



# Contextual Learning as an Effort for Student Empowerment in Semarang

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ABSTRACT

This journal investigates the contextual learning through Live-In activities in empowering students at Homeschooling Primagama Semarang. Contextual learning integrates academic knowledge with practical experiences in real-world settings, with Live-In activities involving students residing in rural areas, interacting with local communities, and participating in cultural and practical activities. The study's objective is to evaluate the impact of Live-In activities on students' personal, social, and academic development. The research methodology employs qualitative analysis, including observations, and interviews to examine students' experiences during Live-In activities, aiming to identify patterns and themes related to student empowerment. The study reveals that contextual learning through Live-In activities has a positive influence on students. They acquire social skills, responsibility, empathy, independence, and actively engage in learning. Furthermore, students gain a deeper understanding of ethics, culture, and social diversity. The empowerment process encompasses intrapersonal, interactional, and participatory aspects, fostering self-awareness, enhanced life skills, and improved ability to interact with their environment. In conclusion, contextual learning through Live-In activities proves to be an effective approach for empowering students at Homeschooling Primagama Semarang. To maximize the benefits of this method, it is recommended to specify empowerment objectives in activity proposals, refine student assessments, and enhance the clarity of activity objectives for teachers.

Keywords:

Contextual learning, Live-In activities, Student empowerment, Homeschooling.

**Introduction**

Education is a continuous journey that continually guides humans towards maturity, meaning the ability to acquire knowledge, develop skills, change attitudes, and self-direct in various areas of knowledge, skills, and the maturation process itself, as well as the ability to help the souls of students become good both physically and mentally, from their natural disposition towards a better human civilization. Education. (Dewantara, 1967) stated in his book that educational efforts are aimed at (a) refining character; (b) sharpening the mind; and (c) maintaining physical health. These three efforts will make a person com-

plete and balanced. Ki Hajar Dewantara also expressed several things in Javanese language expressions that should be used in education, namely "ing ngarsa sung tuladha, ing madya mangun karsa, tut wuri handayani." These expressions mean that educators must be able to be role models for their students, maintain balance, motivate, and provide motivation for their students. These expressions are similar to the Sundanese expression that education should refer to "tekad-ucap-lampah" (intention, speech, and action) in a balanced way. Education is an ongoing and never-ending process, continuing from birth to death (life-long education).

Education can be defined as a conscious effort to assist human development towards optimal growth, which means development that aligns with one's abilities, interests, talents, and other potentials. In the broadest sense, education means a process to develop all aspects of human personality, including knowledge, values, attitudes, and skills. Education is a process that helps humans achieve a better personality. The National Education System Law Number 20 of 2003 has explained that national education functions to develop the capabilities and shape the character and civilization of a dignified nation in order to enlighten the nation's life, aiming for the development of students' potential to become people who have faith in God, noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and responsible citizens. These objectives are the aspirations of all Indonesian society. Education should function to realize and develop various potentials in people in the context of diversity, morality, individuality, social, and cultural aspects, all in a comprehensive and integrated manner.

(Sastrawijaya, 1991) stated that the purpose of education includes problem-solving skills, constructive use of leisure time, job readiness, and others according to each student's expectations. The purpose of education broadly involves helping students integrate what they learn into everyday life. (Kartadinata, 2011) defines education as a normative effort to move a person from "what it is" to "what should be." In summary, the purpose of education is to transform students from ignorance to knowledge, from inability to ability.

Considering the above, it can be said that education has functions and purposes that are not only focused on improving human knowledge but also aim to produce individuals with noble character and good moral values. Therefore, education must also play a role in developing skills and emotional intelligence so that people can live in harmony with society and cope with the pressures of their surroundings. (Amirin 2013), the comprehensive definition of education is life, this implies that education encompasses all knowledge and

learning that occurs throughout one's lifetime in all places and situations that have a positive influence on the development of each individual. Education is a lifelong process (long life education), teaching, in the broad sense, also constitutes an instructional activity, and the execution of learning can occur in any environment and at any time. However, in reality, education is often seen as a knowledge transfer process. Students mostly receive theories without understanding how education is directly applied or beneficial in their daily lives. Although not all students, some tend to lack good morals, a sense of responsibility, skills, and emotional intelligence. One effective way to develop human skills and emotional intelligence through education is to provide real-world experiences. With real-world experiences, individuals can integrate their knowledge with the reality of society, making the learning process more meaningful. Education has always been associated primarily with activities within school. In reality, education can take place outside school, and education outside school can be accomplished through direct interaction activities. Education can take place through learning activities. Learning is an interaction process between students and educators and learning resources in a learning environment. Learning is the assistance provided by educators to facilitate the process of acquiring knowledge and beliefs and providing attitudes to students. In summary, learning is a process to help students walk well. One way to do this is through contextual teaching and learning.

Approach Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is a way of presenting lesson material by exposing students to problems that must be solved or resolved in order to achieve educational goals associated with everyday life (Dewi & Primayana, 2019). Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is a system that accompanies the way nature works and unites concepts and practices. CTL can help students associate academic learning with the context of daily life, the environment, and the real world so that students are able to understand the meaning of the understanding that has been obtained by the class (Fadillah *et al*, 2017). The

Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach is an approach involving active students in the learning process to discover the concepts learned through to knowledge and experience of the students (Selvianiresa & Prabawanto, 2017). Contextual Teaching and Learning is a constructivism approach focusing on knowledge that is very contextual and relevant to the lives of students from diverse backgrounds (Hendawati et al., 2019). Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is one of learning approaches that makes the use of everyday lives problems or problems surrounding the students as their learning objects. Contextual problems, or commonly called real-world problems, are defined as problems that portray the real-world situation according to the students' experience (Khotimah, 2016)

(Yildis, 2016) Explaining contextual teaching and learning as an approach to learning that focuses on highly contextual and relevant knowledge for students, emphasizing the use of concepts and process skills in the context of the real world that is relevant to students from various backgrounds. Contextual teaching and learning motivate students to establish connections between knowledge and its application in their lives as family members, citizens, and workers. Contextual learning is active learning with a design that provides a way to introduce learning content through various active learning methods to help students connect with their learning world (Hasrudin et al., 2015). Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) is defined as a method to present content by employing various active learning techniques aimed at assisting students in linking their existing knowledge to what they are anticipated to learn, and at forming new knowledge through learning process (Wishler, 2013). A theoretical foundation for CTL is delineated, with an emphasis on Connection, Constructivist, and Active Learning theories. (Johnson, 2008) described contextual teaching and learning as an educational process that aims to help students see the meaning of everyday life in the context of their personal, social, and cultural circumstances. It involves self-regulated learning, cooperation, critical and creative thinking, meaningful connections,

and achieving high standards, using authentic assessment to achieve these goals. Contextual learning can be seen as a natural condition of knowledge. Contextual education, through relationships inside and outside the classroom, makes learning more relevant and real for students in building knowledge that will be applied in lifelong learning.

The components of contextual learning include 1) constructivism, 2) inquiry, 3) questioning, 4) learning community, 5) modeling, 6) reflection, and 7) authentic assessment. This approach combines the students' learning process with real-life situations, encourages critical and creative thinking, and measures students' knowledge and skills through authentic and relevant assessment. Thus, contextual learning provides a meaningful and relevant learning experience for students, connects learning to their life situations, and encourages students to actively develop their understanding and skills.

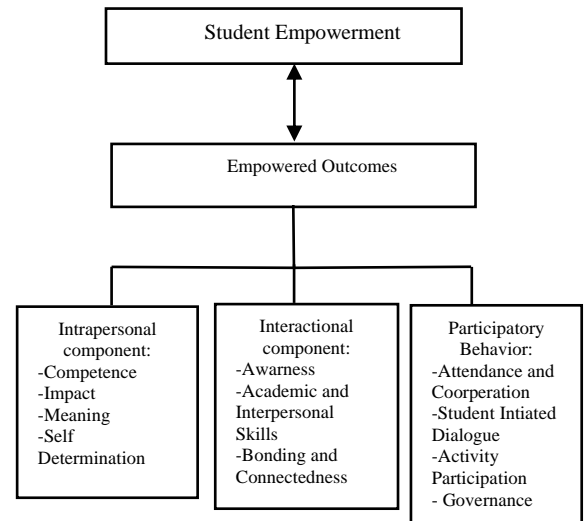
Contextual learning encourages students to find connections between the material they learn and real-life situations. Furthermore, it motivates students to apply their learning in real-life situations. Some differences between contextual learning and conventional learning are that in contextual learning, students act as active learners, responsible for monitoring and developing their learning. Learning can occur anywhere, and it is connected to real life. Contextual learning that can happen anywhere, relates to real life, and helps students see the meaning of daily life in their personal, social, and cultural context can be one form of empowerment.

Empowerment is an effort to improve the quality of human resources by making them capable, motivating them to work to combat shortcomings and backwardness in society with the hope of building themselves up for advancement and prosperity. According to (Malik, 2019), empowerment has now become the cornerstone of community development, shifting the development approach from top-down to bottom-up, from centralization to decentralization, and from an orientation towards local uniformity to local variations, sustainable dependence, and transformation.

More precisely, (Conger, 2017) stated that empowerment can be described as a mental state in which four aspects of an individual (meaning, competence, choice, impact) work together to encourage a proactive, positive, and self-assured attitude toward one's work. For the person, personal empowerment is felt as increased job satisfaction and effectiveness in meeting work-related expectations, as well as displaying more innovative behaviors at work. Regarding how empowerment influences performance motivation, it influences both the start and continuation of an individual's work-related actions. Empowerment is an assemblage of systems, methods, and actions aimed at cultivating the capabilities and competencies of individuals to enhance productivity, organizational development, growth, prosperity, and human resources (Asgarsani et. al, 2013)

Student empowerment represents any attitudinal, structural, and cultural activity, process or outcome in which students gain the ability, authority and agency of making decisions and implement changes in their own schools, learning and education, and in the education of other people (Jeckoniah, 2019). Student empowerment can be defined as academic competence, with strong skills and academic knowledge (Horn, 2015). Student empowerment is defined as a process by which students gain more control over their lives and develop empowered academic outcomes including competence, self-determination, and a sense that their voice is heard (Kirk et al., 2017). Empowered students are anticipated to take greater control of their lives and to make them meet their needs for power and have a sense of belonging; this is an important step for a student to realize their social and education goals (Denis, 2012). According to (Krik et al., 2012) on their dissertation, empowerment outcomes provide evidence for the process, including intrapersonal outcomes (competence, meaning, self-determination, impact/voice), interactional outcomes (awareness, academic and interpersonal skills, bonding/connectedness), and participatory behaviors (attendance, compliance, student-initiated dialogue, extracurricular

participation, and governance). The application of contextual learning as an effort for student empowerment through specific activities, such as live-in experiences. Aloysius (2013) empowerment means enhancement of student's autonomy for decision making



**Figure 1**  
**Student Empowerment**

(Veny, 2019) stated that the live-in program is an activity centered outside the school environment, designed very differently to cultivate a high sense of socialization in students so that they can interact with new communities with different social, economic, cultural, traditional, and environmental backgrounds. This process can be observed through the activities that students engage in while socializing and participating with their new families. This activity also has the advantage of being enjoyable learning, as students can see, enjoy, admire, and learn about God's creations that unfold in nature, and in the process, incorporate spiritual values into their education.

Live-in activities provide students with the opportunity to stay with a family with different customs, values, and ways of life than they are used to in their daily lives. (Virginia, 2016) this experience aims to increase social sensitivity, build endurance, increase the ability to cope with and return to the original condition after experiencing stress (resilience), and form a positive character. These

activities allow students to experience the daily life of the local community, and they are guided by the host family. One of the goals of live-in programs in rural areas is to foster a simple, hardworking, collaborative, responsible, and caring way of life, as well as to improve students' character. Live-in activities in rural areas also aim to instill a sense of caring in participants to shape their characters and adapt to rural community life and natural environments. The benefits of live-in programs in the village include participants feeling the warmth of family life, learning the customs of rural life, and the harmony of togetherness. The 'live-in' program is an initiative meticulously designed to explore and appreciate the essence of life through the act of residing in the homes of local inhabitants. In addition to inhabiting these residences, participants in the 'live-in' program actively engage in the day-to-day activities of the household's occupants. It is expected that individuals taking part in the 'live-in' program will gain valuable experiences and develop an understanding of the unique socio-environmental dynamics that differ from their daily circumstances (Selawati et.al 2019)

Research conducted by (Ramdani, 2018) explores the development of a contextual learning model based on local wisdom as a means of character education. This model aims to help students understand the values within society through direct field experiences. Furthermore, the study by (Syaparuddin and Elihami, 2020) emphasizes the importance of contextual learning that connects subject matter to real-world situations for students. Their research findings reveal that contextual learning encourages students to construct their own knowledge through interaction with objects, experiences, and their environment. It also helps students distinguish between positive and negative behaviors in society. Research by (Setiyorini, 2018) focuses more on contextual learning in science subjects through the Outdoor Learning method. The results show that this model enhances students' understanding of concepts because it connects the knowledge they acquire with their

everyday life experiences. The research by (Moreno and Gunckel, 2019) on student empowerment in natural environments highlights that students feel most empowered academically, emotionally, and socially after undergoing learning based on a groundwater model. These findings demonstrate that student empowerment can occur in various contexts, not just concerning the concept of justice, and can influence students in academic, emotional, social, and political aspects.

Homeschooling Primagama Semarang (HSPG Semarang) is one of the community learning centers (PKBM) and talent-based homeschooling institutions in Semarang. In addition to the reasons mentioned above, HSPG Semarang believes in the importance of developing various human potentials. (Pomalato, 2016) argues that education fundamentally transforms potential into competence. Humans have various potentials, and through education, these potentials can be transformed into competencies. HSPG Semarang is one of the institutions that also organizes live-in activities. The live-in program at HSPG Semarang was initiated around 2017 with the aim of providing students with a refreshing experience by staying in a village and getting away from the busy city life. HSPG Semarang wants to introduce village life to students, a life they had never experienced before or had only imagined, as most of the students come from urban areas. The general goal of the live-in program is not far from the common goal, which is for students to gain real experiences from their education. Students also have the opportunity to learn, understand, experience, reflect on, and understand the activities, patterns of life, and cultural values of the local community where they conduct their activities. This program is also carried out based on the student's tendency to have limited social interaction, especially with the surrounding community, a lack of independence, responsibility, empathy, and a goal to improve students' character. The live-in program organized by HSPG Semarang is similar to general live-in activities. Students at HSPG Semarang live in a village with guidance from HSPG Se-

marang employees and tutors. Usually, three students and one counselor are placed in one house. Common activities include participating in the daily activities of the rural community and engaging in outbound activities. These activities are adapted to the activities of the local rural community being visited. HSPG Semarang selects villages that do not have smartphone signals, are deeply rooted in traditional activities and mutual cooperation, and can provide students with new experiences.

Usually, the live-in program at HSPG Semarang is conducted over three days and two nights. In addition to common live-in activities, HSPG Semarang also uses the live-in program as an opportunity to empower the village community they visit. This empowerment is a form of feedback or reciprocity from HSPG Semarang to the village community that allows students to blend in with the community and engage in their daily activities. Empowering the community is carried out according to the needs of the rural community and their desires. This live-in program not only provides feedback for community empowerment but also gives students the opportunity to become empowered through various activities outside the classroom that they may not often do. Live-in activities help students develop responsibility, independence, empathy, good social interaction skills, and adaptability to rural community life. Therefore, the live-in program organized by HSPG Semarang can be seen as a form of contextual teaching and learning.

Based on the above explanations, contextual teaching and learning through live-in activities as an empowerment effort is a concept that is not widely known. The author wants to understand how contextual teaching and learning through live-in activities can be used as an empowerment tool. The background mentioned above is the reason why the author wants to conduct research based on the explanations given. The author also wants to gain a deeper understanding of the live-in activities at HSPG Semarang. Therefore, the research on "Contextual Learning as an Effort for Student Empowerment in Semarang" will be carried out.

## Method

This research employs a qualitative approach with the aim of understanding the subjects and experiencing their everyday lives. Researchers are immersed in the context, situations, and natural settings of the phenomenon being studied because each phenomenon is unique and context-specific. This research adopts a qualitative descriptive method to describe the process of contextual learning activities at HSPG Homeschooling Semarang, with live-in activities as an empowerment effort. The research focuses on the implementation of contextual learning, learning as a means of student empowerment, and the outcomes of contextual learning.

Data sources consist of primary data obtained through observations and interviews with students, tutors, and staff at HSPG Homeschooling Semarang, as well as secondary data from interview results, activity design proposals, observation notes, and documentation. Data collection techniques involve participatory observation methods, structured interviews, and documentation.

To ensure data validity, source and technique triangulation is performed by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and data from various sources and research situations. Data analysis includes data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions, with data presented in various forms such as narratives, framework, and scheme. The conclusions of this research will continue to evolve until a final conclusion is reached.

## Results And Discussion

### Results

This research begins by providing an overview of Homeschooling Primagama Semarang (HSPG Semarang). HSPG Semarang is one of the alternative options to formal schooling, founded in 2014 as a branch of Homeschooling Primagama Yogyakarta. HSPG Semarang focuses on a psychological and academic approach to developing students' potential without the burden of irrelevant subjects that do not align with their interests and talents. The institution implements a "school at home"

learning system that offers an enjoyable, friendly, and familial learning experience.

The vision and mission of HSPG Semarang are to create a child-friendly learning environment that nurtures students' character. The primary goal is to be the best and largest homeschooling support institution, shaping independent, character-driven students while optimizing their academic and non-academic potential. HSPG Semarang also aims to be a high-quality homeschooling provider on a national and international scale and a partner in enhancing the nation's education quality.

Additionally, the research describes the organizational structure of HSPG Semarang, which involves the institution's head, secretary, treasurer, the psychology department, the vocational department, package a, b, c coordinators (homeroom teachers), and educational staff (tutors). Each department has its respective responsibilities in managing the institution and nurturing students.

The background of the Live-In activities at HSPG Semarang is explained, which started in 2017. The purpose of these activities is to provide new experiences to students, foster independence, and assist students who may have experienced trauma or stress in the learning process. A serene and oxygen-rich village environment was chosen as the location for the Live-In activities. Students eligible to participate in these activities must meet specific criteria, with special consideration for students with special needs. The Live-In activities are one of the empowerment efforts at HSPG Semarang.

## Result

Contextual learning is a concept of education that connects subject matter to real-world situations for students, encourages the relationship between knowledge and daily life, and involves external support from the community. The implementation of contextual learning can be applied through various activities, as stated by Ms. DHS regarding the application of contextual learning at the Homeschooling Primagama Semarang institution. In reality, before the advent of the Merdeka curriculum, which aims to enable students to de-

velop their potential beyond theory, such as through the P5 initiative, one of the methods is through contextual learning. Homeschooling Primagama has carried out the learning activity before the P5 policy was implemented.

Activities related to contextual learning at HSPG Semarang include field trips, live-in programs, and outbound activities. Additionally, Ms. EW mentioned that there is also learning taking place in gardens. The Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), formulated by the government, is an interdisciplinary learning initiative to observe and contemplate solutions to issues within the students' surrounding environment. The goal of P5 is to shape a young generation that is faithful to the One Almighty God, globally minded, values cooperation, independence, critical thinking, and creativity. P5 adheres to principles of being holistic, contextual, student-centered, and exploratory.

The Live-In program at Homeschooling Primagama Semarang is one of the learning methods that provides real-life experiences to participants. Its goal is to instill a sense of caring and character and encourage participants to adapt to rural communities and environments. In 2022, this activity was held in Lerep Village, on the slopes of Mount Ungaran, Semarang Regency, from December 5th to 6th. Participants were first introduced to local culture, including traditional dances and games to foster relationships with the villagers. They also engaged in activities such as painting tampah (woven bamboo trays), pottery, and playing traditional musical instruments.

In the evening, there was an art performance and a torchlight procession around the village. The following day, they participated in morning exercises, outbound activities, and explored the river with the villagers. This year, the program was more structured compared to previous years when it followed the pattern of the "induk semang" (community leaders). Participants lived in the village, worked in accordance with the villagers' activities, and participated in activities such as religious studies and community service.

Despite the differences in format, participants still experienced the benefits of the Live-

In program. Firstly, they became more socially aware, actively engaged in community activities, and contributed to various tasks. Secondly, they gained improved physical and mental endurance. Challenges may have arisen, but they were able to overcome them and continue their activities. Thirdly, the program helped them develop resilience in socializing with new people. Finally, it fostered independence and responsibility in them. Mrs. DHS, indicating that, thus far, the students have exhibited physical and mental endurance, social awareness, and independence. Consequently, upon the culmination of the live-in activities, the students are better prepared to face the real world, honing the knowledge they have acquired during these activities.

Contextual learning, as previously mentioned, consists of seven main components which can achieve the goals of live-in activity, explicated below:

#### 1. Constructivism

Constructivism involves constructing one's understanding from new experiences based on pre-existing knowledge. Based on observations during contextual learning activities, such as live-in programs at Homeschooling Primagama Semarang, it can be seen that students build their understanding by adapting and asking questions. For instance, when they begin to inquire about and focus on experiencing, and understanding the cultural introduction in the village. According to Ms. EW that by live-in programs, students can learn about the nature, life skills, community environment, and rural life. With constructivism in contextual learning through live-in activities, students can begin to develop social awareness.

#### 2. Inquiry

Inquiry is the process of transitioning from observation to comprehension. In contextual learning at Homeschooling Primagama Semarang, specifically through live-in programs, students start to comprehend community life and interact with their surroundings. This approach helps students like NF feel more at ease interacting with the rural community, especially since the parents in the village often use Javanese Kromo language. Ms. DAF stated that the level of constructivism and inquiry among

students in contextual learning varies depending on their background. Some students can immediately build understanding and comprehend the learning, while others may require guidance from tutors. On the other hand, Ms. EW believes that students can better understand lessons that they wouldn't typically get in a classroom, such as life skills. The inquiry process in contextual learning through live-in activities through student's ability to understand community life, interact with surroundings. Before they are capable of understanding and interact with surroundings, there is a process of observation, questioning with speculations, gathering data through recollection, and drawing conclusions through application. This can foster student's independence and resilience.

#### 3. Questioning

Questioning is usually the beginning of acquiring new knowledge. Asking questions is essential for gathering information, conveying what is already known, and directing attention to unknown aspects. Students actively ask questions during activities, especially when prompted by teachers or the community. According to Ms. EW, students more active at questioning during the contextual learning activity than the usual learning activity in class. Self-reliance and problem-solving abilities in students can be achieved when they actively engage in information acquisition through questioning.

#### 4. Modeling

Modeling is the process of presenting an example so that others can think, work, and learn from it. During contextual learning with live-in programs, students are shown demonstrations of playing traditional musical instruments, painting pottery, and crafting. After observing these demonstrations, students immediately put them into practice. When painting, each student's level of creativity shines through, allowing them to express themselves. In playing musical instruments, students are initially taught and guided, and then they try to play on their own and together with the local residents. Interviews revealed that approximately 90% of students can create independently after receiving examples.



### 5. Learning Community

A learning community is a group of individuals who engage in discussions and share experiences and knowledge. These groups can consist of individuals from diverse social, economic, environmental, and occupational backgrounds. Exchanging experiences, sharing ideas, and collaborating with others are forms of a learning community. Based on observations, students share experiences with the community during breaks in their activities. According to the students, sharing experiences, ideas, and working together with the local community occur when they stay with the "induk semang" (community leaders) and follow their daily routines. Students also collaborate and share ideas with their peers and teachers during outbound and field trip activities. Ms. DAF stated that the process of dialogue and sharing experiences naturally occurs because they live with the surrounding community. Furthermore, when students encounter challenges in following the work of the "induk semang," they share their experiences about village work. Ms. DHS mentioned that in rural community life, people tend to be welcoming when new individuals arrive, similar to when students come to the rural area for live-in programs. The community often initiates conversations with students, leading to further interactions and sharing of experiences. This can lead students to develop social awareness and physical-mental resilience as they learn alongside the community and their surrounding environment.

### 6. Reflection

Reflection aims to train students to express their opinions and aspirations regarding completed and ongoing learning processes. This allows students to convey their hopes for future learning. Reflection can take the form of documenting what they have learned, such as creating journals, art pieces, and group discussions. During activities, the process involves creating art, such as painting pottery and woven baskets. Students and teachers collaborate and discuss to showcase their acting abilities in a performance, which is part of the series of activities. For reflection after learning, Ms. DAF explained that Homeschooling Primagama Semarang

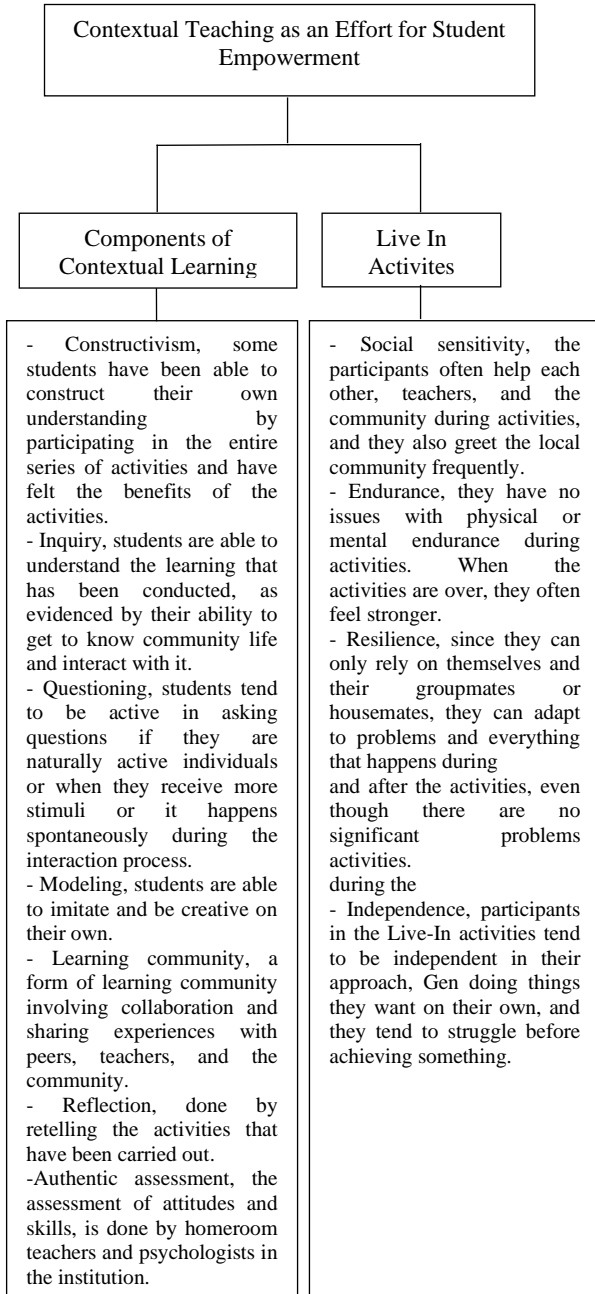
usually encourages students to recount their activities when they return to the classroom. Teachers typically stimulate students to share their experiences, which students also do with their peers. Through this process, students will cultivate social awareness, resilience, independence, as when they engage in recollection through storytelling, they can experience an empowering form of education.

### 7. Authentic Assessment

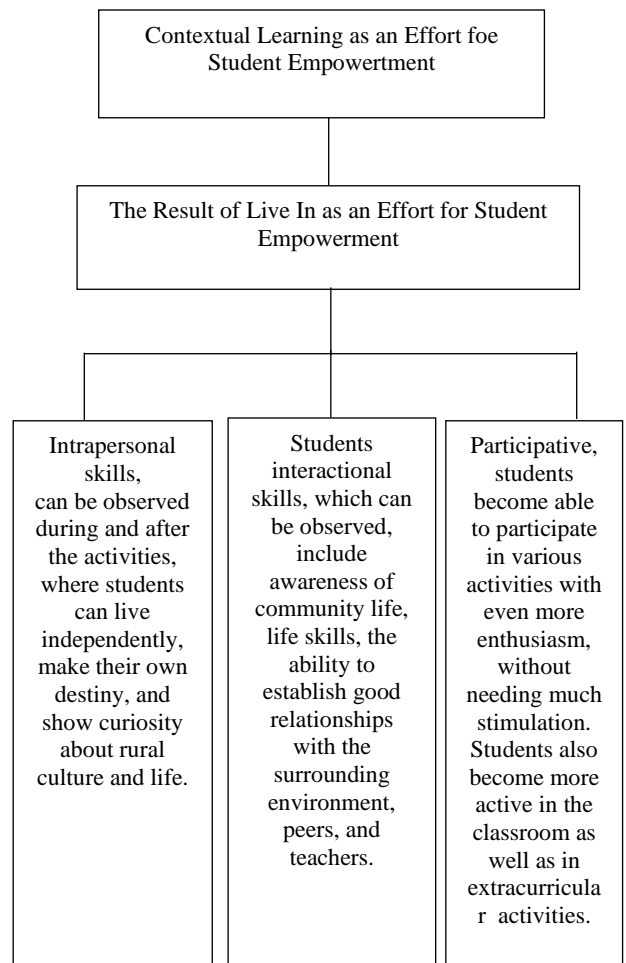
Authentic assessment measures students' knowledge and skills accurately. Based on interviews with the institution's head and tutors at Homeschooling Primagama Semarang, the assessment of learning activities typically includes evaluating independence, skills, and attitudes, particularly spiritual and social aspects. Additionally, the assessment of contextual learning activities is integrated into empowerment assessments and sometimes contributes to additional grades in Civic Education (PKN) subjects. The assessment of contextual learning is typically conducted by class advisors and psychologists at Homeschooling Primagama Semarang. As mentioned by Ms. DAF, the assessment is directed towards each class advisor and psychologist. Through this assessment, students can gain insight into the outcomes of the activities they have executed.

Contextual learning through live-in activities provides students with the opportunity to seek, process, and discover concrete learning experiences related to real-life situations, through students' active involvement in trying, doing, and experiencing for themselves. Thus, learning becomes essential in the process. The impact of the Live-In program is student empowerment. The discussed aspects of student empowerment include the intrapersonal, interactional, and participatory aspects. The first aspect, which is the intrapersonal aspect, can be construed as the ability to self-reflect and act in accordance with that understanding. The second aspect is the interactional aspect, include awareness, academic and interpersonal capabilities, as well as connections and interrelations. The final aspect is participatory, which includes presence, student compliance, initiated dialogue, participation, and governance Through this experience, students

become more intelligent, possess better intrapersonal skills, and can interact with the community more effectively. They also acquire physical and self-reliance skills. Overall, Live-In is part of contextual learning that helps students develop and prepare for the real world. Here is the research findings schema:



**Figure 2**  
Contextual learning with Live-In activities



**Figure 1**  
The Results of Live-In Activities as an Effort for Student Empowerment

**Discussion**

In Indonesia, education often still focuses on teachers as the main source of knowledge with lectures as the primary method. Therefore, an approach that empowers students is needed, one of which is the contextual approach. Contextual learning through Live-In activities is an educational approach that allows students to connect their academic understanding with practical experiences in the context of the real world. Hull and Sounders (1996) explained that in contextual learning, students discover meaningful relationships between abstract concepts and their application in everyday life. They internalize these concepts through discovery, reinforcement, and interconnectedness.

Learning requires students to work in teams, both in the classroom, laboratories, workplaces, and within the community. Howey (2001) defines contextual learning as a process in which students use their academic understanding and skills to solve real-world problems or simulations, either individually or collaboratively.

In contextual learning, students are not merely given the end results; rather, the process is more crucial. It engages students in seeking, processing, and experiencing concrete learning experiences that will shape their behavioral patterns, thinking, and problem-solving abilities.

One implementation of contextual learning is through Live-In activities. This allows students to directly interact with different communities in various aspects such as social, cultural, and environmental. They stay in rural areas for several days, assist in household chores, participate in community activities, and follow a structured program.

Research findings indicate that contextual learning through Live-In activities has a positive impact on students. They develop social skills, responsibility, empathy, independence, character, and more active learning. This activity also provides a deeper understanding of ethical values, culture, and social diversity.

Empowering students is one of the goals of Live-In activities. Students at Homeschooling Primagama Semarang face some challenges such as a lack of social skills and independence. Contextual learning through Live-In activities gives them the opportunity to address these issues. This is because students are actively involved in real-life experiences that enable them to learn, adapt, and become independent.

In this context, student empowerment involves intrapersonal, interactional, and participatory aspects. Students develop an understanding of themselves, their ability to interact with others, and active participation in various activities. They also grasp the values of ethics, culture, and social diversity.

Live-In activities empower students consciously or unconsciously. Some students may feel their personal development directly, while others may not realize it immediately but their

changes can be felt by those around them, including teachers and parents. This activity provides students with valuable experiences that shape their character and skills to face the challenges of everyday life.

### Conclusion

Based on the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that contextual learning through Live-In activities is an effective method in empowering students. Contextual learning, which integrates learning with the daily lives of students, the community, and the working world, aligns with the characteristics of students at Homeschooling Primagama Semarang. Live-In activities provide concrete experiences and learning that can be applied in students' everyday lives. Moreover, the stimuli received during Live-In activities can have long-term impacts on students, enhancing their understanding, physical and mental endurance, and adaptability.

Contextual learning through Live-In activities also has significant effects on student empowerment in terms of intrapersonal, interactional, and participatory aspects. Students experience development in self-awareness, life skills, and the ability to interact with their surroundings. They become more active and independent in their daily lives and engage in various learning activities.

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