

# Development of Patience and Sharing Character through Play Activities for Children Aged 3–4 Years

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the effectiveness of play activities in developing the characters of patience and sharing among children aged 3–4 years at the Setia Hati Playgroup in Gawang. The background of this research is based on the importance of character education from an early age as a foundation for shaping children's personalities. The research method used is Classroom Action Research (CAR) consisting of two cycles, each including planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The research subjects consisted of 9 children. Data collection techniques were carried out through observation, documentation, and field notes. The results of the study show that group play activities, role-playing, and turn-taking games can improve children's ability to demonstrate patient and sharing behaviors. The percentage of the development of patience increased from 45% in the pre-cycle to 82% in Cycle II, while the sharing character increased from 50% to 85%. Thus, play activities are effective in developing patience and sharing characters in early childhood.

**Keywords:** Character Education, Patience, Sharing, Play Activities, Early Childhood.

## I. Introduction

Early Childhood Education (ECE) plays a crucial role in shaping children's character, personality, and overall development. The early years of life are widely recognized as a critical period for cognitive, social, emotional, and moral development. Children aged 3–4 years are in what developmental psychologists often refer to as the "golden age", a phase when brain development occurs rapidly and when children are highly receptive to learning experiences from their environment. During this stage, children begin to develop the ability to interact with peers, understand simple rules, express emotions, and gradually build self-regulation skills. Because of this rapid developmental process, appropriate educational stimulation is essential to ensure optimal growth and development. In the Indonesian educational context, the importance of early childhood education is formally recognized in Law Number 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, which states that early childhood education is an educational effort aimed at children from birth to the age of six through the provision of educational stimulation to support their physical and spiritual growth and development so that they are prepared to enter further education. This policy emphasizes that early childhood education is not only focused on cognitive development but also on building fundamental character traits and social competencies that will shape children's future behavior and attitudes.

One important aspect of early childhood development is social-emotional development, which includes the ability to manage emotions, interact positively with others, and develop prosocial behaviors such

as patience, empathy, cooperation, and sharing. Among these, patience and sharing are essential character values that help children build healthy relationships and function effectively in social environments. Patience allows children to regulate their impulses, wait for their turn, and cope with frustration, while sharing reflects the ability to consider others' needs and develop empathy toward peers. However, in practice, cultivating these character values among young children is not always easy. Many children at the preschool stage still demonstrate behaviors such as difficulty waiting for their turn, becoming easily frustrated when their desires are not immediately fulfilled, and reluctance to share toys or learning materials with peers. Such behaviors are developmentally common, but without appropriate guidance and learning experiences, they may hinder the development of positive social interactions. Similar conditions have also been observed in Kelompok Bermain Setia Hati Gawang, where several children aged 3–4 years show challenges in demonstrating patience and sharing behaviors during classroom activities and play sessions.

Character education is therefore an essential component of early childhood learning. According to Thomas Lickona, character education is a deliberate effort to help individuals understand, feel, and act upon core ethical values. This definition highlights that character education should not only involve cognitive understanding of moral values but must also include emotional engagement and behavioral practice (Lickona, 2016). In the context of early childhood education, character formation should be implemented through approaches that align with children's natural ways of learning, particularly through play-based activities. Play is considered a fundamental activity in childhood development. For young children, play is not merely a recreational activity but an essential medium for learning. Through play, children explore their environment, develop creativity, practice problem-solving, and build social relationships with peers. Play also provides opportunities for children to learn about rules, cooperation, fairness, and emotional regulation. Research indicates that play-based learning supports children's social competence and encourages the development of prosocial behaviors such as empathy and cooperation (Whitebread et al., 2017).

From a developmental psychology perspective, the importance of play in children's learning has long been emphasized by leading theorists. Jean Piaget argued that play is closely related to cognitive development, as it allows children to construct knowledge through active exploration and interaction with their environment. Through play, children assimilate new experiences into their existing cognitive structures and gradually develop higher levels of thinking. Meanwhile, Lev Vygotsky emphasized the role of social interaction in children's learning. According to Vygotsky, play creates opportunities for children to interact with peers and adults within the zone of proximal development, where they can develop social and emotional skills through guided participation and collaborative activities (Vygotsky, 1978/2016). In the context of social-emotional development, play also serves as a powerful medium for teaching character values. When children participate in group play activities, they naturally encounter situations that require them to take turns, negotiate roles, resolve conflicts, and cooperate with others. These experiences provide meaningful opportunities for children to practice patience and sharing in real-life situations. For example, when playing with limited toys, children must learn to wait for their turn and share resources with friends. Such experiences help children internalize social norms and develop prosocial attitudes over time. The development of social skills such as sharing and cooperating is part of the 4C skills that need to be cultivated from an early age so that children can build a strong foundation in leadership and collaboration (Nurfadila, 2024)

Recent studies highlight that structured play activities guided by teachers can significantly enhance children's character development. Teachers can design play-based learning environments that encourage collaboration, empathy, and emotional regulation. By facilitating cooperative games, storytelling activities, and role-playing scenarios, educators can help children experience moral values in a concrete and enjoyable way. According to Berk (2018), guided play enables children to develop both cognitive and socio-emotional skills simultaneously, making it an effective approach for early childhood education. In addition, modern research emphasizes the importance of integrating character education into daily classroom routines. Instead of teaching moral values through direct instruction alone, educators are encouraged to embed character development within meaningful activities such as group play, creative projects, and social interaction. Such approaches allow children to learn values through experience rather than abstract explanations. Studies also

suggest that children who engage in cooperative play activities tend to demonstrate higher levels of empathy, patience, and sharing behaviors compared to those who experience more individualistic learning environments (Ramani & Brownell, 2016).

Considering that play is the natural world of children, it becomes an effective strategy for developing positive character traits. Through play-based learning, children not only enjoy the learning process but also gain valuable social experiences that shape their behavior and attitudes. Activities such as cooperative games, role-playing, and group storytelling can help children understand the importance of waiting for their turn, respecting others, and sharing resources with peers. Based on the observations conducted at Kelompok Bermain Setia Hati Gawang, it is evident that there is a need for innovative learning strategies that can effectively foster patience and sharing among children aged 3–4 years. Play-based learning activities are considered suitable for this purpose because they align with the developmental characteristics of young children and provide opportunities for experiential learning. Therefore, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled “The Development of Patience and Sharing Character through Play Activities among Children Aged 3–4 Years at Kelompok Bermain Setia Hati Gawang.” This study is expected to contribute to the development of effective learning strategies in early childhood education, particularly in fostering positive character traits through engaging and meaningful play activities.

## II. Literature Review

Character education refers to the process of instilling moral values, attitudes, and positive behaviors in children through habituation, guidance, and exemplary actions from adults. In the context of early childhood education, character formation is considered a fundamental aspect because early childhood represents a critical stage in human development. During this stage, children begin to form habits, attitudes, and social behaviors that may influence their future personality. According to Thomas Lickona, character education involves three essential components: moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, which together shape an individual's ethical behavior (Lickona, 2013). Moral knowing refers to the understanding of moral values, moral feeling relates to emotional commitment to those values, and moral action represents the implementation of moral behavior in daily life.

In early childhood settings, character education is most effective when delivered through concrete and enjoyable experiences rather than abstract instruction. Young children learn primarily through observation, imitation, and active participation in meaningful activities. Therefore, teachers and parents play a crucial role as role models whose behavior can be directly imitated by children. Research in early childhood education suggests that play-based learning environments provide natural opportunities for children to practice social values such as patience, cooperation, and sharing (Berk, 2018). Through repeated experiences, these behaviors gradually become part of children's character. Moreover, early childhood education institutions are expected to create learning environments that integrate character education into daily activities. According to Michele Borba, character development in young children becomes more effective when moral values are embedded in routine activities, social interactions, and collaborative learning experiences (Borba, 2016). Thus, character education for young children should emphasize experiential learning, social interaction, and positive reinforcement.

Patience is an important character trait that helps children regulate emotions and respond appropriately to challenging situations. In early childhood, patience can be understood as the ability to wait for one's turn, manage frustration, and remain calm when things do not go according to one's wishes. Developing patience is particularly important for children aged 3–4 years because this stage is characterized by rapid emotional and social development. According to Erik Erikson, children aged 3–6 years are in the stage of initiative versus guilt, where they begin to develop independence, initiative, and self-regulation (Erikson, 1963). At this stage, children need guidance to manage emotions and learn socially acceptable behaviors. When children are supported in practicing patience such as waiting for a turn during play they gradually develop emotional control and social competence.

Indicators of patience in children aged 3–4 years include the ability to wait for their turn in playing activities, the ability to follow simple rules during games, and the capacity to remain calm even when they do not immediately obtain what they want. Studies show that patience in early childhood is closely linked to the development of self-regulation and emotional intelligence (Denham et al., 2017). Children who learn patience at an early age tend to demonstrate better social adjustment and interpersonal relationships later in life. Sharing is a prosocial behavior that reflects children's willingness to give opportunities or resources to others voluntarily. This behavior is closely related to empathy, cooperation, and social awareness. Teaching children to share is an essential part of early childhood character education because it helps them understand the importance of caring for others and building positive social relationships. In early childhood settings, sharing behavior can be developed through group activities, cooperative play, and teacher guidance. According to Nancy Eisenberg, prosocial behaviors such as sharing emerge gradually as children develop empathy and social understanding (Eisenberg et al., 2015). Adults play an important role in encouraging sharing by modeling positive behaviors and providing consistent reinforcement.

Indicators of sharing behavior in children aged 3–4 years include willingness to lend toys to friends, playing cooperatively with peers, refraining from grabbing toys, and sharing food or materials during group activities. When children repeatedly experience cooperative situations, they gradually internalize the value of sharing as a natural social behavior. Play is the primary activity of children and serves as a fundamental medium for learning. Through play, children explore their environment, develop cognitive abilities, and practice social interactions. Educational experts widely recognize that play-based learning supports holistic development, including social, emotional, and moral aspects. According to David F. Bjorklund, play provides children with opportunities to practice social rules, negotiate roles, and develop emotional regulation in a natural context (Bjorklund & Causey, 2018). In addition, play activities allow children to experience cooperation and fairness, which are essential for character development. Several types of play activities are particularly effective in fostering patience and sharing among young children. These include turn-taking games, role-playing, group games, and cooperative games. Turn-taking games encourage children to wait patiently for their opportunity, while cooperative games promote teamwork and mutual support. Role-playing activities also help children understand different perspectives and practice social interactions.

Play activities that are intentionally designed to involve social interaction can effectively support the development of patience and sharing among young children. When children participate in structured play situations, they learn to wait for their turn, follow rules, cooperate with peers, and share resources. These experiences gradually strengthen their emotional regulation and social competence. Therefore, structured play activities implemented in early childhood education settings can serve as an effective strategy for developing patience and sharing behaviors among children aged 3–4 years. By integrating character education into playful learning experiences, teachers can support children's holistic development in a natural and meaningful way.

### III. Research Method

This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design. Classroom Action Research is a reflective research method conducted by teachers or researchers in educational settings with the aim of improving the quality of teaching and learning processes through systematic cycles of planning, action, observation, and reflection. CAR is widely used in early childhood education because it allows educators to directly address problems that arise in the classroom and implement improvements through iterative learning cycles. According to Burns (2015), classroom action research provides opportunities for educators to evaluate instructional practices while simultaneously enhancing children's learning experiences. In the context of early childhood education, this method is particularly relevant because it supports responsive teaching practices that align with children's developmental needs (Mertler, 2019). Through the implementation of two cycles, this study aimed to improve children's character development specifically patience and sharing through structured play activities.

The subjects of this study consisted of nine children aged 3–4 years enrolled in the Setia Hati Gawang Playgroup. Children in this age range are in a crucial developmental stage characterized by rapid growth in social-emotional skills, including the ability to regulate emotions and interact with peers. Research indicates that early childhood is a critical period for developing prosocial behaviors such as cooperation, empathy, and sharing (Denham et al., 2016). Therefore, focusing on children aged 3–4 years provides valuable insights into how educational interventions, particularly play-based activities, can support the development of patience and sharing in early childhood settings. Data in this study were collected using several qualitative techniques to ensure a comprehensive understanding of children's development. The first technique was observation, which involved systematically monitoring children's behavior during play activities to identify indicators of patience and sharing. Observational methods are commonly used in early childhood research because they allow researchers to capture authentic behaviors in natural learning environments (Slot et al., 2017).

The second technique was documentation, which included photographs, learning records, and activity reports collected during the research process. Documentation provides supporting evidence that helps validate observational findings. The third technique was field notes, which were used to record important events, children's responses, and reflections during the implementation of learning activities. Field notes help researchers document contextual information that may not be captured through structured observation instruments. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive quantitative analysis. This method was used to measure the percentage of children who demonstrated development in patience and sharing behaviors during the learning activities. The percentage was calculated using the following formula: [Percentage = (Number of children showing development / Total number of children) × 100%]

Descriptive quantitative analysis allows researchers to present the results in a clear and measurable manner, making it easier to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. Similar approaches are frequently used in early childhood classroom action research to track developmental progress and assess the impact of educational interventions (Odom et al., 2018). The study was considered successful if at least 80% of the children demonstrated improvement in patience and sharing behaviors according to the predetermined indicators. Establishing measurable success criteria is important in classroom action research because it provides a clear benchmark for evaluating the effectiveness of the implemented learning strategies. Research in early childhood education suggests that clearly defined behavioral indicators help educators monitor children's socio-emotional development more effectively (McClelland et al., 2017).

This research was conducted at Setia Hati Gawang Playgroup, located at Jalan Gawang–Kebonagung RT 01 RW 08, Wati Hamlet, Gawang Village, Kebonagung District, Pacitan Regency, Indonesia. The study was carried out over a period of February to March 2026. The research implementation consisted of several stages. The pre-research stage was conducted for one week to carry out initial observations and identify problems related to children's patience and sharing behaviors. The first cycle was implemented over four weeks, during which play-based learning activities were introduced and observed. After reflection and evaluation, the second cycle was conducted for another four weeks to improve and strengthen the intervention strategies. Finally, a post-research stage lasting one week was conducted to evaluate the overall results and analyze children's developmental progress.

## IV. Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Research Result

#### a. Pre-Cycle Results

The pre-cycle stage was conducted to identify the initial condition of children's character development before the implementation of the learning intervention. At this stage, the researcher observed the behaviors of children aged 3–4 years during daily learning activities and free play sessions. The observations focused specifically on two character indicators: patience and sharing behavior. These two aspects were selected because they represent important components of children's social-emotional development and are frequently observed during interaction with peers.

**Table 1. Pre-Cycle Observation Results**

| Character Indicator | Percentage | Description  |
|---------------------|------------|--|
| Patience            | 45%        | Many children were still unable to wait for their turn during play activities. Some children showed impatience when the toy they wanted was being used by another child. |
| Sharing             | 50%        | Children were sometimes willing to share, but conflicts over toys still frequently occurred. Several children tended to grab toys instead of borrowing them politely.    |

The pre-cycle results indicate that children's patience and sharing behaviors were still relatively low. Most children had difficulty waiting for their turn and often competed for toys. This condition shows that structured learning activities are needed to help children develop patience and sharing skills through guided play. The results of the pre-cycle observation showed that the level of patience among children was 45%, while the level of sharing behavior reached 50%. These results indicate that the development of both character traits was still relatively low. Many children were not yet able to regulate their emotions when interacting with peers. For instance, some children often grabbed toys from others instead of waiting for their turn. Others showed frustration or anger when they did not immediately receive the toy they wanted.

Such behaviors are quite common among children in early childhood because emotional regulation and social awareness are still developing at this stage. According to Erik Erikson, children in the early childhood stage are in the phase of initiative versus guilt, where they actively explore their environment and attempt to assert their desires. However, without appropriate guidance, this initiative may lead to impulsive behaviors such as impatience or possessiveness (Erikson, 1963). The observations also revealed that many children preferred to play individually rather than cooperatively. During free play activities, some children tended to hold onto their toys and were reluctant to lend them to others. In several cases, conflicts occurred when two or more children wanted to use the same toy at the same time. Teachers often needed to intervene to resolve these conflicts and encourage children to take turns.

These initial findings highlighted the need for structured learning activities that could help children practice patience and sharing in a natural and enjoyable way. Play-based learning was therefore chosen as the intervention strategy because it aligns with the developmental characteristics of young children. As suggested by Lev Vygotsky, social interaction through play plays a crucial role in helping children internalize social norms and develop self-regulation skills (Vygotsky, 1978). Through guided play activities, children can gradually learn to manage their emotions, respect rules, and cooperate with peers. Based on the findings of the pre-cycle stage, the researcher decided to implement turn-taking games and group play activities in the first cycle. These activities were designed to provide children with opportunities to practice waiting for their turn, cooperating with peers, and sharing play materials.

**b. Cycle I Results**

Cycle I was implemented after planning several structured play activities that emphasized turn-taking and group interaction. The activities included turn-taking games, simple group games, and shared play sessions where children used the same materials collaboratively. The teacher also provided guidance and reminders about the importance of waiting patiently and sharing toys with friends.

**Table 3 Cycle II Results**

| Character Indicator | Percentage | Description  |
|---------------------|------------|--|
| Patience            | 82%        | Most children were able to wait for their turn calmly and follow the rules of the game without becoming upset. |
| Sharing             | 85%        | Children were more willing to share toys, play cooperatively, and support their peers during group activities. |

After implementing turn-taking games and group play activities, both character indicators showed improvement. Children became more cooperative during play, although some still required teacher guidance to maintain patience and sharing behavior. After the implementation of Cycle I, the results showed a noticeable improvement in both character indicators. The level of patience increased from 45% to 65%, while sharing behavior increased from 50% to 70%. These results demonstrate that the introduction of structured play activities had a positive impact on children's social behavior. During this cycle, several behavioral changes were observed. Some children began to understand the concept of waiting for their turn during games. For example, when playing with building blocks or puzzle sets, children were encouraged to take turns adding pieces. Although a few children still needed reminders, most of them showed greater willingness to follow the rules of the game. In addition, improvements were also observed in sharing behavior. Children gradually became more willing to lend toys to their peers, especially when the teacher encouraged cooperative play. Group games helped children realize that playing together could be more enjoyable than playing alone. As a result, interactions among children became more positive and collaborative.

Nevertheless, the results of Cycle I also revealed that several children still required additional guidance. Some children occasionally became impatient when waiting too long for their turn, while others still hesitated to share their favorite toys. These behaviors indicate that character development requires continuous practice and reinforcement. According to Albert Bandura, children learn social behaviors largely through observational learning and reinforcement (Bandura, 1977). When teachers consistently model positive behavior and provide encouragement, children are more likely to imitate and internalize those behaviors. Therefore, the next cycle focused on strengthening positive behaviors through cooperative games and positive reinforcement strategies.

c. Cycle II Results

Cycle II was implemented by refining the learning activities introduced in Cycle I. In this stage, the researcher added cooperative games, role-playing activities, and positive reinforcement techniques. Cooperative games were designed to require teamwork, where children could only complete a task if they collaborated and shared resources with their peers. The teacher also provided verbal praise and encouragement whenever children demonstrated patience or sharing behavior. The results of Cycle II showed a significant improvement in both character indicators. The level of patience increased to 82%, while sharing behavior reached 85%. These results indicate that the intervention was highly effective in improving children's social-emotional character.

**Table 3. Cycle II Results**

| <b>Character Indicator</b> | <b>Percentage</b> | <b>Description</b>   |
|----------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Patience                   | 82%               | Most children were able to wait for their turn calmly and follow the rules of the game without becoming upset. |
| Sharing                    | 85%               | Children were more willing to share toys, play cooperatively, and support their peers during group activities. |

The addition of cooperative games and positive reinforcement significantly improved children's patience and sharing behavior. Children demonstrated better emotional control, stronger cooperation, and greater willingness to share with their peers. During Cycle II, children showed greater ability to regulate their emotions and cooperate with peers. Many children were able to wait patiently for their turn during group games without becoming upset. They also demonstrated a better understanding of the rules and expectations of the activities. When conflicts occurred, children were more willing to resolve them peacefully, often with minimal teacher intervention. Sharing behavior also improved significantly. Children began to offer toys to their friends voluntarily and showed greater enthusiasm when playing collaboratively. In cooperative games, children worked together to achieve common goals, such as building structures with blocks or completing puzzles as a team. These activities helped them understand the value of cooperation and mutual support.

The improvement observed in Cycle II supports the idea that play-based learning is an effective approach for developing social and moral character in early childhood. According to Jean Piaget, play provides children with opportunities to practice social rules and develop moral understanding through interaction with peers (Piaget, 1962). When children participate in structured and meaningful play activities, they gradually internalize values such as patience, fairness, and sharing. Furthermore, the use of positive reinforcement played an important role in strengthening desired behaviors. When children received praise or encouragement for demonstrating patience or sharing, they felt motivated to repeat those behaviors. Over time, these behaviors became more consistent and natural. Overall, the results of the two action cycles demonstrate that structured play activities combined with cooperative learning and positive reinforcement can effectively enhance patience and sharing behaviors among children aged 3–4 years. The findings suggest that character education in early childhood should be integrated into daily play activities rather than taught through direct instruction alone. Through repeated experiences in cooperative play, children gradually develop social skills, emotional regulation, and positive character traits that will support their future development.

#### 4.2 Discussion

The results of the study indicate that play activities are effective in developing the characters of patience and sharing among young children. This effectiveness occurs because play provides children with direct experiences to interact with their peers and learn through real-life situations. Through play, children are not only involved in enjoyable activities but also learn important social values such as waiting for their turn, cooperating with others, and understanding the needs of their friends. In addition, play allows children to explore their imagination and develop patterns of thinking through meaningful and contextual experiences. These processes contribute significantly to the development of children's social-emotional competencies. Early childhood education experts emphasize that play-based learning is one of the most appropriate approaches for stimulating various aspects of children's development, including cognitive, social, emotional, and moral aspects. In a play-based learning environment, children become active participants in the learning process because they learn through exploration, experimentation, and social interaction. According to Sitorus, Siregar, and Sari (2025), play-based learning creates opportunities for children to learn naturally while interacting with their environment, thereby strengthening their ability to communicate, cooperate, and build relationships with others.

In the context of character education, patience and sharing are essential values that need to be developed from an early age. Patience is closely related to children's ability to control impulses, wait for their turn, and manage emotions when facing certain situations. Meanwhile, sharing reflects children's willingness to care for others, cooperate, and show empathy toward their peers. These two character traits are fundamental for building positive social interactions during early childhood development. Research has shown that character education introduced at an early age significantly influences children's social behavior and emotional maturity in later stages of life (Maryani et al., 2024). The findings of this study demonstrate that structured play activities can significantly improve children's patience and sharing behaviors. Various types of play implemented in the learning process, such as group games, role-playing activities, and turn-taking games, create opportunities for children to practice social interaction. Through group games, children learn to collaborate and communicate with their peers. In role-playing activities, children can simulate social situations that require empathy, cooperation, and understanding of others' feelings. Meanwhile, turn-taking games train children to wait patiently and respect the rights of others. Research also indicates that role-playing activities help children develop empathy, cooperation, and social awareness because they learn to understand different perspectives during play (Hafidhoh et al., 2025).

Another important aspect that supports the success of play activities in developing children's character is the role of the teacher as a facilitator. Teachers guide children during play, provide direction when necessary, and create a learning environment that encourages positive behavior. Rather than dominating the

learning process, teachers allow children to explore and solve problems independently while still providing guidance when challenges arise. Studies on play-based learning highlight that educators play a crucial role in facilitating meaningful play experiences that stimulate children's social and emotional development (Amir et al., 2024). Furthermore, the results of this research reveal a significant improvement in children's character development from the pre-cycle stage to Cycle II. Initially, many children still showed difficulties in demonstrating patience, such as interrupting others, refusing to wait their turn, or being reluctant to share toys. However, after the implementation of structured play activities in two cycles of classroom action research, children gradually demonstrated better patience and sharing behaviors. They began to wait for their turn more calmly, share toys voluntarily, and cooperate with their friends during group play activities.

This improvement indicates that play activities provide a practical and effective medium for character development in early childhood education. Unlike conventional instruction that relies heavily on verbal explanation, play-based learning enables children to internalize moral values through direct experience. When children repeatedly experience situations that require patience and sharing during play, these behaviors gradually become part of their daily habits. According to research on character education in early childhood institutions, learning activities that integrate moral values into everyday experiences are more effective in shaping children's behavior compared to purely theoretical instruction (Rakhmawati et al., 2024). In addition, play activities stimulate children's imagination and creativity, which also contributes to their social development. When children engage in imaginative play, they often create scenarios that involve cooperation and shared goals. For example, when pretending to run a store or play house, children naturally divide roles, share materials, and negotiate with their peers. Such interactions strengthen children's ability to communicate and build positive relationships with others. Interactive play-based approaches have also been shown to increase children's engagement and motivation in learning activities, making the learning process more meaningful and enjoyable (Wasi'ah & Herawati, 2024).

The results of this study also confirm that the improvement in children's patience and sharing behavior occurred progressively from the pre-cycle stage to Cycle II. In the pre-cycle stage, children's patience behavior was recorded at a relatively low level, indicating that many children still needed guidance and practice in controlling their impulses and respecting turn-taking rules. However, after the implementation of structured play activities in Cycle I and Cycle II, children showed noticeable progress in demonstrating patient behavior. After participating in repeated play activities designed to encourage cooperation and empathy, children began to show more willingness to share and collaborate. This finding reinforces the idea that character values can be effectively nurtured through repeated experiences in social play contexts. Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate that play activities designed in a structured and meaningful manner can effectively foster the development of patience and sharing among children aged 3–4 years in the Setia Hati Playgroup in Gawang. The improvement observed from the pre-cycle stage to Cycle II indicates that play-based learning provides a powerful pedagogical strategy for integrating character education into early childhood learning environments. Therefore, educators are encouraged to incorporate more structured and collaborative play activities into their teaching practices to support the holistic development of children's social and emotional competencies.

## V. Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study demonstrate that structured play activities are effective in developing the characters of patience and sharing among children aged 3–4 years at the Setia Hati Playgroup in Gawang. The results showed a significant improvement from the pre-cycle stage to Cycle II, where patience increased from 45% to 82% and sharing behavior improved from 50% to 85%. These improvements indicate that play-based learning provides meaningful opportunities for children to practice social interaction, emotional regulation, and cooperation with peers. Through activities such as turn-taking games, group play, and cooperative tasks supported by teacher guidance and positive reinforcement, children gradually learned to wait for their turn, share toys, and work collaboratively with others. Therefore, integrating structured play

activities into early childhood learning environments can serve as an effective strategy for fostering social-emotional development and strengthening positive character formation in young children.

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