

Implementation of the Two Stay, Two Stray Cooperative Learning Model in Islamic Education

*Tegar Elyanda¹, Subardi², Muhammad Insan Jauhari³

¹IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

²IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

³IAIN Syaikh Abdurrahman Siddik Bangka Belitung, Indonesia

*Corresponding author, email:tegar24@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The learning process in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) at the elementary school level is often dominated by conventional teacher-centered methods, resulting in unequal student participation, limited interaction, and low collaborative engagement. This condition necessitates the implementation of innovative learning approaches that encourage active student involvement. Therefore, this study aimed to describe the implementation of the Two Stay Two Stray (TSTS) cooperative learning model in Islamic Religious Education at SD Negeri 11 Sijuk and to explore how the model promotes collaborative and interactive learning. This study employed a qualitative descriptive approach. The participants consisted of one Islamic Religious Education teacher and 24 sixth-grade students who were purposively selected due to their readiness to engage in cooperative learning activities. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. The collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, which includes data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings revealed that the implementation of the TSTS model was carried out through three interconnected stages: planning, implementation, and evaluation. During the planning stage, the teacher prepared instructional modules and formed heterogeneous groups. During implementation, students actively



exchanged information through structured “stay” and “stray” roles, while teacher scaffolding and class agreements ensured orderly participation. In the evaluation stage, authentic assessment was used to monitor students’ understanding, communication skills, collaboration, and engagement. The model successfully increased student participation, fostered peer interaction, and promoted the development of social and Islamic character values such as responsibility, respect, and cooperation. The TSTS cooperative learning model provides an effective framework for creating active, collaborative, and character-oriented Islamic Religious Education learning environments in elementary schools.

Introduction

Education plays a vital role in shaping individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also of noble character. In an increasingly complex world, education is expected to produce a generation that is adaptable, critical, and of strong character. Therefore, education should not be viewed merely as a process of transferring knowledge in the classroom, but as a process that encompasses the intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual development of students (Ahadi and Sugiarto 2025).

Effective learning is characterized by students’ active engagement in the learning process, such as asking questions, discussing, and collaborating. To achieve this, teachers do not merely act as conveyors of information, but also as facilitators who can create an interactive learning environment tailored to the students’ characteristics. (Ahmad Prayogo 2024)

However, based on initial findings at SD Negeri 11 Sijuk, the learning process is still dominated by conventional methods such as lectures, question-and-answer sessions, assignments, and demonstrations. This situation has led to uneven student engagement, with some students actively participating in learning while others tend to be passive and unmotivated. This situation highlights the need for innovation in the learning process to increase student interaction and participation.

One approach adopted by Islamic Education teachers to address this issue is the implementation of the Two Stay Two Stray (TSTS) cooperative learning model. This model emphasizes group collaboration, information exchange, and student interaction through a mechanism in which two students remain in their group while



two others visit another group. As a result, students not only receive information from the teacher but also learn actively and collaboratively from their peers.

In theory, the TSTS cooperative learning model provides students with the opportunity to develop communication skills, teamwork, responsibility, and mutual respect. In addition, this model also supports more meaningful learning because students are directly involved in the process of discovering and conveying information (Aji and Wulandari 2021).

Based on an earlier study conducted by Resti Nadia Putri et al., it was found that the implementation of the TSTS model in inclusive classrooms at the elementary school level was able to improve student learning outcomes, communication skills, and student interaction. Despite challenges such as time constraints and differences in student abilities, this model was still able to create an active and collaborative learning environment (Putri and Hamamy 2025). That study shares similarities with this study in that both examine the TSTS model. However, that study focuses more on learning outcomes and communication skills, whereas this study examines the comprehensive implementation of TSTS, from the planning and implementation stages through to evaluation in Islamic Education instruction.

A second previous study conducted by Idzhar Laila Rahmadani showed that the implementation of the cooperative learning model to improve students' collaboration and communication skills in Islamic Education classes at Al Irsyad Islamic Junior High School in Cilacap (Idzhar, Laila 2025). Learning becomes more active and conducive, encouraging students to express their opinions and collaborate in groups. The similarity between this study and the previous one lies in the use of a cooperative learning approach combined with qualitative methods. The difference is that the previous study did not specifically address the type of cooperative learning used and focused more on students' skill outcomes, whereas this study specifically examines the implementation of the TSTS model in detail within the learning process.

A third previous study conducted by Indah Nur Rizki and Kukuh Santoso showed that the application of the TSTS model in Islamic Education instruction at the high school level was carried out in accordance with instructional procedures, with an emphasis on student-centered learning strategies (Annisa and Santoso 2024). This study shares similarities with that research in that both examine the TSTS model in Islamic Education. However, that study was conducted at the high school level and placed greater emphasis on teaching strategies and procedures, whereas this study was conducted at the elementary school level with a focus on the comprehensive implementation of the TSTS model.

Furthermore, the fourth previous study, conducted by Mochamad Fikri Fauzi, showed that the use of the TSTS model had a positive effect on improving students'



cognitive learning outcomes in Islamic Education. The results of the study indicated an improvement in learning outcomes in the experimental class following the implementation of the model (Fauzi 2022). The similarity between this study and the previous one lies in their examination of the TSTS model; however, the previous study focused on improving cognitive aspects using a quasi-experimental approach, whereas this study examines the implementation of learning through a qualitative approach.

The fifth previous study, conducted by Rizka Putri Aulia, also showed that the application of the TSTS model is effective in increasing students' motivation to learn in Islamic Education and Character Education. This study used a quantitative approach to measure the model's effectiveness through improvements in students' motivation to learn (Rizka P.A 2024). The similarity between this study and the previous one is that both examine the TSTS model in Islamic Education classes; the difference lies in the research approach. This study employs a qualitative approach that focuses on the process of implementing the TSTS model in the classroom, including student participation, group dynamics, and the challenges that arise during the learning process.

Several previous studies have shown that cooperative learning can enhance student engagement and interaction in the learning process. However, the implementation of the TSTS model in Islamic Religious Education, particularly in elementary schools, still requires further in-depth examination in the context of its practical application, especially regarding the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages of instruction. Therefore, this study focuses on a comprehensive examination of the implementation of the TSTS model in Islamic Religious Education at the elementary school level, which not only examines learning outcomes but also describes the process of applying the model and the adjustments made by teachers, including the use of class agreements and teacher guidance to create orderly, active, and collaborative learning.

Several previous studies have shown that cooperative learning can enhance student engagement and interaction in the learning process. However, a significant gap remains in the existing literature regarding the qualitative, stage-by-stage adjustment required when applying this model to elementary school students within Islamic Religious Education (PAI). While quantitative designs by Fauzi (2022) focus primarily on measuring statistical outcomes like cognitive scores and motivation, they overlook the micro-level behavioral shifts and classroom management dynamics during the interaction. Furthermore, studies at the secondary level, such as those by Annisa and Santoso (2024), assume a higher degree of student autonomy that is absent in primary schools. This study addresses these gaps by providing a comprehensive, qualitative description of the TSTS model's implementation at the elementary level,



explicitly detailing how structured teacher scaffolding and the enforcement of explicit class agreements mitigate classroom chaos and foster equal peer participation.

Method

The informants in this study consisted of one Islamic Education teacher who actively implements the cooperative framework, and 24 sixth-grade students at SD Negeri 11 Sijuk. The sixth-grade cohort was purposively selected due to their developmental readiness to follow complex, multi-step cooperative instructions compared to lower-grade students moel (lexy j. moelong 2019). The collected data were then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman data analysis model, which includes data reduction, data display, and drawing conclusions to obtain a clear picture of the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes of learning carried out by teachers in applying the TSTS model in the classroom.

Discussion

The implementation of the Two Stay, Two Stray (TSTS) cooperative learning model at SD Negeri 11 Sijuk demonstrates a systematic transition from conventional, teacher-centered paradigms to an active, student-centered learning environment. In Islamic Education (PAI), learning has traditionally been dominated by lectures, leading to passive student engagement and uneven participation. The empirical findings of this study indicate that structured collaborative models like TSTS can bridge this gap by fostering equal opportunities for all students.

During the instructional planning stage, the development of teaching modules paired with strict content analysis ensured that the PAI material could be effectively segmented. This segmentation is crucial for facilitating meaningful peer-to-peer information exchange. This pre-structural setup aligns with the core principles of cooperative learning, which emphasize that thorough material preparation prevents chaotic classroom management and maximizes learning efficiency (Sudrajat & Hermansyah, 2021; Wardani et al., 2022). Furthermore, forming heterogeneous groups of four based on gender and academic ability prevents academic segregation and prompts high-achieving students to naturally tutor their peers (Fitriani & Nasution, 2020; Hidayat & Saputra, 2023).

The implementation phase highlighted the importance of clear classroom mechanics. Field observations revealed that combining a brief interactive lecture with explicit class agreements minimized the typical noise and disorientation often



associated with the "straying" phase. During interviews, one of the PAI teachers explicitly stated:

"Initially, I was concerned that allowing students to move around the classroom would create chaos. However, by establishing a clear class agreement beforehand and strictly assigning the 'stay' and 'stray' roles, the students knew exactly what was expected of them. Even the passive students were forced to speak because they held the responsibility of conveying their group's information to the visitors."

This qualitative evidence proves that the TSTS model successfully addresses the issue of uneven participation. When two students stay to defend their group's ideas and two students stray to gather new information, every individual is compelled to engage in higher-order thinking and communication. The "stay" members practice argumentation and conceptual defense, while the "stray" members sharpen their active listening and synthesis skills. This cooperative dynamic heavily reinforces Robert E. Slavin's foundational theory regarding individual accountability and positive interdependence within classroom structures (Slavin, 2020; Nugroho, 2021).

By examining these internal dynamics, this study provides deeper pedagogical nuances that complement previous quantitative literature. While Fauzi (2022) and Lestari (2021) focused strictly on measuring cognitive learning outcomes through experimental designs, and Rizka P.A (2024) along with Pratiwi (2023) evaluated student motivation via statistical scales, our qualitative approach uncovers the actual behavioral shifts during peer interaction. Moreover, the elementary school setting of this research demands a significantly higher level of teacher scaffolding compared to the high school environments examined by Annisa and Santoso (2024) or Gunawan (2022). At the primary level, students require ongoing, direct guidance from the teacher to help them articulate their findings coherently during the inter-group visits (Suryani & Wijaya, 2020; Utami, 2024).

The integration of TSTS in PAI also yields a profound impact on character building and social skills. PAI instruction is not merely about cognitive absorption; it fundamentally aims to shape noble character (*akhlak karimah*). Through the cooperative processes embedded in TSTS—such as listening to opposing viewpoints and taking turns speaking—students actively practice tolerance (*tasamuh*), mutual respect, and collective responsibility (Rahmawati & Aziz, 2022; Supriadi, 2023). This finding matches contemporary research showing that cooperative structures accelerate the internalization of Islamic social values in



early childhood and primary education (Handayani et al., 2021; Mulyani & Rohman, 2025).

Finally, the evaluation phase in this study marks a critical shift from traditional, exam-heavy assessments to authentic, process-oriented evaluation. By utilizing real-time observation rubrics, the teacher was able to assess non-cognitive variables such as communication fluency, teamwork, and emotional regulation during conflict resolution within the groups. This comprehensive approach is highly supported by modern educational measurement theories, which assert that authentic assessment provides a truer reflection of a student's holistic development than rote-memorization tests (Ramadhan & Sari, 2021; Kurniawan, 2023). Moving beyond conventional methods allows PAI classrooms to transform into dynamic spaces where intellectual, social, and spiritual dimensions grow simultaneously (Prasetyo & Wulandari, 2024; Wijaya et al., 2026).

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the systematic implementation of the Two Stay, Two Stray (TSTS) cooperative learning model, encompassing rigorous material segmentation in planning, structured peer-to-peer mechanics paired with explicit class agreements in implementation, and process-oriented authentic assessment in evaluation, effectively resolves uneven student participation and transforms conventional teacher-centered classrooms into active, collaborative environments. The pedagogical implication of these findings suggests that structured cooperative scaffolding at the elementary school level not only enhances intellectual absorption but also serves as a vital vehicle for embedding foundational Islamic social values (akhlak karimah), such as mutual respect and collective responsibility. However, a key limitation of this study is its narrow qualitative focus on a single cohort (sixth-grade students) at one specific primary school, which restricts the generalizability of the operational challenges and behavioral shifts observed. Therefore, future research should expand upon these insights by conducting large-scale mixed-methods or longitudinal studies across diverse primary education contexts to evaluate the long-term sustainability of the TSTS model on both cognitive outcomes and character building.



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