

The Effect of The 5s Culture (Smile, Greeting, Hellogreeting, Polite And Courtesy) on The Social Ethics of Elementary School Students

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Abstract. The low level of social ethics among elementary school students, reflected in rude behavior and a lack of respect for teachers and peers, underscores the urgency of instilling social values through a positive school culture. This study aimed to analyze the influence of the 5S Culture (Smile, Greet, Say Hello, Be Polite, and Be Courteous) on the social ethics of elementary school students. The research used a qualitative descriptive method involving 28 fourth-grade students from one public elementary school in Bandung City, Indonesia, where the 5S Culture had been systematically implemented for more than six months. Data were collected through questionnaires, field observations, and documentation, and analyzed through data reduction, coding, and interpretation. The findings revealed that approximately 60% of students demonstrated noticeable improvement in social ethics indicators such as politeness, honesty, cooperation, and empathy after the consistent implementation of the 5S Culture. Students became more respectful and responsible in their interactions, particularly toward teachers and senior peers. These results confirm that the 5S Culture effectively strengthens students' social behavior and supports Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) by fostering inclusive, respectful, and value-based learning environments.

Keywords: 5S Culture, Social Ethics, Elementary School

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the most important aspects of life. According to (Wulandari & Fauzi, 2021), education essentially serves not only to develop knowledge and skills, but also to shape the personality and character of students. In the era of SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals), in the context of the rapid development of modern society, education is required to be able to instill moral and social values (Nurus & Nugraheni, 2024) so that students are not only intellectually intelligent but also sensitive to others. The phenomena of globalization and advances in information technology have influenced the mindset and social behavior of students, including a decline in concern, empathy, and politeness in interactions (Firdausi, et al., 2024). Therefore, character education is a major pillar in building an ethical and cultured generation.

Elementary schools have a strategic position as the first institutions to systematically instill moral values and social ethics in students. At this level, children are at a stage of moral development that is greatly influenced by their surroundings. According to (Ningsih, 2024), the learning process and interactions at school are important means for children to learn to appreciate, respect, and adapt to prevailing social norms.

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that considers moral values that distinguish between good and bad behavior in various contexts of human life. Ethics is also known as Moral Philosophy. Ethics usually discusses considerations regarding good and bad actions,

as well as moral and immoral actions in human interactions (Prasetyo et al, 2021). Social ethics are important for elementary school students, even though every year, these values tend to decline. According to Mardani (2019), students can demonstrate good manners in various ways, such as greeting others when entering the classroom, greeting older people, praying sincerely, not using foul language, not disturbing friends, not fighting, not spitting indiscriminately, asking permission when borrowing items, and saying thank you after receiving help. However, in reality, the implementation of these values has not been fully optimized in the character of elementary school students. In line with this, according to (Judrah et al., 2024), social ethics are an important aspect because they reflect the ability of students to establish harmonious relationships with teachers, peers, and the school environment. However, in practice, behaviors that indicate a lack of social ethics character in students are still often found, such as a lack of respect, the habit of speaking without manners, and indifference towards others.

This phenomenon shows that the formation of social ethics is not yet optimal in elementary schools. Many students are not yet accustomed to practicing good manners in their daily lives. This may be due to a lack of positive habits and the absence of a consistent school culture that instills social values (Faizi, et al., 2025). Schools, as formal educational environments, have a responsibility to create a culture that is conducive to the formation of children's social character. One way to do this is by instilling ethical values through structured school culture habits.

School culture represents a system of values, habits, and norms that develop within the school environment and serve as behavioral guidelines for all members of the school community. A positive school culture can effectively shape students' character because it emphasizes habituation through direct experience (Mahananingtyas, 2018). One form of school culture widely implemented across various educational levels in Indonesia is the *Budaya 5S (Senyum, Salam, Sapa, Sopan, and Santun)*. This culture embodies social and ethical values that are consistently practiced and internalized in daily school life.

The 5S culture plays an important role in building harmonious social relationships among school members. Through the practice of 5S, students learn to show friendliness, respect, and appreciation for others (Sari, et al., 2024). This practice not only serves as a written form but also as a means of shaping the social character inherent in students. In line with this, according to (Mulyadi, 2017) in the perspective of character education, behaviors that are repeated will develop into habits, and habits that last for a long time will shape a person's values and personality. Thus, the application of the 5S Culture can be an effective strategy for fostering social ethics among students in elementary schools.

Previous studies have shown that school culture has a significant influence on student behavior and character. However, most studies still focus on aspects of discipline,

cleanliness, or public service, while research specifically examining the influence of 5S Culture on the social ethics of elementary school students is still limited. This indicates that there is an important research gap to be filled in order to strengthen the theoretical and practical foundations for the development of a positive culture in schools.

Based on the above description, this study aims to analyze the influence of the Budaya 5S on the social ethics of elementary school students. Previous studies on school culture and character education such as those by Lickona (2018), Berkowitz and Bier (2020), and Mahananingtyas (2018) have emphasized the importance of moral habituation and teacher modeling in shaping student character. However, most of these studies focus on general aspects of school culture or moral values without examining the specific influence of daily ethical routines like the Budaya 5S. Therefore, this study seeks to fill that gap by providing an in-depth qualitative analysis of how the *Budaya 5S* contributes to improving students' social ethics at the elementary school level. The results of this study are expected to contribute to the development of a school culture based model of social character formation and to serve as a practical reference for teachers and principals in fostering an ethical and value-oriented learning environment through positive daily habits.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative approach with a descriptive design. According to Sugiyono (2015), qualitative research methods are used to explore natural conditions in which the researcher acts as the key instrument. The main objective of qualitative research is to understand phenomena in depth not merely to measure them but to interpret the meaning behind behaviors, actions, and social interactions. Therefore, a qualitative approach was chosen because this study focuses on understanding the meaning, process, and form of the influence of the Budaya 5S on the social ethics of elementary school students through direct observation in a natural environment.

The study was conducted at one public elementary school in Bandung City, Indonesia, involving 28 fourth-grade students (15 boys and 13 girls). The participants were selected through purposive sampling, as the school had consistently implemented the Budaya 5S in its daily routines for more than six months. The observation period lasted for approximately six weeks, covering both classroom and non-classroom interactions.

The data in this study were collected through several techniques, namely questionnaires, observation, and documentation.

1. According to Sugiyono (2017, p. 199), a questionnaire is a data collection technique that involves respondents answering or responding to a series of written

- questions or statements. Questionnaires were used to obtain data on students' perceptions and experiences regarding the implementation of the 5S Culture and the social ethical attitudes they displayed in their daily interactions.
2. Nasution (in Sugiyono. 2020, p. 106) argues that observation is the basis of all science. Scientists can only work based on data, namely facts about the real world obtained through observations collected with the help of various sophisticated tools. Observation is a method of observing research objects that relies on all human senses (sight, hearing, smell, touch, and taste). Field notes are taken to directly observe student behavior inside and outside the classroom, particularly in relation to the practices of Smiling, Greeting, Saying Hello, Being Polite, and Being Well-mannered in school life.
 3. Sugiyono (2017, p. 124) states that documents are records of past events. Documents can be in the form of images, writings, or monumental works of a person. Documentation is used to supplement data through the review of various school documents such as rules and regulations, activity programs, and photos of activities that reflect the implementation of the 5S Culture.

The data obtained were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The analysis process was carried out continuously from data collection to the final stage of the study to obtain a complete understanding of the form and influence of the 5S Culture on the social ethics of students. Data validity was strengthened through source and technique triangulation, namely by comparing the results of questionnaires, observations, and documentation to ensure the consistency and validity of the research findings.

With this methodological design, it is hoped that the research results will provide a comprehensive picture of how the 5S Culture can shape and influence the social ethics of elementary school students, especially in fourth grade at public elementary schools in Bandung.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Results of the Social Ethics Questionnaire after the Implementation of the 5S Culture

No	Indicator of Social Ethics	Statement Examples	Average Score (1–5)	Category	Percentage of Students Showing Positive Change (%)
1	Politeness	Students greet politely, use respectful language, and behave	4	High	68%

		courteously in daily interactions.			
2	Honesty	Students tell the truth, admit mistakes, and return lost items.	4	High	61%
3	Responsibility	Students complete tasks on time and keep promises.	4	Moderate	59%
4	Tolerance	Students respect differences in opinions, religions, and backgrounds.	3	Moderate	55%
5	Empathy	Students care for friends who face difficulties and offer help voluntarily.	3	Moderate	56%
6	Cooperation	Students actively participate in group work and share roles fairly.	4	Moderate	57%
7	Respect for Others	Students listen when others are speaking and avoid interrupting.	4	High	63%
8	Self-Discipline	Students follow school rules and show self-control in class.	4	High	65%
	Average		4	Moderate to High	60%

The results of the study show that the implementation of the 5S Culture (Smile, Greet, Say Hello, Be Polite, and Be Courteous) has a positive effect on improving the social ethics of elementary school students. As many as 60% of students showed improvements in social ethics behavior after the 5S culture was systematically implemented by teachers in learning activities and interactions within the school environment. These findings confirm that instilling moral values through school culture can shape ethical social behavior, in line with the concept of character education that emphasizes the integration of moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions.

The 5S culture is essentially a representation of basic social ethical values such as politeness, respect, empathy, and appreciation for others. When these values are consistently applied in schools (Syaroh & Mizani, 2020), students learn to internalize polite behavior in the form of concrete actions. In habituation theory, behaviors that are repeated in a supportive social context will form positive habits and eventually become part of an individual's character. Teachers, who serve as role models and

reinforcers of positive culture, contribute significantly to the process of internalizing these values.

The improvement in students' social ethics is reflected in the indicators of politeness and honesty, which received the highest scores in this study. This shows that students have become accustomed to displaying polite and friendly behavior and respecting others in their daily interactions. The implementation of the 5S culture, which starts with simple things such as greeting others, greeting teachers and friends, or speaking politely, has proven to be effective in fostering positive social behavior. This concept is in line with the character education approach that emphasizes the process of value formation through direct experience and role modeling, rather than just cognitive teaching about morals (Irayanti & Sundawa, 2023).

In addition, indicators of cooperation and tolerance also showed a significant improvement. This can be interpreted as meaning that the 5S habit also strengthens social relationships among students. Students have become more open, respectful of one another, and able to collaborate easily in group activities. In the school social context, the habit of positive interaction has become the basis for creating a harmonious and inclusive classroom atmosphere. These findings reinforce the view that a positive school culture serves as a medium for socializing values and shaping a moral environment that is conducive to children's social and emotional development.

However, the results of the study also show that indicators of responsibility and empathy still need to be strengthened. Although there has been an improvement, some students have not yet shown consistency in completing tasks or showing concern for friends who are experiencing difficulties. This is understandable because the formation of social ethics does not happen instantly, but through a long process involving habituation, reflection, and environmental support. Teachers need to integrate the 5S values not only into daily routines, but also into contextual learning activities, social projects, and value reflection so that their understanding and application are more profound (Khairunnisah, 2024).

Conceptually, these findings support the theory that social character is formed through interactions between environmental factors and learning experiences. A well-managed school culture acts as a living value system and a source of moral learning for students (Nurhayati & Langlang Handayani, 2020). Teachers, as central figures, serve as role models, value guides, and reinforcers of positive habits. Through the systematic application of the 5S culture, teachers help students develop social skills such as respect, appreciation, and empathy, which are at the core of social ethics.

These results are also in line with previous studies that emphasize the importance of school culture in shaping student character. Various studies show that instilling positive values in the school environment, if done consistently and accompanied by teacher role modeling, can improve students' social behavior, discipline, and sense of

responsibility (Uge & Ode Lidya Arisanti, 2022). In this context, the 5S culture serves as a concrete and easily internalized medium for teaching values to elementary school-aged children because it involves simple actions that are performed repeatedly and meaningfully.

Thus, the implementation of the 5S culture can be considered an effective strategy in building social ethics in elementary schools. In addition to shaping polite behavior, this culture also fosters social awareness, concern, and responsibility for the social environment. This formation process requires consistency, exemplary teachers, and the support of the entire school community so that this positive culture becomes part of everyday life at school.

Based on observations and field notes during the implementation of the 5S Culture (Smile, Greet, Say Hello, Be Polite, and Be Courteous) in fourth grade elementary school, it appears that students are beginning to show behavioral changes that lead to improved social ethics. Every morning, teachers consistently apply the 5S through the habit of greeting, smiling, and saying hello to students. This habit is slowly being imitated by students, especially when they interact with teachers and peers. Students are beginning to get used to greeting teachers when they enter the classroom, saying thank you, and speaking in a more polite manner.

However, observations show that the changes in social ethics that have occurred are not yet fully consistent. Some students display polite and courteous behavior at certain times, but on other occasions revert to their previous behavior, which shows little regard for ethics in speaking or interacting. This inconsistency indicates that the internalization of social values is still in the early stages of familiarization and requires time and ongoing guidance.

Another interesting finding is that learning about social ethics is more meaningful when students see direct examples of behavior from teachers, rather than when they only receive theoretical explanations about the importance of manners. On several occasions, when teachers demonstrated concrete actions such as greeting students warmly, reprimanding them politely, or showing respect to fellow teachers, students seemed to more easily understand the meaning behind the 5S values. Field notes show that most students spontaneously imitated their teachers' behavior, for example by greeting guests who came to the classroom or helping friends who were having difficulties in a polite manner.

This phenomenon shows that modeling plays an important role in shaping the social ethics of elementary school children (Wulansari, et al., 2023). The process of instilling values through real examples is far more effective than simply through verbal explanations. Students at this age are in a stage of social development where they learn through observation and imitation of the behavior of adults who are considered influential.

However, field notes also show that students' application of social ethics still depends heavily on the social context and the figures they encounter. Students show more polite and respectful behavior when interacting with senior teachers or principals, but this attitude tends to decline when they are dealing with younger teachers or peers. This pattern indicates that students' social ethics are still external and situational in nature, where respect arises because of the presence of authoritative figures, rather than from a deep moral awareness (Agustina, 2019).

This condition reflects that the formation of social ethics needs to be directed not only at habit formation, but also at the development of value awareness. Teachers need to create reflective moments so that students understand the meaning behind 5S actions. For example, after greeting or helping friends, teachers can invite students to have a light discussion about why these actions are important and how other people feel when they are treated politely. Through this kind of reflection, social values do not stop at the level of habit, but develop into a deeper moral awareness.

In addition to role modeling, consistency in implementing school culture is also an important factor. Field notes show that when the entire school community teachers, principals, and educational staff simultaneously implement 5S, the school atmosphere becomes more positive and children find it easier to adapt to social ethical values. Conversely, when there are differences in behavior among educators, students appear confused and tend to follow the figure they consider to be the most influential. This reinforces the importance of school culture alignment in shaping a cohesive moral environment.

Overall, the results of the observation show that the implementation of the 5S culture has a real impact on the formation of students' social ethics, although there are still variations and inconsistencies in behavior. This process of social character building is an ongoing journey and requires systematic support from all elements of the school. The 5S culture has proven to be effective as a medium for teaching values because it bridges the gap between theory and practice, between moral teachings and everyday social experiences (Safitri, et al., 2024).

Thus, the results of this field study confirm that the formation of social ethics in elementary school students cannot be separated from the exemplary behavior of teachers, consistent reinforcement, and the support of a conducive school environment. The 5S culture serves as a bridge between values and actions, helping students understand that social ethics is not only about formal manners, but also about respect, empathy, and responsibility towards others.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study indicate that the implementation of the 5S Culture (Smile, Greet, Say Hello, Be Polite, and Be Courteous) has a positive effect on improving the

social ethics of elementary school students. Through consistent practice in school activities, students showed improvements in social behavior, such as increased mutual respect, politeness in communication, and concern for friends and the school environment. The 5S Culture has proven to be an effective strategy in instilling social values and shaping the character of elementary school students, especially those in fourth grade.

These findings have important implications for the development of school culture and character education in elementary schools. The implementation of the 5S Culture is not only a symbolic activity, but can also be integrated into all aspects of school life, from teacher-student interactions and learning activities to overall school management. Thus, the 5S Culture can be used as a means of strengthening social ethics as well as a concrete effort to build a positive culture in line with the values of the Pancasila Student Profile. The results of this study also provide a basis for teachers and principals to design more focused and sustainable habit-forming policies in shaping students' social behavior.

Based on the results of the study, it is recommended that schools continue to develop and instill the 5S Culture consistently through planned activities involving the entire school community. Teachers need to be the main role models in applying the 5S attitude in every interaction with students, because role modeling is a major factor in the successful formation of social character. In addition, further research can be conducted by expanding the subject and location of the study in order to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the influence of the 5S Culture on various aspects of student character development in elementary schools.

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