

STRENGTHENING THE CHARACTER TRAIT OF PEACEFULNESS THROUGH HABITUAL COMMUNICATION PRACTICE OF '3S' (SMILING, GREETING, SAYING HELLO) AT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE

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Abstract: This study aims to describe the reinforcement of the character trait of peacefulness in students through the habitual communication practice of the "3S" approach ("senyum," "salam," and "sapa") or smiling, greeting, saying hello at Taman Todda Qur'ani Early Childhood Education (PAUD) School in Jepara. The research employs a qualitative approach, with the study conducted at Taman Todda Qur'ani PAUD School in Jepara. The primary data sources for this research include the principal and teachers within the school environment. Data collection techniques involve interviews, observations, and documentation related to reinforcing the character of peacefulness through the habitual communication practice of the "3S" approach. The data analysis process involves data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The findings indicate that the habitual communication practice of "3S" effectively strengthens the students' character of peacefulness in the early childhood education environment of Taman Todda Qur'ani PAUD. Indicators of peaceful character include speaking politely to others when resolving conflicts, avoiding physical force, and demonstrating mutual love and care. The character of peacefulness is an attitude that fosters a sense of calm, safety, and comfort within society.

Keywords: Communication, Character, Habituation, Peace.

A. Introduction

Many cases occur within the scope of society, such as brawls between youths, bullying in the school environment, sexual harassment, persecution of fellow friends, and so on. This is due to low morals and character. The root of the problem is the lack of implementation of character education. Character education can form a good personality seen from an ethical or moral perspective, such as honesty, a sense of trustworthiness, and other characteristics that must be present in a person. (Ramadhanti & Vinayastri, 2022).

Early childhood education schools (PAUD) teach several subjects, including Islam, through the familiarity of smiles and greetings. Character learning is a trait or disposition instilled by the school environment through character education. The character of students in elementary school needs to be considered and known. One example is the character of the love of peace. (Fadillah, 2022a).

A peace-loving character is an attitude that causes others to feel calm and secure in their presence. By having a peace-loving character in a person, he can restrain himself from various disturbances that cause fights, such as mocking each other's friends. By applying the character of love of peace, a person will love peace and will not commit acts of violence. (Arifa Rizki Halim, Mislinawati, 2020).

Educational institutions or every school should instill a peace-loving attitude in students to form a good character. A peace-loving attitude must be constantly instilled and carried out by all involved in the educational process at school. More importantly, in this case, teachers should be able to be role models in applying this character. (Arifa Rizki Halim, Mislinawati, 2020).

In simple terms, communication is the process of delivering messages from communicator to communicator. This process can generate feedback from the communicator so that communication can occur two-way between the communicator and the communicator. Individuals can communicate in their style and way, but not all can communicate effectively. Effective communication can be interpreted as communication that can result in a change in attitude towards others. Attitude change is usually seen during communication and post-communication (Ruslan, 2020).

3S (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) is very well applied and is part of the habit of positive communication. The application of 3S (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) can be made anywhere, for example, in the school environment. 3S (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) can instill an upbeat personality in students. Technological advances cause children's morals and manners to decrease. Therefore, teacher guidance is needed to educate students to behave better, be polite, and respect each other. (Dhuha et al., 2021).

Early childhood education includes all educators' efforts in children's care, parenting, and education by creating an aura and environment. Children can explore experiences that allow them to know and understand the learning experiences they get from the environment through observing, imitating, and experimenting, which take place repeatedly and involve all the potential and intelligence of the child. Shaking hands is instilled and developed in early childhood through methods that are fun for children and do not make children bored quickly. Teachers as educators must be creative in finding ideas to choose the suitable method, especially when shaking hands with children. Through habituation in early childhood, they can more easily understand the importance of shaking hands. It is one of the wrong morals if they do not get used to shaking hands. (Liestari et al., 2015).

The character of loving peace is one of the characteristics that a person must possess. Therefore, this character needs to be instilled from an early age. The habit of doing good from an early age is easier to do than the habit of being an adult. In addition to being at home, this habit can be implemented in schools, including early childhood education. What distinguishes this research from other research is that this research only focuses on the 3S habituation to strengthen the peace-loving character of students.

Smile Concept

Smiling in the KBBI dictionary is described as silent expressive laughter movements that show joy, joy, joy, and so on by developing lips slightly. This definition illustrates that a smile is positive body language. In fact, according to some psychologists, Allan and Barbara Pease, a smile is a gesture that can disarm others (Sufyan Syauqi, 2019).

Batson et al. (2002) define a smile as a process in human beings that is so beautiful, starting from an object, and then our five senses capture and know it. In this process, tremendous energy in the form of happiness will appear in the heart so that there is a smile. (Nurliani Firdaus & Ramli, 2023)

Husley in Azmi (2021) defines a smile as a change in facial expressions that causes eyes to shine and the corners of the mouth to curve upwards without sound, joy, pleasure, affection, approval, control, and other emotions. (Nurliani Firdaus & Ramli, 2023).

This means that the action is an effective communication that aims to make it easier for others to understand the content or message the communicator conveys. One of the goals is for the information transferred to produce feedback from communicators. (Ruslan, 2020).

Mackley in Febrianto & Widiana (2019) defines a smile as an individual's facial expression to express their feelings, a sense of friendship, agreement, and an individual's appreciation for others. As a social being, in the interaction and association with fellow humans, the appearance of a dazzling smile and balance are very needed or valuable. In Islam, a smile is interpreted as worship in the form of alms, which is the easiest to do. Some Muslims have become obliged to do alms as proof of obedience to Allah SWT. Smiling also has various positive impacts and benefits. One of the benefits of smiling is that it reduces stress levels. Psychology (Nurliani Firdaus & Ramli, 2023).

A smile attitude or behavior is one of the expressions we can see on a person's face, which is also part of a positive expression that will describe the person's mood or the smile's owner. A simple way most people express feelings of joy and happiness is by spreading a smile to their fellow humans. In religion, it is also said that a smile is worship, so when we smile, it will be of worship value. A smile is included in the lightest form of alms and is easy to apply daily. (Arifin, 2021).

A smile is an expression of happy emotions. With a smile, children can signal to those around them about the situation they are experiencing and the need for interpersonal relationships. In short, emotions help children to survive and communicate with the environment. Emotions develop all the time. Emotions in early childhood develop from simple to more complex conditions.

Emotions develop as a result of interaction with the environment (Martani, 2012).

Concept of Greetings

One of the noble morals of believers in social relations with others is to say greetings. Whether it is greetings to greet and pray for others who pass by or by deeds by always spreading the meaning of greetings in peace, safety, and the best prayers in life. Greetings are the most effective means of communication to strengthen social bonds. Greetings can bring the distance or social gap that is starting to widen in the current era. Greetings will make people who were previously unknown become acquaintances and strengthen relationships with familiar people. Greetings also dilute hostility and suspicion among others.

In forming a conducive condition through shaking hands, according to Fauzul Iman (2005), humans have several intentions: first, to apologize for their mistakes. Second, as a sign of friendship. Third, because they have not seen each other for a long time. Fourth, to strengthen friendship. Therefore, if we want to improve unity and multiplication, we should shake hands. Shaking hands is something good and part of politeness. Even people who do not want to shake hands when meeting or present at a meeting are usually considered arrogant and uncivilized. (Munadi, 2021).

Handshake in Arabic comes from the word “al-mushafahah,” which means the meeting of the sides or faces of the palms with the position of the faces facing each other. According to Ibn Munzir, it is termed shaking hands; it is sticking or sticking the palm with another person’s palm and facing the face (back and forth) (Ibn Munzir al-Afkiri al-Mishri, 1374). Meanwhile, according to Bahrudin Fuad (2014), a handshake is a succession of reaching out and always grasping it until a sufficient amount of time is used to say greetings and ask questions (Ramdani et al., 2022).

Ramdani et al. (2022) also stated that shaking hands when meeting, according to Munadi (2021), is not limited to moving hands without meaning. However, a form of action based on love for Allah swt. and strong faith accompanied by giving a smile so that there is more friendship, increased love, and abort sin. After that, the virtue of mushafahah (shaking hands), every practice suggested by Islam, certainly has excellent virtue, whether it is

experienced directly or not. Shaking hands is a significant priority, and there are great rewards. Shaking hands is listed among the triggers for the removal of sin. (Ramdani et al., 2022).

Confident children dare to try new things and make their own decisions. One of them is his courage to greet his friends and teachers. Children who dare to try new things and make their own decisions can learn to be responsible and accept the consequences. The characteristics of students who have high self-confidence are that they dare to interact with the social environment, want to get to know peers or other people, are brave enough to have eye contact with others, can socialize, and are happy when dealing with people other. (Ma'rufi et al., 2018).

Concept of Say Hello

Various greetings are used in many forms and references. Following the view of Sumampouw (2000), every act of speech produced in a speech event created due to face-to-face social interaction in any variety involves one crucial aspect, namely the greeting system. In social interaction, the greeting system has another term: saying hello. (Wibowo & Retnaningsih, 2015).

As Rahman & Ningsih (2022) stated, speaking or greeting is an important aspect that the speaker, namely politeness, must consider. From language politeness, speakers can look polite or not when talking to others. In speech, the speaker must also be more careful in speaking, not saying things that are not true or speaking to offend the other person. (Ardila & Ningsih, 2023).

As stated by Mailawati (2023), speaking or greeting plays an essential role in communication because humans are never separated from spoken language in the form of speech or saying hello when talking and interacting with others. The act of speaking or saying hello manifested in everyday language is a whole unit that can be researched and cannot be separated from the context and social structure of individuals in society. (Larasati et al., 2022).

Greeting words are words used to greet, reprimand, or refer to the second person or the person you are talking to. Badudu (1986) defines "hello" as a word to greet someone being talked to or a talking partner. Say hello can be morphemes, words, or phrases that refer to a conversational situation and vary according to the nature of the relationship between speakers. (Herniti, 2014) This means an effective communication process must be carried out

using unambiguous language (Ruslan, 2020).

In Islam, saying greetings is a *sunnah mu'akkadah*, a strengthened sunnah. Greetings are one of the rights a Muslim must fulfill to his fellow Muslim brothers. Islam encourages its followers to spread greetings to everyone, both Muslims and non-Muslims. Islamic law teaches its people to continually increase their love for fellow Muslims, strengthening brotherhood and affection. Love and affection can be formed by saying hello to others.

Greetings function in three stages. These three stages are greetings spoken as part of the culture of fellow Muslims, greetings containing peace, and peace greetings functioning as a system for interacting with fellow human beings, both Muslims and non-Muslims. Instilling communicative character education in students requires a form of example and habituation. The nature of students who like to imitate makes it necessary to set an example for a teacher. A simple thing teachers can do to develop communicative character is to get into the habit of greeting or saying hello when they meet students. The morning greeting activity can reflect the implementation of character education in elementary schools. (Nugroho & Pangestika, 2017).

The positive impacts of implementing greetings include 1) Reduced arguments between students. 2) Students have politeness and respect teachers more. 3) Dare to communicate with friends, teachers, and school principals. 4) Can socialize with classmates and other classes (Nugroho & Pangestika, 2017).

B. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive research type. This research aims to comprehensively uncover facts related to strengthening the peace-loving character of children through 3S communication (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) in PAUD schools. The research location is at the PAUD school Taman Toddler Qur'ani Jepara. This school was chosen because it implements the 3S (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) habits that improve children's character. Data collection in this research was carried out through interviews, observation, and documentation. Primary data was obtained through interviews with school principals and one teacher. Students were not used

as subjects (interview sources) because their age was too early. Apart from interviews, observations were also conducted to obtain broader and more detailed data. Secondary data was obtained by studying documents and archives.

The data that has been obtained is then checked for validity using triangulation. Then, data analysis techniques are used to reduce data, present data, and draw conclusions. Reducing data means summarizing, selecting, and sorting the main things, focusing on the essential things, and looking for themes and patterns. In this way, the reduced data will provide a clearer picture, making it easier for researchers to collect and search for data when necessary. In qualitative research, data presentation can be done through short descriptions, relationship charts between categories, flowcharts, etc. The third step in qualitative research data analysis is concluding and verifying. The initial conclusions reached are still temporary and will change if strong supporting evidence is not found at the following data collection stage. However, suppose the conclusions put forward at the initial stage are supported by valid and consistent evidence when the researcher returns to the field to collect data. In that case, the conclusions put forward are credible.

C. Result and Discussion

Smile Habituation Communication

As mentioned by the results of the interview by N (teacher) at the PAUD Taman Todda Qur'ani Jepara school, "Every morning before entering the classroom, the children first line up, pray, have fun through singing, then shake hands with their mothers, teachers and friends" (Interview, 31 August 2024, at 07.20 WIB).

The 3S culture (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) to teachers and colleagues who are met is not only done in the morning when entering the school but also seen shaking hands when meeting with ustadzah and ustadz both in the PAUD school environment, such as in the classroom or outside the classroom such as in the school hallways (Maftukha & Kurniawan, 2023).

The habit of smiling for children in the PAUD school environment of Taman Todda Qur'ani Jepara is motivated by the words of the Prophet Muhammad Saw. as follows:

نَعَّ كَتَيْهَنَو فَيورُ عَمَلِ ابِ كَرْمُأَو ،عُقِدَصَ كَلَّ كَتَيْخَأ وَجَوَّ يِفِ كَمْسُ بَت
 كَرَصَبَو ،عُقِدَصَ كَلَّ لَالِ صَلَّ اَضْرَأَ يِفِ لَجْرَلِ الْكَدَّاشِرِو ،عُقِدَصَ رَكْنُ مَلِ
 مَطْعَلِ اَوَّ كَتَوْشَلِ اَوَّ رَجَحَلِ كَتَشَطَامِو ،عُقِدَصَ كَلَّ رَصَبَلِ اِيْدِرَلِ لَجْرَلِ
 عُقِدَصَ كَلَّ كَتَيْخَأ وِلْدَ يِفِ كَوَلْدَ نَمِ كَغَارَفِو ،عُقِدَصَ كَلَّ قِيْرَطْلِ اِنَعَّ

“Senyummu kepada saudaramu merupakan sedekah, engkau berbuat ma’ruf dan melarang dari kemungkarannya juga sedekah, engkau menunjukkan jalan kepada orang yang tersesat juga sedekah, engkau menuntun orang yang berpenglihatan kabur juga sedekah, menyingkirkan batu, duri dan tulang dari jalan merupakan sedekah, dan engkau menuangkan air dari embermu ke ember saudaramu juga sedekah.”

The above hadith shows that a smile is a small behavior, even a glimpse of a trivial thing to do, but it is valuable in the sight of Allah (Sufyan Syauqi, 2019).

This means that we have been given an excellent example of the smile of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. A smile is the most crucial strategy he used throughout his da’wah’s history in developing Islam. With a smile, the Prophet can melt the hardness of the heart of anyone he faces. He always invited his people to decorate their lives with noble morals and use smiles as a vehicle to compete to do good. According to him, smiling is worship. He also once said in a hadith, “Your smile in front of your brother is alms” (Mudjia Rahardjo, 2010).

S3 habituation activities, namely smiling, greetings, and saying hello at the PAUD Taman Todda Qur’ani Jepara school, are in line with Ening Herniti’s thoughts in the results of her research entitled “Greetings in the Islamic Religious Realm.” The results confirmed that Greetings are words used to greet, reprimand, or mention the second person or the person to whom they are talking. Greetings can present religion. The selection of greeting forms in each language has different rules due to various cultural and social backgrounds. Greetings in the religious realm are also different. Religious terms are a form of greeting. (Herniti, 2014) This PAUD school will create a peaceful and conducive atmosphere through smiles, greetings, and saying hello.

It can be understood that the character of peace-loving can make a person avoid disturbances that lead to fights and bullying so that they can respect every difference in the community, to other individuals and groups rather than themselves and their group. (Ramadhanti & Vinayastri, 2022).

Spontaneous habits are activities carried out suddenly without being limited by time, place, and space. The aim is to

provide spontaneous education, especially in getting used to good manners and other commendable attitudes. Examples of spontaneous habitual activities are asking for help kindly, offering help, and visiting a friend who is sick.

Giving a smile to people they meet is one form of spontaneous habituation. This is because smiling is done spontaneously when students meet people they know. Giving a sincere smile will make it easier for students to interact and build relationships with others.

To build the habit of smiling, teachers can do various things. Teachers can set an example for students. For example, teachers always give a friendly smile to students and parents when they meet. In addition, schools can also hold 3S activities (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) before students enter the classroom.

Familiarity Communication Greetings or Shaking Hands

Based on observations that children in PAUD schools have made, they apply the habit of shaking hands every day at 06.30-07.15 with school elements such as leaders, teachers, and Staff welcoming the arrival of children in the school environment, children approach the teachers and then shake hands by kissing the teacher's hand. (Prakarsa, 2020). Then the children said Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakaatuh (September 2, 2024).

The habit of greetings, in this case, is interpreted as shaking hands, as mentioned above. This is part of the daily activities carried out by children in the school environment, which aligns with the school's visions and missions, namely "forming the personality of children with moral character *al-karimah*."

As stated by Masnur Muslich (2011), education is a process of internalizing culture into a person so that it makes a person civilized or characterful. Education is not only a suggestion to transfer knowledge but also to teach values. Education must also be able to make students have good character and morals. The activity of shaking hands can be said to be a habituation activity or school routine because it is carried out continuously from the time the child enters the school gate and enters the classroom until the learning in the classroom ends. (Prakarsa, 2020).

Roshita (2015) stated that manners are students' behavior in daily life and must be by nature, place, time, and environmental conditions. It is obvious that habituation is very necessary to be instilled from an early age so that children get used to shaking hands, good behavior, and especially in the pronunciation of greetings (Audine et al., 2023).

Still related to the habit of shaking hands, as the results of an interview with N, one of the school teachers stated, "Greeting activities at school are part of daily habits. This activity is part of the form of Islamic religious teachings. One of the goals of this morning's shaking hands is that all children are used to greeting others by shaking hands and can realize a sense of peace, which is the best prayer in daily life (Interview, 31 August 2024, at 11.46 WIB).

The handshake activity aligns with the results of a study by Evy Liestari, Muhamad Ali, and Sri Lestari with the theme: Habituation of shaking hands in children aged 5-6 years in kindergarten. The result is that the behavior shown by children in shaking hands seems to have begun to be able to apply to shaking hands, namely by using the right hand, accompanied by greetings and polite attitudes. This attitude of shaking hands is shown by children coming to school before entering class and apologizing to friends, and children are seen as wanting to go home from school. (Liestari et al., 2015).

Among the means of education is education with habits". That is, getting the child used to certain things so that they become his habits and do it without needing direction. The habit of shaking hands from an early age will become inherent in the child, so he feels comfortable shaking hands with older people. (Audine et al., 2023).

This means that communication is one of a person's skills to influence his life. Good communication does not cause misunderstandings. 3S (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) is a type of good communication that promotes mutual respect and respect for each other (Dhuha et al., 2021).

As Saputra (2020) said, when a person can appreciate the success of others, it is a form of love and peace. The advantage of a child with a peace-loving attitude is that he can respect and accept every difference and always do good to others. This is an element of peace-loving, so he can control his emotions and be good. (Ramadhanti & Vinayastri, 2022) The character of peace-loving is an attitude that makes people feel calm, safe, and comfortable. (Fadillah, 2022b).

Teachers need to build an atmosphere that is familiar to students and make each child comfortable with each other so that there is equality between children and children do not discriminate between their friends. After that, teachers make it a habit for students to be non-violent and caring for others, thus creating a peace-loving school environment. (Arifa Rizki Halim,

Mislinawati, 2020).

Shaking hands is also a form of spontaneous habituation because shaking hands is done suddenly without being limited by time, place, and space. Shaking hands is a spontaneous action carried out by someone when meeting or parting with someone, saying congratulations, expressing gratitude, and so on.

Teachers can teach the habit of shaking hands through role models. Habits through role models are more effective for children because children imitate what they see. Teachers can set an example by shaking hands when meeting or parting with students or fellow teachers, congratulating students who excel, and so on.

Habitual Communication: Say Hello

The results of an interview with N, one of the PAUD school teachers, stated that the children had done it to apply the habit of greeting their teachers and friends. The earliest was when the teacher said “Assalamu’alaikum” to the teacher and greeted their friends. The mother of each teacher guides this habit—the teacher guides ten students. Through the patience and perseverance of each teacher, the children in this school gradually get used to shaking hands. The habit of greeting is the most urgent when the children have entered the classroom, where the teacher greets the children by attending one by one (Interview, 2 September 2024).

He patiently waits for the teacher to call his name. After the teacher calls his name, the child raises his hand and answers the teacher by saying “present” for boys and “attend” for girls. It can be said that the peaceful and friendly character of love for peace and friendliness is evident in the children’s daily activities at the PAUD school. (Inayah, 2022).

It can be understood that communication can occur anywhere and anytime, whether it happens inside the house or outside the home, between children and parents, between students and teachers, between superiors and subordinates, between communicators and communicators, and so on. (Ammaria, 2017).

Muslims usually give greetings to other Muslims when greeting or starting a conversation. When visiting, Muslims usually include this greeting when knocking on the door. This greeting can be said anytime, especially when Muslims want to greet each other. Greetings are done spontaneously, so this habit is included in spontaneous habits. Because not everyone does this, habituation can be done by saying hello before and after learning.

Peace is interpreted as the absence of war or conflict and violence. The causative factor for a peaceful atmosphere is when

individuals have a sense of peace in themselves and can control their emotions and thoughts to avoid taking actions that harm others and can trigger conflicts and violence. Sahlan and Angga (2012) state that love of peace is “attitudes, words, and actions that cause others to feel happy and safe in their presence.” The values contained in peace education are mutual respect, love, fairness, justice, cooperation, and tolerance (Chaer, 2017) Understandably, a person who does not have a peace-loving character will tend to do wrong and dangerous things for themselves and others. (Ramadhanti & Vinayastri, 2022).

According to Barizi and Riko (2021), peace-loving characters have several indicators: speaking politely to fellow humans, not using physical force when solving problems, and loving and cherishing each other. (Dewantari et al., 2023). To achieve effective communication, especially with people of different cultures, we must empathize with our communication partner, trying to put ourselves in his position. Use appropriate greetings according to the culture. (Ammaria, 2017).

D. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it has been found that 3S habituation communication (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) can strengthen the peace-loving character of students in the early childhood education environment (PAUD) of Taman Todda Qur’ani Jepara. The character of peace-loving has several indicators, including saying hello or speaking politely to fellow humans when solving problems, not using physical strength, and loving and cherishing each other. The character of peace-loving is an attitude that makes people feel calm, safe, and comfortable.

This research is limited to the habit of 3S (Smiling, Greetings, Saying Hello) in strengthening the character of loving peace. On other occasions, other researchers can reveal habits other than those mentioned to strengthen children’s peace-loving character.

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