

## Analysis of Role Play in Children's Social-Emotional Development at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to describe the implementation of the role play method in developing the social-emotional abilities of early childhood at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir. A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, involving 49 children aged 4–6 years as research subjects, along with two teachers and two parents as key informants. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation, and then analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings indicate that role play activities have a positive impact on children's social-emotional development. Children become more confident, are able to communicate effectively, collaborate with peers, and demonstrate empathy as well as improved emotional regulation. Teachers play a crucial role in facilitating these activities and instilling Islamic values, while parental support further reinforces the application of positive behaviors in the home environment. Therefore, the role play method

is proven to be effective as a holistic and contextual learning strategy oriented toward the development of social-emotional character in early childhood within the madrasah diniyah setting.

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### **Introduction**

Early childhood education (ECE) serves as a fundamental foundation in shaping children's character, personality, and readiness to face future life challenges. During this stage, children begin to learn how to recognize, express, and regulate emotions, as well as build social relationships with their surrounding environment. Effective education in early childhood must be able to stimulate these two aspects in a balanced manner so that children grow into confident, independent individuals who are capable of interacting positively with others (Hidayah & Khadijah, 2023; Komari & Aslan, 2025). Optimal social-emotional development in early childhood is strongly influenced by a supportive learning environment, appropriate learning methods, and the active roles of teachers and parents in providing suitable stimulation (Sulistiawati et al., 2023).

One approach that has proven effective in developing children's social-emotional abilities is the role play method. Role play provides children with opportunities to express themselves, understand others' feelings, and learn to solve social problems through the simulation of real-life situations. Research indicates that role play can significantly enhance children's courage, self-confidence, independence,

communication skills, and social interaction (Mawardah & Puri, 2025). Through role play, children learn to adapt to various social roles, develop empathy, and build collaborative skills that are essential for their future social lives (Musthofiyyah et al., 2025; Ningsih, 2024).

The implementation of role play methods in educational institutions, including madrasah diniyah, requires teachers' creativity in designing scenarios, selecting appropriate media, and adjusting themes to children's needs and interests. Teachers also act as facilitators who guide children throughout the role play process, ensuring that each child gains optimal learning experiences. Active teacher involvement is crucial to ensure that positive social and emotional values are well internalized. In addition, teachers need to conduct regular evaluations to assess children's social-emotional development and provide appropriate interventions when necessary (Susiani et al., 2024; Abdurahman et al., 2025; Parera & Supriadi, 2025; Bilqis et al., 2025).

At Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir, role play activities are integrated into daily learning as an effort to instill social, religious, and moral values. Through role play, children are encouraged to understand social roles in society, such as becoming leaders, group members, or characters in Islamic stories. This approach not only strengthens social-emotional aspects but also builds religious character and affection for Islamic values. Teachers at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir strive to relate role play themes to children's daily lives, making learning more contextual and meaningful.

Recent research findings indicate that the consistent implementation of role play methods can enhance early childhood social-emotional development. For example, a study conducted at RA Al-Mukhlisin showed a significant improvement in children's social-emotional aspects after the implementation of role play, with the proportion of children categorized as developing very well increasing from 0% to 53.33% after two learning cycles (Purba, 2022). Other studies also confirm that children who actively engage in role play tend to be better able to manage emotions, demonstrate empathy, and build harmonious social relationships with peers (Taryo, 2025). Nevertheless, challenges remain, such as the need for sufficient time, the involvement of all children, and the adjustment of themes to ensure relevance to everyday life.

Therefore, an analysis of the role of role play in children's social-emotional development at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir is important to conduct. This study is expected to contribute to the development of holistic and contextual learning models, as well as to strengthen the role of madrasah diniyah as institutions that not only impart religious knowledge but also shape children's character and social-emotional intelligence. Through an integrated role play approach supported by a conducive learning environment, children are expected to grow into socially and emotionally mature individuals who are well prepared to face future life challenges.

## Methods

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach aimed at understanding and describing in depth the implementation of the role play method in developing early childhood social-emotional abilities. A qualitative approach was chosen because it is capable of portraying educational phenomena naturally in accordance with the real context in the field (Ulfatin, 2022). Through this approach, the researchers sought to obtain a comprehensive understanding of teachers' experiences, parental involvement, and children's responses during the learning process through role play activities (Waruwu, 2024).

The research was conducted at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir, an early childhood education institution that focuses on strengthening Islamic, social, and moral values in daily learning activities. The research subjects consisted of 49 children aged 4–6 years who were actively involved in the learning process at the madrasah. In addition, two teachers and two parents were involved as key informants to obtain deeper insights into the implementation of the role play method and its impact on children's social-emotional development.

Data were collected using three main techniques: interviews, observations, and documentation. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with two teachers and two parents to explore information regarding the implementation of the role play method, the forms of children's involvement, and observed changes in social-emotional behavior after the activities were implemented. Observations were carried out directly during the learning process to examine children's

social and emotional behaviors, such as their ability to cooperate, demonstrate empathy, communicate, and express feelings. Through observation, the researchers also examined the role of teachers as facilitators in guiding role play activities in the classroom. In addition, documentation techniques were used to collect supporting data in the form of activity photographs, field notes, and learning administration documents related to the implementation of the role play method at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir (Romdona et al., 2025; Jailani, 2023; Sari et al., 2025; Putri & Murhayati, 2022).

According to Qomaruddin and Sa'diyah (2024), the collected data were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman data analysis model, which consists of three stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction involved selecting and simplifying data relevant to the research focus to facilitate understanding and interpretation. Data display was presented in descriptive narrative form to provide a comprehensive and in-depth depiction of the implementation of role play activities and their impact on children's social-emotional development. Finally, conclusions were drawn inductively based on findings that had been verified through data triangulation from interviews, observations, and documentation.

To ensure data validity, this study applied source and method triangulation techniques. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from teachers, parents, and observations of children, while method triangulation was achieved by

integrating interview, observation, and documentation data to obtain consistent, credible, and scientifically accountable findings (Susanto & Jailani, 2023; Husnullail & Jailani, 2024; Nurfajriani et al., 2024). Through these approaches and procedures, the study is expected to provide an accurate and in-depth depiction of the effectiveness of the role play method in developing early childhood social-emotional abilities at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir.

### **Result and Discussions**

Based on observations conducted during learning activities at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir, it was evident that the implementation of the role play method had become an integrated part of the learning process for children aged 4–6 years. These activities were carried out routinely with themes adjusted to daily life contexts and Islamic values. Children appeared enthusiastic in participating, interacting with peers, and displaying a wide range of emotional expressions. For instance, in a role play activity themed “Traditional Market,” children assumed the roles of sellers and buyers. Through this activity, they learned to communicate, negotiate, and cooperate with peers to complete the play scenario. Children who were initially quiet began to speak more confidently, while those who tended to dominate learned to give others opportunities to speak. Teachers played an active role as facilitators by providing dialogue examples and helping children understand the social roles being enacted.

In subsequent observations with the theme “Islamic Family,” there

was a noticeable improvement in children's ability to demonstrate empathy and care toward their peers. A child who had previously been reluctant to share toys began to show positive behavior by offering toys to friends. Several children also started to understand concepts of responsibility and social roles within the family, such as helping others, apologizing, and respecting others. Overall, role play activities successfully created a joyful learning atmosphere while serving as an effective medium for stimulating children's social-emotional development.

The results of interviews with two teachers were consistent with the observational findings. The first teacher (G1) stated that through role play activities, children became more expressive and confident in speaking in front of their peers. She explained, *"The children have become more open and confident. Previously, some of them remained silent when spoken to, but now they can respond and even share their own experiences."* The second teacher (G2) added that these activities also helped children understand social values such as cooperation and mutual respect. According to her, *"Through role play, children learn to wait for their turn, listen to their friends, and understand that everyone has different roles. This is important for building their empathy."*

Meanwhile, interviews with two parents also indicated positive responses regarding changes in children's behavior after participating in role play activities. The first parent (P1) reported that their child had become more socially engaged at home and was no longer shy when

speaking to others. She stated, *“My child used to be quite reserved, but now often tells stories about school activities and even pretends to teach their younger sibling at home.”* Similarly, the second parent (P2) observed improvements in the child’s ability to manage emotions. According to this parent, *“Previously, my child would get angry easily, but now is more open to discussion. They say that at school they learn to be an ustaz and need to be patient, so there is a noticeable change in attitude.”*

From the observation and interview results, it can be concluded that the implementation of the role play method at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir has a positive effect on children’s social-emotional development. Children demonstrated improvements in self-confidence, communication skills, cooperation, empathy, and emotional regulation. Teachers successfully created a supportive and interactive learning environment, while parents experienced the positive impact of these developments in the home setting.

The findings of this study indicate that the role play method is effective in stimulating early childhood social-emotional development. Role play activities allow children to experience social situations directly through simulations of roles relevant to their lives. This aligns with the views of Mawardah and Puri (2025), who emphasized that role play encourages children to express themselves freely while learning to understand others’ perspectives. Children who actively participate in role play also develop stronger communication skills and social competencies.

Furthermore, the results of this study support the findings of Taryo (2025), who reported that children involved in role play activities are better able to manage emotions and build harmonious social relationships. At Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir, teachers did not merely use this method as a form of entertainment, but as an instructional medium for instilling Islamic values such as patience, honesty, and care for others. The role of teachers as facilitators proved to be crucial, as explained by Susiani et al. (2024), who stated that the successful implementation of role play methods largely depends on teachers' abilities to design scenarios, guide children, and provide positive feedback throughout the activities.

Parental involvement also emerged as an important factor in reinforcing children's social-emotional learning outcomes. Support and reinforcement from home help children apply the values learned at school in their daily lives. This finding aligns with the perspective of Hidayah and Khadijah (2023), who emphasized the importance of collaboration between teachers and parents in shaping children's social-emotional character in a sustainable manner.

Overall, this study demonstrates that role play activities at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir not only enhance children's social and emotional skills but also strengthen their religious character through the integration of moral and Islamic values in each activity. Therefore, the role play method can be considered a holistic, contextual, and effective learning strategy for supporting comprehensive early

childhood development.

### Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study conducted at Madrasah Diniyah Istiqomah Tanah Kusir, it can be concluded that the implementation of the role play method has a positive impact on the social-emotional development of early childhood. Through role play activities, children aged 4–6 years demonstrated significant improvements in self-confidence, communication skills, cooperation, empathy, and emotional regulation. These activities not only provided children with opportunities to express themselves and understand others' feelings, but also fostered their ability to adapt to social environments.

Teachers played an important role as creative and reflective facilitators in designing and guiding role play activities that were relevant to children's experiences and aligned with the Islamic values taught in the madrasah. Meanwhile, parental involvement further strengthened learning outcomes by providing support and reinforcing positive attitudes and behaviors at home.

Thus, the role play method is proven to be effective as a learning strategy that not only develops children's social and emotional aspects, but also strengthens religious character and moral values that form the foundation of education in Madrasah Diniyah. This approach may serve as an alternative for other early childhood education institutions in realizing holistic, contextual, and child-centered learning.

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