religious), school size and school resources. As explored in Section 5.3.1, this study identified that features of the schools influence student perceptions of their school. In terms of school resources, six out of eight schools participating in this study do not have adequate sports fields. Some of them also do not have enough spaces in hallways or play areas where students can actively play during recess. Students need physical activities as an integral part of their development, but these conditions do not support them. Research shows evidence that supports the importance of physical activities of school children in enhancing
cognitive performance as well as in supporting student psychological and social well-being (WHO, 2007).

Observation indicated that all classrooms were inhabited by large numbers of students (35–40 students). In School A, a classroom designed for a small number of students was inhabited by 57 students. These conditions represent the opposite of what is stated in Indonesian policy on the standard for resources and infrastructures. Law No. 20/2003 states that school resources and infrastructure are provided to facilitate student physical, intellectual, social, emotional and psychological development. A recent study released by the Indonesian MOEC (Baswedan, 2014), developed based on data from 40,000 schools in 2012, reported that 75% of these schools do not meet the requirements of a minimum standard of resources and infrastructure. According to SDT, a lack of resources can hinder student activity and self-determined striving (Reeve et al., 2004). Likewise, Konu and Rimpela (2002) found that school conditions include both the physical environment surrounding a school and the environment inside a school, and both are key indicators of school well-being.

With regard to school size, five out of eight of the schools participating in this study can be categorised as large schools because they accommodate more than 600 students. Many researchers indicate, however, that an elementary school is more effective with 300–400 students (Cotton, 1996). In small schools, teachers show more responsibility towards student learning (Lee & Loeb, 2000) by participating more in school life, closely monitoring students and developing positive relationships (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b).
Another feature of schools that impact on school experiences is the school start and end times. Schools in this study start school at 6.30 am. Some students said that waking up in the early morning makes them feel unenthusiastic about going to school (SFGI, Palupi, School D Group 1, 10/05/20; Lusi, Shashi, Reza, School E Group 1, 11/05/2012). Moreover, they can still feel sleepy and tired as a consequence of their activities at cram schools in the previous day.

With regard to the school start times in urban settings like Jakarta, traffic jams can be an additional problem requiring students to depart home in the early morning every school day. School end times vary among schools in Jakarta, but are generally after 1.00 pm, but because many students have to join intensive study sessions or cram schools after school hours, they spend much time studying and doing their homework and have less leisure time. Many students therefore feel tired. The time that school starts and finishes has a significant impact on student moods, energy, attention, and therefore, their motivation to learn (Roeser, Urdan & Stephen, 2009). Yambise (2015), the Indonesian Minister of Empowerment for Women and Safety for Children, argues that school times in Indonesia do not respect children’s rights. Students do not have enough time for playing and family gathering.

8.2.3 The classroom

The classroom is the most proximal and immediate school environment for students (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). Bronfenbrenner (1997, p. 38) argues that enduring forms of interaction in the immediate environment is a key factor of development (Tudge et al., 2009). Chapters 6 and 7 discussed student experiences in school, particularly with regard to academic demands and relationships. The following sections discuss how these experiences in the classroom challenge student needs for competence,
autonomy and relatedness. Sub-topics include academic work and curriculum, teacher beliefs concerning student abilities, and TSRs.

8.2.3.1 Academic work and curriculum

Two important aspects of academic work are what is taught in the content of the curriculum and the design of instruction that describes how subjects are taught (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). As explored in Chapter 5, students complain about the burden of curriculum content, lots of assignments and the high frequency of tests. Negative student emotional experiences include tiredness, sadness, boredom, stress, depression and worry. Tiredness also occurs because they do not have enough time for rest and relaxation. In some schools, time for extracurricular activities for students in Year 6 was allocated for intensive study sessions. Moreover, many students want opportunities for playing and sports, but they do not have much leisure time for it. The availability of places and opportunities for students to play, socialise and participate in creative and recreational activities is one of the key features of a child-friendly school (WHO, 2003). The opportunity and time for students to be relatively free from the curriculum and from pressures to perform under assessment situations is vital to promote student creativity (WHO, 2003).

Students also feel they are in a coercive situation when they are asked to be involved in learning activities that are too difficult for them. When demands do not match ability, the likelihood of success is minimised. These situations threaten the need for competence (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). Instructional practices in the current study also contradict fundamental principles outlined by the MOEC in designing lesson plans (The Ministerial Decree 41/2007) (Permendikbud, 2007b). These principles include being respectful to student individual differences, such as cognitive ability, learning styles, motivation, gender and social background, while also facilitating
student-centred approaches to teaching that stimulate motivation, interest and creativity.

As already highlighted, teacher-centred approaches are predominantly used in instructional practices. Consequently, students experience boredom when they sit passively at their desks and listen to teacher lectures. Students also spend much time completing their worksheet or workbook exercises, leaving limited opportunity for them to be involved in meaningful learning activities. With these classroom characteristics, teachers provide students with little freedom of choice, voice, or support for initiative (Reeve et al., 2004). This classroom type can therefore be seen to undermine the fulfilment of student needs for autonomy.

In addition, because the design of instruction is mainly conducted for individual and whole-class interaction rather than for cooperative learning, instruction does not support student needs for autonomy and relatedness with their peers. Research shows, however, that students learn to take responsibility for their own learning through cooperative learning and become empowered in the process (WHO, 2003). Indeed, when provided with the opportunity, students also enjoy cooperative learning because it is fun and stimulating. The existing learning approach, however, contradicts the policy that outlines the standard of process in the national educational system (The Government Act No. 19/2005) which states that learning should be interactive, inspiring, full of enjoyment, challenging, motivating students to participate actively, providing students an opportunity to show initiative, creativity and autonomy with regard to their aptitude, interest, and physical and psychological development. Such situations indicate that there is a gap between what is stated in the policies and what is applied in practice. Support for constructivist approaches stated
clearly in policy are contradicted by the use of predominantly behaviouristic approaches in practice. Moreover, teachers tend to apply the traditional pedagogical approach until they feel confident in using pedagogical approaches more in line with the curriculum (OECD/ADB, 2015).

8.2.3.2 Classroom management

As reviewed in Section 7.1.1.2, learning practices in the schools of this study were regimented; the students had limited opportunities for choice and participation in decision making, and the teachers displayed authoritarian communication styles to control student behaviours. Because these schools provide high structure but little freedom, the context can be categorised as a controlling environment (Reeve et al., 2004) or a uni-dimensional classroom (Rosenholt & Simpson, 1984, as cited in Schunk et al., 2010). The teacher’s role is as controller of the learning process. The teacher gives directions to the whole class, and students do the same tasks at the same time (Schuh, 2004). Moreover, students have little choice about what, when and how to complete tasks (Rosenholt & Simpson, 1984, as cited in Schunk et al., 2010). Social contexts where students are pressured to accept certain goals or adapt courses of action undermine student needs for autonomy (Skinner & Belmont, 1993; Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). The need for autonomy is supported by a school environment where students have more opportunities for expression of their choice and participation (Roeser et al., 1998). Details of teacher behaviours that support these needs were described in Chapter 3, Section 3.7.1.

8.2.3.3 Teacher beliefs concerning student abilities

Teacher beliefs concerning student abilities can be identified by teacher statements about students. In this study, teachers commented when students could not easily understand their explanations, when they valued academic skills more than other
kinds of intelligence, and when they considered their students may have insufficient ability to enrol in a prestigious middle school because of the competitive selection process (explored in Section 7.1.1.1). Teacher statements in these situations are linked to beliefs about how ability and intelligence change over time. When teachers believe that intelligence is a fixed entity rather than malleable, they are more likely to adopt a relative ability or performance orientation in their pedagogical practices (Dweck & Leggett, 1988).

8.2.3.4 Teacher-student relationships

The quality of TSRs is a key aspect of the classroom climate (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). In addition, the quality of relationship is found in the structure of instructional contexts (Davis, 2003). As discussed in Chapter 7, the students perceived the extent to which teachers showed their support towards them, academically and personally. Two key issues are discussed: differential expectations and interpersonal behaviours of teachers.

Teachers often hold differential expectations of different students within the same classroom. When paired with differential treatment, differential student outcomes are produced (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b). As reported by some students in this study (Section 7.1.1.1), particularly those from lower-ability classrooms, teacher differential expectations undermine their motivation because their teachers undervalue their ability in getting the highest academic results. Even though the literature shows that the effect of teacher expectations are small on average, for students from stigmatised groups these effects are cumulative and are a substantial influence on their motivation and achievement (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b). When students feel that they are treated poorly by discriminatory or unfair teachers, their competence is challenged (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). In addition to differential
expectations, the teachers sometimes conducted social comparison of academic outcomes between classes. Social comparison highlights obvious difference between the winner and the loser, and the loser feels humiliated. The impact of social comparison is more likely negative when the upward comparison is used to compare with others’ behavioural or performance results (Buckingham & Alicke, 2002). Moreover, Astleitner (2001) argues that social comparison typically enhances feelings of envy among students, while unequal distributed privileges among students may foster anger.

These teacher behaviours contradict the stated principles in designing the lesson plans, in which teachers are to consider student individual differences, such as cognitive ability, learning styles, or motivation (The Ministerial Decree 41/2007). As the instructional process within Indonesian schools is usually conducted with the class as a whole, it cannot be easily adapted to the needs of individual children (Kaluge et al., 2004). Teachers have not applied a value of inclusiveness – to respect all students and a commitment to enabling them to fulfil their potential (Robinson & Campbell, 2010). This situation contradicts one of the key features of the positive school, which is giving attention to student strengths and providing an environment that supports and matches student needs – treating students based on their individual differences in personality, abilities and interest (Huebner et al., 2009).

The most important characteristics of school contexts for fostering positive development of students is feeling emotionally supported (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). In this study, students identified the kind of teacher behaviours that support them, as well as behaviours that are non-supportive. Generally, students perceived that most teachers in school show caring behaviours; however, some teachers were perceived
as hostile and showing uncaring behaviours (explored in Section 7.1.1.2). When teachers communicate to their students with less regard and affection, when they underestimate student abilities, or when they show less warmth and display hostile behaviour, they can be described as showing neglect (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). These kinds of social interactions undermine children’s need for relatedness. If these behaviours were otherwise, students could experience school well-being in terms of their teacher caring about them, and helping them in academic learning and social-emotional problems (Eccles & Roeser, 2004). Students’ feeling accepted for who they are is an important component of emotional and social well-being (WHO, 2003).

Furthermore, this study has identified teacher controlling behaviours that manifest as lecturing and directing behaviours towards the students (explored in section 7.1.1.2). Some studies conclude that teacher controlling behaviours are more likely to occur when teachers themselves are being controlled by the education system (Deci et al., 1982; Flink et al., 1990; Pelletier et al., 2002). In this study, teachers are controlled by the standardised testing and standardised curriculum (explored in Section 6.2.4.2), so that there is increased focus on curriculum delivery and test preparation. Kliebard (1995, as cited in Au, 2011) argues that focus on the standardised curriculum and standardised outcome dehumanises TSRs and the process of education because it alienates them from their creativity and intellectual curiosity. Teacher controlling behaviours in this study also manifested in the use of corporal punishment. For some cultures corporal punishment may be viewed as a form of applying discipline at school; however, the use of physical punishment in school is unacceptable for student well-being (WHO, 2003). A healthy psycho-social school environment is
indicated when school prevents physical punishment, bullying, harassment and violence in school (WHO, 2003).

Based on the general prescription of developmentally appropriate needs and individual differences in the appraisal of their school experiences, there is still a mismatch between school affordances and student basic psychological needs. With regard to the criteria of positive school from Huebner et al. (2009) and a healthy psycho-social school environment from WHO (2003), it could be concluded that school participants in this study have not sufficiently provided a psychologically healthy environment for their students.

8.3 Summary

This study reveals the kind of school experiences described by students in both positive and negative emotional terms. This study also shows that national policy associated with standards of educational achievement significantly influences all processes of education within schools, specifically within classrooms; however, the evidence suggests there is also some disconnect between policy and practice. Significant to this study is that pressure for academic accountability has become a dominant driver within the Indonesian educational landscape. Despite students generally feeling satisfied with their school experiences, feelings of dissatisfaction are routinely expressed by those with the highest level of school satisfaction. This duality could be interpreted in terms of the distinction between hedonic and EWB (Ryan & Deci, 2001); students may experience happiness as subjective or hedonic well-being – SWB – in their schools but may not necessarily experience EWB, which includes feelings with their agency and self-realisation. Student expressions of dissatisfaction of school experiences indicate that schools in this study do not
provide a developmentally appropriate educational environment for students. The school contexts studied do not afford much opportunity for students to feel academically competent, experience a sense of autonomy, and participate in caring and respectful relationships. It therefore seems logical that exposure to this developmentally inappropriate environment would influence a negative appraisal of school experience in terms of negative feelings, beliefs and behaviours (Eccles & Roeser, 2004; Roeser et al., 1998). Thus, student expression of negative affect in relation to their school experiences provides a valuable and potentially helpful source of information for teachers wishing to improve overall outcomes and effectiveness of their teaching.

In the words of a student, teachers can change classroom activities from “things not worth doing” into “things worth doing” (Reeve et al., 2004, p. 48). In the final section of Chapter 9, I offer tentative implications for Indonesian educational stakeholders and suggestions for further exploration by education researchers.
Chapter 9 Contributions and implications
This study explored how primary school students in Jakarta experience their school, specifically in terms of their perceptions of academic press and relationships at school. Findings associated with student well-being at school comprising school satisfaction and related affects were discussed in Chapter 5. The analysis and discussion related to academic demands and relationships at school were presented in Chapters 6 and 7, respectively, while Chapter 8 analysed and discussed the significant findings related to school experiences based on SDT and other theories.

This chapter draws together the key findings of this study that relate to the research questions. Following meta-reflection upon these findings it also addresses: the contributions of this thesis; implications for school reform aimed at developing better learning environments and outcomes for students; the limitations of the study; suggestions for further research; and, some final comments.

9.1 Key findings

As mentioned in Chapter 1, several research questions that are posed in this study are:

1. Are students satisfied with their school experiences?
2. What kind of positive and negative emotions do students experience frequently in school?
3. What factors of the learning environment affect student emotions in school?
4. How do academic press and relationships at school affect student school experience?
5. How does student school well-being affect learning outcomes?
6. What are the characteristics of an enjoyable school and learning environment?
7. What is the extent to which schools have provided a psychologically healthy environment for students?

In order to address the research questions above, data collection methods used in this research comprised a questionnaire, research conversations comprising student stories and drawing, focus-group interviews with students and teachers, and classroom observations. This range of methods provided rich data that when analysed indicates several key points:

1. Most students are happy with their school experiences. They experience positive emotions more frequently than negative emotions in school.

   Comment:
   Less than 10% of students reported a level of school satisfaction below the neutral point. Positive emotions most frequently experienced are: joyful, lively, delighted and happy; whereas the negative emotions are tired, confused, upset and jittery.

2. There is a negative correlation between school satisfaction and academic achievement, and no correlation between positive and negative emotion and academic achievement.

   Comment:
   These findings do not support previous research that promotes the importance of school satisfaction and positive emotions to increased academic achievement. In this study student well-being in school cannot be regarded as an achievement enhancer.

3. High-level school satisfaction and frequent positive emotions, and infrequent negative emotions cannot be exclusively used as a marker of school well-being.
The level of well-being can be indicated by the relative frequency of positive emotions and negative emotions.

*Comment:*

For optimal functioning, the ratio of frequency of positive and negative emotions must also be optimal. Although it is beyond the scope of this study to calculate the precise ratio of positive emotions to negative emotions, this study indicates that frequency of positive emotion is slightly higher than negative emotions.

4. School well-being can also be indicated by a student’s emotional experiences at school. School experience that triggers emotions – either positive or negative – can be critical incidents that impact on student well-being.

*Comment:*

Student perceptions of their school environment drawn from qualitative data supplemented the quantitative measures of school well-being. Despite students generally feeling satisfied with their school and experiencing positive emotions, negative emotional experiences in school are critical phenomena to be further explored. Feelings of dissatisfaction with school experiences are not only expressed by students with low-levels of school satisfaction, but also by those with the highest level of school satisfaction. This indicates that students may experience happiness in schools as SWB, but may not necessarily yield EWB.

5. Students have unique perspectives on learning, teaching and schooling.

*Comment:*

While students in this study had shared perceptions of school experiences, there was considerable variation in their perception of the school context even
though they were in the same school setting. Different perceptions of their school experiences is influenced by individual characteristics, and how students construct meaning of their experiences is determined by the extent to which their individual needs are satisfied by school context.

6. Positive emotions in school are experienced by students when their basic psychological needs are facilitated by the school context, whereas negative emotions are experienced when their needs are not supported.

Comment:
Drawing upon SDT, this study identified various school contexts (as discussed in Chapter 8) that hinder the fulfilment of student needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness.

7. A variety of experiences in school can either promote or undermine student well-being in school.

Comment:
The qualitative approach to data collection provides an insight into factors of the school environment that stimulate students in experiencing positive and negative emotions. School resources and infrastructure, and school psychosocial climate are two general factors of the school environment that instigate positive and negative perceptions of school as well as positive and negative emotions.

8. Lack of school infrastructure and other school features stimulate negative perceptions of schools.

Comment:
There is inequality in access to school resources and infrastructure among school participants; however, students do not express specific negative
emotions in relation to these. They express that these conditions relate to what they do not like about schools.


Comment:
The use of academic results as an indicator of school and student success lead teachers, schools and parents to setting high academic expectations of students. Overcrowded curriculums, the frequency of testing, regular task assignments, and intensive study sessions or cram schools are several forms of academic burden for students. The goal of education tends to be restricted in emphasis because schools focus more on student core academic results, typically at the surface level, with periphery attention to broader notions of education.

10. Teachers and peers are significant persons in the learning environment that both stimulate student positive emotions and generate negative emotional experiences.

Comment:
Positive perceptions of teachers are stimulated when teachers show their interest in student academic problems and student achievements and when they treat students with caring behaviours. In contrast, students experience negative emotions in schools when teachers show differential expectations of student achievements, grumpiness, favouritism and controlling behaviours. Student interest in attending school is often underpinned by them having friends at school and their hope of meeting and hanging out with these friends at school. However, peer conflicts and victimisation are also identified as increasing student dissatisfaction of their school experiences.
11. There is a significant gap between what is officially stated in Indonesian education system policies and what actually occurs in educational practice.

   **Comment:**

   The ideal concepts of the goal of education at national level are not supported by the policies that direct and manage the implementation of education practices at the local and school level. The implementation of standards are more focused on a particular standard, especially that of government (the NE), but ignore other standards, such as resources and infrastructure, and educational processes and pedagogy.

12. Schools participating in this study have not sufficiently facilitated the fulfilment of student basic psychological needs and, therefore, have not provided a psychologically healthy environment for students.

   **Comment:**

   This conclusion is drawn using SDT and positive psychology as the main theoretical lenses in analysing the context of schooling for student development (as discussed in Chapter 8). This finding leads to significant recommendations to reform school contexts that can provide more psychologically healthy environments.

### 9.2 Contributions of this thesis

This thesis reports on an in-depth study of student perspectives in primary schools located in Jakarta, Indonesia, identifying 12 key findings. Drawing upon these key findings, the contributions of this thesis are summarised as follows:

1. A number of findings (Findings 1 and 2) challenge previous research in this area of student well-being that predicts a strong correlation between academic achievement and personal experience of school satisfaction as well as positive
and negative emotions. This study suggests that student well-being at school is not regarded solely as a factor that influences academic achievement, but as a necessary condition within educational contexts that supports student psychological health.

2. This thesis contributes to understanding of the concept of student well-being in school and what constitutes a positive school. Generally, feeling well in school does not necessarily mean that students do not feel negative emotions in school. Likewise, higher levels of school satisfaction of most students do not mean that schools can be indicated as a positive school. In probing this issue, this thesis promotes consideration of the degree to which schools provide sufficient opportunities for students in fulfilling basic psychological needs as a critical indicator of student well-being in school.

3. This thesis addresses a gap in the research literature associated with SWB of primary school students by acknowledging the importance and authenticity of student voices in the collection of data. Moreover, by pursuing a qualitative approach that acknowledges subjective experiences of students, this study provides an alternative perspective to quantitative research studies on the same topic. The qualitative approach used has demonstrated a more context-sensitive understanding of student emotions in school.

4. Through listening to student voices this study identifies a number of findings (Findings 3, 7, 8 and 9) that describe what contributes to an enjoyable school life for primary school students. This thesis corroborates previous studies about the negative impact of academic press on student well-being. Moreover, this thesis highlights the significant influence of TSRs – particularly in terms of teacher
behaviours, on student emotions. This thesis highlights that student perspectives have to be taken into account in any attempt at education reform.

5. This thesis addresses a gap in the research literature associated with the Indonesian educational context through identifying the ambivalence of Indonesian education policies in implementation and the impact of the associated practices upon student well-being in school. This thesis suggests that policymakers in the Indonesian education system might consider incorporating student well-being at school as an important value in the educational context.

9.3 Meta-reflections

In finalising this thesis and making explicit its contributions, I engaged in critical reflection associated with the core constructs, the research question, the primary theoretical lens and connections to related theories, and my understanding of key findings. The following is a summary.

1. In the beginning of this study prior to data being collected, I used school satisfaction as the main construct. This term was measured by the SSS with additional perspective provided by the PNAS to measure positive and negative affect. Originally, the PNAS was used as an additional dimension to measure affective components because school satisfaction was typically defined as a cognitive evaluation of school experience. In the process of writing the literature review, I found the construct of school well-being to be a more appropriate term for this study. School well-being consists of school satisfaction, positive affect, and negative affect – therefore, this construct is broader as it incorporates the previous terms used. The cognitive component of school well-being is
represented by school satisfaction, whereas the positive and negative affect refer to the affective component of school well-being.

2. Quantitative data analysis showed that the MSSS is positive and the MSPE is slightly higher than the MSNE. According to the SWB conception, these findings can suggest that student well-being in schools in this study is good; however, upon reflection, I do not totally agree with this interpretation. I assumed that the educational context of Indonesian schools still has lots of problems and has not yet provided an optimum quality of school life. I was intrigued by the expressions of dissatisfaction of school experiences that were explored in the qualitative components of this research. These expressions were particularly expressed by students with either the highest level of school satisfaction or from those with the lowest level. As a consequence of two different findings from two different approaches, I felt that other perspectives were needed to explain these differences. I introduced the construct of SWB in the literature review (Chapter 3). When I further explored the literature, I found another perspective of well-being – EWB – that can be used to explain these different findings. Moreover, this concept of EWB from SDT focuses on the social environment that fosters well-being. Reviewing the broader literature on well-being, I concluded that SDT is the most relevant theory for this study to explain how well school has provided an environment that facilitates student well-being. Therefore, a further research question emerged as the study progressed: What is the extent to which schools have provided a psychologically healthy environment for students?

3. Despite this study not positing a hypothesis, given that the literature generally argues that there is an association of school satisfaction and positive
emotions with student learning, I expected that this study would find a positive correlation between both school satisfaction and positive emotions, and academic achievement. My expectation seemed in line with the implication that schools promote school satisfaction and positive emotions of students. However, the correlation analysis shows a negative correlation between school satisfaction and academic achievement and no correlation between both positive and negative emotions and academic achievement. Similarly, results from different studies may support, contradict, or sometimes be controversial in examining the effect of emotions on academic achievement. The findings of this current study suggest that further research using larger samples, mediator variables, or other approaches is necessary. Rather than focusing on the effect of school well-being on academic achievement – the construct that I explored as the main indicator of school success – school well-being was not the primary determinant of academic success. However, student well-being has a value in itself (Helmke, 1993, as cited in Hascher, 2007). Despite school well-being not directly fostering academic achievement, it does indicate a good quality of school life (Hascher, 2008), as is evident in this current study. Well-being of students is a necessary condition for their learning and optimal mental health. Therefore, schools have to provide a psychologically healthy environment for students.

9.4 Implications

From the findings of this study, I offer tentative implications for the Indonesian educational system in promoting a positive school environment for students, as well as some suggestions for further exploration in education research. The implications are derived from each key finding in the previous section, but the discussion here addresses broader issues for educational reform.
9.4.1 Explicitly re-defining the purpose of education

The purpose of education that is often indicated in educational policy is commonly derived from particular educational philosophy or theory (Donnelly & Wiltshire, 2014). With regard to the Indonesian educational system, Marsigit (2013) comments that even though the goal of education in Indonesia is formally stated in various policies, the educational philosophy required is not yet clear enough to be effectively implemented. He states that some of the laws that manage the educational system are contradictory. For instance, the goal of education stated in the Indonesian education system policy document (the Ministerial Decree 65/2013) is to support the development of the whole person. However, approaches to assessment at school do not generally reflect a focus on holistic learning. The focus of assessment in schools is dominated by examination of the core academic curriculum (the Ministerial Decree 20/2007), and this inadequately assesses learning as prescribed by the policy. Consequently directions to achieve the goals of education in Indonesia are confusing. The current dominant use of national standardised testing, where the pass threshold is increased each year in order to reflect increased student academic results, must be reviewed – it negatively impacts teaching and learning where teachers, students and parents focus on student academic performance on tests rather than in student learning.

The national-level policy is a dominant driver impacting all educational processes and policies at provincial, local and school levels. Therefore, any reform of schools and their practices needs to begin at the national level. Policymakers and all educational stakeholders should re-consider and re-define, or articulate more clearly, what the purpose of education in Indonesia is, and how it is to be achieved.
This re-definition is primarily required because the policies that direct and manage the implementation of education practices at the school level are not in alignment with the stated purpose of education. The sole use of the NE under its current form as a tool to decide whether a student can pass or fail their schooling is therefore founded upon policy that appears to be contradictory and requires further reform. Vindicating such a conclusion, the Minister for Primary and Secondary Education and Culture recently announced that MOEC would end the current approach of the NE as the sole determining factor of student learning success and graduation. Furthermore, the Minister has also announced that starting in 2015 the NE graduation results will be completely determined by each school (the Ministerial Decree 5/2015). This policy shift can thus potentially change the impact of the NE as an HST.

The curriculum of 2013 also promotes another approach in pedagogical practices and assessment. Nevertheless, schools and teachers do not have sufficient knowledge to implement this new curriculum. Moreover, bringing about such a change is difficult as the value of academic examinations are deeply embedded in the culture of Indonesian society, and there is a risk that schools will simply replace a national high-stake examination with their own academic examination.

### 9.4.2 Preparing qualified teachers

Teachers are key persons in the educational process. This argument is supported by evidence that good teaching is an important determinant of student outcomes and the quality of the education system depends on the quality of its teachers (OECD/ADB, 2015).

In Indonesia, initial teacher education courses are conducted by many universities. Continuing professional teacher development is also delivered by universities.
through postgraduate education, funded by government – often through *Pusat Pengembangan dan Pemberdayaan Pendidik dan Tenaga Kependidikan* (Centre for Development and Empowerment of Teachers and Educational Personnel), and by private consultants through short courses and workshops. These institutions influence the quality of graduate teachers through the training (knowledge, skills and attitudes) they provide and the educational experiences that graduates gain. The educational experiences of teachers within these courses reflect the way teachers are taught, including preferred ways of teaching, preferred ways of learning, and proficiency of academic fields of study (Cruickshank et al., 2006). Further, the extent and the quality of teacher education courses influence how teachers teach in the future (Darling-Hammond, 2000). The way a teacher was taught will influence their teaching style (Cruickshank et al., 2006). Therefore, there is an opportunity that initial teacher education courses and continuing professional teacher development could better prepare pre-service and in-service teachers with more appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes of teaching based on similar experiences they themselves have had as students. Bjork (2013) states that teachers have to acquire the skills to act as an instructional leader or autonomous educator. Related research also suggests that before students enter a teaching course, they should have a set of characteristics, such as communication skills and the motivation to teach (OECD/ADB, 2015).

Throughout both their training and ongoing development teachers should be prepared to redefine their beliefs about learning, teaching and their students, and be free from pre-existing personal bias, misconception or untruth. Teacher beliefs about learning and teaching influence their choices of pedagogy, their assessment practices and their feedback to students (Buehl & Alexander, 2009). This research indicated that
teachers must view students as whole persons, not as passive recipients of knowledge, and not as learners who just accumulate academic content (Battistich, Watson, Solomon, Lewis, & Schaps, 1999). Teachers should understand the importance of student positive emotions in learning, and to do this they must have the skills to create learning environments that facilitate positive feelings about school in their students. In teaching practices, therefore, teachers can simultaneously teach well to achieve optimum academic results while also ensuring that students are happy in their learning (Seligman et al., 2009). In preparing teachers with well-founded beliefs and good knowledge of teaching, teachers need time for reflecting upon their teaching and student learning in order to adjust any misconceptions. Teachers need opportunities to learn and change their minds. Moreover, to become successful teachers, they must acquire multi-disciplinary knowledge or skills (such as from educational psychology, educational sociology and communication), in order that they might better understand their students and to employ democratic instruction practices (Zulfikar, 2009).

9.4.3 Transforming school culture

To foster productive and healthy students, while maintaining high standards in learning of knowledge and skills, schools must give attention to students, instructional processes and the learning environment (McCombs, 2004). First, there are several approaches in dealing with students. Second, in order to achieve a more inclusive approach to learning, schools need to change their instructional practices. Finally, to improve the learning environment, schools must develop a caring community. In any attempt to reform school culture, the role of the school principal is critical. Through exercising quality leadership, the school principal can empower their staff to develop a positive school culture.
The following sections describe several recommended actions in relation to students:

**The need to identify student well-being regularly and frequently.**

Even though this study identifies that less than 10% of students surveyed have a level of school satisfaction below the neutral point, these students require attention from teachers and school staff because their dissatisfaction could potentially become behaviour problems. Therefore, schools have to develop a positive learning environment in which they not only seek student academic or cognitive competence, but also promote student happiness in general and particularly in their school life.

These approaches align with the concept of positive education (Seligman et al., 2009) and positive school (Huebner et al., 2009) which point to the need for schools to assess student school satisfaction and emotions regularly and frequently. In doing so, general information about student levels of school well-being can be used as data to develop a program to promote a psychologically healthy school. Moreover, specific information about students who display lower levels of school satisfaction and more frequent negative emotions, or students who show decreased levels of school satisfaction, can serve as powerful data to design specific intervention programs.

**Providing opportunities for students to express themselves**

The proposal by Batistich et al. (1999) of providing an opportunity for students to express their experiences and expectations of learning environments is supported by the findings of this current research – that is, students should be given opportunities to think about their ideal school, what behaviours they expect from teachers and friends, and how school can be made a happy and safe place for them to learn. Freiberg (1998, as cited in McCombs, 2004) also argues that student perspectives as
sources of feedback should be part of school reform efforts. By identifying student emotions and how they arise in learning experiences and school environments, teachers might develop more awareness of the antecedents of student emotions. Teachers should attempt to proactively identify student feelings or emotions that may facilitate, inhibit, or even have no effect, on their learning. Moreover, teachers should view student expressions of negative affect as important and helpful information for teachers in support of learning (Reeve et al., 2004). Teachers could then adjust their behaviours and instructional settings in order to foster positive emotions and inhibit negative emotions.

To some degree, each student has different perceptions or interpretations of their school experiences as individual characteristics influence them in making meaning of their environment. However, the voices of students regarding their school experience, either positive or negative, even if expressed infrequently, should be given special attention because they might point to critical incidents that significantly impact on their well-being. Similarly, Roeser and Eccles (2000) suggest that student perceptions of learning and school environments predict their adjustment more than other indicators of the environments that might be objectively observed by others.

By providing students with a voice, educational stakeholders can place students as significant contributors to, not just recipients of, their educational process. Based on student perspectives of their expectations of their school and learning environments, schools can be designed more safely and be more enjoyable for students. The results of listening to students in this study also suggest that educational stakeholders in Indonesia can better support equality in access and use of school physical resources, such as school yards, playgrounds, provision of appropriate desks and chairs, clean
toilets and other supportive facilities, so that every school is provided with
standardised infrastructure and school facilities and consistent with stated policies.
These suggestions align with the Minister of Education and Culture’s comment that
schools have to be a comfortable and enjoyable place for children, and for that,
student expectations of what is ideal for them have to be sought (Baswedan, 2015).

Appreciating student strengths and weaknesses
Positive schools recognise that all students have strengths (Huebner et al., 2009),
therefore individual differences in ability and personality should be acknowledged.
Teachers should better identify personal strengths and uniqueness rather than focus
on weaknesses. Positive psychology orientation supports actions that encourage
student development through providing an environment that supports their strengths
and makes adjustments (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). When students are
treated as people who are able to growth with their strengths, they are more likely to
be satisfied with their school experiences (Huebner et al., 2009), and this study
supports this position. To apply a student-centred approach in teaching requires a
belief that students have the capability of being active initiators of their own
learning.

Student emotional experiences are malleable and responsive to changes in the
instructional practices and interpersonal environment they experience. Therefore,
instructional practices that better recognise student emotional needs may increase the
likelihood of students experiencing positive emotions in school. Promoting positive
emotions is important because they not only affect individuals, but also groups,
organisations and communities (Fredrickson, 2003).
Balancing improvements in learning outcomes and social emotional development

This study suggests schools re-focus on the development of the whole child, placing equal emphasis on student social and emotional aspects, as well as intellectual development. In other words, schools must acknowledge that the purpose of education is not merely for academic competence and content knowledge (McCombs, 2004). In order to minimise the impact of testing on teaching and learning, the educational system must change from evaluating the quality of learning outcomes achieved based simply on student test scores and school admission rates. When the importance of test scores is decreased, the impact of testing on teaching and learning will be minimised. Reducing academic burdens, such as the frequency of tests and the amount of homework, also will likely decrease academic pressure on students and increase positive emotional experiences in school.

9.4.3.2 Change in instructional practices

Given that any change in instructional practices will impact student learning several suggestions are provided below.

Opportunity to improve the design of instructional environments

Positive schools emphasise instructional activities that enhance student engagement (Huebner et al., 2009). Therefore, schools in this study and in Indonesia generally, need to improve the design of instructional tasks and the learning environment if better student engagement is to be achieved. These suggestions corroborate with some general guidelines by Pekrun, Göetz, Titz, and Perry (2002) and Huebner et al. (2009):

1. Teachers must use appropriate communication styles in explaining the lesson content. Simple and clear statements paired with warm emotional tone should be emphasised. Teachers should not use predominantly coercive or controlling
communication in managing student behaviours, which was noted as a feature of teachers in the schools of this study. Reeve (2009) indicates teachers accepting student expressions of negative affect and acknowledge student perspectives promotes more positive classroom functioning and educational outcomes. In addition, teachers should use humour appropriately in their teaching – humour as a strategy can increase positive feelings in learning (Astleitner, 2001).

2. Conveying high-achievement expectations for all students accompanied with valuing mastery orientation in learning is necessary. Teachers should match their expectations with student abilities to achieve goals. When this happens students are stimulated by optimal challenges and enjoy their learning. Tasks that are too easy can instigate negative feelings such as boredom, while tasks that are too difficult can stimulate frustration (Pekrun et al., 2007). The best learning will be experienced by students when the task challenge is optimal (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2009).

3. Developing curricula that emphasise cooperative learning, creativity and social-emotional learning will involve students in interesting and challenging learning activities. Using a variety of teaching methods allows students with different learning styles to derive optimum benefit from a range of teaching methods. In addition, teachers can provide non-evaluative and competitive feedback for student achievement results. These actions may promote a culture of learning from errors and stimulate belief in the importance of lifelong learning.

4. Teachers can develop instructional design or activities that increase the likelihood of students experiencing positive emotions and inhibiting negative emotions. Astleitner (2001) proposes the emotional design of instruction approach to increase sympathy and pleasure as positive emotions, and to decrease
fear, envy, and anger as negative emotions. Astleitner (2001) also suggests use of play-like activities in instructional settings, such as role plays and simulations which broaden outcomes beyond cognitive ones, while also increasing student feelings of pleasure in learning.

Several of the suggestions above have been incorporated by the 2013 curriculum that is designed to foster higher-order cognitive skills, creativity and the development of character and behavioural skills (OECD/ADB, 2015). This curriculum challenges traditional teaching practice and culture and requires a shift to more interactive teaching practices. In order to facilitate change in the classroom, teacher educators are likewise required to use student-centred approaches in their teaching practices, so that new teachers are able to implement a new pedagogical approach mandated by the new curriculum. To strengthen this strategy the MOEC will also need to develop and provide an extensive program of continuing professional development. Within such a strategy it is suggested that teachers become involved in professional learning communities and networks to learn from others and share their experiences about what works best for student learning. Moreover, monitoring from principals and school supervisors is needed to ensure that a real cultural change takes place.

**Opportunities to incorporate student-centred principles in teacher-centred practices**

The findings of this study show that students still prefer teacher-centred approaches and teachers still do not have sufficient knowledge to apply constructivist theories of learning. Switching from teacher-centred approaches to student-centred approaches requires significant effort to transform teacher conceptions of students, learning and teaching. In addition, Indonesian school conditions have many constraints in implementing student-centred practices, such as large class sizes and small
classrooms, fixed furniture or little flexibility for different arrangements, and an overcrowded curriculum. Moreover, in general, Indonesian teachers demonstrate low levels of competence (Chang et al., 2014).

The process of school reform to better adopt constructivist approaches is slow, and Indonesian teachers often revert to teacher-centred approaches by default. However, a shift in pedagogical practice must be combined within a fear-free atmosphere in order to promote student creativity and risk-taking. Schuh (2004) suggests that in teacher-centred practices teachers can still incorporate student-centred principles. In his study, he found several incidents perceived by students as applying student-centred principles in the teacher-centred practices, such as creating positive interpersonal relationships, encouraging students to listen to and think about classmate opinions, and encouraging higher-order thinking and self-regulation. In short, the critical principles identified in this research require teacher acceptance of students in combining a focus on individual students with a focus on learning (Schuh, 2004). These principles can be implemented in the teacher-centred classroom and therefore indicates how an incremental strategy of shifting pedagogical practice might proceed.

9.4.3.3 Develop a caring school community

Schools that function as a caring community of students are regarded as more effective for fostering student intellectual, social, and ethical development (Battistich et al., 1999). According to Astleitner (2001), instructional context can increase positive feelings, especially sympathy through close relationships between students and teachers. Sympathy is defined as positive feelings concerning the liking and support of other people (Astleitner, 2001, p. 185). Suggestions for developing a
caring school community drawn from this research include the following two broad areas of development.

**Facilitating supportive teacher-student relationships**

To develop a positive school, school settings should be designed to sustain high levels of positive interaction among *all* school participants: teachers, school staff and students (Huebner et al., 2009). To achieve this, schools need to establish norms of mutual respect expressed by teachers showing their respect to students, displaying warm affection, and showing care and consideration of student learning. Moreover, teachers should provide more time for listening and talking with students about their academic and personal problems. Conversely, teachers should not show any kind of rejection, or hostile and uncaring behaviours towards students. When students feel that their teachers care, are warm and supportive of them – what Wentzel (1997) called pedagogical caring – they more generally experience a sense of school well-being (Baker, 1998; Eccles & Roeser, 2004). Yan et al. (2011) suggest various features of relationship building between teachers and students, such as getting to know students, sharing personal information with students, sharing positive affect through using humour, and using terms of endearment. Students feel valued when they have opportunities to express their voice.

In order to create supportive relationships teachers require skills as well as a sense of their own well-being. Therefore, schools likewise need to create conditions that are conducive to teacher well-being (Sarason, 1990, as cited in Roeser et al., 2009), because ‘well teachers’ promote ‘well students’ (McCallum & Price, 2010). A responsive program of teacher education or teacher professional development should therefore consider and be designed for developing caring teachers, and not only focus on enhancing teacher competency and proficiency. This is particularly the case for
primary school teachers where it is essential that teachers have the ability to develop affective attachment with students, taking a role similar to parental interactions (Wood, 1990, as cited in Vogt, 2002). Likewise, a program of school principal professional development should include context-based support for the fulfilment of teacher psychological needs. This also accords with research that shows teacher engagement in professional activities is determined by the degree to which basic psychological needs are supported or inhibited by the work context (Connell & Wellborn, 1991).

**Promoting positive peer relationships**

Positive peer relationships can be promoted by school through various ways; for instance, through applying school policy that guides behaviours to respect each other. Teachers can convey the message of mutual respect in school, such as considering others’ feelings, not making fun of each other, and valuing one another (Patrick et al., 2007). The most important consideration is that teachers can be role models for mutual respect behaviours. This can be supported at every level of task-related interactions in school. One of the most effective contributions to the development of positive peer relationships is extensive use of cooperative learning (Nobles & McGrath, 2008). The uses of pedagogical approaches that emphasise collaborative learning have been shown to foster a spirit of cooperation among students rather than competition (Baker & Bridger, 1997; Pekrun, Göetz, et al., 2002). The use of competition to motivate students can be eliminated or greatly reduced (Battistich et al., 1999). In addition, more positive peer relationships strengthen a cooperative goal structure which is associated with higher achievement (Roseth et al., 2008). In some situations, schools may not have much opportunity to teach students how to collaborate and interact in a friendly way. In this situation, teachers can teach
students how to play and work cooperatively through cooperative games (Battistich et al., 1999).

9.5 Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

This study has explored student perceptions on their school experience in general and its impact on their emotional experiences in school. There are variations in emotional expression and the sources of emotional experiences. There are also shared perceptions of school experiences among students. However, this study does not identify why school experiences in the same settings generate different emotional outcomes among students. Thus, a future study could examine the factors which might produce individual variations in perceiving the school and classroom environment and the sources of individual differences in perceiving the environment. The way a student might receive different treatment in a given context (Ryan & Grolnick, 1986) and personality dispositions that influence tendencies to perceive a situation in a certain way (Skinner & Wellborn, 1997) are examples.

As emotion is not only an outcome of perceptions but also a predictor of appraisal – student perceptions are therefore also affected by their emotional state. In order to know more about the ways in which student experiences of schooling are related to their emotional experiences and how these experiences influence their development, a future study could consider children’s emotional states when their perceptions occur (Eccles & Roeser, 2011b; Skinner & Wellborn, 1997). Astleitner (2001) provides evidence-based conclusions on how to design emotionally sound classroom instruction, learning environment and educational system; however, more educational intervention studies are needed to probe deeper, particularly intervention
research focused on demonstrating how school settings facilitate student well-being in school.

Most school satisfaction studies reviewed in the development of this thesis were conducted by quantitative methods. In contrast, this study used a mixed methods design and its findings signal a need for additional research design to corroborate quantitative findings on student satisfaction (Suldo et al., 2009). However, this study identified some limitations of the use of focus-group interviews in seeking deep or specific information from participants. Therefore, the related issue of the impact of school context on student school experiences could be investigated by another method of inquiry, such as individual interviews and student diaries, or through ethnographic studies, phenomenology and grounded theory approaches.

Another limitation is the quantitative measures of this study were not developed through a standardised process in developing an instrument, such as test-retest reliability, using replication samples, and factor analysis. Despite the internal consistency of the SSS and PNAS in this study showing a satisfactory reliability score, additional research with larger and more diverse samples and a standardised procedure are needed to develop a school well-being instrument for Indonesian students with good psychometric properties.

Several previous studies have used the quantitative approach to examine the relation of the three psychological needs and school satisfaction (e.g. Stiglbauer et al., 2013; Tian, Liu, et al., 2013). This study did not use a quantitative approach to identify student perceptions of the extent to which schools provided school experiences that fulfil student basic psychological needs. Intentionally, the questions in the focus groups were used to explore student perceptions of school experiences especially in
terms of student emotions, academic pressure and relationships at school. This study did not use open-ended questions to systematically explore the degree to which students are satisfied with their basic psychological needs in school. The degree to which the fulfilment of student basic psychological needs is assumed based on the student responses and classroom observations in the qualitative phase.

It is also important to document that there might be personal bias in interpreting student responses. Further research is suggested that could provide additional perspective on the quantitative measurement on student basic psychological needs to corroborate qualitative findings.

9.6 Final comment

Within school settings, students are exposed to various experiences in terms of academic and non-academic climate. These contexts stimulate a wide range of emotions, both positive and negative. There are shared emotional reactions across students, but in the same setting there are also variations among students in perceiving the school context. This study has found that the level of student school well-being in terms of hedonic perspectives is quite good. School is perceived as a place where students can experience enjoyment in school despite not fulfilling some of their basic psychological need. Thus, this study also provides the evidence that student expressed problems with the existing school environment that stimulated negative emotions and feelings of dissatisfaction. What is significant here that how students construct the meaning of their school experience is related to the extent to which their psychological needs are satisfied by school contexts.

The finding of this study also indicate that improvement can be made if schools work to better accommodate individual difference in abilities and other personal
characteristics then students may benefit significantly. When students have feelings of well-being in school in terms of eudaimonic perspectives – the fulfilment of their basic psychological needs associated with their development and identity –, it impacts their academic functioning. Therefore, a psychologically healthy school environment is a necessary condition for both the promotion of student well-being and optimising academic achievement. Such a change will likely require advocacy from scholars in education and aimed at developing an ecologically and developmentally appropriate school characterised by a friendly and supportive atmosphere. However, providing a healthy psycho-social environment is a significant challenge given that the Indonesian educational system is constrained by traditional practices, inequality in access to school resources, lack of standardised teaching practices consistent with contemporary learning theory as well as teacher quality. Meeting this challenge is entirely consistent with the trajectory of change already initiated by the various versions of the curriculum; however, a key important message for the Government and policy makers is that any efforts to transform the Indonesian education system must be re-focused to address the broader agenda of education – the development of the whole child and the professional requirement of teachers as a consequence.
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Appendix 1  Consent Forms (in English and Indonesian)

Appendix 1.1  School principal consent forms

Dear School Principals,

My name is Deasyanti. I am a lecturer of Department of Psychology Faculty of Education, State University of Jakarta, and I am doing a Ph.D program at Charles Darwin University, Australia. My research is exploring students’ school satisfaction, focusing on how students experience their school and its impact on their school satisfaction, how teachers challenge students to reach high levels of academic performance and how teachers sustain their students with a caring and supportive learning environment. This study will contribute significant knowledge for better understanding of teaching and learning and for developing a school where the students enjoy study.

Your school are selected as a possible location of this study because it is at an urban community schools. The research will involve a total 300-350 survey participant and 80-100 interview participants. However, in your school 40-50 participants will be involved. I would ask your students and teachers to do the following activities:

1. Survey
   In this stage, the students will be required to fill in the questionnaires at the school. The survey will take 20-30 minutes to complete. In addition, the students will be required to write a short story and/or to draw a picture about their school experiences. This story writing or drawing might take 30 minutes.

2. Group Interview
   There are two separate groups: students group and teachers group. In this one hour interview, a group of 5-7 students and a group of 5-7 teachers will be involved in a group discussion.

3. Classroom Observation
   Several classes’ lesson activities will be observed two or three times. Duration of observation is approximately 1.5 hours/session.

For group interviews and classroom observations, an audio or video recording will be taken in order to record the details accurately.

I would like to invite your students and teachers at your school to participate in this study. Their participation is free and voluntary and they can withdraw from the study at any time without consequences of any kind by contacting me. If they withdraw from the study, all information will be returned or destroyed at their request. All information in this study will be kept strictly confidentially. No other person will access the information except my research assistants and me. My research assistants have been trained about ethics in research and will be bound to confidentiality of all information.

I would appreciate if you give me your permission to conduct the study at your school. I have already got a letter of consent from District Area Office of Education Province of DKI Jakarta to conduct my research at various public and private Primary Schools in Jakarta (see attachment).

For further queries, please feel free to contact my mobile phone at +62 811890712 or email: deasyanti.adl@cdu.edu.au. You may also contact my Supervisor, Associate Professor Greg Shaw via email at greg.shaw@cdu.edu.au, or phone at +61 8 8946 7306. If you have any concerns about this project, you are invited to contact the Executive Officer of the Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee by email: cduethics@cdu.edu.au, phone +61 8 8946 6468 or mail: Research Office, Charles Darwin University, Darwin NT 0909. The Executive Officer can pass on any concerns to appropriate officers within the University.

Thank you very much for your kind assistance.

Yours faithfully,
Deasyanti

This information sheet is yours to keep.
PRINCIPAL/SCHOOL CONSENT FORM

Research project: Primary School Students Experience of Their School
Supervisor: Associate Professor Greg Shaw
Researcher: Deyayanti

I acknowledge that:
- I have read and understand the information provided about this research project.
- I understand that students will complete a survey in the class.
- I understand that the group interview will be audio recorded and transcribed.
- I understand that the classroom observation will be video recorded and transcribed.
- I voluntarily and freely give my consent to school participation in the study.
- I agree to allow students and teachers Year 5 and/or Year 6 at this school to take part in this research with their consent.

Principal’s Name: ________________________________

Signature: ______________________________________

School: ____________________

Date: ________________________
SURAT PERMHOONAN KEPADA KEPALA SEKOLAH
UNTUK BERPARTISIPASI DALAM PENELITIAN:
"KEPUasan SEKolah SISwa SEKolah DASAR DI JAKARTA"

Bapak/Ibu Kepala Sekolah Yth,

Saya, Desayanti, staf pengajar di jurusan Psikologi Universitas Negri Jakarta yang sedang menempuh pendidikan S3 di School of Education, Charles Darwin University-Australia. Saat ini saya sedang melakuak penelitian yang bertujuan untuk mengetahui tingkat kepuasan sekolah siswa, terutama terkait dengan bagaimana guru mendorong siswa untuk mencapa prestasi akademik yang tinggi dan bagaimana guru menyediakan lingkungan belajar yang peduli dan mendukung. Penelitian ini akan bermanfaat untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang proses belajar mengajar serta dalam mengembangkan lingkungan sekolah sebagai tempat yang menyenangkan bagi siswa untuk belajar.


Adapun kegiatan yang akan dilakukan dalam penelitian ini adalah:

1. Survey

2. Diskusi Kelompok
   - Ada dua kelompok yang terlibat dalam tahap ini: satu kelompok siswa dan kelompok guru, yang akan melakukan diskusi dalam kelompok yang terpisah. Pada tahap ini, selama maksimal satu jam, 5-7 orang akan terlibat dalam diskusi kelompok. Kegiatan ini akan direkam dengan alat perekam audio dan akan dibuka untuk catatan rekanannya.

3. Observasi Kelas
   - Bapak/Ibu Guru mata pelajaran tertentu akan diobservasi selama dua atau tiga kali peremuan selama proses belajar mengajar berlangsung di kelas. Kegiatan ini akan direkam dengan alat perekam video.


Kesediaan berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini bersifat bebas dan sukarela. Peserta juga dapat menarik diri dari penelitian ini kapan saja dan di tahap mana saja. Jika ada peserta yang menarik diri maka informasi yang telah diberikan akan saya kembali atau saya meminta terpantau permintaan peserta, dan yang bersangkutan tidak dimasukkan dalam daftar jumlah peserta penelitian.


Terimakasih banyak saya ucapkan atas bantuan Bapak/Ibu.

Salam,
Desayanti

Lampir informasi ini untuk dihimpun Bapak/Ibu.
SURAT PERNYATAAN KEPALA SEKOLAH

Nama Penelitian: Kepuasan Siswa Sekolah Dasar di Jakarta
Supervisor: AssocProf. Greg Shaw
Peneliti: Desyanti

Bersama ini, saya menyatakan bahwa:
- Saya telah membaca dan memahami informasi tentang kegiatan dalam penelitian ini.
- Saya memahami bahwa kuesioner akan disi oleh siswa di sekolah.
- Saya memahami bahwa diskusi kelompok akan direkam dengan alat perekam audio.
- Saya memahami bahwa observasi kelas akan direkam dengan alat perekam video.
- Saya memahami bahwa partisipasi dalam penelitian ini bersifat bebas dan sukarela.
- Saya memberikan izin kepada siswa dan guru kelas 5 dan 6 untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini dengan menggunakan sendiri surat pernyataan keikutsertaannya.

Nama Kepala Sekolah: _________________________
Tanda Tangan: _____________________________
Sekolah: _________________________________
Tanggal: _________________________________
Appendix 1.2  Teacher consent forms

Invitation for Teachers' Participation in the Research on Primary School Students Experience of Their School

Dear Teachers,

My name is Deasyanti. I am a lecturer of Departement of Psychology Faculty of Education Universitas Negeri Jakarta and I am doing Ph.D program at Charles Darwin University, Australia. My research is exploring students' school satisfaction, focusing on how teachers challenge the students to reach high level of academic performance and how they sustain their students with a caring and supportive learning environment. This study will contribute significant knowledge for better understanding of teaching and learning for developing a school where the students enjoy study.

There are two stages of the study:
1. Stage 1 is a group interview. In this one hour interview, you and 5-6 other teachers will be involved in a group discussion.
2. Stage 2 is a classroom observation. You will be observed one or two times during the lesson activities in the class.
For these two stages, an audio or video recording will be taken in order to record the details accurately.

I would like to invite you to participate in this study. Your participation is free and voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any time without consequences of any kind by contacting me. If you withdraw from the study, all information will be returned to you or destroyed at your request, and you will not be included in list of participants.

All your information in this study will be kept strictly confidentially. No other person will access your information except my research assistants and me. My research assistants have been trained about ethics in research and will be bound to confidentiality of all information. The participants or non-participants in this study will not influence their career in school.

I would appreciate your participation in my study. If you agree to take part in this research, please sign the consent form below.

For further queries, please feel free to contact my mobile phone at +62 811890712 or email: deasyanti.ad@cd.u.edu.au. You may also contact my Supervisor, Associate Professor Greg Shaw via email at greg.shaw@cd.u.edu.au or phone at +61 8 8946 7306. If you have any concerns about this project, you are invited to contact the Executive Officer of the Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee by email: dcre@cd.u.edu.au; phone +61 8 8946 6483 or mail: Research Office, Charles Darwin University, Darwin NT 0802. The Executive Officer can pass on any concerns to appropriate officers within the University.

Thank you very much for your kind assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Deasyanti

This information sheet is yours to keep.

FACULTY OF LAW, EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND ARTS
T. +61 8 8946 6002 | F. +61 8 8946 6151 | E. deasyanti.ad@cd.u.edu.au
Caruana Campus
TEACHER CONSENT FORM

Research project: Primary School Students Experience of Their School
Supervisor: Associate Professor Greg Shaw
Researcher: Deasyanti

I acknowledge that:
- I have read and understand the information provided above.
- I have been given a chance to ask questions and have these answered.
- I understand that the group interview will be audio recorded and transcribed.
- I understand that the lesson observation will be video recorded and transcribed.
- I understand that I can withdraw my permission at any time by contacting the researcher.
- I understand that I withdraw from the study, all information will be returned to me or destroyed at my request, and my name will not be included in list of participants.
- I voluntarily and freely give my consent to my participation in the study in:
  - Group interview, and  to be audio recorded
  - Classroom observation, and  to be video recorded

Teacher's Name: __________________________________________

School: __________________________________________________

Signature: _________________________________________________

Date: _____________________________________________________
SURAT PERMOHONAN KEPADA GURU
UNTUK BERPARTISIPASI DALAM PENELITIAN:
"KEPUASAN SEKOLAH SISWA SEKOLAH DASAR DI JAKARTA"

Bapak/ibu Guru Yth,

Saya, Desyanti, staf pengajar di jurusan Psikologi Universitas Negeri Jakarta yang sedang menempuh pendidikan S3 di School of Education, Charles Darwin University-Australia. Saya ini seseorang yang melakukan penelitian yang bertujuan untuk mengetahui tingkat kepuasan sekolah siswa, terutama terkait dengan bagaimana guru mendorong siswa untuk mencapai prestasi akademik yang tinggi dan bagaimana guru menyediakan lingkungan belajar yang “peduli dan mendukung”. Penelitian ini akan bermanfaat untuk mendapatkan penahaman yang lebih baik tentang proses belajar mengajar serta dalam mengembangkan lingkungan sekolah sebagai tempat yang menyenangkan bagi siswa untuk belajar.

Sehubungan dengan hal tersebut, saya membutuhkan bantuan Bapak/ibu untuk berpartisipasi dalam dua tahap penelitian ini, yaitu:
1. Diskusi Kelompok
   Pada tahap ini, selama maksimal satu jam Bapak/ibu bersama lima- enam orang rekan guru lainnya akan terlibat dalam diskusi kelompok. Untuk mendapatkan hasil diskusi secara lebih detil dan akurat, kegiatan ini akan diadakan dengan alat perekam audio dan akan dilakukan catatan hasil rekamannya.
2. Observasi Kelas
   Bapak/ibu akan diobservasi selama dua atau tiga kali pertemuan selama proses belajar mengajar berlangsung di kelas. Untuk mendapatkan hasil observasi secara lebih detil dan akurat, kegiatan ini akan diadakan dengan alat perekam video.


Jika Bapak/ibu memerlukan informasi lebih lanjut tentang penelitian ini, dapat menghubungi sekolah dengan Bapak/ibu XXXXX di nomor telepon XXXXXX atau no hp saya di +62 811 890712 dan email: desyanti.asli@cdu.edu.au. Bapak/ibu juga dapat menghubungi supervisor saya: AsistenProf. Greg Shaw via email: greg.shaw@cdu.edu.au, atau telp. +61 8 8946 7308. Jika ada hal yang kurang jelas dari kegiatan ini, Bapak/ibu dapat menghubungi Staff Eksekutif dari Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee melalui email: edureths@cdu.edu.au, telp. +61 8 8946 6458 atau surat dengan alamat: Research Office, Charles Darwin University, Darwin NT 0903.

Terimakasih banyakk saya ucapkan atas bantuan Bapak/ibu.

Salam,

Desyanti

Lembar informasi ini untuk disimpan Bapak/ibu

FACULTY OF LAW, EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND ARTS
T: +61 8 8946 8320 | F: +61 8 8946 6151 | E: desyanti.asli@cdu.edu.au
Casuarina Campus

CHANGE YOUR WORLD

421
SURAT PERNYATAAN GURU

Nama Penelitian : Kepuasan Sekolah Siswa Sekolah Dasar di Jakarta
Supervisor      : Assoc/Prof. Greg Shaw
Peneliti        : Deasyanti

Bersama ini, saya menyatakan bahwa:

• Saya telah membaca dan memahami informasi tentang kegiatan dalam penelitian ini.
• Saya memahami bahwa diskusi kelompok akan direkam dengan alat perekam audio, dan hasil rekaman akan dibuat catatan rekaman.
• Saya memahami bahwa observasi kelas akan direkam dengan alat perekam video, dan hasil rekaman akan dibuat catatan rekaman.
• Saya memahami bahwa saya dapat mengundurkan diri dari penelitian dengan cara memberitahu kepada peneliti.
• Saya memahami bahwa jika saya mengundurkan diri maka peneliti akan mengirimkan kembali atau memusnahkan semua informasi yang telah diperoleh, dan saya tidak akan dimasukkan ke dalam jumlah peserta penelitian
• Saya memahami bahwa partisipasi dalam penelitian ini bersifat bebas dan sukarela.
• Saya bersedia berpartisipasi dalam: [ ] Diskusi Kelompok, dan [ ] direkam dengan perekam audio
  [ ] Observasi Kelas, dan [ ] direkam dengan perekam video

Nama Guru : ______________________
Tanda tangan: ______________________
Sekolah : ______________________
Tanggal : ______________________
Appendix 1.3  Parental consent forms

Invitation for Students’ Participation in the Research on Primary School Students Experience of Their School

Dear Parents/Guardians,

My name is Deasyanti. I am a lecturer of Department of Psychology Faculty of Education Universitas Negeri Jakarta and I am doing Ph.D program at Charles Darwin University Australia. I am working on a research exploiting students’ experience of their school and its impact on their school satisfaction. This study will contribute significant knowledge for better understanding of teaching and learning and for developing a school where the students enjoy study.

I would like to invite your child to participate in this study. There are three stages of the study:

1. Survey
   In this stage, your child will be required to fill in the questionnaires at the school. The survey will take 20-30 minutes to complete. In addition, your child will be required to write a short story and/or to draw a picture about their school experiences. This story writing or drawing might take 30 minutes.

2. Group Interview
   In this one hour interview, your child and 5-6 other students will be involved in a group discussion about their experiences in school. An audio recording will be taken in order to record the details of discussion accurately.

3. Observation
   In this stage, I will observe learning process naturally in the classroom. Observation will focus on teacher’s discourse while they teach, however because of your child is a part of classroom members, he/she will be observed indirectly. In order to record the details of observation accurately, an audio or video recording will be taken.

Your child participation is free and voluntary and your child can withdraw from the study any time at any stage by contacting me. If your child withdraws from the study, I will return all information to you or destroy it at your request, and your child will not be included in list of participants.

Your child’s answers in this study will be treated strictly confidentially. No other person will access your child’s information except my research assistants and me. My research assistants have been trained about ethics in research and will be bound to confidentiality of all information. The participants and non-participants in this study will not influence child’s grade in school.

I would be grateful if you could give your permission for your child to participate in this study. Your kind assistance will definitely facilitate my study.

For further queries, please feel free to contact the school at XXXX or my mobile phone at +62 511950712 and email: deasyanti.adl@cdu.edu.au. You may also contact my Supervisor, Associate Professor Greg Shaw via email at greg.shaw@cdu.edu.au or phone at +61 8 8946 7306. If you have any concerns about this project, you are invited to contact the Executive Officer of the Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee by email: cduethics@cdu.edu.au, phone +61 8 8946 9498 or mail: Research Office, Charles Darwin University, Darwin NT 0909. The Executive Officer can pass on any concerns to appropriate officers within the University.

Thank you very much for your kind assistance.

Yours faithfully,

Deasyanti

This information sheet is yours to keep.
PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Research project: Primary School Students Experience of Their School
Researcher: Deasyanti

I acknowledge that:
• I have read and I understand the information provided to me about the research project.
• I understand that the group interview will be audio or video taped and transcribed.
• I understand that classroom observation will be audio or video recorded.
• I understand that I can withdraw my permission at any time by contacting the researcher.
• I understand that if I withdraw from the study, all information will be returned to me or destroyed
  at my request, and my child will not be included in list of participants.
• I voluntarily and freely give my consent to my child participation in the study:
  □ to complete the questionnaires and to write individually a short story and/or
    drawing a picture about their school experience
  □ to discuss in a group of students, and □ to be audio recorded
  □ to be involved in classroom observation, and □ to be video recorded

Name of Student: __________________________
School: __________________________
Signature of Parents/Guardians: __________________________
Date: __________________________
SURAT PERMOHONAN KEPADA ORANG TUA/WALI MURID
UNTUK BERPARTISIPASI DALAM PENELITIAN:
"KEPUASAN SEKOLAH SISWA SEKOLAH DASAR DI JAKARTA"

Bapak/ibu orang tua/wali murid Yth,

Saya, Desa...n, staf pengajar di Jurusan Psikologi Universitas Negeri Jakarta yang sedang menempuh pendidikan S3 di School of Education, Charles Darwin University Australia. Sebagai staf saya sering melakukan penelitian yang bertujuan untuk mengumpulkan pengalaman siswa selama di sekolah dan pengalamannya terhadap kepuasan sekolahnya. Penelitian ini akan bermanfaat untuk mendapatkan penelitian yang lebih baik tentang proses belajar mengajar serta dalam mengembangkan lingkungan sekolah sebagai tempat yang menyenangkan bagi siswa untuk belajar.

Sehubungan dengan hal tersebut, saya membutuhkan bantuan putra/putri Bapak/ibu untuk berpartisipasi dalam dua tahap penelitian ini, yaitu:

1. Survey

2. Diskusi Kelompok
Pada tahap ini, selama maksimal satu jam putra/putri Bapak/ibu bersama lima-empat orang temannya akan berdiskusi dalam kelompok untuk mendiskusikan pengalaman belajarnya di sekolah. Rekaman audio akan digunakan selama kegiatan diskusi ini untuk membantu mereka mencatat informasi secara detil dan akurat.

3. Observasi
Pada tahap ini, saya akan mengamati proses belajar di kelas pada mata pelajaran tertentu. Fokus observasi adalah lingkup pelajaran dan upacara guru selama mengajar serta bagaimana siswa meresponnya. Untuk mendapatkan informasi lebih akurat dan detil, proses observasi akan menggunakan alat perekam video.


Jika Bapak/ibu memerlukan informasi lebih lanjut tentang penelitian ini, dapat menghubungi sekolah dengan Bapak/ibu xxxx di nomor telepon xxxx atau no hp saya di +62 611 8520712 dan email: desa...n@cd...u.au. Bapak/ibu juga dapat menghubungi supervisor saya: Asst Prof. Greg Shaw via email: greg.shaw@cd...u.au atau tel (+61) 8 8946 7300. Jika ada hal yang kurang berkenan dari kegiatan ini, Bapak/ibu dapat menghubungi Staff B...k director dari Charles Darwin University Human Research Ethics Committee melalui email: re...k@cd...u.au, tel: +61 8 8946 6898 atau surat dengan alamat: Research Office, Charles Darwin University, Darwin NT 0909.

Terima kasih banyak saya ucapkan atas bantuan Bapak/ibu.

Salam,

Desa...n

Lembar Informasi ini untuk disimpan Bapak/ibu
SURAT PERNYATAAN ORANG TUA/WALI

Nama Penelitian: Kepuaan Sekolah Siswa Sekolah Dasar di Jakarta
Supervisor: Assoc.Prof. Greg Shaw
Peneliti: Deasyani

Bersama ini, saya menyatakan bahwa:

- Saya telah membaca dan memahami informasi tentang kegiatan dalam penelitian ini.
- Saya memahami bahwa diskusi kelompok akan direkam dengan perekam audio dan hasil rekaman akan dibuat catatan rekaman.
- Saya memahami bahwa observasi proses belajar di kelas akan direkam dengan perekam video.
- Saya memahami bahwa saya dapat mengundurkan diri dari penelitian dengan cara membentahu kepada peneliti.
- Saya memahami bahwa jika saya mengundurkan diri maka peneliti akan mengirimkan kembali atau memusnahkan semua informasi terkait permintaan saya, dan anak saya tidak akan dimasukkan ke dalam daftar jumlah peserta penelitian.
- Saya memahami bahwa partisipasi dalam penelitian ini bersifat bebas dan sukarela.
- Saya memberikan izin kepada anak saya untuk bepartisipasi dalam penelitian ini untuk:
  - [ ] Mengikut diskusi kelompok, dan [ ] direkam dengan perekam audio
  - [ ] Menjadi bagian dalam observasi kelas, dan [ ] direkam dengan perekam video

Nama Orang Tua/Wali: __________________________
Nama Siswa: __________________________
Tanda tangan: __________________________
Sekolah: __________________________
Tanggal: __________________________
Appendix 2  Survey instruments (in English and Indonesian)

This questionnaire will explore primary students experience with their school. This questionnaire is not a test; therefore it does not have right or wrong answer. It consists of three sections. The first section will ask you about personal information. The second section will ask you about your general perceptions of school, and the third section will ask you what you felt during a few past weeks in school.

Please circle the answer that best describe you.

Kind Regards,

Deasyanti

Section 1

No. ::
Year ::
School ::
Date of birth ::
Gender ::

The most favourite subject : 1. ______________________
   2. ______________________

The least favourite subject : 1. ______________________
   2. ______________________
**Section 2**

This section consists of some statements about your satisfaction with school. Read each sentence carefully and then circle the answer that best describe how you feel.

1 : Strongly disagree ☐ ☐
2 : Disagree ☐
3 : Neither agree or disagree ☐ ☐
4 : Agree ☐
5 : Strongly agree ☐ ☐

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Statements</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree or disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>( ☐ ☐ )</td>
<td>( ☐ )</td>
<td>( ☐ ☐ )</td>
<td>( ☐ )</td>
<td>( ☐ ☐ )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I like being in school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I look forward to going to school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>School is interesting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>There are many things about school that I like</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I learn a lot at school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>I enjoy my school activities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>I really like to go to school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>School day are nice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>School day are make me happy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Learning is nice</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>School lesson are fun</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>I got enjoyment for being at school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>I get satisfaction from the school work I do</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>I like school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>School is a nice place to be</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 3
This section consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each word and then circle one option in the row that indicates to what extent you have felt this way during the past 3-4 weeks in school.

1 : None of the time
2 : Little of the time
3 : Some of the time
4 : Most of the time
5 : All of the time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Feelings/Emotions</th>
<th>None of the time</th>
<th>Little of the time</th>
<th>Some of the time</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>All of the time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Interested</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Cheerful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sad</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Upset</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Joyful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Happy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Nervous</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Jittery</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Delighted</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
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Selamat pagi/siang Adik-adik,


Daftar pertanyaan ini terdiri dari 3 bagian. Bagian 1 terdiri dari pertanyaan tentang data pribadi dan yang membutuhkan jawaban teks, sedangkan pada bagian 2 dan bagian 3, Adik-adik hanya perlu memilih salah satu jawaban yang paling sesuai dengan gambaran diri Adik-adik.

Rasakan dengan baik setiap pertanyaan dan periksalah kembali sebelum mengumpulkan lembaran ini. Terima kasih banyak atas bantuan Adik-adik dalam mengisi daftar pertanyaan ini.

Salam,

Deasyanti

---

Bagian 1

Nomor : 
Kelas :
Sekolah :
Tempat/Tanggal Lahir :
Usia :
Jenis Kelamin :
Mata pelajaran yang paling disukai : 1. 
2. 
Mata pelajaran yang paling tidak disukai : 1. 
2. 

---

FACULTY OF LAW, EDUCATION, BUSINESS AND ARTS
T: +61 8 8946 8892 | F: +61 8 8946 0151 | E: deasyanti.ad@cdu.edu.au
Casuarina Campus
Bagian 2

Bagian ini terdiri atas sejumlah pernyataan yang mengukur pendapat Adik-adik tentang sekolah. Bacalah dengan baik setiap pernyataan, kemudian lingkari jawaban yang paling sesuai menggambarkan diri Adik-adik:

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Bagian 3

Bagian ini terdiri dari sejumlah kata yang menggambarkan berbagai perasaan dan emosi yang mungkin dirasakan oleh adik-adik selama di sekolah. Bacalah dengan baik setiap kata dan lakukan pilihan yang menggambarkan seberapa sering kalian merasakan perasaan ini di sekolah dalam 3-4 minit ke depan terakhir.

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3 : Kadang-kadang
4 : Sering
5 : Selalu

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Appendix 3  Focus Group Interviews

Appendix 3.1  Questions for students

1. How do you feel about school?
2. What do you like and not like about school? Why?
3. Do you think this school is a good school? Why?
4. What is good about school? What is not good?
5. Do you enjoy your learning? Why or why not?
6. Is learning easy or hard for you?
7. What kinds of problems do you have with schoolwork?
8. When and how do you think you learn best?
9. How do your teachers challenge you to get highest academic results?
10. How do you know your teachers care about you?
11. In what way your teacher cares about you. Could you give me an example?
12. Do they help you when you have academic problems?
13. In what way your teacher helps you in your academic problem? Could you give me an example?
14. Do they help you when you have social problems?
15. How do your teachers promote students’ interactions in doing schoolwork?
16. How do you know your friends care about you?
17. What should be changed to make school a better place that helps you to learn more or to make you like school more?
18. Is there anything else you want to share about school?
Appendix 3.2  Questions for teachers

1. How do you define “students’ school success”? Why?
2. Do you think this school is a good school? Why?
3. What is good about school? What is not good?
4. Do your students enjoy learning? Why or why not?
5. How do you challenge your students to get the highest academic results?
6. How do you demonstrate your caring to the students?
7. How do you promote students’ interactions in doing schoolwork?
8. What do you do to make school a better place that helps the students to learn more or to make them like school more?
Appendix 4  Examples of student stories

No 12
Kelas VI

1. Gaya suka karena Gaya ketemu sama.泽
dia Aek kekal, kita ya k轮. Kita beralas, suka kira-
nya ketemu sama. Temen, temen. Bisa Seru-
Seron. Sama temen, tre apa lagi lagi kalo. Oo ada suku-
Bisa Seru Seron trs Aku. Paing Sisa han: Lomart-
Maktu Seram bisa belas atau trs. Aku kalo lagi bangar-
Agian juga bisa beca. Condo oh. Isia Aku juga Sisu-
Sama ketrom. Isoma. Soalnya bisa ketemu suka beca.
Bisa Seru Seron Soma. Sebenanya dia itu sebagai
tepi dia itu Seru kalo diuok. Bercanda.

27
Dia ya tidak disuruh memasak

Paling berte ku kalo lagi pergi aam. Maka atas dan berat spar terutama, susah-susah. Tapi aku pemula. Saya benci lagi, bisanya ama belajar...
Muka Goronya. Serem...
Hai-hai yang menyembelih di sana,

Hai-hai yang amu, Swei Yohu

4. Walaupun pelajaran itu Haji, karena kelak,
   Enak banget kalau nggak karna ella raja. Percuma banyak belajar,
   Mau memperbaiki suatu bercanda itu, gampang banget.
   Swei, Selina, Kees.

2. Walaupun udah pelajaran, Bapek, karena belajar,
   Mungkin anak, walaupun nggak setia bercanda, tapi, kesimpulan,
  青少年, Swei, Mariah, tapi, berbualah yang, raja.
   Swei, Moriah.
Alil, tak ya tidur disini niscaya.

Peralatan yang Prima engga ioi Sunda. Ini Oktavia,
yaitu Paling Kece bantah kayak, Udan Permenan bener).

Kenapa? karena dia suka nyagin bawak, tetapi cara
dia Uden engga nggantin PR Pasti dhajin bhen Suroat dan
Dia, th Nyagin Banyu --- --- --- dan lari nggantin engga
bisa. Jika Suka sekar-nggantin Ngiantin.

2. Walaupun Uden Pelosokan Prapu Prap, Sama-sama prapu.
   Gaya teri qinana ya karo nyagin buk "Pakom" Suka
   Bhen Nyagin banyu. Masyarakat awi semoga beneran
   Dia engga banyu ranger, teti yang engga awi Suhu dhajin th
   "Nyagin" banyu. Masyarakat, th, yang bener awi engga
   Suka.
Appendix 5  Examples of student drawings
Ioga
ini: 17

YANG DISAKAI

BERITAPRINTANGAN
UNTUKPAIDAN
HORE

PLOK
PLOK
PLOK

Nilai Bagus

Senang

PUPR

Senang

Perpustakaan

AKUSUKA PERPUS

ADEM SAMA NYA

AMASENENG BACA

Ting Tong

Senang Pulang Cepet

WA KTYABIZZ
Saya tidak disukai

Maaf bu.

Aku takut qimaram.

Males pelam.

Males remedia.

Haha

Ahk.

Samadik plus helen.

Kadang, kadang.

Bram.

Sering dato.

Ngakada waktu lagi.