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## Digital Generation: Are Manners Fading? Case Study at SDN 212 Harapan

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### Abstract

*The digital generation has had a significant impact on various aspects of life, including education. Elementary school students, as a generation that is in the stage of cognitive and social development, are vulnerable to the negative impact of using digital media without supervision, one of which is the decline in manners. This study aims to analyse the factors that influence elementary school students' manners in the digital era and the efforts made by teachers in instilling these values. The research used a qualitative approach with a case study design. The results showed that digital media poses a big challenge to students' character building, especially good manners. However, character-based programmes such as the Pancasila Student Profile Strengthening Project (P5), the implementation of the 5S culture (smile, greeting, greeting, politeness, courtesy), and collaboration between schools and parents can have a positive influence in instilling the values of courtesy. The role of the teacher as the main role model in shaping student character is crucial. In addition, continuous evaluation of programme implementation is needed to ensure the success of character building. With a good synergy between schools, parents and students, the value of good manners can be maintained and strengthened despite the digital era.*

**Keywords** – Digital era, Elementary school, Politeness, Character education, Social media impact



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## **1. Introduction**

The digital era has brought significant changes in various aspects of life, including in education. This transformation not only affects teaching methods, but also the way students learn and interact in educational environments (Purba & Saragih, 2023; Annisa & Puri Pramudiani, 2022). The digital generation, which has grown up with technology as an integral part of their daily lives, has extensive access to information and various digital platforms (Jati, 2021). The internet is one of the results of technological development that provides a variety of sites, including social media (Noor & Damariswara, 2022). However, behind the various conveniences that technology offers, there are concerns regarding the fading of social values, such as good manners, especially among the younger generation (Nasution, 2022).

Along with the progress of time and modernisation, social media has become one of the most influential aspects in the development of technology today. The worldwide use of social media not only affects adolescents and adults, but has also begun to affect children at the primary school level. This can be seen from the increasing number of fifth and sixth grade elementary school students who use social media. At this level, students have generally entered the puberty phase, so they tend to be more interested in interacting through social media (Nasution, 2022).

The uncontrolled use of social media triggers various impacts, both positive and negative, for primary school students. However, the negative impact is more dominant, one of which is the reduction of manners in students (Nasution, 2022). This problem often occurs due to a lack of assistance from parents when children use social media. In addition, this problem is also influenced by environmental factors and students' backgrounds (Nasution, 2022). As a result, students tend to show indifference to the surrounding environment and lack respect for others, including friends and family (Amaruddin, 2016).

In fact, many students still do not understand the importance of politeness and ethical norms in interacting with their social environment. There are still

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students who fight against their teachers, when socialising with their friends, they use harsh language, and there are even students who feel that they are close to the teacher so they act as they please without any restrictions in terms of behaviour and language.

Manners are unwritten norms that regulate how a person should behave and behave in accordance with the values prevailing in society (Fauzia Qonita, 2019). However, in children and adolescents, these manners are still not optimally developed. Currently, many children and adolescents do not apply politeness values, especially in the use of language in communication (Dwi et al., 2024). As a result, they tend to use speech that is rude, unfriendly, unfriendly, seems haughty or arrogant, pushy, and mocking.

Over time, various politeness and civility problems are increasingly common, both in the school environment and outside of school. For example, students no longer greet each other or give greetings when meeting teachers and friends, and speak impolitely to teachers, friends, and elders (Kurniawan et al., 2019). This condition shows that the attitude of courtesy has not been optimally embedded in students, so it requires further attention and guidance.

The importance of applying good manners to elementary school students is because they are still in the cognitive and social development stage, where the initial foundation of character values is formed, by teaching good manners from an early age helps them develop good characters such as empathy, respect, and responsibility, as well as being the basis for positive social interactions and preventing the emergence of selfishness and intolerance (Munir & Suparman, 2020). Good manners play an important role in creating a conducive and harmonious learning environment. Students who are accustomed to applying good manners tend to be more able to respect their teachers and friends. This in turn helps create a positive classroom atmosphere and supports the learning process optimally (Astuti, 2019).

In the current era, good manners have significant urgency in the context of education and social development of the younger generation. Fundamental

changes in ways of interacting and communicating, especially among children and adolescents, make strengthening the values of good manners even more important (Purba & Saragih, 2023).

The increase in cases of violations of ethics and manners in the school environment is a strong indicator of a crisis in the value of civility that needs to be addressed (Kurniawan et al., 2019). The decline in the quality of interactions between students and teachers and fellow students not only impacts the learning atmosphere in the classroom, but can also affect students' long-term character development. Poor or disharmonious interactions can hinder the formation of positive social attitudes, such as empathy, co-operation and respect for others. In addition, poor interactions can also reduce learning motivation and increase tension in the classroom, which in turn impacts students' academic and social development (Dwi et al., 2024). Therefore, instilling character values, including good manners, from an early age is becoming increasingly crucial to shape an ethical generation in the current era. In addition, teachers also face new challenges in balancing the use of technology with the cultivation of traditional values (Lutfiana et al., 2022). This calls for new strategies in character education that are relevant to the digital era.

This condition demands a new strategy in character education that is relevant to the times. This is in line with research showing that a decline in manners at a young age can impact the quality of social interactions in adulthood (Mutmainnah et al., 2024). This emphasises the urgency of understanding and addressing this issue to prepare a generation capable of interacting positively in a digital society. Therefore, further research is needed to develop effective strategies for instilling the value of good manners in the digital era, as well as to understand the dynamics of changes in social behaviour due to technological advances. This research is important to formulate appropriate solutions so that the negative impact of technology on students' character development can be minimised. With in-depth research, it is hoped that a better approach can be

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found to balance the use of technology with student character building, so that the younger generation can still maintain good manners and strong moral values.

Literature reviews on the influence of gadgets on various aspects of children's lives have been conducted by many researchers before. Every year, the use of gadgets among primary school students continues to show a significant increase. One of the relevant studies was conducted by Abdul Latif & Lestari (2021), who examined the influence of gadgets on children's social development during the pandemic. The study showed that gadgets have both positive and negative impacts. On the one hand, gadgets are the main tool that helps children in the distance learning process. However, on the other hand, excessive dependence on gadgets also brings negative impacts. In addition, another study by Siswa (n.d.) highlighted the influence of social media on children's polite behaviour. The results of this study revealed that excessive use of social media can trigger a behavioural crisis, including a reduction in children's manners towards parents. These findings provide important evidence that children's use of technology needs to be supervised and directed wisely.

This research aims to explore efforts that can be made to improve the quality of character education in Indonesia. By understanding the root of the existing problems and formulating appropriate solutions, it is hoped that the digital generation can grow into individuals who are not only smart and creative, but also have strong moral values. In this context, teachers have a very important role in fostering character education, especially in instilling politeness in schools. Through the right approach, teachers can help students to develop good character and behave politely in everyday life (Putri et al., 2021).

Looking at the phenomenon of declining manners among elementary school students, this study aims to analyse in depth the factors that influence these changes, especially in the digital era. This analytical approach is expected to identify the root of the problem that is the main cause of the decline in the quality of manners in students. In addition, this research will also analyse the various efforts made by teachers to foster and strengthen manners in the school

environment, so as to provide effective solutions in overcoming this problem. Thus, the results of this study are expected to provide useful insights to improve the quality of education and character building of students in the digital era.

## **2. Method**

In this study, researchers adopted a qualitative approach, which is rooted in the philosophy of postpositivism. This approach is used to explore a deep understanding of phenomena that occur in a natural context, where the researcher acts as the main instrument in collecting and analysing data (Wahyuni et al., 2024). Qualitative research aims to gain a deep understanding of a phenomenon or problem using systematic scientific procedures, which allows researchers to explore various aspects and meanings contained in the phenomenon. (Afrilia et al., 2024).

This research uses a case study approach to explore the factors that influence primary school students' polite behaviour in the digital era, as well as the strategies applied by teachers in instilling the value. Data were collected through three main methods: observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data sources included primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained from direct observations and interviews with two grade IV teachers, as well as observations of five students at SDN 212 Harapan. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from literature reviews, written references such as journals and books, as well as relevant documents and archives.

The data analysis process used the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three main steps: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. These steps were continuous and interrelated to ensure a comprehensive and valid understanding. Observations focused on analysing the impact of technology on students' polite behaviour, while interviews were designed to explore respondents' perceptions of changes in students' attitudes due to exposure to digital technology.

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Data triangulation is done by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation to ensure the validity and reliability of the research. This approach provides a more in-depth perspective on the phenomenon under study by considering various points of view. Thus, the research results become more credible, accurate, and able to describe the topic studied as a whole.

### **3. Result and Discussion**

At SDN 212 Harapan, students are allowed to bring mobile phones with the rule that they are only used during tests or lessons that require a mobile phone. Apart from that use, students are required to collect mobile phones for the teacher, but there are still students who secretly do not collect them. There are some students who have permission to bring mobile phones every day with the aim of communicating with their parents so that they can pick them up, these students take the initiative to leave their mobile phones with the teacher. When students bring mobile phones, they will be collected first before the lesson starts, then distributed again after returning home. During learning, children are accompanied when using mobile phones, for example quizzes when using belajar.id, children like to ask for email, there are messages from people, they like to be guided again. The difficulty is not one or two people but several people, such as difficulty to enter so it must be supervised.

#### **The Influence of Digital Media on Students' Courtesy Attitudes**

The influence of digital media on the manners of primary school students can be seen from the negative impact of technology on their character (Sapan A, et.,al 2023). Based on the interview results, digital media has a significant impact on student character at SDN 212 Harapan.

Today's digital generation not only uses mobile phones for basic communication, but also accesses a variety of content that is not always appropriate for their age. As a result, there are changes in students' language and behaviour. A concrete example is the use of abusive language when playing online

games, especially when experiencing defeat. Students' mindset and communication are influenced by social media content, so the values of good manners are often overlooked.

In addition, students who are too engrossed in playing social media tend to neglect direct social interactions. For example, when playing online games, they often do not greet teachers or friends when they pass each other. This shows that the use of mobile phones without strict supervision can erode the values of courtesy that should be upheld.

### **Challenges in Instilling the Value of Politeness**

In an effort to implement good manners in students, teachers are faced with various challenges in instilling these values in the classroom. One of the main challenges is the large number of students, which makes it difficult to give individual attention to each student. In addition, differences in parenting patterns between parents at home and teachers at school often cause confusion in children about the norms of manners that should be followed (Isjoni, 2019).

Students often face difficulties in understanding the importance of applying good manners in interacting with others. The unstable condition of emotional development is one of the factors that cause them to be less consistent in internalising and applying the values of courtesy that have been taught (Fatimah, 2020).

The diversity of student characters, such as differences in background and personality, requires a varied approach in instilling the values of courtesy. In addition, peer influence plays an important role in the application of good manners in everyday life. At the age of grade 4, students tend to imitate the behaviour of their friends. If peers do not show good manners, students tend to follow that behaviour. Thus, peers have a significant role in shaping student character, including in the aspect of good manners (Maulana & Supriyanto, 2020).

Maintaining a balance between academic material and character education is a challenge for teachers, who often find it difficult to allocate proportional time for both. The curriculum is dense and orientated towards



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academic achievement, so the focus on character development, including the cultivation of good manners, is limited. As a result, time for social learning is often neglected, and teachers tend to give more attention to academic aspects than character building.

### **Efforts to Cultivate Politeness through the P5 and 5S Programmes**

To overcome the negative impact of social media, the school integrates the values of courtesy through the P5 programme (Projek Penguatan Profil Pelajar Pancasila) and the 5S programme (Senyum, Salam, Sapa, Sopan, Santun).

Project P5 focuses on the dimension of gotong royong with the theme of sustainable lifestyle. In this activity, students are invited to plant vegetables such as kale, spinach, lettuce, pakcoy, and long beans. This activity not only teaches farming skills, but also fosters a sense of responsibility, cooperation, and mutual respect. Students who were initially less enthusiastic about watering the plants began to show positive attitude changes.

The 5S programme is implemented by getting teachers and students to greet each other every morning. Teachers are in charge of welcoming students at the school gate, teaching the importance of polite and friendly interactions. In addition, every Friday dhuha prayers and reading the Qur'an are held as a habit to instill religious and disciplinary values.

The most basic character education that has been introduced since childhood at school is the 5S culture (salam, senyum, sapa, sopan dan santun). The basic character education that is instilled from an early age, especially in the school environment, is the application of the 5S culture: greetings, smiles, greetings, politeness, and courtesy. This culture starts with greetings, which is the habit of students showing respect, for example by kissing the hands of teachers or elders as a form of respect. Furthermore, a smile reflects a facial expression that describes a person's mood, as well as a form of warmth and a positive attitude in interaction.

Third, sapa is an attitude to remain respectful of someone in the opinion of the 5S programme (salam, senyum, sapa, sopan dan santun) is part of the application of existing culture in schools (Santana & Suwanda, 2023).

### **School and Parent Collaboration**

The partnership between parents and teachers plays a crucial role in educating and guiding children towards optimal development. This synergy is able to provide comprehensive support and significant attention in the process of building children's character (Ramdan & Fauziah, 2019).

SDN 212 Harapan builds cooperation with parents to instill the values of courtesy through several steps. Firstly, through parenting socialisation which is conducted once a year at the moment of grade promotion or report card distribution to deliver programs related to the use of technology. Secondly, through workshops and training, the school sends representatives of teachers, students and parents to activities organised by the education office to strengthen character values. Thirdly, through joint monitoring activities, where teachers and homeroom teachers monitor students' character development through regular meetings at the end of each semester.

### **Evaluation of the Success of Cultivating the Value of Politeness**

Evaluation is conducted through an end-of-semester meeting to discuss the success of instilling the value of courtesy. The school also plans to use Google Forms to measure parents' satisfaction with the programme. The information obtained from this evaluation will be used as material for improvement in future programmes.

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#### 4. Conclusion

This research shows that the digital era brings great challenges to character education, especially in instilling the value of politeness among elementary school students. The use of digital media without strict supervision has the potential to erode polite values, as seen in the use of abusive language and disrespect in social interactions. Other challenges faced by teachers include differences in parenting, peer influence, and limited time to balance academic learning and character education.

As a solution to this problem, SDN 212 Harapan implemented the P5 and 5S programmes, which aim to strengthen courtesy through daily habituation such as greetings, smiles and sapa. The programme is also integrated into farming activities and religious customs such as duha prayers, which successfully foster attitudes of responsibility, cooperation and mutual respect. Collaboration between the school and parents is key in shaping students' character, with parenting socialisation, workshops and joint monitoring.

The evaluation results show that the programme contributes positively to improving students' civility. However, improvement efforts are needed, including the development of new strategies that are relevant to the dynamics of the digital era to ensure that the younger generation grows into individuals with good character, empathy and respect in their social interactions

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