Journal of Educational Innovation and Research
Vol. 1 No. 12 Desember 2025
E-ISSN: 3090-0832
Open Access: https://journals.ai-mrc.com/jeir

Implementation of the Star System Model to Improve Islamic Education Motivation at SDIT Al-Iqra

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Article Info

Article history:
Received 27-10-2025
Revised 27-11-2025
Accepted 17-12-2025

Keyword:
Star System Learning Model, Learning Motivation, Islamic Education, Elementary School Students, Educational Management Theory

ABSTRACT

This research is motivated by the low motivation of students to learn that is often found, which can have an impact on academic achievement and low interest in learning. Teachers have an important role in developing innovative learning strategies to improve student motivation. SDIT Al-Iqra Tirtamulya applies the star system learning model, an active, creative, and innovative approach, with the aim of improving student motivation and understanding. However, previous studies have not clearly explained how the star system model is systematically planned, implemented, and evaluated to address low learning motivation, leaving a gap in understanding its practical effectiveness in Islamic education contexts. This qualitative research aims to analyze the planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation of the star system learning model in improving student learning motivation at SDIT Al-Iqra Tirtamulya. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the star system learning model is effective in improving student learning motivation, as seen from indicators such as conducive classroom conditions, student attendance, learning independence, focus during material presentation, involvement and courage in question and answer sessions, and increased academic grades. All stages of implementation have been carried out in accordance with GR Terry's management theory.

INTRODUCTION

Student learning motivation is a crucial foundation for achieving academic success. However, the reality in the field often reveals issues of low learning motivation, which negatively affect students' achievement and interest (Mukhlis, Suradi, et al., 2023; Mukhlis, 2025b). Teachers, as the central figures in education, play a vital role in addressing this challenge. Law No. 14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers emphasizes the importance of enhancing teachers' competencies to improve the quality of education in Indonesia (Salam & Sari, 2025). This requires teachers to continuously develop innovative and engaging learning strategies.

Preliminary observations conducted by the researcher indicated that students' learning motivation remained low, as reflected in a passive learning atmosphere, limited student engagement, suboptimal discipline, and unsatisfactory learning outcomes (Asriadi et al., 2023). This condition largely stems from the use of less engaging and overly conventional teaching models. Therefore, a learning approach that can foster enthusiasm and active participation among students is essential.

The Star System Learning Model emerges as a promising innovation (Mukhlis, Arifin, Ridwan, & Zulbaidah, 2025; Mukhlis, Arifin, Ridwan, Zulbaidah, et al., 2025). This model adopts a star-based reward system, where students are awarded stars as recognition for their achievements, participation, or positive behavior during the learning process (Alzahrani, 2023). The concept aims to enhance students' intrinsic motivation and create a positive and healthily competitive

learning environment (Ashar et al., 2023:3). Consequently, students not only learn passively but also actively interact with the learning materials, ultimately deepening their understanding.

However, existing studies on the Star System Learning Model tend to focus on its practical application or general motivational outcomes without integrating a clear theoretical foundation—such as behaviorism, operant conditioning, or contemporary motivation theories like Self-Determination Theory (SDT). Prior research also presents fragmented findings that have yet to be critically synthesized, particularly regarding how the model functions at the stages of instructional planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation. This lack of a structured theoretical framework and limited synthesis of empirical evidence indicate a gap in understanding the model's systematic role in improving motivation within Islamic education settings.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation of the Star System Learning Model in enhancing students' learning motivation at SDIT Al-Iqra Tirtamulya.

RESEARCH METHODS

The approach employed in this research is a qualitative approach, with the model used being descriptive qualitative (Carreiras & Castro, 2012; Iosifides, 2016). It aims to systematically describe the facts found in the field (Lutz & Knox, 2014; McNabb, 2015). All data are presented in the form of words, sentences, and descriptions rather than questionnaires.

Qualitative research prioritizes uncovering what is expressed or revealed by the interviewees (Daly, 2007; Longhofer et al., 2012), and the data collected consist of written or spoken language from observers and participants (Hillman & Radel, 2018; Migdal, 2018). This study falls under the category of field research (Fife, 2020; Kawamura, 2020), which involves collecting data by directly visiting the research site to obtain information relevant to the researcher's needs.

The participants in this study consisted of 28 fifth-grade students, 1 homeroom teacher, and 1 Islamic Education teacher at SDIT Al-Iqra Tirtamulya. The student group included 15 males and 13 females, aged 10–11 years, representing diverse academic backgrounds. Participant selection used purposive sampling to ensure relevance to the implementation of the Star System Learning Model.

Data collection procedures were carried out through three primary techniques: (1) in-depth semi-structured interviews with teachers and selected students, focusing on motivational changes and classroom experiences; (2) non-participant classroom observations conducted over four weeks, documenting lesson flow, student engagement, behavioral indicators, and use of the star reward system; and (3) documentation analysis, including lesson plans, attendance records, and student performance reports. Each procedure followed a standardized protocol to increase consistency and replicability.

To ensure analytical rigor, data were processed using Miles and Huberman's (2014) interactive model—data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Research credibility was strengthened through triangulation of sources (students, teachers, documents), triangulation of techniques (interviews, observations, documentation), member checking to confirm accuracy of interpretations, and audit trails documenting each stage of analysis. These strategies were implemented to enhance trustworthiness and allow future researchers to replicate the methodological process.

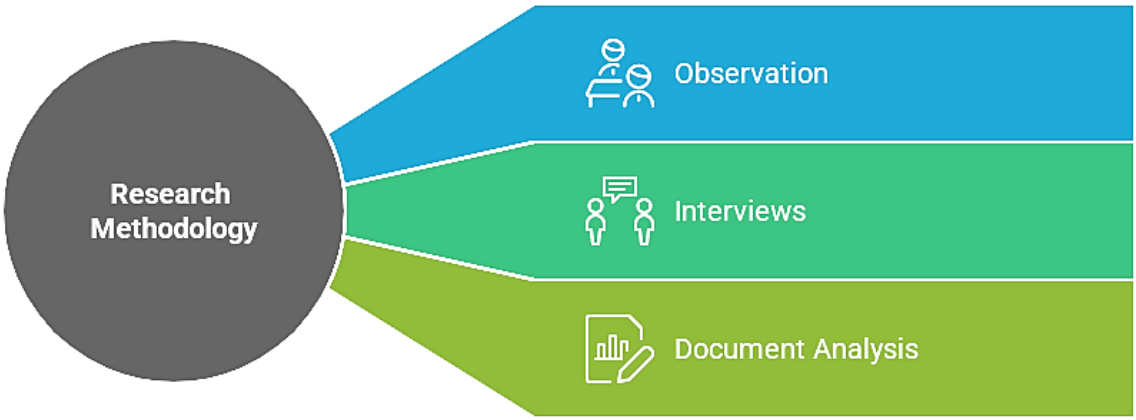
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Implementation

This study was conducted among fifth-grade students during the second semester of the 2024/2025 academic year at SDIT Al-Iqra Tirtamulya, focusing on the subject of Islamic Religious Education, specifically the topic of kalimat tayyibah tarji'. The research was carried out directly

through observation of the study object, interviews, and document analysis to collect the required data. During classroom observations, the research was divided into three stages: opening, core, and closing activities.

Exploring Research Methodology in Islamic Education



The aim of this study was to examine the planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation of the Star System learning model, as well as to understand how this model fosters students' learning interest and motivation.

Planning Stage

In examining the Star System learning model frequently used by SDIT Al-Iqra to enhance student motivation, the findings align with the formulated research question: how planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating the Star System model can increase student motivation. Planning is an essential step in any activity to achieve goals effectively and efficiently. According to George R. Terry, planning involves selecting and relating facts and making forecasts for the future to formulate appropriate activities to achieve desired objectives (Mukhlis et al., 2024; Mukhlis, Maryam, et al., 2023). In other words, planning is a systematic process of determining the necessary steps to achieve the expected outcomes. At SDIT Al-Iqra Tirtamulya, planning for the Star System learning model began with observing students' responsiveness to rewards and the overall classroom learning environment. The principal and Islamic Education (PAI) teacher observed that a reward-based learning method—such as question-and-answer sessions with rewards—effectively enhanced student motivation and engagement.

The primary considerations in selecting this model were learning time efficiency, ease of material delivery, and the model's ability to create a more disciplined and conducive learning atmosphere. This aligns with the planning objective of reducing uncertainty and improving success (Ayoub & Wani, 2025). Preparations included determining PAI learning materials, preparing learning media such as "smart boards" (small whiteboards) and star stickers, as well as evaluation instruments. The main goal was to increase students' focus, enthusiasm, activeness, and understanding in PAI learning. Students expressed that this model made learning more exciting, stimulated their thinking, and helped them achieve better grades. This planning reflects consistency with the conceptual framework of a systematic learning model designed to achieve learning objectives.

Based on the conducted research, the planning of the Star System learning model was carried out in accordance with George Terry's theory of planning, which involves assessing student conditions, identifying motivating factors, preparing infrastructure and media, formulating objectives, and determining the steps required to achieve those objectives.

Organizing Stage

Organization is the process of defining, grouping, and structuring activities, as well as allocating resources appropriately to achieve objectives. According to George R. Terry, organizing

involves determining, grouping, and arranging activities required to achieve desired goals, assigning suitable individuals to tasks, providing adequate human resources, and defining clear lines of authority for each participant (Arifa et al., 2025; Warden et al., 2025). In the implementation of the Star System model, organization involved clearly defined roles among participants. The principal acted as the primary supporter and supervisor, ensuring the availability of teaching materials, media, and comfortable facilities. They provided advice and general guidance to teachers on applying the model.

The Islamic Education teacher (PAI) was responsible for organizing the sequence of classroom activities from presenting materials and explanations to discussions and Q&A sessions. Students were not grouped but organized individually to promote independence and reduce dependency, though it was acknowledged that this could limit group interaction (Zhao & Wang, 2025). Students actively wrote notes, listened attentively, read, understood materials, and answered questions to earn stars. Although parents were not directly involved in school learning activities, they supported their children at home by encouraging them to study and collect stars (Yusri & Zainal, 2025). Parents appreciated this model because they observed an increase in their children's learning enthusiasm.

This organizational approach demonstrates the effective allocation and coordination of resources to achieve educational goals (Mukhlis, Janwari, et al., 2023; Mukhlis & Abdullah, 2025), despite minor challenges such as competition among younger students for stars or feelings of jealousy, which were addressed through additional guidance (Zhou & Ma, 2025). Overall, the organization of the Star System model in enhancing learning motivation aligns with George Terry's organizational theory clearly defined roles, structured classroom management, systematic coordination of activities, and well-organized implementation aimed at achieving the desired learning objectives.

Implementation Stage

Implementation represents the core phase where planning and organization are put into action. According to George R. Terry, implementation or "actuating" is the process of motivating and encouraging all group members to work diligently and sincerely toward achieving objectives in harmony with the established plans and organization (Amirian, 2025). The teaching and learning process using the Star System model at SDIT Al-Iqra Tirtamulya proceeded as planned (Mohammed & Khalid, 2025). The sequence began with students writing learning materials, followed by the teacher's explanation (often using storytelling strategies), then a Q&A session to earn stars, and concluded with evaluation.

The classroom environment was conducive, with students actively engaged, focused on listening, and eager to answer questions during the star sessions (Kojima, 2025). This demonstrates the model's effectiveness in enhancing learning motivation, as students were driven to participate actively. During Q&A sessions, the teacher awarded stars to students who provided correct and well-reasoned answers and encouraged others to participate to prevent discouragement and ensure inclusivity. The increase in student motivation was evident from their enthusiasm to earn stars, which served as recognition of their achievements and participation (Cramer et al., 2021). Students became more confident, diligent, interested, and independent learners. This aligns with (Alimni et al., 2022) view that motivation is the driving force influencing individuals to act toward achieving goals. Indicators of learning motivation such as persistence, the ability to face difficulties, interest, independence, and maintaining opinions (Jansen in de Wal et al., 2020) showed significant improvement. Parents also reported a noticeable increase in their children's enthusiasm for studying at home.

The implementation of the Star System model in PAI learning was consistent with George Terry's theory carried out in accordance with established plans and organization, involving collaboration between the principal, teachers, students, and parents (Fasya et al., 2023). It also aligns with M. Ngalim Purwanto's theory of learning motivation, as evidenced by the conducive classroom atmosphere, focused students, active participation, and improved formative and summative assessments (Titihalawa et al., 2025). Students became more independent and confident, while

teachers and parents worked together to sustain motivation. Any challenges encountered were addressed collaboratively to achieve educational goals.

Evaluation Stage

Evaluation is the process of monitoring and regulating to determine whether management activities are effectively achieving their goals. George R. Terry defines control as the process of determining what should be achieved (standards), what is being implemented (execution), assessing whether implementation aligns with planning and organization, and making corrections if necessary to ensure conformity with established standards (Iqbal et al., 2022). The evaluation of the Star System model at SDIT Al-Iqra Tirtamulya produced positive results. Indicators of success included students' enthusiasm in earning stars, obedience, classroom conduciveness, improved learning outcomes, and increased student independence. A significant improvement in learning motivation was observed—students who were previously unmotivated, bored, sleepy, or unfocused became more enthusiastic, active, and attentive due to the challenge and reward system.

Follow-up actions to address issues identified during implementation were conducted by the principal and teachers, such as providing explanations to prevent jealousy and encouraging continuous participation (Mukhlis, 2025a; Mukhlis & Saidah, 2025). For students who rarely earned stars, further evaluation was conducted with parents to identify causes and solutions (Ng & Cheung, 2025). Some challenges noted included maintaining consistent student focus, managing younger students' competitiveness, and reduced model effectiveness in the second semester due to more extracurricular activities. These were mitigated through effective communication between the school and parents via monthly evaluation meetings.

The evaluation process of the Star System learning model, in line with George R. Terry's theory, involved continuous supervision during learning, assessment of implementation smoothness and obstacles, measurement of achievement indicators, and evaluation meetings with parents (Yudiawan et al., 2021). Follow-up improvements were then implemented to refine and enhance the model's effectiveness in motivating students to learn.

CONCLUSION

After conducting research, data analysis, and discussion, the author draws several conclusions from the study on the implementation of the Star System Learning Model, which includes planning, organizing, implementation, and supervision or evaluation. All stages have been carried out in accordance with G.R. Terry's theory. The implementation of the Star System Learning Model has proven effective in increasing students' learning motivation, as indicated by several predetermined indicators such as a conducive classroom environment, student attendance, independence in learning, focus during material presentation, participation and courage during Q&A sessions, and improved student performance. The systematic conclusions regarding the implementation of the Star System Learning Model are as follows:

1. Planning of the Star System Learning Model has been conducted in accordance with George Terry's theory of planning, which involves analyzing the students' conditions and learning realities, identifying factors that enhance students' motivation, assessing facilities and learning media, formulating learning objectives, and determining the necessary steps to achieve these goals.
2. Organizing of the Star System Learning Model to enhance students' learning motivation has been implemented in line with George Terry's theory of organizing. This includes defining the roles of each individual involved in the model, assigning clear responsibilities according to their roles, managing the classroom throughout the learning process (including star organization), and structuring activities systematically to achieve the desired objectives.
3. Implementation of the Star System Learning Model has been carried out following George Terry's theory, as evidenced by its conformity with the planned and organized stages, the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in applying this learning model,

collaboration among school principals, teachers, students, and parents, and the overall execution aligning with the established plans and organization to achieve the intended goals.

4. The application of the Star System Learning Model to increase students' motivation has also been implemented according to M. Ngalim Purwanto's theory. This is observed from the conducive classroom atmosphere, students' focus during lessons, active participation in discussions or Q&A sessions, enthusiasm in earning stars, and excellent formative and summative assessment results. Students have become more independent and confident through the individualized learning approach employed by the teacher, which also aligns with their more self-reliant behavior at home when completing assignments.
5. Evaluation of the Star System Learning Model in enhancing students' learning motivation has been carried out in accordance with G.R. Terry's theory. This is evidenced by the monitoring process conducted during the model's implementation, including supervision throughout the learning activities, monitoring the fluency and obstacles during learning, establishing achievement indicators to assess the success of the model in improving learning motivation, evaluating active and passive students along with identifying causes and solutions, holding evaluation meetings with parents, and taking follow-up actions to improve and develop the model further.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest. All stages of this research—including design, data collection, analysis, and publication—were conducted independently and without any influence from the sponsoring organization or affiliated institutions.

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