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Classroom Action Research: Implementation of the Student Teams Achievement Divisions Type Cooperative Learning Model to Improvee Student Discipline

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Abstract: This study aims to improve student discipline through the application of the Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) cooperative learning model in Catholic Religious Education at SMA RK 2 Kabanjahe. The research was conducted using Classroom Action Research (CAR) based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model in two cycles, each consisting of planning, action, observation, and reflection. The subjects were 36 eleventh-grade students from one class. Data were collected through observation sheets, discipline questionnaires, and documentation. Discipline indicators included Punctual attendance, Timely assignment submission, Compliance with classroom rules, Orderliness during the learning process, Honesty in completing assignments. The results showed gradual improvement: the average discipline score increased from 57.60% in the pre-cycle (based on combined questionnaire and observation scores), to 70.40% in the first cycle, and 88.00% in the second cycle. These findings suggest that the STAD model enhances discipline by engaging students in structured teamwork, promoting responsibility for group performance, and encouraging consistent participation. In this way, STAD helps strengthen classroom discipline in Catholic Religious Education through collaborative and accountable learning.

Keywords: Catholic Religious Education; Classroom action research; Cooperative Learning; Discipline; STAD

Introduction

Discipline is a crucial dimension of student character, reflecting responsibility, compliance with rules, and self-regulation. It is also a core element of the *Pancasila Student Profile* within the *Merdeka Belajar* curriculum (Anwari et al., 2021; Rahayu et al., 2023). Empirical evidence shows that student discipline influences not only classroom order but also overall learning outcomes and the development of social responsibility (Nata, 2020). However, classroom observations at SMA RK 2 Kabanjahe indicate recurring problems, including frequent tardiness, delayed assignment submission, lack of compliance with classroom rules, and limited participation in discussions. Pre-action observations revealed that only 57.60% of students consistently demonstrated discipline indicators, suggesting the need for pedagogical interventions (Evendi & Verawati, 2021).

Theoretically, discipline is shaped by the instructional approach applied by teachers. According to Vygotsky's social constructivist theory (1978), students acquire behaviors and values through social interactions in learning environments. Cooperative learning, particularly the Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) model, offers structured collaboration

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that requires accountability, respect, and active participation (Johnson & Johnson, 2023; Kirschner et al., 2022; Slavin, 1995). Previous studies confirm that STAD effectively enhances cognitive achievement and social skills, yet fewer studies have explored its impact on student discipline, especially in the context of religious education (Anwari et al., 2021; Rahayu et al., 2023)..

This research therefore seeks to fill that gap by examining the use of the STAD model to improve discipline in Catholic Religious Education classes (Lukitasari & Mufidah, 2024; Sitohang et al, 2023). The novelty lies in applying STAD not only as a cognitive learning strategy but also as a character-building tool, specifically targeting discipline-related behaviors (Hartin, 2019). The findings are expected to provide practical insights for teachers in designing collaborative learning that strengthens both academic and behavioral outcomes (Hikmawati et al, 2021; Suhaida & Syarifah, 2019).

Method

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) with a collaborative approach. CAR is designed to improve teaching practices in real classroom settings through systematic reflection and action (Kemmis et al., 2013; McNiff, 2017). The collaboration involved the Catholic Religious Education teacher as the practitioner, while the researcher acted as observer, facilitator, and co-reflector (Ari & Dole, 2024). Joint planning and reflection were carried out at the end of each cycle to ensure continuous improvement.

The research subjects were 36 eleventh-grade students from one class at SMA RK 2 Kabanjahe, purposively selected because preliminary observations indicated low discipline levels (Syamsinar et al., 2023). The study was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection.

The instruments used were observation sheets to assess discipline indicators (punctuality, assignment submission, rule compliance, active participation, and honesty), student discipline questionnaires, and documentation (attendance records and assignment logs). All instruments were validated through expert judgment before use (Ilyas I & Liu, 2020; Ritonga et al., 2021).

Data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative techniques (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Discipline scores were calculated by converting observation and questionnaire results into percentages per indicator, then averaging across students. Triangulation between observation, questionnaire, and documentation strengthened the validity of the findings.

The research flow followed the Kemmis and McTaggart Classroom Action Research model, as shown in Figure 1.

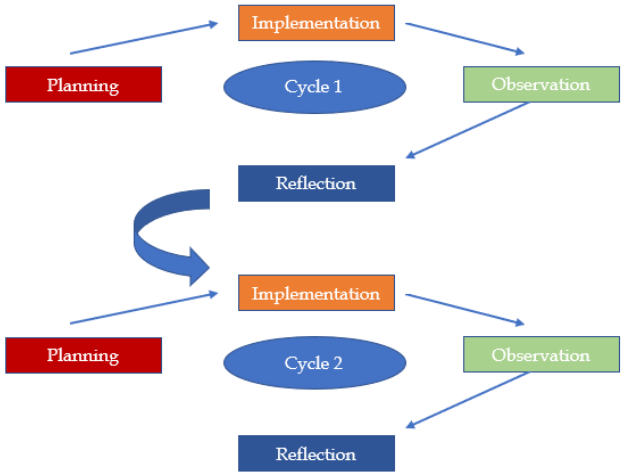

Figure 1. Kemmis & McTaggart's Classroom Action Research Model

Result and Discussion

Result

This research aimed to improve students' discipline in learning through the Student Teams Achievement Division (STAD) cooperative learning model at SMA RK 2 Kabanjahe. Discipline was measured using five consistent indicators: punctual attendance, timely assignment submission, compliance with classroom rules, orderliness during the learning process, and honesty in completing tasks. The action research was conducted in two cycles, each consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection (Fatmawati et al., 2021).

Pre-Cycle Results

The initial findings revealed that students' discipline was still low, with an overall average of 57.60%. The lowest aspect was timely assignment submission (52%), while honesty scored highest (57%). This indicates limited responsibility and low awareness of learning obligations. Similar findings were also reported by Esminarto et al. (2016), who highlighted that weak participation and lack of engagement contributed to low discipline in high school students.

Table 1. Student Discipline Level in the Pre-Cycle

Discipline Indicator	Percentage %
Punctual attendance	58
Timely assignment submission	52
Compliance with classroom rules	60
Orderliness during the learning process	61
Honesty in completing assignments	57
Overall Average	57.60

First Cycle Results

After the first implementation of STAD, discipline improved to 70.40%. The largest gains occurred in punctual attendance (73%) and compliance with classroom rules (72%). Although honesty (68%) and orderliness (69%) also increased compared to the pre-cycle, the progress was relatively modest, suggesting that students were still adapting to the accountability structure of STAD. This is consistent with Wulandari (2022), who emphasized that cooperative learning requires adjustment before its impact becomes more optimal (Lie, 2002).

Table 2. Student Discipline Level in Cycle I

Discipline Indicator	Percentage %
Punctual attendance	73
Timely assignment submission	70
Compliance with classroom rules	72
Orderliness during the learning process	69
Honesty in completing assignments	68
Overall Average	70.40

Second Cycle Results

In the second cycle, after adjustments in group composition and teacher monitoring, discipline improved significantly to 88%. Each indicator reached a high level: punctual attendance (90%), timely submission (88%), compliance with rules (89%), orderliness (86%), and honesty (87%). These results demonstrate that STAD, when consistently applied, effectively fosters discipline in both behavioral and academic dimensions.

Table 3. Student Discipline Level in Cycle II

Discipline Indicator	Percentage %
Punctual attendance	90
Timely assignment submission	88
Compliance with classroom rules	89
Orderliness during the learning process	86
Honesty in completing assignments	87
Overall Average	88.00

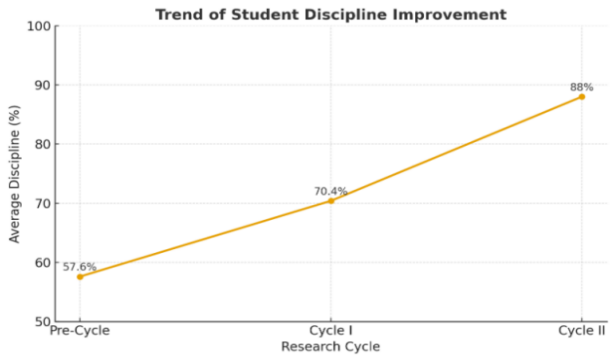

Figure 2. Graph of Trends in Increasing Student Discipline

Figure 2. The trend of increased student discipline over the research cycles showed growth from 57.6% (pre-cycle) to 70.4% (cycle I), and 88% (cycle II), affirming the model's gradual and consistent impact on discipline through collaborative and structured learning (Yanti & Rahmad, 2023).

Discussion

The findings show a steady improvement in students' learning discipline through the STAD model. The overall discipline rose from 57.60% (pre-cycle) to 70.40% (cycle I) and finally 88.00% (cycle II), reflecting not only behavioral changes but also the development of collaborative learning attitudes (Soenarko et al., 2022). The effectiveness of STAD can be explained through several theoretical perspectives: first Slavin's Cooperative Learning Theory STAD is built on the principle of positive interdependence and individual accountability. Each student realizes that the team's success depends on their personal effort, which encourages punctual attendance, honest work, and responsibility in task submission. These elements directly align with the indicators of discipline observed in this study, second Vygotsky's Social Constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978).

Through peer discussion and group activities, students operate in their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Ayob et al., 2013). For example, in this study, students who were initially less disciplined in submitting assignments benefited from peer monitoring and encouragement within their STAD groups. Teachers facilitated this by assigning mixed-ability teams, providing scaffolding, and reinforcing orderliness through structured activities, thirt Contribution to Catholic Religious Education Beyond pedagogical impact, STAD carries spiritual and moral significance (Linda, 2024; Mau & Laiyan, 2024). In Catholic education, discipline is not merely external compliance but part of character formation rooted in Gospel values (Pranyoto, 2018). The STAD process integrates values such as: Responsibility → reflected in punctuality and task completion, Honesty → ensuring integrity in individual quizzes and assignments, Cooperation and Service → evident in group discussions where stronger students assist peers, Orderliness and Respect → practiced through adherence to classroom rules.

This corresponds with the Catholic vision of education, which seeks to develop students not only cognitively but also morally and spiritually (Buan, 2021; Tibo et al., 2023). Furthermore, STAD supports the Pancasila Student Profile by fostering independence, collaboration, and faithfulness to God (Rahayu, 2023). While the results are promising, the study's limitations must be acknowledged (Zulhelmi et al., 2023). It

involved only one class and two research cycles, making it less generalizable (Hazmiwati, 2018). Future studies with a larger participant base and mixed-method design are recommended to further validate these findings.

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the implementation of the Student Teams Achievement Divisions (STAD) cooperative learning model effectively improves student discipline in Catholic Religious Education classes. The improvement was evident across five key indicators: punctuality, assignment submission, adherence to classroom rules, active participation, and academic honesty. The mechanism of improvement can be traced to STAD's structured process, where individual accountability, group interdependence, and reward systems encourage students to act responsibly and consistently.These findings highlight that STAD not only supports academic achievement but also serves as a practical approach to fostering discipline as part of character education. For teachers, especially in religious education, STAD provides a structured method to cultivate responsibility and cooperation within the classroom. Nevertheless, the research was limited to one class and two cycles; future studies involving broader samples and mixed methods are recommended to strengthen and generalize these findings.

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Conceptualization, MMLG and EG; methodology, MMLG; writing original draft preparation, MMLG; review and editing, EG; data curation, MMLG; supervision and validation, EG. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Conflicts of Interest
The authors declare no conflict of interest. The funders had no role in the study design, collection, analysis, or interpretation of data, writing the manuscript, or in the decision to publish the results.

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