

Implementation of 5S Culture in Forming Students' Religious Character at SD Negeri 5, Banda Aceh City

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the implementation of the 5S culture (Smile, Greet, Greeting, Politeness, and Courtesy) in shaping the religious character of students at SD Negeri 5, Banda Aceh City. This research is based on the importance of instilling religious character in elementary school students as a foundation for spiritual, social, and moral attitudes in daily life. A qualitative descriptive approach was applied in this study. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation, then analyzed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing techniques. The results show that the implementation of the 5S culture is carried out systematically and continuously through daily habituation activities in the school environment. The practice of smiling, greeting, and greeting is applied in interactions between teachers and students as well as between students. Meanwhile, politeness and courtesy are manifested in respectful behavior, the use of appropriate language, and compliance with school regulations. The implementation of the 5S culture has been proven to positively contribute to the formation of students' religious character, particularly in aspects of politeness, empathy, and respect for others. However, several challenges were identified, including inconsistent implementation and limited parental involvement at home. This study concludes that the 5S culture is effective in fostering religious character in students at SD Negeri 5, Banda Aceh City, through habituation and exemplary behavior demonstrated by the school community. The study recommends strengthening collaboration between schools and parents, as well as enhancing habituation programs to improve character building outcomes.

Keywords: 5S, character, culture, religious

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Introduction

Character education plays a crucial role in shaping students' personalities, attitudes, and behavior, particularly at the elementary school level. At this stage, students are at a critical developmental stage where moral and religious values begin to form and influence their daily actions (Sholeh et al., 2024). In the context of Indonesian education, strengthening religious character is considered crucial to support the development of students grounded in spirituality, demonstrating faith, piety, respect, and compassion for others. Therefore, schools function not only as academic learning institutions but also as environments that foster moral and religious values. One approach that can be implemented to support character formation is the 5S culture, which consists of Smile, Greet, Greeting, Politeness, and Courtesy (Siswa & Negeri, 2021). This cultural practice encourages positive social interactions, mutual respect, and a conducive school

atmosphere. The implementation of the 5S values reflects Islamic teachings and aligns with the national character development agenda, particularly in regions with deeply rooted Islamic culture. SD Negeri 5 Kota Banda Aceh is one school that promotes the 5S culture as part of its efforts to foster students' religious character (Permatasari et al., 2023).

Banda Aceh City, known for its strong adherence to Islamic values, provides an ideal environment for integrating these cultural practices into the educational process. Schools believe that daily practice of 5S activities helps students internalize religious and moral values, enabling them to practice politeness, respect, and empathy for others. However, implementing character education in schools is not without challenges. Factors such as diverse student backgrounds, levels of parental support, and varying degrees of consistency in practice can impact the success of character development initiatives (Teknologi & Indonesia, 2024). Therefore, investigating how the 5S culture is implemented and how it impacts students' religious character is crucial to understanding its effectiveness and identifying areas for improvement (Winanda et al., 2024). This study aims to describe the implementation of the 5S culture in shaping students' religious character at SD Negeri 5 Banda Aceh City. These findings are expected to contribute to the development of effective character education strategies, particularly within the context of Islamic-based educational environments in Indonesia.

The 5S culture (Smile, Greet, Greeting, Polite, and Courteous) is implemented at SD Negeri 5 Banda Aceh City. Indicators include observable aspects of school life, such as daily routines, teacher role models, school rules, visual reminders, and student engagement. These indicators help researchers identify the level and consistency of 5S implementation in the school environment. Examine factors that support or hinder the implementation of the 5S culture (Pratiwi & Anshari, 2024). Supporting factors include a positive school climate, teacher commitment, institutional policies, student motivation, and community or parental involvement. Conversely, inhibiting factors can include lack of parental support, inconsistencies in implementation, student challenges, and limited resources. These indicators guide the analysis of internal and external dynamics that influence the effectiveness of the program.

Explore how the implementation of the 5S culture contributes to the development of students' religious character (Yani et al., 2025). Indicators for this question include changes in student behavior, such as increased politeness, empathy, consistent religious practice, reduced negative behavior, and increased awareness of moral values (Ahmadi, 2025). This helps determine the outcomes of 5S-based character education. Overall, the listed indicators serve as measurable components aligned with each research question, facilitating a structured understanding of how the 5S culture is practiced, the factors influencing its implementation, and its impact on students' religious character development. This framework supports systematic data collection and ensures that the research remains focused and coherent.

Literature Review

Religious Character

Character is a person's nature, disposition, morals, or personality formed from a combination of virtues believed in and used as a guideline for perspective, thinking, behaving, and acting (Shallum et al. 2025). Character is the values embedded in a person through education, experience, experimentation, sacrifice, and environmental influences, combined with values from within humans to become a kind of intrinsic value that manifests in a system of fighting power that underlies a person's thoughts, attitudes, and behavior (Mayang & Jalaluddin, 2020). According to Supriyanto (2020), character is a characteristic inherent in an individual or object. Character is a person's personality formed from the internalization of various policies that are believed and used as a basis for perspective, thinking, behaving, and acting. Meanwhile (Mayang

et al. 2020) also stated that the terminology of character contains at least two things, namely values and personality, these values can be developed through habits and role models. A person's habits are formed from actions that are done repeatedly every day, these actions are initially conscious or intentional, but because the same action is done so often, eventually the habit becomes a reflex that is not realized by the person concerned.

Based on the quote above, character is a person's habits that are carried out spontaneously without prior consideration or thought. If these habits are practiced continuously, they will become a characteristic that is very difficult to change. Character is a way of thinking and behaving that characterizes each individual for living and working together, whether within the family, community, nation, or state. It can be concluded that an individual with good character is one who is able to make decisions and is prepared to take responsibility for the consequences of those decisions.

Instilling Islamic character values includes empathy, which is the emotional ability to feel the feelings of others. Conscience, which is the inner voice that is usually used in decision-making. Self-control, which is the ability to guide and direct oneself in positive behavior. Respect, which is the attitude of mutual respect for one's peers; the younger ones respecting the older ones, and the older ones caring for the younger ones. Kindness, which is helping children show concern for the welfare and feelings of others. Tolerance, which is mutual respect and appreciation for differences. Justice, which is treating others fairly without taking sides (Hamdiyah and Jumari 2023).

Religious character can also be seen in the concepts of adab (traditional morals) and akhlak (morals), which are essential foundations of Islamic education. Adab (traditional morals) is the recognition and acknowledgement of one's proper place, position, and circumstances within the order of life. Akhlak (morals) is a trait embedded in the soul that results in spontaneous actions without requiring thought or deliberation. These two concepts are the main pillars in character formation for students in educational institutions. The urgency of adab (traditional morals) and akhlak emphasizes their role in shaping Islamic character, personality development, and strengthening moral values. Integrating these values into modern education requires an innovative approach (Iqbal 2024).

According to Hamdiah & Jumari (2023), factors influencing the formation of religious character include: Internal factors are supporting or inhibiting factors originating within the individual, including instinct, belief, desire, conscience, and lust. External factors are supporting or inhibiting factors originating from outside, such as family, school, and the environment. The indicators of religious character according to Hamdiah & Jumari (2023) include: a) believing and being pious to Allah, b) being tolerant towards others (tasamuh), c) having a helpful spirit, d) forgiving, forgiving each other, e) hardworking, having a high spirit to achieve targets and f) being fair, which includes: being able to put down something that is not his right and not wanting more of something that is not his right.

5S culture

School culture is the traditions, beliefs, and norms within a school, which can be formed, strengthened, and maintained by all members of the school community, including the leadership, teachers, and students. School culture contains distinctive characteristics that can be identified through the values it upholds, the attitudes it possesses, the habits it displays, and the actions of all school personnel, who form a unique unit within the school system. According to Hamdiah & Jumari (2023), the 5S culture is:

1. A smile reflects a happy state of mind and is usually accompanied by lip movement and facial expressions.

2. A greeting is a form of conversation used to encourage others. This act can strengthen ties of friendship and Islamic brotherhood.
3. A greeting is a frequently uttered expression of affection and prayer for others.
4. Courtesy is a person's display of good manners through attitude, speech, and actions.

According to Reza Pahlevi (2018), the 5S culture (smile, greet, greeting, politeness, courtesy) can be interpreted as follows:

1. *Smiling is an act of worship.*

According to the Department of National Education, a smile is a silent, expressive laughter that shows joy, happiness, and so on by slightly expanding the lips. A smile can paralyze enemies, cure illness, strengthen bonds of brotherhood, heal mental wounds, and can be a means of achieving world peace.

2. *Greeting*

Greeting is synonymous with reprimanding. Greeting can mean inviting someone to a conversation. Greeting can make it easier for anyone to get along, contact, and interact with each other. Meanwhile, the Department of National Education explains that greeting means words of reprimand. Reprimanding in this case does not mean reprimanding for wrongdoing, but rather reprimanding someone because we meet someone, for example by calling their name or using familiar greetings like "hey." When someone greets another, the atmosphere becomes more familiar, comfortable, and appreciated.

3. *Greeting*

The word "greeting" comes from the Hebrew word "shalon," meaning peace. According to Alfonsus Sutamo (in Reza Pahlevi, 2018), "peace contains elements of friendship, joy, and an attitude or expression of respect for others." Greetings come in various forms, including greetings of introduction, greetings of meeting, and greetings of farewell. According to the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, "Salam" comes from the word "salam/sa-lam/," which means peace and is also an expression of respect.

4. *Politeness and Courtesy*

According to the Department of National Education (in Reza Pahlevi, 2018), "polite" means respect, reverence, and order according to custom. A polite person will behave according to custom and never violate it. Meanwhile, according to the Department of National Education, "polite" means refined and kind behavior, patient and calm, and full of compassion. Good manners should be instilled in children from an early age, so that they will carry their manners into adulthood. But in reality, many children now have their polite and courteous attitudes starting to fade, so in this case this is the influence of instilling a culture of politeness and politeness. The character values that can be applied through the 5S culture are discipline, friendship and love of peace. Characters that can be cultivated through the 5S culture include good manners towards fellow students, older students (seniors), and respect for teachers. Manners are divided into two types: 1) polite language, the way a person interacts socially using gentle words; 2) polite behavior, the way a person expresses themselves and treats others well (Rusmini, 2023).

According to Robbins, school culture has general characteristics including: individual initiative, tolerance, mutual respect and appreciation for differences, direction, integration, bringing small things together, management support, control, identity, reward systems, tolerance towards the public, and communication patterns (Annisa, 2019). Hamdiah & Jumari (2023) state that indicators of a 5S school culture include, among others: a) having a friendly attitude,

students are encouraged to be friendly towards each other, teachers, and the school community; b) having ethics, students are encouraged to be polite towards teachers and the school community; c) have a respectful nature, students are encouraged to respect each other, teachers and residents at school; d) caring for others, students are encouraged to have a caring attitude towards others, teachers, and residents at school; e) upholding cultural ethics, students are encouraged to uphold the cultural ethics that exist at school; and f) discipline, students are encouraged to comply with the regulations that have been set by the school.

Method

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design (Satya et al., 2024). This approach was chosen to provide an in-depth understanding of the implementation of the 5S culture (Smile, Greet, Greeting, Polite, and Courteous) and its role in shaping students' religious character at SD Negeri 5 Banda Aceh City. Qualitative methods allowed researchers to explore natural behaviors, interactions, and perceptions within the school environment (Moleong, 2020). This research was conducted at SD Negeri 5 Banda Aceh City, an elementary school located in Banda Aceh, Indonesia. Participants included: the principal, teachers, students, and support staff (if involved) (Azis et al., 2024).

Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on their role and relevance to the implementation of the 5S culture within the school environment. Data were collected through three main techniques: This researcher conducted non-participant observations of daily school activities to examine 5S practices, including student greetings, classroom interactions, and the overall school climate. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the principal, teachers, and selected students to obtain detailed information about the implementation process, supporting and inhibiting factors, and the perceived impact on students' religious character (Pendidikan, 2020). Relevant documents such as school programs, posters, attendance records, photographs, and activity reports were reviewed to support observation and interview data. The primary instrument in this study was the researcher, supported by: an observation guide, an interview guide, and a documentation checklist.

Result and Discussion

Results

1. Implementation of 5S Culture

The findings show that the 5S culture—Smile, Greeting, Salutation, Courtesy, and Politeness - is implemented consistently in the daily school environment. Implementation takes place through:

Table: 1. Implementation of 5S Culture

Activity Area	Description
Arrival & Dismissal	Students greet teachers and peers with polite language and smiling.
Classroom Interaction	Teachers model 5S behavior; students respond with respectful communication.
Religious Activities	Students apply polite language and respectful posture during daily worship.
School Environment	Posters and reminders of 5S are placed around school facilities.

(Implementation of 5S Culture in Forming Students' Religious Character ...)

Teachers consistently model 5S values and integrate them into routines, such as greeting before lessons begin, encouraging polite expressions, and emphasizing respect. The following is the implementation:



Figure 1. Implementation of 5S for students

Teachers consistently model the 5S values and integrate them naturally into the daily school routine. Each morning, they warmly greet students before class begins, creating a friendly and positive atmosphere. Throughout the learning process, teachers encourage the use of polite language and guide students to communicate effectively and tactfully. Mutual respect is emphasized in every interaction, both between teachers and students and between students. Through continuous modeling, teachers not only teach the 5S values but also embed them in the classroom culture, enabling students to internalize and apply them in their daily lives.

2. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

Table: 2. Supporting factors

Supporting Factors	Description
School policy	The 5S culture is included in school programs.
Teacher commitment	Teachers consistently model 5S values.
Religious environment	Banda Aceh context supports Islamic manners.
Student motivation	Students feel encouraged to behave politely.





Figure 2. Supporting factors of 5S

Teachers are seen setting an example by greeting students politely and friendly, demonstrating a strong commitment to modeling the 5S values daily. The teachers' smiles, greetings, and salutations create a warm and respectful atmosphere, helping to build positive relationships between teachers and students. These interactions not only demonstrate the practice of good manners but also illustrate how teachers serve as models of Islamic behavior in the school environment. Students who receive greetings appear to respond respectfully and enthusiastically, reflecting that the 5S practices have become ingrained in them and become part of the school culture that supports the formation of religious character.

Table: 3. Inhibiting Factors of 5S

Inhibiting Factors	Description
Parental inconsistency	Home culture may not reinforce 5S values.
Individual student differences	Some students are less responsive.
Limited supervision	Crowded activities reduce monitoring.



Figure 3. Inhibiting Factors of 5S

Interviewee	Aspects Asked	Summary of Interview Results
Principal	5S Program Policy and Management	5S is part of the school policy and is included in the character development program. Routine socialization, supervision, and evaluation are conducted.
	Teacher Role	Teachers are expected to be primary role models in 5S through greetings, polite language, and daily interactions.
	School Environment	The Banda Aceh context and regular religious activities support the formation of religious morals.
	Challenges	Busy school activities and diverse family backgrounds lead to uneven implementation.
	Expectations	Greater parental involvement and the development of 5S habituation modules.
Teacher	Understanding and Implementation	Teachers greet students every morning, integrate 5S into their lessons, and serve as role models of Islamic morals.
	Student Response	The majority of students show positive changes; some are less responsive due to the influence of their home environment.
	Environmental Support	The school's religious atmosphere strongly supports the internalization of 5S.
	Challenges	Busy school activities and differences in home habits make supervision less than optimal.
	Recommendations	Teacher training, collaboration with parents, and regular evaluations.
Parents	Knowledge of 5S	Learned about the program through school outreach and WhatsApp groups. Assessed that 5S aligns with family values.
	Impact at Home	Children greet each other more often, speak politely, and show respect.
	Challenges	Children are inconsistent due to differing parenting styles and parents' busy schedules.
	Expectations	Routine parenting and stronger collaboration between school and family.
Students	Understanding of 5S	Learned about 5S from teachers and school posters; consider 5S a good habit.
	Experiences at School	Greet, smile, and say hello; teachers constantly remind them to be polite.
	Feelings and Motivations	Enjoyed being greeted by teachers; motivated to be polite to friends.
	Challenges	Busy environments can make students forget to practice 5S; friends don't always follow suit.
	Expectations	Additional activities and rewards for students who consistently practice 5S.

Some students appeared less responsive to implementing the 5S values, indicating that the home culture may not fully support the implementation of polite behavior, greetings, and courtesy as practiced at school. In the busy and busy school environment, teachers also struggled to maintain optimal student behavior. This situation illustrates that even though the 5S program is running, family environmental factors and limited supervision during peak activity times can hinder the consistency of these values. This image reflects the importance of collaboration between schools, parents, and improved classroom management to ensure that the 5S values are implemented evenly by all students.

3. Impact on Religious Character Formation

The implementation of the 5S culture shows a positive impact on students' religious character. Indicators of improvement include: increased politeness in speech, respect toward teachers and older people, empathy toward peers, improvement of discipline and responsibility, reduced

conflicts among students. Students demonstrate respectful greetings (salam), gentle speech, and empathy, aligning with Islamic values.

Discussion

1. Implementation of 5S Culture and Character Education Theory

The results align with Lickona's Character Education Theory, which emphasizes: Moral Knowledge, Moral Feelings, and Moral Actions. The 5S routine trains students in moral actions by demonstrating respectful behavior every day; teachers foster moral feelings by reinforcing empathy and caring, and students acquire moral knowledge through teaching about Islamic morals. In line with Thomas (1995), character formation must be instilled through daily routines; the 5S culture operationalizes this principle through structured repetition.

2. Social Learning Theory Perspective

Bandura's Social Learning Theory states that character development occurs through observation and imitation. In this study, students imitated the teacher's 5S behaviors (smiling, greeting, and speaking politely), demonstrating a modeling process in action. This supports Ahyani's (2021) research, which found that teacher modeling plays a significant role in shaping students' religious character in elementary schools.

3. Religious Character Development in an Islamic Context

Religious character encompasses morals, disciplined worship, and polite interactions. This research supports the findings of Rahmawati (2020), who stated that a religious school culture fosters spiritual habits and respectful behavior. Similarly, Nasution (2019) concluded that an Islamic learning environment fosters politeness, compassion, and respect. The 5S culture encourages: Smiling: demonstrating friendliness and positive energy. Salam: practicing shalom/peace in Islam. Sapa: openness in communication. Politeness & Courtesy: moral teachings in accordance with Islamic etiquette. This aligns with Nuryanto's (2018) research, which emphasized that Islamic habit-based programs strengthen students' faith and morals.

3. Supporting and Inhibiting Factors

These findings reflect the theoretical perspective of Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory, which states that character development is influenced by various systems, specifically: Microsystem: School and family. Mesosystem: The relationship between school and family. In this study, strong school influence supports the 5S, but weak parental reinforcement can hinder it. This is reinforced by Hidayat (2021), who found that parental involvement determines the sustainability of character education programs.

4. Contribution of 5S to Religious Character

Research results show that practicing 5S significantly contributes to improving manners and respectful communication, which are aspects of akhlakul karimah (noble character). A study by Salsabila (2022) found that verbal greetings, politeness, and empathy components of 5S are early indicators of strong religious character in early childhood. This is also in line with Amri's study (2025) which states that the 5S culture is a very important program and is needed by madrasas in

order to realize the vision and mission of madrasas, from the input component, it shows that the availability of technical guidelines and budgets is one of the keys in realizing the 5S culture program. However, there are several obstacles related to limited facilities. In terms of the process, the results of the study show that the implementation of the 5S culture has opportunities and challenges, however, the readiness and support of the madrasah principal and also teachers is one of the factors for the success of this program even though there is still a lack of parental involvement in supporting this program. In terms of products, the implementation of the 5S culture among students has an influence on student habits in improving discipline, and has a positive influence on the development of student character.

Implication

The findings of this study provide comprehensive implications that the implementation of the 5S culture plays a strategic and multidimensional role in shaping students' religious character. Therefore, all parties schools, teachers, parents, and policymakers—need to work together in an integrated manner to strengthen its implementation. Schools must consistently integrate 5S into their educational culture and activities and provide training for teachers to ensure systematic character development. Teachers need to model 5S values in daily learning and interactions, thereby becoming role models of Islamic behavior for students. Parents need to collaborate with schools to continue 5S practices at home to ensure their sustainability. Policymakers can support this by institutionalizing 5S in character education guidelines, providing facilities, and incorporating 5S indicators into school evaluations. Furthermore, future research is needed to deepen theoretical understanding and develop more effective 5S implementation models through comparative, quantitative, and longitudinal studies. With the involvement of all parties and continued research support, the 5S culture can become a strong foundation for the formation of students' religious character.

Conclusion

Based on the research results and discussion above, it can be concluded that the implementation of the 5S culture (smile, greeting, greeting, polite, courteous) in the formation of religious character of students at SD Negeri 5 Banda Aceh City is carried out through the habituation of positive interactions based on religious values by instilling habits such as greeting when meeting teachers, performing congregational prayers when the call to prayer sounds, forgiving each other when wrong, and helping each other as a manifestation of religious attitudes in everyday life. In the aspect of smiles, educators and educational staff welcome students with a smile which can foster a friendly and positive attitude. Teachers also give smiles and appreciation when students do good. Students get used to greeting and greeting teachers and friends, even shaking hands when meeting, which fosters respect and politeness and giving greetings when in front of teachers or older people as part of the students' polite attitude.

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