

Implementation of the Dynamic Learning Model in Strengthening Children's Character Education

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Abstract

Background - Character development is a major challenge in education, particularly in non-formal institutions that often emphasize flexibility over structured character education. Many learning programs focus primarily on cognitive outcomes, while moral and social values receive less attention. Non-formal education has strong potential to address this gap because it is closely connected to learners' daily lives. Therefore, innovative approaches such as Dynamic Learning are needed to integrate character values into meaningful learning experiences.

Purpose - This study aims to describe the learning process implemented through a Dynamic Learning approach in a non-formal educational setting. Specifically, the study focuses on the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation. It also seeks to explain how character values are integrated into learning activities and how these values are internalized by children through active and contextual learning experiences.

Method/Approach - This study employed a descriptive qualitative method using a phenomenological research design. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation to capture participants' experiences during the learning process. The phenomenological approach allowed the researcher to understand how Dynamic Learning is planned, implemented, and evaluated in a natural non-formal education environment. Data analysis involved data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing.

Findings - The planning process is carried out by setting learning objectives, teaching resources or materials, learning methods, learning media, and designing learning outcome assessments. The learning process begins with a prayer, followed by a reflection on the previous meeting, the delivery of material, and ends with a review of the material covered in the lesson. Summative evaluation is used in the form of crossword puzzles during the learning process.

Conclusion - This study concludes that Dynamic Learning-based learning is effective in developing children's character in non-formal educational settings, particularly in Wonosari Village, Semarang City. The approach creates an active and enjoyable learning atmosphere while fostering values such as honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and empathy. Support from tutors, parents, and the community strengthens the effectiveness of Dynamic Learning in character education.

Novelty/Originality/Value - The novelty of this study provides a contextual description of Dynamic Learning implementation in non-formal settings and maps practical stages (planning-implementation-evaluation) that can guide community-based character education programs.

Keywords: dynamic learning; children's character; learning

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INTRODUCTION

Character education is an important foundation in shaping a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also has moral integrity and wisdom in their actions. However, the reality on the ground shows that the education system in Indonesia still tends to focus on cognitive achievement, while character building has not been fully integrated into the learning process (Zahrudin et al., 2024). Amid increasingly complex social dynamics, character education is essential for children to be able to face change with mature moral and social skills (Suram & Suram, 2024).

Character education is not only the responsibility of educational institutions, families and community organizations also need to be involved in the process of character education (Tan, 2025). Research (Nasrudin et al., 2023) argues that character values such as honesty, responsibility, discipline, and cooperation are important assets that enable children to adapt and make positive contributions to their environment. If education only emphasizes knowledge, children have the potential to grow up intellectually intelligent but lacking in values and morals (Nazarullail & Maskulin, 2023). According to (Unicef Indonesia, 2020) character education issues in Indonesia remain a complex problem to address. National assessment data shows that 34.51% of students are at risk of sexual violence and 36.31% of students experience bullying. This fact highlights the existence of a character crisis, particularly in terms of mutual respect among peers and others. One in two children aged 13-17 years, or 50.78%, have experienced physical, emotional, or sexual violence in their lifetime, and 33.64% have experienced it in the last 12 months (Muhsin et al., 2021).

The importance of character education must also be considered in the Semarang area, where 84% of children from elementary to high school have experienced bullying, whether physical, verbal, or social (Ali et al., 2025). The character crisis among children in Semarang is not only about bullying, but also about street children in Semarang City who tend to exhibit highly aggressive behaviour due to their unmet basic need for security (Junaidi et al., 2024). This situation shows that the character crisis is not limited to everyday behaviour but also has an impact on safety, mental health, and the quality of children's growth and development (Suriaman et al., 2024). Without strong character education, children are at risk of growing up to be academically intelligent but fragile in the face of social pressures. In addition, weak character makes children more prone to negative behaviours such as intolerance and violence. Character education must be designed with an innovative, active, collaborative, and real-life experience-based approach (Widiastuti & Widayati, 2024). Interactive learning plays an important role in character building because children can learn actively, get involved, and experience moral values firsthand (Saripudin & Komalasari, 2015).

Children tend to internalize values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility more easily when they are involved in discussions, educational games, simulations, or collaborative projects that require participation (Cappelen et al., 2020). Unlike lectures, which tend to be passive, interactive learning stimulates children's curiosity, empathy, and reflective abilities. Interactivity also fosters social skills as children are trained to listen to others' opinions, respect differences, and learn to work together (Gerhardt et al., 2020). This process helps children develop moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action as theorized by Thomas Lickona in the framework of character education (Peterson, 2020). Character education must be integrated into every aspect of formal and informal learning. Schools, families, and communities must collaborate in creating an interactive, inclusive, and experience-based learning environment (Elkin et al., 2025). With a more diverse learning experience, children will be better prepared to face social challenges in the future.

Wonosari Village, Semarang City, as an urban area, also faces similar problems. Children in this area live in a dynamic environment, but not all of them have access to alternative learning spaces that can foster positive character development (Fitriani & Wijaya, 2023). The lack of educational community activities, limited educational play facilities, and high mobility of parents are factors that hinder the formation of strong character in children (Indriaih et al., 2023). On the other hand, the community of Wonosari Village has great potential to develop non-formal education that suits the needs of children.

The Dynamic Learning Program is one of the non-formal education innovations that can be a solution for building children's character. This program emphasizes active, creative, collaborative, and real-life experience-based learning. Children are not only taught knowledge, but also accustomed to internalizing life values through fun and meaningful learning activities (Nisa et al., 2025). The Dynamic Learning Program is one of the non-formal education innovations that can be a solution for building children's character.

This program emphasizes active, creative, collaborative, and real-life learning. Children are not only taught knowledge, but also accustomed to internalizing life values through fun and meaningful learning activities. Based on observations conducted by researchers on October 7, 2025, this study aims to describe the Dynamic Learning-based learning process in Wonosari Village, including: (1) the learning planning stage, (2) the learning implementation stage, (3) the learning evaluation stage. This study focuses on Dynamic Learning-based learning in Wonosari Village, Semarang City, Central Java. Character education issues in Indonesia have been widely discussed. However, most existing studies still focus on conventional approaches, such as lecture-based learning, the inculcation of normative values, or the integration of character education into specific subjects. A research gap emerges in the limited number of studies that deeply explore Dynamic Learning as an adaptive, reflective, and learner-centered approach to character development. To date, research on Dynamic Learning has predominantly emphasized cognitive aspects and learning skills, while its contribution to character formation particularly within non-formal education settings has not been systematically examined.

This study is important because Dynamic Learning offers distinct advantages compared to other learning models, particularly in its ability to adjust learning processes to the evolving needs of learners, encourage active participation, and foster character values through authentic experiences, reflection, and social interaction. Unlike static learning models, Dynamic Learning enables the internalization of character values in a contextual and sustainable manner. Therefore, this research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically by enriching character education models that are more relevant, adaptive, and responsive to the social challenges faced by learners today.

This study contributes to building awareness that character building in children is not only the responsibility of educational institutions, but also the social environment. Dynamic Learning emphasizes collaboration between schools, families, and village communities in forming a dynamic and sustainable learning ecosystem. Thus, community activities such as mutual cooperation, cultural preservation, and environmental awareness can be utilized as media for contextual character education. Through the application of Dynamic Learning, this study supports the creation of an inclusive, participatory education system that is oriented towards shaping children's character to be people of integrity, empathy, and social responsibility.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive study with a phenomenological research design. Qualitative research is a repetitive process in which a better understanding is achieved by making new and significant distinctions as the phenomenon under study becomes clearer (Aspers & Corte, 2021). A phenomenological study of the character education crisis in qualitative research is an approach that focuses on understanding the meaning of individuals' lived experiences in a deep and subjective manner (Køster & Fernandez, 2023).

Researchers use phenomenological studies because they want to gain a deep understanding of the experiences of participants, so this research emphasizes certain events or phenomena in their lives. The research uses qualitative methods by obtaining data directly and analysing it to provide peace of mind regarding various problems experienced (Sugiyono, 2020). Researchers used this method because, in order to obtain data, they had to meet with sources directly to obtain credible information about dynamic learning-based education in Wonosari Village, Semarang City, Central Java.

The data sources in this study used primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained

through key informants and supporting informants. The key informants in this study were the Dynamic Learning Community Managers. The supporting informants were Community Tutors, two parents of students, and three students. Secondary data sources in this study were obtained directly from documentation and scientific publications as references for dynamic learning-based learning.

Data collection was conducted through direct observation, interviews with informants, and documentation of the learning process in the Dynamic Learning community in Wonosari Village, Semarang City. The analysis used was data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing (Miles & Huberman, 2014). After the data is collected, it is summarized by selecting important topics, focusing the research, and following the research topics and themes. The results of data reduction were then presented descriptively. The validity of the data used in this study was triangulated using techniques and sources. Technical triangulation aims to test data by comparing interview data from different sources (Natow, 2020). Meanwhile, source triangulation aims to test data by checking data obtained from various data sources such as observations, interviews, and documentation of activities (Kumar et al., 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Dynamic Learning Community Profile

Dynamic learning-based education cannot be separated from the tutors' concerns about the moral and social conditions of children in Wonosari Village. Internal motivation arose from the personal experience of one of the tutors who realized the importance of character education for his own child, leading to the reflection that education is more than just the delivery of subject matter (Junanto et al., 2024). Education is seen as a process that helps build empathy, human values, and a sense of social responsibility (Sudirta et al., 2022).

The Dynamic Learning Community creates a learning space that focuses not only on academic abilities, but also on character building and social skills. Through a learning-by-doing model accompanied by a process of reflection, the Dynamic Learning Community is able to foster independence, discipline, and awareness to make positive changes. The Dynamic Learning Community has developed as an educational forum and social movement that places education as a means of individual transformation, especially for children in Wonosari Village.

Implementation of the Dynamic Learning Model in Strengthening Children's Character Education

Learning is an interactive process that takes place between students and educators in a systematically designed learning environment. This process focuses not only on delivering material, but also on developing students' thinking skills, character, and abilities (El-Sabagh, 2021). In this process, students are guided to understand concepts, develop positive attitudes, and improve their thinking skills. Learning also aims to foster positive behavioural changes as a result of the learning experiences they have undergone. Thus, learning is a comprehensive and focused process that encompasses cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Suhaila & Muthi, 2025).

Learning outcomes are positive changes that occur in students after participating in a comprehensive learning process (Musso et al., 2020). These changes include improvements in knowledge, skills, and attitudes that reflect personal development. Learning outcomes can be observed through students' ability to understand concepts, practice certain skills, and demonstrate behavior in accordance with the values they have learned (Santoso et al., 2021). In addition, learning outcomes are evident in students' ability to solve problems, think critically, and adapt to new situations.

This study applies the learning theory as defined by Nana Sudjana, where the concept of learning consists of planning, implementation, and evaluation (Marselina et al., 2022). The conceptual framework applied in this study is as follows:

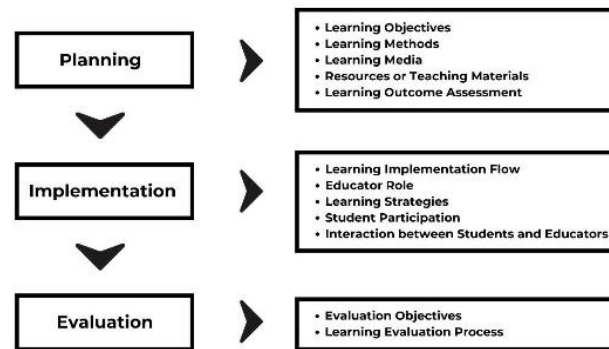


Figure 1. Dynamic Learning Process

Dynamic Learning Model Instructional Planning

The learning objectives developed by the Dynamic Learning community are based on an analysis of the needs of the Wonosari village community, especially for children (Huntington et al., 2023). Before conducting the learning process, the community conducted observations and in-depth interviews with community leaders, families, and children to identify basic learning needs in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects (Shelton-Strong, 2022). (Colomer et al., 2020) suggests that learning objectives are developed using a participatory and reflective approach, in which learning tutors, community members, and students are involved in formulating relevant and meaningful learning outcomes and teaching materials.

Learning is not only about imparting information and improving academic performance, but also about fostering good character in every student (Suciati et al., 2023). According interview by tutor that the implementation of dynamic learning began with tutors' concerns about the social and moral conditions of children in urban areas, especially those with economic and social limitations. Tutors take the initiative to create a dynamic, humanistic learning space that suits the needs of children so that they can teach and foster moral awareness.

The main objective of implementing dynamic learning-based education is to build a sustainable learning environment that is relevant to children's daily activities (Gupta et al., 2021). Dynamic learning-based education through a learning-by-doing approach and reflection on experiences that seek to instil positive social change (Bartels, 2023). Learning is prepared through a systematic and adaptive planning process tailored to the needs of students, containing material for subsequent learning (Exley et al., 2025). The initial stage begins with the preparation of a syllabus that is updated every three to six months as a reference for the development of learning activities. The syllabus is prepared by taking into account the results of previous learning developments (Harding, 2023). The tutor then determines the material by categorizing students based on their education level and age, starting from early childhood education, kindergarten, to elementary school students aged 6-11 years.

In the planning process, tutors directly involve children in identifying learning needs by asking them about the material they usually learn at school as a basis for learning material and strengthening the connection between learning experiences (Thapliyal et al., 2022). According the interviews by manager that the selection of dynamic learning-based teaching methods is based on principles that can create a learning atmosphere that is enjoyable, communicative, and in line with the characteristics of children.

Tutors provide a stress-free learning experience so that children feel safe and are motivated to actively participate in learning (Holt & Taylor, 2022). A personal approach is also a strategy for establishing emotional closeness between tutors and students, enabling tutors to understand each child's background, emotions, and learning style, which can then be used as a basis for determining how to deliver learning materials (Heilporn et al., 2021). A commonly used dynamic learning method

is small group discussion, which provides space for students to share their understanding and help friends who have difficulty understanding the material.

These small group discussions aim to centre learning on the students and encourage them to participate actively (Tholibon et al., 2022). Dynamic learning-based teaching uses media to support an interactive learning environment and instil character values. Student worksheets serve as a means of practice, reflection, and evaluation of understanding of the material taught (Syamsuddin et al., 2023). The worksheets are designed to suit the ability level of each age group so that children can learn independently. Tutors also utilize technology by using laptops as audiovisual media to show educational videos, especially material about technology or social values that are easy to understand using visual aids (Nicolaou et al., 2021). Each tutor creatively adapts the media according to the conditions and needs of the students. Other media such as educational missions, crossword puzzles, or interactive quizzes are used to foster enthusiasm for learning (Lauc et al., 2020).

Implementation of the Dynamic Learning Model

The implementation of dynamic learning is designed systematically and oriented towards character building through activities that are structured according to the needs of students (Suartama et al., 2020). Learning activities begin with a religious session as part of the implementation of the religious pillar in the Dynamic Learning community. Muslim children participate in Quran recitation using the Yanbu' method, while non-Muslim children are facilitated by non-Muslim tutors to do alternative activities such as drawing, storytelling, or sharing experiences about worship practices. The separation of these activities is a form of respect for religious diversity so that every child receives rights in accordance with their beliefs, thereby indirectly fostering social empathy among students (Bennett et al., 2022).



Figure 2. Implementation Dynamic Learning

Learning continues with thematic sessions tailored to participants' needs and focused on strengthening the five pillars of character, namely Faith, Intelligence, Independence, Caring, and Technology. The learning materials also include reading, writing, and arithmetic activities to address illiteracy among participants (Mohammadi et al., 2020). According interview by tutor, the learning session lasts for two hours, with interactive teaching methods interspersed with educational games to keep children focused and motivated.

At the end of the activity, the tutor conducts a game-based test or quiz to assess the children's understanding and conclude the lesson in a fun atmosphere. If there is material that has not been fully understood, the tutor will schedule a review and further study of the material in the next session so that the learning outcomes have an impact on the participants (Huang et al., 2020). The strategy applied in delivering learning materials emphasizes two-way interaction and a pleasant learning

atmosphere (Pörn & Hansell, 2020).

Before the lesson begins, the tutor and the children establish rules that serve as guidelines for behavior during the activity so that the children feel a sense of responsibility in the learning process (Öngören, 2025). Tutors provide simple rewards, such as praise and small gifts, to children who demonstrate positive attitudes or successfully complete tasks. These rewards serve as part of character building by reinforcing positive behavior, which can create interactive, adaptive, and relevant learning experiences for children (Lubis et al., 2024).

Implementation Activity			Description (Based on Field Data)	Field Evidence
Religious discipline	session	builds	Religious activities conducted at the beginning of each learning session habituate children to arrive on time, follow the learning sequence, and behave orderly during the activities. This routine helps develop discipline and learn readiness.	"After getting used to reciting and praying at the beginning of the session, the children become more orderly and less disruptive when the lesson starts." (Tutor)
Learning-by-doing	improves	caring behavior	Practice-based learning and educational games encourage children to interact directly, collaborate, and show care toward peers who experience learning difficulties.	"When a friend does not understand the material, other children often help voluntarily without being asked." (Tutor)
Rules and rewards	support	independence	The use of agreed-upon rules and simple rewards fosters children's sense of responsibility and independence in participating in activities and completing tasks.	"Children become more accustomed to completing tasks independently because they understand the rules and receive appreciation for their efforts." (Community Manager)

Table 1. Thematic Analysis of Dynamic Learning Implementation

Tutors are not only providers of material, but also mentors and companions who understand children's emotional problems and social needs. Tutors act as role models who instil character values through direct interaction in the learning process (Prayogi & Najiyah, 2023). Tutors can help participants find meaning in each lesson. According to interview by tutor, this role indirectly becomes the responsibility of the tutor because the participants come from unstable and vulnerable family backgrounds, requiring the maintenance of the psychological and moral well-being of the students so that the learning process takes place in a safe and supportive environment.

The level of participation of children in dynamic learning-based learning shows a positive response and high enthusiasm. Each learning session is attended by ten to thirty children. The attendance of students is an indicator that the learning program designed has succeeded in attracting the interest and trust of children (Thapliyal et al., 2022). According to manager community that the increase in learning participation is also inseparable from the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused many children to spend time at home without productive activities. Dynamic learning-based learning has emerged as a learning space that provides meaningful educational, social, and spiritual activities.

Interactions in the dynamic learning-based learning process are familial in nature. Tutors position themselves as learning companions who accompany children in their growth and development process (Tenhovirta et al., 2022). According to interview by manager community that the interaction pattern in the learning process aims to eliminate the distance between tutors and participants, so that children do not feel shy to communicate, ask questions, or express themselves comfortably. Tutors bond with children through informal communication, light humour, play, and storytelling.

An indirect interpersonal approach fosters mutual trust, which is an important foundation for the success of dynamic learning-based education (Frey & Martinez, 2024). By creating a comfortable learning environment, tutors are able to understand the emotional needs and unique characteristics of each participant, making learning more meaningful (Suhaila Nasywa A & Ibnu Muthi, 2025). The closeness between tutors and participants is reflected in the high level of emotional involvement of children in the presence of tutors in learning.

Interactions are reciprocal, with children often requesting activities that they find interesting or want to learn more about. Tutors respond to participants' requests with flexibility and openness, incorporating participants' ideas into future lesson plans (Lamberti, 2025). Equal, friendly, and participatory relationships are key to the success of dynamic learning in fostering a comfortable learning environment and creating a humanistic atmosphere (Rifal Kurniawan Jaki et al., 2025).

Communication between tutors and participants in dynamic learning-based activities takes place in an open atmosphere and is tailored to the characteristics of the participants. Tutors use simple and easy-to-understand language so that the messages conveyed are well received without causing confusion (Hobert & Berens, 2024). This communication strategy helps create emotional closeness between tutors and participants. Effective communication is an important aspect in building harmonious social relationships and creating a conducive learning environment (Rahayu et al., 2023).

Children are not only recipients of information, but also actively respond, whether in the form of questions, spontaneous comments, or initiatives for activities they want to do (Sabato & Ritov, 2025). This response indicates confidence and emotional involvement in the learning process. The tutor provides space for participants to express their opinions, thereby creating a dialogical process that enriches the learning dynamics (Jiménez & Gallardo, 2020). Participants' understanding of character values in dynamic learning-based education is quite good and continues to develop in line with learning routines.

Evaluation of the Dynamic Learning Model

Evaluations are conducted periodically using a checklist that includes academic abilities, social skills, and character values (Oktaviana et al., 2022). This checklist serves as a reference for tutors in monitoring children's development over three to six months and forms the basis for reflection in planning future lessons. In addition, tutors also assess changes in children's behaviour through observation, such as analysing significant reductions in the amount of time children spend on the streets and a decrease in the use of profanity, which are important factors in learning (Tahiri & El Alami, 2020). The evaluation process is conducted after the entire learning series has been completed, so that educators can assess the extent to which students understand the material that has been provided (Setiawan et al., 2024). At this stage, the evaluation instrument used is a crossword puzzle designed in line with the content and character values to be developed. The use of this medium provides variety in the assessment process so that children do not feel burdened. In addition, crossword puzzles encourage students to think more actively and critically in recalling the concepts they have learned (Gilani et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Dynamic Learning is an effective approach for fostering children's character in non-formal education settings, such as Wonosari Village, Semarang City, by creating active and collaborative learning experiences that support the internalization of values including honesty, responsibility, cooperation, and empathy. The findings imply that Dynamic Learning can be adopted by PKBM and urban learning communities as a practical model to integrate character education into daily learning activities. However, this study is limited by its relatively short research duration and the limited number of informants, and it has not yet employed a comprehensive evaluative analysis; therefore, future research is recommended to involve longer study periods, a larger number of participants, and evaluative or mixed-method approaches to more thoroughly assess the effectiveness and long-term impact of Dynamic Learning on character development.

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