

Teaching strategies for cultivating preschoolers' sharing behavior based on gender roles in Chinese culture

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ABSTRACT

Chinese boys and girls manifest distinct sharing behavior compared with children of other nationalities following different cross-national pathways. Undoubtedly, the Chinese traditional culture projects distinct expectations of female and male roles. Kindergarten teachers are responsible for delivering cultural norm knowledge to children and shaping their behaviors and beliefs. This study aims to provide an insight into how kindergarten teachers cultivate preschoolers' sharing behavior considering the traditional gender-role culture in China. This study adopted the multiple case study approach and involved six participants working in a Chinese public provincial kindergarten in Hebei Province. The data collection techniques used comprise semi-structured interviews and document analysis. This study's findings showed teachers develop both boys' and girls' sharing awareness through an other-oriented strategy. They also elicit sharing practices through benefits-oriented and habits-forming strategies. However, different treatments of boys and girls could be observed in some respects. These findings demonstrate that children's sharing behaviors are shaped through the same strategy with a subtle gender bias. They further imply that the gender-role knowledge of Chinese kindergarten teachers impacts how they cultivate preschoolers' sharing behavior.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Children were reluctant to share before school age [1] due to the human natural tendency to protect their belonging [2]. Beyond concerns about others' welfare, young children's sharing reactions seem to be selective and motivated by specific purposes. For instance, four years old children share more treats in gossip conditions [3] to manage their reputation. The amount of children's sharing is correlated with outcomes from previous interactions with potential recipients [4]. Besides, children's cognitive ability has been proven to be related to their sharing behavior. They prefer to distribute resources based on the discipline of benefiting equally [5]. These findings may indicate that children's understanding on sharing perceptions may influence their sharing decisions.

According to Ecological Systems Theory [6], schooling is a part of a micro-system that directly impacts children's attitudes and perceptions of positive behaviors. In line with it, preschoolers' sharing behaviors have been linked to their preschool teachers [7]. Unfortunately, despite Chinese researchers' growing body of literature on developing children's sharing behavior, little is known about kindergarten

teachers' perception. Studies were conducted to examine the efficiency of specific teaching methods through coding children's behaviors [8], [9] or proposing some suggestions based on correlational study findings of influencing factors on sharing behavior [10]. Few showed concerns for teachers' perspectives based on teaching practice.

There is evidence that children's prosocial behavior may be influenced by different pathways grounded on different cultural norms [11], resulting in different preferences and behavior in sharing. Contrary to traditional assumptions, researchers found that boys at preschool practice more sharing than girls in China [12], implying that Chinese children's sharing behavior may develop in distinct pathways from Children in other countries. Corresponding to it, previous research proved that even though some teachers advocate gender equity in education, gender stereotype still exists in the physical and spiritual environment in China, like role expectations [13] and stereotyped evaluation of children's personality [14]. Consequently, it is reasonable to believe that in China, children of different gender may have different nurturing experiences when developing their pro-sociality influenced by traditional gender-role norms. Nevertheless, it is rare for studies to consider internalized Chinese traditional gender-role culture among kindergarten teachers when exploring their teaching in cultivating preschoolers' sharing behavior.

Undoubtedly, a strong and consistent positive association between young children's prosocial behaviors and long-term development have been revealed by developmental psychologists. Preschool children who demonstrate strong prosocial behaviors are more popular and highly accepted by their peers [15]. These children are less likely to develop behavioral problems, such as aggression [16] and depressive symptoms [17]. In this regard, as the main component of prosocial behavior, developing sharing behavior among children has been underlined officially by Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (MOE) both in the teaching guideline for preschool education (for trial implementation) [18] and the guideline for learning and development of children aged 3-6 [19]. More importantly, preschool education in China has rapidly expanded in the past decade. In 2021, the enrollment rate for the three-year preschool program had increased to 88.1% from 62.3% in 2011. The number of full-time kindergarten teachers has grown nearly 130% over a decade to 3.5 million [20], implying that education in kindergarten plays a significant role in the development of most Chinese preschoolers.

Traditional gender-role culture is still deeply rooted in Chinese, with different roles for men and women. Scholars in China have put forward different educational modes of handling gender roles, including gender-neutral education, gendered education, and gender sensitive education. Despite insisting that boys and girls are treated within the same pattern in gender-neutral education [13], equal education practices for boys and girls cannot accomplish the goal of impartiality. Instead, it has become a way to deliberately avoid specific gender characteristics, which may lead to deeper gender discrimination. Therefore, it is significant to explore teaching strategies for cultivating preschoolers' sharing behavior with the consideration of the traditional Chinese gender-role culture. Based on the previous account, it is pertinent to carry out this qualitative research and understand kindergarten teachers' views on how they understand, plan and carry out teachings to encourage children's sharing behaviors. Besides that, the way teachers treat boys and girls has also been highlighted. Thus, the study is guided by the following questions: i) How do kindergarten teachers develop preschoolers' sharing awareness based on Chinese traditional gender-role culture? and ii) How do kindergarten teachers elicit preschoolers' sharing practices based on Chinese traditional gender-role culture?

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Design

The study follows the qualitative research paradigm, which makes sense of the meanings people bring to the setting and directs the researcher to explore an in-depth activity or the process [21]. This qualitative study aims to develop a deeper understanding of teaching strategies employed by Chinese kindergarten teachers. The multiple-case study design, rooted in real-life events, provides rich descriptive and interpretive basic information on kindergarten teachers' experiences cultivating preschoolers' sharing behavior based on traditional Chinese gender-role culture. Beneficial from the multiple cases, the researcher has opportunities to examine similarities and differences between these cases and acquires a broader description of teaching strategies for cultivating children's sharing behavior.

2.2. Context and participant

Participants were selected from a public large-scale provincial demonstrative kindergarten in Hebei Province. This kindergarten highlights cultivating children's sharing behavior as a part of social ability development. Besides that, all teachers in this kindergarten were assessed on whether their values were in line with Chinese culture before being employed. Purposive sampling explored kindergarten teachers' teaching strategies to cultivate sharing behavior. This method was chosen as the study deals with participants who are representative of a known unit [22]. Based on research questions, the criteria for inclusion are

established as: i) Teachers who are currently teaching in kindergarten; ii) Teachers who have teaching experience covering levels 1-3 in kindergarten; iii) Teachers who are interested in and give attention to preschoolers' sharing education in teaching practice; iv) Teachers who agree with traditional Chinese gender-role culture; and v) Teachers who are responsible for their work and are highly praised. Merriam [23] proposed that sampling should be based on the ability of participants to contribute rich insight and understanding of the phenomenon rather than the number of participants when doing qualitative research. Thus, six kindergarten teachers who met the criteria were invited to participate in this study. Table 1 shows the selection of six teachers with different teaching experiences representing different professional development stages.

Table 1. Description of teacher participants

Participant	Years of teaching experiences	Class in charge of now
A	19	L3
B	25	L1
C	33	L3
D	15	Manual course covering all levels
E	4	L2
F	29	L2

2.3. Data collection method

2.3.1. Interview

This qualitative research was mainly conducted in the form of in-depth semi-structured interview. Rubin [24] stated qualitative interviewing is a method to find out the respondents' feeling and thinking about their world, in-depth interview was applied as the primary means to explore kindergarten teachers' teaching strategies, which considered to be a kind of inner beliefs or concepts that direct teaching practices. Semi-structured interview was selected as to provide more spaces for teachers to express their ideas. A consent form was sent to each participant before interview to clear the research and their right during data collection procedure. Then, convenient online interviews with open-ended questions were arranged according to participants' schedule and preference. Each interview lasted approximately one hour, allowing the teacher to tell their stories with abundant time and avoiding fatigue. Once interview completed, the researcher would transcribe both handwritten notes and audio-recorded interview, and sent to participants for verify.

2.3.2. Document analysis

Documents reflecting teaching concepts and behaviors related to cultivate preschoolers' sharing behavior were collected to bring more realities within sub unit analysis. Documents, including teaching plan, annual reports or reflection and other resource profiles, were gathered from the participants to validate the information. These documents, especially teaching plans, presenting the researcher a more concrete, intuitive and detailed view towards the participants' teaching process and teaching language in reality, can provide more information which may be ignored by participants, and more importantly, highlight the gap between how participants think and how they act on cultivating preschoolers' sharing behavior.

2.4. Data analysis

In qualitative research, data analysis is considered to be the process of transforming the data into results [21]. Consequently, inductive analysis and creative synthesis were selected as the strategies for data analysis in this study. Data analysis was conducted by using NVivo following five phases: i) Transcript verification; ii) Reading and noting emergent ideas; iii) Coding and categorizing the data; iv) Developing themes; and v) Interpreting and representing the findings. The process of data analysis began with managing and organizing the interview and document transcripts, most of which were in Chinese, and translating them into English. After verifying data with attributes covering teaching experiences and perceptions on cultivating preschoolers' sharing behavior, transcriptions were read and re-read several times to acquire a general sense of the whole data and inspire the researcher's thinking towards the issue. Meanwhile, the researcher wrote down the perceptions in the margins. An open-coded strategy was applied to code and categorize data, and themes were developed and examined following criteria suggested by Merriam [23]. Finally, narrative descriptions and interpretations on how kindergarten teachers develop children's sharing behavior were presented associating with past researches.

2.5. Reliability and validity

Six case study tactics were established in this research to ensure the validity and reliability specifically regarding data analysis. A chain of evidence was maintained when testing construct validity. Research procedures were directly linked to the initial research questions, and the link was pointed out in the interview protocol, where data collection practice about participants' teaching strategies were based on. Semi-structured interview and document analysis were both utilized corroborating for constructing validity. Participants were also invited to check if they agree with what the researcher says about them through member checking. To test external validity, the researcher provided a thick, detailed description of participants, context, data collection to facilitate the potential users' judgment on how close the reader's study and the research it reads. To establish the reliability, another Ph.D. student who is familiar with qualitative research was invited for peer examination. Results were compared and eventually built consensus for 100% inter-coder agreement [25].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Kindergarten teachers cultivate their children's sharing behavior with the concern of sharing awareness and sharing practices through diverse strategies. Participants guide children to step outside of their head and look at the situations from others' perspective through developing perspective-taking abilities and establishing collective consciousness. Children are more likely to accept the point of view on sharing resources with another person when they analysis the situation concerning for others. Besides altruistic motivation, advantages from sharing are realized by children with the help of their teachers, covering both spiritual and material benefits. In addition, participants try to develop sharing behavior as a kind of conscious behavior among children by setting examples and increasing the frequency of practicing sharing. Interestingly, all participants perceived that they use same methods to shape sharing behavior among boys and girls. However, in fact, subtle gender bias was founded in their practice, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2. Teaching strategies for cultivating children's sharing behavior based on gender roles in Chinese culture

Teaching strategy	Theme	Sub-theme	Gender bias
Sharing awareness	Other-oriented strategy	Developing perspective-taking ability	More focus is given to girls' emotional perspective-taking ability, while more focus is given to boy's cognitive perspective-taking ability
Sharing practices	Benefits-oriented strategy	Fostering collective consciousness	Different expectations on role image
		Experiencing the happiness of sharing	Changes in feedback towards boys based on age
		Realizing the benefits of sharing	No gender bias
		Setting an example	No gender bias
Habits-forming strategy	Creating opportunities for sharing	Different persuading patterns	

3.1. Sharing awareness

Teachers use the other-oriented strategy to foster a sense of sharing by cultivating collective consciousness and developing perspective-taking abilities. Children with higher emotional and cognitive perspective-taking abilities can better understand potential recipients' feelings and desires [26]. This situation may contribute to children's decisions on sharing. Collective consciousness strengthens children's feeling of being accepted and needed, resulting in a switch of focus from fulfilling their desire to mutual welfare. Moreover, a sense of commitment may lead to the recognition of obligation on equal benefits [5].

3.1.1. Other-oriented strategy

a. Developing perspective-taking ability

The premise of a sharing action as a response is that children have realized the potential recipient's plight. Unfortunately, the way children think tends to be self-centered [27]. In other words, they usually view and understand the phenomena from its own perspectives. According to the socio-cognitive integration of abilities model [28], the presence and frequency of practicing prosocial behaviors are influenced by cognitive and affective abilities. Based on such perception, all participants highlighted the importance of developing children's perspective-taking abilities to understand others' feelings and thoughts from an alternative point of view. Participant C shared her experiences:

“When children refuse to share, I will say: ‘I know, you like it, but do other children want to play too? If you cannot play with it, will you be happy? How other children feel if they cannot play with it?’”

Perspective-taking abilities are correlated with a person’s sharing behavior [29]. The emotional perspective-taking ability helps understand others’ feelings and emotions, which may contribute to children’s empathic concern in reacting to others’ distress. Children with more empathic concerns are more likely to behave prosocially [30]. It is possible to imply that emotional perspective-taking ability allows children to be more capable of understanding others’ unhappy feelings, assisting them far away from negative emotions through distributing their belongings. Moreover, developing children’s cognitive perspective-taking ability is conducive to personal intuition about others’ thoughts and intentions [31]. The cognitive perspective-taking ability allows children to “read” their stingy behaviors from the perspective of potential recipients and bring alternative meanings or understanding on sharing actions to their existing knowledge.

Even though teachers help develop children’s perspective-taking abilities covering cognitive and emotional aspects, different emphasis was observed when leading them to understand others’ situations. Teachers are more likely to communicate others’ feelings with girls, following the expectation of being a caring person. While, boys, following the expectation of being generous, prefer to analyze others’ needs and intentions. Hence, sharing behaviors of children of different genders may be motivated by distinct reasons even in the same situation influenced by different focuses in communication. With the concern of other’s feeling, girls may share for the purpose of making recipients happy. While, boys may react in the way of distributing caring about what others need or want.

3.1.2. Fostering collective consciousness

Even if children have realized others’ plight and needs, it is still possible for them to pretend not to see or refuse to share due to their self-oriented selfishness. Considering this, all participants proposed establishing preschoolers’ collective consciousness, making them realize their indispensable role in the class collective. With the emphasis on whole entity, participants usually use “we” instead of “you” when communicating with children. Supporting to it, Vasil and Tomasello [32] found that children aged 3 and 4 felt a great sense of commitment with their partners in “we”-framing condition compared with children in “you”-framing condition. Participant B shared:

“Let the children realize that we are a whole. No one is left behind. Make them realize we are mutually needed by each other. Each of them is loved by their peers, as well as their teacher. And equally, they can love others.”

Previous studies found that children from collectivist backgrounds are more prosocial than children from individualist backgrounds [33]. However, concerning emphasis on group welfare, preschoolers are labeled with a distinct gender image. The image of the girl is kind, meticulous, caring, and gentle. In contrast, the image of the boy is responsible, generous, and powerful, which may lead to different underlying mechanisms for practicing sharing. Besides that, Malti *et al.* [34] found that children’s feelings of social acceptance at six years old positively relate to their costly sharing behaviors at seven years old. As psychologists claim, the sense of belonging is one of the core human needs [35], which may conduce to subsequent trust in others, contributing to the willingness to share [36]. The findings imply that collectivism ties all children together, contributing to sharing decisions.

Awareness of equality in the entity is also highlighted by most of the participants. As participant F stated:

“For shared resources, for example, when playing with building blocks, I will first ask each of them whether the blocks belong to himself or our class. All of them will answer that they belong to our class but argue, like ‘I need more for building’ or ‘I took these blocks first’. So now it is crucial to stress the equal status in kindergarten. No one could possess the public goods only depending on their preferences. Usually, the child with more blocks will take out some blocks that others need or ensure everyone has the same amount.”

Supporting it, children around three years old undergo a “normative turn” [37] when sharing resources in the view of “we”. Children prefer a fair resource distribution [38] rather than keeping for themselves, obeying the discipline of benefiting equally [5]. Even more, striking in this direction, children showed an obvious protest facing unfair resource distributions after collaboration [39]. The finding indicate that young children’s sense of commitment induces the feeling of obligation for equitable sharing beyond self-oriented goals.

3.2. Sharing practice

Benefits-oriented strategy and habits-forming strategy were applied to elicit children's sharing practices. Children internalize this kind of interaction as a social norm [40] by imitating others' generous behaviors and participating in sharing activities. Besides that, children are more likely to practice sharing actions when they saw others' distribution been rewarded or praised [41] in order to get positive feedback. After sharing, children may experience happiness or obtain a reciprocal item from the receiver, eliciting their willingness in continuing their sharing actions.

3.2.1. Habits-forming strategy

a. Setting an example

Studies showed children learn more efficiently through direct interaction with a model [41]. Undoubtedly, setting an example or a role model to imitate is the most frequently used method by kindergarten teachers in cultivating sharing behavior among preschoolers. Children observe others' sharing behavior and the behavioral effects, develop a positive attitude and perceptions towards these actions, and finally decide to behave or react as how others did. Besides that, children can also evaluate whether sharing is positive behavior to follow or not through observing feedback on others' distribution.

As the starting point of infant's socialization, young children's sharing behavior were influenced by parents modeling generous sharing actions [42]. Similarly, preschoolers perceive teachers as the authority in kindergarten, resulting in their tendency to model their behavior following their teachers' performance. Given this, teachers often practice generously giving to other children as a lead to them. Participant A described:

"I often take some candy or snacks to the class to share with other children, and I will explain to them that I think the food is very delicious, and I like it very much. So, I take them to class to share to let everyone enjoy it. While enjoying the food, I ask them if they are willing to share their own like me. Most of them answer 'yes'."

From observing teachers' sharing behavior, children set out their imitative learning by sharing their belongings and the socialization process. They internalized these "other-regarding" preferences as a kind of social interaction norms to obey. Besides that, children's likelihood to share after observing the act of sharing by others can also be explained through the "upstream reciprocity model" [43]. Children have benefited from the teacher and, in turn, benefited other children. Such forward generous sharing tendency has been demonstrated among children at four years old [44].

In addition to teachers, children's spontaneous sharing behaviors are commonly regarded as "examples". Imitating peers is an efficient model for children's imitations of their positive behaviors [45]. All participants are interested in praising children to the whole class to highlight their generosity with the purpose of eliciting other children's sharing willingness. However, it is notable that the way teachers set generous children by sharing examples can also be considered a reward on their behalf. This may lead to another mechanism that children acting prosocially are stimulated by external rewards. Consequently, practicing sharing may become utilitarian further back from teachers' original intention. As Participant E described her experiences:

"One day, a child brought the cake to the class to share with other children. I praised and hugged her. Some other children also brought snacks to share in the following days. I praised them, but some seemed unsatisfied, implying me that I would give a hug like a child who shared on that day."

The participants also used examples of popular protagonists demonstrating sharing behaviors because of their appeal to children. Furthermore, regarding the impact of prosocial media on children's prosocial behavior, it may be that children could acquire better access to prosocial thoughts and emotions [46]. Findings have shown advantages of prosocial media provide criteria related to sharing thoughts and emotions for teachers to refine the selection of targeted models beyond simply focusing on presenting behavior itself. Based on the findings, sharing actions of teachers, peers and popular protagonists are often highlighted as persuasive examples by kindergarten teachers when eliciting children's sharing behavior. While setting examples of sharing, interactions occur between the teacher and the whole class, meaning that girls and boys are given the same information and treated in the same way. Thus, no gender differences were found in this strategy.

b. Creating opportunities for sharing

Although children show sharing behaviors early, this does not mean all preschool children will share on their own initiative. For instance, only 32 out of 72 children aged from 4-6 years old donated candies in a Dictator Game designed by Aguilar-Pardo, Martínez-Arias, and Colmenares [2]. In other words, children's natural tendency to preserve their resources may somewhat constrain their altruistic sharing behaviors. Based on this consideration, all participants proposed ideas of assigning sharing tasks and encouraging children to share. Among these activities, the most popular one is setting "Sharing Day" on fixed days. Participant A shared her experiences:

"We set every Friday as the sharing day. On that day, all children must bring one item to share with their peers. In the beginning, some children are reluctant to share. However, after a few times sharing, fewer children are unwilling to share. Finally, nearly all children actively participate in this activity, and sometimes they even take something precious to them to share with peers."

In Participant A's story, children's attitude changes from resisting to actively participating in sharing activities, even showing more generosity. This implies an advanced perception of sharing among preschoolers. One possible explanation is that children experience happiness through a self-reward mechanism [47] after sharing. Besides that, children become active in sharing due to their adherence to this internalized social norm [40]. Apart from sharing behavior as a kind of moral norm, children may consider it a general reciprocal norm [48] because everyone has received something from others in sharing activities. On the other hand, children may reduce their sharing behaviors once they receive no reciprocity from others who benefited from it before. Unfortunately, children's perceptions through these kinds of sharing activities are still unclear, given that children are both givers and receivers.

Children are less generous due to difficulties inhibiting their desire to keep an item for themselves [49]. Corresponding to it, even though sharing activities are carried out towards the whole class, but in reality, some children will still insist on refusing to share after several sharing activities. Hence, teachers need to persuade them to share. Interestingly, all participants pointed that they tend to communicate with boys and girls in distinct ways with the consideration of their characteristics. They prefer a more direct way for boys, while teachers approach this indirectly for girls as girls are more sensitive and fragile. As Participant D described:

"To boys, I will tell them, 'If you insist on refusing to share, I don't like you anymore, and so do other children. 'But to girls, I will tell them, 'If you still do not share with other children and me, we will be upset. I know you don't want to make us sad, right?'"

3.2.2. Benefits-oriented strategy

a. Experiencing the happiness of sharing

Aknin, Dunn, and Norton [50] proposed the existence of a "positive feedback loop" between positive emotions and prosocial behaviors, where the giver will feel happiness after sharing [47]. In turn, this affective benefit elicits the giver to practice more sharing with others [51]. Previous studies found that positive emotion promotes sharing behavior [43] and all participants use the method of letting children experience the happiness of sharing. The participants shared two approaches to reacting to this positive emotion after donating. All teachers mentioned providing positive feedback to strengthen the feeling of happiness. As Participant A stated:

"Once a child shares his own, I will give him an explicit agreement and praise towards his behavior. Usually, verbal praise is essential, like 'Good boy, you are so wonderful. I am proud of you. Accompanied by it, I often hug them or ask the class to give him warm applause. Besides that, sometimes, I will give him a small gift, such as candies and stickers, as a reward for their sharing behaviors."

These reactions create happiness and a feeling of being appreciated. They serve as positive reinforcements that induce spontaneous sharing behavior. According to Behaviorism, this positive feedback can be regarded as a reward that stimulates high intention to continue sharing behavior to get more rewards. However, material rewards may reduce children's altruistic tendency [52]. In this light, the positive correlation between positive emotion and prosocial behavior may not be universal. Guo and Wu [53] found that only children with high empathy showed more sharing behavior after including happiness. Noteworthy, feelings of happiness after watching a happy video vignette as a bystander in research might differ from the

happiness acquired from sharing as the receiver or giver. The findings imply that positive emotion after sharing may be caused by diverse factors, which is worth further investigation.

Besides that, the participants proposed the use of different feedback after sharing. This is because some children can be embarrassed or in distress when praised or addressed in public, narrowing their focus with a short-term view [54] towards themselves and finally choosing to escape from a similar scene as a means of self-protection. Accordingly, more consideration of feedback patterns is required to maximize happiness while avoiding stimulating negative emotions among “shy children”. Some participants proposed that as boys grow, they choose verbal feedback instead of hugging to reduce their attachment to teachers. Fewer hugs show boys that they are not little children anymore, reflecting the traditional expectations of boys to be independent. However, such changes with age were not mentioned for girls with the idea that girls should be treated more delicately.

b. Realizing the benefits of sharing

Due to the natural human tendency to preserve for themselves [2], it is challenging for young children to inhibit their instinct to keep resources for themselves [2], [49] in costly sharing. All participants advocates that they prefer to elicit children’s spontaneous sharing actions following their own interests rather than persuading or forcing them. Children weigh their gains and losses before making decisions. Thus, an efficient way to increase children’s willingness to share is to make them believe that sharing does not mean losses only, but also gains. More specifically, making children realize the benefits of sharing will contribute to their willingness on sharing. Participant E shared her experiences:

“When a child shares what he owns, I usually ask the recipients if they feel happy about the giver sharing with them. After they answer ‘Yes’. I will keep asking whether they like playing with the giver and if they are willing to share with their peer next time. Luckily, most of the children will respond with a positive answer.”

Children may decide whether to share or not with a strategic consideration of the potential further social positive interactions catering to their social needs. For instance, children behave more generously in sharing when they have opportunities to be chosen as cooperative partners by recipients [55] or third-party observers [56]. Except for social needs, a large body of research showed that preschool children develop an expectation to be reciprocated [57], [58] and a reciprocity concern [59] when sharing decision-making for further benefits. However, it is notable that kindergarten children are likelier to distribute stickers with potential friends than strangers [60].

In this regard, there are inconclusive findings on whether children in kindergarten share with potential friends in the same class due to future relationships or reciprocity; whether these factors are relevant or interdependent, especially when teachers pose a series of questions, like posted by Participant E. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that once children realized the benefits from sharing, in other words, sharing is not a sacrifice but a reciprocal act, they may be less resistant even actively share their resources with others. During the manipulation of this strategy, teachers will explain the tangible benefits of sharing without any intervention. Thus, no differences appear between boys and girls when developing their awareness of the benefits from sharing.

4. CONCLUSION

Sharing behaviors of children are cultivated through establishing sharing awareness and eliciting sharing practices. Teachers use an other-oriented strategy to foster a sense of sharing through building up collective consciousness and developing perspective-taking abilities. Benefits-oriented strategy and habits-forming strategy are applied to increase times on practicing sharing behavior among children. Through setting examples and carrying out sharing activities, children internalized sharing as a social norm. After donating, children obtain either pleasant experiences or reciprocal resources, generating their interests to continue their sharing actions. Even though, all participants asserted that children are of status on an equal footing in sharing education, subtle gender bias still exists in some aspects, involving distinct gender-image on responsibility, different focus on developing perspective-taking, feedback ways and communicating patterns. Consequently, whether such subtle gender bias has an impact on children’s development of sharing behaviors and how it functions are needed to be further explored.

The findings provide effective ways on inspiring children’s desire to share to kindergarten teachers and other caregivers. Teaching strategies from teachers’ perspectives could provide educators or policymakers insights on how teachers internalize, transform, and implement the guidance scheme on sharing education in teaching, contributing to comprehensive teaching guidelines conforming to the actual teaching environment, as well as providing effective teaching materials or tools for teaching sharing.

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