

## Integrating Islamic Parenting and Assertive Training in Students' Character and Learning Motivation

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**ABSTRACT:** *The phenomenon of low self-confidence, communication difficulties, and decreased learning motivation of students at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School indicates the need for a parenting approach that is not only normative-religious but also responsive to the psychological needs of students. This study aims to examine in depth the practice of parenting in the Tahfidz Islamic boarding school in integrating Islamic parenting values with assertiveness training techniques, and analyse its implications for the formation of character and learning motivation of students. This study uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. Primary data sources were obtained from four main informants, namely the head of student care, the head of the foundation, the (GPH: Guru Pembina Harian) supervisor for worship, the GPH supervisor for ta'lim, and several students as supporting informants. Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained through documentation of the coaching program, activity log reports, and tahfidz reports. Data collection was carried out through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation. Data analysis used an interactive model that includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data validity was tested through source and technique triangulation, member checking, and audit trail. The results of the study indicate that the integration of Islamic parenting based on the values of monotheism, faith, morals, and habituation with assertiveness training techniques has been proven to significantly strengthen the character of responsibility, self-confidence, good communication quality, and increased learning motivation of students. Theoretically, these findings strengthen Bandura's social learning theory and Lickona's character education and expand the study of Islamic education through a holistic and dialogical parenting approach. This study confirms that the integration of Islamic values and assertiveness is an effective*

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*parenting strategy in Islamic boarding schools. The formulation of an integrated parenting model that combines Islamic values and assertiveness techniques can be a positive, applicable, and contextual contribution to educational institutions. However, the limitations of this study in the context of a single Islamic boarding school mean that the findings cannot be generalised widely.*

Fenomena rendahnya kepercayaan diri, kesulitan berkomunikasi, dan menurunnya motivasi belajar santri di Pondok Pesantren Tahfidzul Qur'an Darul Madinah menunjukkan perlunya pendekatan pola asuh yang tidak hanya normatif-keagamaan, tetapi juga responsif terhadap kebutuhan psikologis santri. Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji secara mendalam praktik pola asuh di pesantren tahfidz dalam mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai pengasuhan Islami dengan teknik pelatihan asertif, serta menganalisis implikasinya terhadap pembentukan karakter dan motivasi belajar santri. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan desain studi kasus. Sumber data primer diperoleh dari empat informan utama, yaitu kepala pengasuhan santri, kepala yayasan, pengawas Guru Pembina Harian (GPH) bagian ibadah, pengawas GPH bagian *ta'lim*, serta beberapa santri sebagai informan pendukung. Sedangkan data sekunder diperoleh melalui dokumentasi program pembinaan, laporan catatan aktivitas, dan laporan tahfidz. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi partisipatif, dan dokumentasi. Analisis data menggunakan model interaktif yang meliputi reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Untuk uji keabsahan data dilakukan melalui triangulasi sumber dan teknik, *member checking*, serta *audit trail*. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa integrasi pola asuh Islami berbasis nilai tauhid, akidah, akhlak, dan pembiasaan dengan teknik pelatihan asertif terbukti signifikan mampu memperkuat karakter tanggung jawab, kepercayaan diri, kualitas komunikasi yang baik, serta motivasi belajar santri yang meningkat. Secara teoretis, temuan ini menguatkan teori pembelajaran sosial Bandura dan pendidikan karakter Lickona, serta memperluas kajian pendidikan Islam melalui pendekatan pengasuhan yang holistik dan dialogis. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa integrasi nilai Islami dan asertivitas merupakan strategi pola asuh yang efektif di pesantren tahfidz. Perumusan model pola asuh terintegrasi yang memadukan nilai Islami dan teknik asertif dapat menjadi kontribusi positif, aplikatif dan kontekstual bagi lembaga pendidikan. Adapun keterbatasan penelitian pada satu konteks pesantren sehingga hasil temuan belum dapat digeneralisasikan secara luas.

**Keywords:** *Islamic Parenting, Assertive Training, Character Building, Learning Motivation, Islamic Boarding School Students.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Islamic boarding school education is oriented not only towards the transmission of Islamic knowledge, but also towards the development of the character, personality, and motivation of students to learn as a whole. Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding Schools,

as educational institutions based on strengthening the memorisation of the Qur'an, have a strategic responsibility in shaping students who are not only spiritually superior but also possess self-confidence, communication skills, and social readiness (Siskandar et al., 2025). This makes the learning process in Islamic boarding schools not only focus on academic aspects or mastery of religious knowledge, but also on mental and behavioural development (Supriani et al., 2023). However, the dynamics of Islamic boarding school education in the contemporary era face increasingly complex challenges, especially related to the psychological aspects and motivation of students in the learning process (Ikhwan et al., 2025). In Islamic boarding schools, students experience a different life from life at home, so students are required to adapt to a new life system complete with strict rules and schedules (Handayani et al., 2023).

On the other hand, students are also required to be independent and disciplined in their Islamic boarding school life. Therefore, it is not uncommon for some students to experience emotional stress, difficulty communicating, and even a loss of motivation to learn due to the drastic changes they experience (Triyuliasari & Mubarak, 2024). This is in line with the results of initial observations conducted by researchers as a pre-research at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School, which identified a number of problems that deserve serious attention. Some students exhibit symptoms of low self-esteem, fear of expressing opinions in front of friends or teachers, and a tendency to withdraw from social interactions. This condition has implications for decreased enthusiasm for learning, weak active participation in learning, and less than optimal development of students' potential. Therefore, if not addressed systematically, this situation has the potential to hinder the goals of Islamic boarding school education, which emphasises a balance between cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects (Triyuliasari et al., 2025).

These problems cannot be separated from the parenting patterns applied in Islamic boarding schools. Parenting patterns play a fundamental role in shaping students' character, attitudes, and learning motivation (Nasrin et al., 2025). Islamic boarding schools tend to implement Islamic parenting patterns, where parenting patterns are based on Islamic values that focus on developing students' character through a holistic and integrated approach (Nafisah & Tahir, 2024). The concept of parenting in Islamic boarding schools prioritises fundamental values such as monotheism, faith, and morals. This serves as the foundation for developing individuals who are not only academically intelligent but also possess spiritual awareness and social responsibility (Munir, Salminawati, et al., 2025). From an Islamic educational perspective, Islamic parenting patterns are rooted in the values of monotheism, faith, and morals, which aim to shape individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and have noble character. Al-Attas (1980) emphasised that Islamic education must integrate the dimensions of adab, knowledge, and charity as an inseparable whole. Therefore, Islamic parenting is not merely normative but must also address the psychological and social needs of students.

Theoretically, Islamic parenting positions educators as murabbi (leaders) who guide students through role models, instilling habits, and reinforcing values (Anggraini et al., 2022). According to Faisol et al. (2024), effective Islamic education is one that addresses spiritual, intellectual, and emotional aspects in a balanced manner. However, in practice, parenting approaches that overemphasise obedience and discipline without balancing them with opportunities for self-expression have the potential to foster passivity, dependency, and low self-confidence in students (Harismansyah et al., 2023). Based on field findings and initial interviews, it was discovered that student communication

patterns tend to be rigid and authoritarian. This actually reduces students' courage to develop. This situation places particular urgency in formulating a parenting approach that emphasises not only control and discipline but also provides space for emotional development, self-expression, and student learning motivation through supportive communication patterns (Ikhwan et al., 2025). Increasing learning motivation is one of the keys to success in Quranic memorisation-based education, which requires high levels of perseverance and consistency (Iman et al., 2023).

Educational psychology theory emphasises the importance of communication skills and the courage to express oneself as part of healthy personality development (Tavakoli et al., 2009). One relevant approach in this context is assertiveness training techniques. Assertiveness training techniques are applied to improve students' communication skills, encouraging them to express themselves assertively and constructively without harming others. Through this approach, students are taught to interact with empathy and reflection, thereby creating a safe and supportive environment (Nuha et al., 2024). Alberti & Emmons (2017) define assertiveness as an individual's ability to express feelings, thoughts, and needs honestly and firmly without violating the rights of others. Assertiveness training aims to develop individuals who are able to communicate healthily, have positive self-esteem, and make responsible decisions (Rahmawati et al., 2025).

Assertiveness training techniques have been widely used in educational and counselling contexts to improve students' self-confidence, learning motivation, and interpersonal skills. Corey (2023) explains that assertive behaviour falls between passive and aggressive behaviour, making it an effective strategy for building constructive social relationships. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, assertiveness training becomes relevant when integrated with Islamic-based parenting, emphasising etiquette, empathy, and moral responsibility (Rahmawati et al., 2025). This integration is defined as the systematic unification of normative Islamic values with pedagogical-psychological strategies. The values of monotheism and morality serve as the ethical foundation for implementing parenting in Islamic boarding schools.

In contrast, assertiveness training serves as a means of actualising these values in the students' daily behaviour (Halik, 2020). Thus, the assertiveness developed is not unlimited freedom, but relatively civilised and responsible self-expression while remaining grounded in Islamic values. Several previous studies have shown that parenting styles have a significant influence on character development and student learning motivation (Bahtiar et al., 2020). Previous research confirms that supportive and responsive parenting styles contribute positively to the development of self-confidence and independence (Fitrianto et al., 2025).

In the context of Islamic education, research by Muzakki & Nurdin (2022) found that value-based parenting can shape the religious character of Islamic students, but has not specifically examined aspects of assertive communication and learning motivation. Other research focusing on assertiveness training techniques has shown positive results in increasing student self-confidence and learning participation (Delfriani et al., 2023). Another study also demonstrated that assertiveness training significantly increases learning motivation in high school students (Pahmiah et al., 2024). However, some of these studies were conducted in the context of public schools and did not integrate them with Islamic educational values or the Islamic boarding school environment. Referring to the results of several previous studies, many studies have discussed parenting styles

and learning motivation in general. However, in this study, I take a different perspective, highlighting the specific relationship between Assertive Training techniques and Islamic parenting styles for students in Islamic boarding schools. Most of the literature focuses more on cognitive techniques or conventional motivational approaches.

In contrast, communication-based psychological approaches such as Assertive Training can make a significant contribution to fostering student character (Mujahid, 2021). Several previous studies have found that Islamic parenting styles and assertiveness training tend to operate in isolation. However, research that fully integrates both approaches, particularly in the context of Islamic boarding schools for memorising the Qur'an, is still minimal, thus providing significant innovation. The objectives of this study are to identify the basic concepts of the parenting styles applied; to understand how the integration of Islamic parenting styles and assertiveness training techniques as a unified model for character development; and to analyse the implications of this integration for students at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School. Islamic boarding schools have unique characteristics that require a parenting approach that is not only religious but also responsive to the psychological needs of the students.

As stated, an individual's ability to express themselves confidently has a significant impact on the development of self-esteem and academic success (Ikhwan et al., 2022). However, in the context of Islamic boarding schools, communication between caregivers and students is often one-way, limiting students' freedom of expression. Therefore, this study not only adds to the scientific body of Islamic educational psychology but also provides a new perspective on the application of assertive communication techniques within an Islamic parenting style that can be used as a model by other Islamic boarding schools. The application of Assertive Training techniques has the potential to be an alternative solution that can build positive relationships between caregivers and students, foster self-confidence, and motivate students to achieve their learning goals. This study not only describes parenting practices but also explains how Islamic values and assertive strategies interact to shape the personalities of independent, confident, and responsible students. Therefore, this study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to Islamic education science, as well as a practical contribution in the form of an applicable parenting model for Tahfidz Islamic boarding schools in fostering character and motivation in students in a holistic and integrated manner. This research is important because it directly touches on the practical aspects of education in Islamic boarding schools, as well as strengthening the academic understanding of the importance of communication patterns in developing students' character.

## II. METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design to deeply understand how parenting patterns through Assertive Training techniques implemented at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic boarding school in Madiun increase student learning motivation. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to holistically explore the communication dynamics between caregivers and students within the unique and complex context of Islamic boarding school life (Creswell & Creswell, 2023).

Data collection techniques included semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation (Huberman, 2014). The researchers used primary data sources in

this study, utilising four primary informants: the head of student care, the head of the foundation, the GPH supervisor for worship, and the GPH supervisor for religious study. The informants were selected purposively with the following criteria: they were from the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an, they understood parenting practices, they had experience in mentoring students, and they were actively involved in implementing communication techniques in mentoring. This research focuses on parenting patterns and the influence of assertiveness training techniques on student learning motivation. This study aims to explore the experiences, perceptions, and strategies used by caregivers. Observations were conducted during daily interactions within the Islamic boarding school environment, specifically in the development of GPH teachers. Secondary data sources, including documentation in the form of activity notes, development programs, and memorisation reports, were used to strengthen the data. The collected data were then analysed using data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion-drawing techniques, through an interpretive process to identify patterns of meaning relevant to the research focus (Miles et al., 2014).

To ensure the credibility and validity of the data, this study employed several verification strategies commonly used in qualitative research. Data validity is understood not only as the accuracy of the findings but also as the level of trust in the research process and interpretation. Therefore, the researcher sought to ensure that the data obtained truly represented the empirical reality at the Darul Madinah Madiun Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School, comprehensively and contextually. *First*, data credibility was maintained through triangulation techniques. Triangulation was conducted in three forms: source triangulation, technical triangulation, and temporal triangulation. Source triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from the head of the care, the head of the foundation, the GPH supervisor for worship, the GPH supervisor for religious education, and students as supporting informants.

Technical triangulation was conducted by combining data from semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentation, allowing researchers to verify the consistency of information obtained through various data collection methods. Meanwhile, temporal triangulation was conducted by collecting data at different points in time to ensure the stability and consistency of the findings. In addition to triangulation, data credibility was also strengthened through member checking, which involves reconfirming interview results and preliminary findings with key informants. This process aims to ensure that the researcher's interpretations do not deviate from the informants' intentions and experiences, and to minimise subjective bias. Member checking provides informants with the opportunity to provide clarification, correction, or affirmation of the collected data (Mey, 2022).

*Second*, transferability is maintained through the presentation of rich and in-depth descriptions of the Islamic boarding school context, parenting patterns, interactions between caregivers and students, and the implementation of assertiveness training techniques in fostering GPH. Detailed contextual descriptions allow readers to assess the extent to which the research findings can be applied or are relevant to other Islamic boarding school contexts with similar characteristics. Third, the research's dependability is maintained by systematically and transparently documenting the entire research process. The researcher notes the stages of data collection, the analysis process, changes in research focus in the field, and methodological considerations taken during the research (Creswell, 2019). This documentation serves as an audit trail that allows other

researchers to trace the consistency of the research process and assess the reliability of the procedures used.

Fourth, data confirmability is maintained by ensuring that research findings are genuinely based on empirical data, not on the researcher's assumptions or preferences (Safarudin et al., 2023). This effort is carried out by including direct quotes from informants, observational notes, and supporting documents as a basis for drawing conclusions. Furthermore, researchers engage in continuous self-reflexivity to recognise and control potential subjective bias in the data interpretation process. By implementing the aforementioned steps, valid, reliable, and scientifically sound findings will be produced. This approach also strengthens the methodological legitimacy of qualitative case study research in examining the integration of Islamic parenting patterns and assertiveness training techniques in increasing student learning motivation at the Darul Madinah Madiun Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### Result

Based on the results of interviews with the head of the student care, it shows that the Islamic parenting pattern in this Islamic boarding school is not only oriented towards instilling the values of faith and morals, but is also directed at forming the students' communication skills healthily and responsibly so that the students do not continue to harbor complaints felt during their time at the Islamic boarding school. The head of the care stated that the care is carried out with a dialogical approach so that the students are accustomed to expressing their feelings and opinions politely. This is in line with the results of the researcher's interview with the head of the student care, who revealed:

"We instil Islamic values as a foundation, but in our parenting practices, we also train students to speak up, express their opinions, and address their problems in a respectful and civilised manner. We, along with the other *ustadz*, also model good and communicative attitudes and behaviour in every interaction, as this will be observed and used as an example by the students in their behaviour."

The foundation head also emphasised that the integration of Islamic parenting styles and assertiveness training techniques is part of the Islamic boarding school's institutional vision. According to him, students who memorise the Qur'an must possess a balanced personality, combining spiritual strength and social skills. Therefore, assertiveness is understood as the ability to convey the truth within Islamic ethics. In an interview, he revealed:

"This certificate does not mean being rebellious or cruel, but rather daring to speak the truth with good morals. We instil this value in our education so that students are not afraid to speak and can express their opinions while remaining polite."

Furthermore, an interview with the GPH supervisor for worship revealed that assertiveness training techniques are applied contextually in daily worship guidance. Students are given space to ask questions, express difficulties, and discuss worship practices, so they do not feel pressured.

"In worship guidance, we engage students in dialogue. If anyone is having difficulties or feels burdened, they can share. From there, we guide them with a gentle, non-judgmental approach so the students can be more open."

Meanwhile, the GPH supervisor for religious study (ta'lim) explained that the application of assertiveness training techniques is evident in the learning process and academic mentoring. Students are encouraged to express their opinions, ask questions, and address learning challenges openly, while still respecting teachers and peers. This aims to improve student focus and increase motivation.

"We train students to be courageous in asking questions and expressing opinions in class. However, we also emphasise etiquette, how to speak politely and respect others."

From the perspective of students as supporting informants, the integration of Islamic parenting styles and assertiveness training techniques has a positive impact on self-confidence and learning motivation. Students feel more comfortable interacting with their teachers and are not afraid to express their opinions or problems.

"Now I am more confident in speaking up. If I have difficulty memorising or studying, I can tell the teacher. I feel calmer, and my enthusiasm for learning has also increased because I feel heard and valued."

Other findings indicate that teachers consciously use positive reinforcement techniques as part of assertiveness training. Students who express their opinions or demonstrate responsibility are given verbal praise, thus reinforcing assertive behaviour in accordance with Islamic values. This aligns with the interview results revealed by the head of the student care center:

"If students dare to speak up positively, we appreciate it. This is important so they feel confident and valued. Sometimes, if a student dares to answer during a discussion or during a question-and-answer session, we reward them, even if it is not much. However, the goal is to recognise their courage in expressing their opinions."

Overall, the interview results indicate that the integration of Islamic parenting styles and assertiveness training techniques at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School is implemented adaptively and contextually. This approach not only strengthens the religious character of students but also increases their courage to communicate, self-confidence, and motivation to learn continuously.

## **Discussion**

### **Islamic Parenting Values in Student Character Formation**

Islamic parenting in Islamic boarding schools is essentially based on the view that education is a process of instilling values that simultaneously encompass faith, morals, and behaviour (Siskandar et al., 2025). Research findings at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School indicate that the values of monotheism, morals, exemplary behaviour, and habituation are the primary foundations of student parenting practices. These values are not understood as abstract concepts that stop at the cognitive level, but are internalised through daily interactions between caregivers and students throughout all aspects of Islamic boarding school life. This internalisation process occurs through interpersonal communication, emotional development, and educational relationships that are built intensively and sustainably. Caregivers serve not only as instructors but also as mentors who present the values of monotheism and morals in the students' attitudes, language, and ways of solving problems. This pattern of interaction makes Islamic values visibly and contextually present in the lives of students,

making them easier to understand and accept as part of their self-awareness (Al-Attas, 1980).

Through these daily interactions, Islamic values are transformed into lived experiences directly experienced by students. Students learn responsibility, honesty, and discipline not only from verbal advice but also from how their teachers behave, respond to mistakes, and provide reinforcement. This process aligns with the theory of value internalisation, which states that values become firmly embedded when individuals experience, reflect on, and practice them directly in meaningful social contexts (Bandura, 1997). Thus, the formation of students' character occurs through social learning mechanisms that emphasise observation, imitation, and repeated reinforcement.

The internalisation of values through these consistent interactions shapes students' character gradually and sustainably. Character does not emerge instantly, but instead develops through a process of habituation accompanied by an understanding of meaning and spiritual awareness (Ikhwan et al., 2025). The consistent practice of positive behaviours, such as disciplined worship, ethical speech, and responsible learning, gradually forms a lasting moral disposition in students. This aligns with previous studies that emphasise that effective character education must simultaneously integrate moral knowledge, moral feelings, and moral actions (Kurniawan & Fitriyani, 2023). In the context of Islamic boarding schools, the interaction between students and their caregivers is key to ensuring that Islamic values are not only understood but also embodied in their personalities.

Several Islamic values serve as the foundation for Islamic boarding school parenting. *First*, the value of monotheism (tauhid) is the most fundamental foundation of Islamic parenting applied in Islamic boarding schools. The value of monotheism serves as the ontological foundation of the Islamic boarding school Qur'an memorisation education system, reflecting a holistic paradigm by integrating the divine dimension as the centre of the entire learning process (M. N. Fajri et al., 2024). Islamic education is holistic and universal, based on Islamic normativism and historicism, has profound meaning and messages, and encompasses all aspects (Halik, 2020). The application of the value of monotheism in the concept of parenting does not only operate at the cognitive level of doctrine. However, it is manifested comprehensively in the ontological dimension as the essence of existence, epistemology as a method of acquiring knowledge, and axiology as a system of values that guide all educational activities. The integration of this triad results in the formation of student character that places monotheism not only as a theological belief, but as a unifying principle that unites worldly pursuits with a spiritual orientation, so that every academic, social, and ritual action becomes an integral part of total worship to Allah SWT (M. D. Fajri et al., 2023).

Based on interviews, the teachers emphasised that all student activities, including worship, study, and social interactions, are directed toward fostering an awareness that every action is under God's supervision. This instillation of monotheism is not only conveyed through formal teaching but also through personal counselling and reflection in daily guidance. This finding aligns with Al-Attas' (1980) view, which asserts that monotheism is the core of Islamic education because it shapes students' life orientation and value systems. With a strong foundation of monotheism, students tend to develop self-control, a sense of responsibility, and intrinsic motivation in learning, rather than being solely driven by external incentives (Al-Attas, 1980). Recent studies have shown

that the integration of monotheistic values into the Islamic boarding school education system not only produces superior Quranic memorisation skills but also fosters a coherent worldview in which students develop a transcendental awareness that every learning activity is a manifestation of devotion to God, creating a harmonious synthesis between academic achievement and spirituality, a hallmark of Quranic memorisation in Islamic boarding schools (Munir, Lubis, et al., 2025).

*Second*, moral values are a crucial dimension in shaping the character of students. Research shows that parenting in Islamic boarding schools emphasises not only adherence to rules but also the development of politeness, empathy, and mutual respect (Nasruddin, 2025). The parenting style provided by the *ustadz* consistently links the students' daily behaviour with the values of *akhlakul karimah* (good character), both in speech, attitude, and conflict resolution. This reinforces previous findings that moral education is the heart of Islamic education, as morality is an indicator of the successful internalisation of religious values (Muzakki & Nurdin, 2022). In this context, morality is not positioned solely as a moral requirement, but rather as a habit that develops from spiritual awareness.

*Third*, the value of exemplary behaviour (*uswah hasanah*) emerged as the most dominant parenting strategy based on field findings. The *ustadz* recognise that their behaviour serves as a primary reference for the students in shaping their attitudes and character. Therefore, the students and other *ustadz* strive to demonstrate patience, fairness, and communication in every interaction. Students acknowledge that the exemplary behaviour of teachers (*ustadz*) makes it easier for them to accept advice and rules. This finding aligns with Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, which asserts that individuals learn through observation and imitation of significant figures. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, the presence of *ustadz*, and especially the care of students, plays a crucial role as models of Islamic behaviour, directly influencing the development of their character.

In addition to exemplary behaviour, the value of habituation is a crucial mechanism for internalising Islamic values. This study found that routines of worship, time discipline, and a structured learning culture are practical tools for consistently shaping the character of students. These habits are not rigid, but are accompanied by explanations of meaning and purpose, enabling students to understand the essence of each activity. This finding aligns with the concept of habituation in character education, which stems from Lickona's thinking that character formation requires repeated practice accompanied by an understanding of values. In Islamic boarding schools, habits based on Islamic values help students develop a natural sense of discipline and responsibility (Kurniawan & Fitriyani, 2023).

The integration of monotheism, morals, role models, and habituation forms a holistic Islamic parenting pattern. Research shows that these four values are not applied separately, but rather reinforce each other within a single parenting system (Imamah, 2025). Monotheism provides direction and orientation, morals shape moral quality, role models serve as a medium for transmitting values, and habituation ensures the continuity of character internalisation. This pattern reinforces the findings of previous research, which stated that the success of character education in Islamic boarding schools is primarily determined by the consistency of values and parenting practices (Sugiarto & Rachmadhani, 2022). Therefore, Islamic parenting values play a strategic role in shaping the character of students. Research findings show that students' character is not

formed through normative instruction, but rather through a parenting process that is Islamic, contextual, and sustainable. The integration of the values of monotheism, morals, role models, and habituation makes Islamic boarding schools educational spaces that not only transfer knowledge but also shape students' religious personalities, strong character, and readiness to face social challenges responsibly.

### **Assertiveness Training for Communication and Confidence**

Assertiveness training techniques in the context of Islamic boarding school education are understood as pedagogical strategies to develop students' abilities to express their thoughts, feelings, and needs openly, assertively, yet politely and ethically. Research findings at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School indicate that the implementation of these techniques is a response to the phenomenon of students' low communication skills, particularly in expressing opinions, expressing learning difficulties, and interacting with their teachers. Assertiveness training is not implemented as a stand-alone psychological approach, but rather integrated with Islamic values that emphasise manners, empathy, and moral responsibility. Based on interviews, the students' care providers implement assertiveness training techniques through a dialogical and communicative approach in their daily development. Assertiveness training techniques are used as an approach to building character and effective communication.

The five main strategies include: *first*, role-playing. In this approach, students are trained in courage and communication through simulated roles in creative activities. Students are also trained to express opinions and reprimands politely and courageously through daily habits (Stubbs & Sorensen, 2025). *Second*, a step-by-step system and a point system are used. The technique of consistently repeating instructions is used in the system of calling out students who violate, without threats or emotion (Mamo et al., 2021).

Meanwhile, the point system is implemented to strengthen the boundaries of the rules, where students receive consequences for violations gradually and repeatedly (Degli Espinosa & Hackenberg, 2024). *Third* is Positive Reinforcement, which provides rewards for student achievements, both in terms of worship, memorisation, and morals to strengthen positive behaviour (Ghafar, 2023). In addition, routine monthly evaluations are conducted to reflect student progress and provide motivation through verbal or symbolic reinforcement (Littin et al., 2025). *Fourth*, systematic desensitisation through a gradual learning process so that students become accustomed to and confident in using Arabic (Hulukati et al., 2023). In addition, students are also required to participate in muhadhoroh activities or speeches using Arabic to practice public speaking habits, thereby helping students overcome fear and build optimal self-confidence (Carona et al., 2023). *Fifth*, individual counselling where students are taught to express their feelings honestly and responsibly through the guidance counsellor, so that students do not tend to blame themselves or blame others without reflection and evaluation (Segal, 2024). In addition, students are also taught Violation Handling techniques. This technique is applied in the process of fostering violations committed by them, so that students admit mistakes with an open attitude and a complete sense of responsibility for their actions (Wood & Suzuki, 2024).

Furthermore, the application of assertiveness techniques in character education at Tahfidzul Qur'an Darul Madinah is based on three interrelated fundamental value concepts—*first*, the concept of no judgment. The concept of non-judgment is an

important value implemented through the Violation Handling and Individual Counselling Program, where *ustadz* and *musyrifah* use the expressions "I feel" or "I am worried" to convey their concerns without attacking the student's personality (Saepullah, 2021). *Second*, the concept of Assertive Communication. In the context of restorative justice, this is a value that emphasises improving relationships and learning rather than mere punishment, which is implemented through open dialogue that facilitates students to understand the reasons behind their behaviour (Wijayanto & Hastuti, 2023). *Third*, there is the concept of good cooperative relationships through positive appreciation. This concept reflects the priority value of collaborative relationships between parents and students in the process of character formation (Ghafar, 2023). This value is realised through active listening and providing empathetic responses, thus creating an environment where students feel heard, valued, and understood in the context of their experiences.

These three concepts collectively serve as learning examples for students to develop the ability to express themselves honestly and responsibly without harming others, as well as to build internal self-control that fosters long-term self-regulation (Masnuna & Qonita, 2022). The application of these values significantly improves students' self-awareness and emotional regulation, as positive experiences interacting with respectful *ustadz*/caregiver figures strengthen their self-esteem and psychological well-being, ultimately motivating them to develop better and more constructive problem-solving strategies (Nashihin et al., 2025). Based on several key strategies and concepts in the assertiveness techniques implemented, findings reveal that students feel they are given space to speak, ask questions, and express their opinions without fear of blame or judgment. The students' caregiving consciously uses persuasive language, provides positive feedback, and guides them to express themselves appropriately. This practice aligns with the concept of assertiveness proposed by Alberti & Emmons (2017), which states that assertive behaviour allows individuals to express themselves honestly while respecting the rights of others.

Field findings also indicate that assertiveness training significantly increased students' self-confidence. Students who previously tended to be passive and withdrawn began to demonstrate the courage to speak up in learning forums and GPH development activities. This self-confidence did not emerge instantly, but instead grew through a process of habituating safe and supportive communication. This aligns with Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, which states that an individual's belief in their abilities develops through successful experiences, social support, and positive reinforcement. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, the support of both students and *ustadz* plays a key role in building students' self-efficacy. It functions not only as a communication strategy but also as an instrument for character development. Through assertive communication, students learn to value themselves, respect others, and take responsibility for their choices and behaviour.

### **Integrating Islamic Parenting and Assertiveness Training**

Within the dynamics of Islamic boarding school education, the integration of Islamic parenting and assertiveness training is a strategic approach that holistically integrates the spiritual, moral, and psychosocial dimensions of students (Silfiyasari & Zhafi, 2020). Research findings at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School indicate that parenting is not carried out in isolation, focusing on fostering Islamic values and strengthening communication skills. Instead, it is designed as a

unified, complementary process. Islamic parenting provides a framework of values that instils monotheism, morals, and etiquette. Assertiveness training, on the other hand, serves as a methodological strategy for actualising these values in students' daily social interactions.

Interviews with the head of student care and the GPH supervisor support this. This integration is evident in the way caregivers guide students to express opinions, complaints, and learning difficulties openly, while remaining grounded in Islamic etiquette. Students are not only encouraged to speak boldly but are also taught how to speak correctly, use polite language, and demonstrate respect for their interlocutors. This practice demonstrates that assertiveness in Islamic boarding schools is not interpreted as an individualistic attitude, but as a form of moral responsibility in communication. This aligns with the view of Alberti & Emmons (2017), who emphasised that assertive behaviour is the ability to express oneself honestly without violating the rights of others.

This integration is also reflected in the relationship patterns between caregivers and students, which are dialogical and educational. Field observations indicate that caregivers act not only as moral authorities but also as facilitators, creating space for dialogue and reflection. In this context, the value of role modelling (*uswah*) is key, as caregivers demonstrate assertive communication directly in daily interactions. Students learn not only from verbal instructions but also from the concrete practices they observe daily. This finding aligns with Bandura's (1997) social learning theory, which states that social learning occurs through observational learning, imitation, and internalisation of behaviours displayed by significant figures in an individual's social environment. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, these significant figures are the caregivers, *ustadz*, and supervisors, who serve as role models for students in communication, self-regulation, and the practice of Islamic values. According to Bandura (1997), individuals learn not only through direct reinforcement but also through internal cognitive processes triggered by observing the behaviour of others and the consequences of that behaviour.

In the dynamics of Islamic boarding school care, students observe how the *ustadz* delivers advice firmly yet empathetically, how they reprimand mistakes constructively, and how they express assertiveness without being aggressive or passive. This observation process is then followed by a selective imitation process, where students replicate communication and behavioural patterns deemed effective and in accordance with Islamic boarding school norms. Over time, these imitated behaviours become not only external habits but also internalised as part of the students' personality and character structure (Noor et al., 2023).

Furthermore, social learning theory emphasises the existence of a self-efficacy mechanism, namely an individual's belief in their own ability to act (Hidayati et al., 2022). In this study, the exemplary role model of *ustadz* who consistently implemented assertive communication and Islamic parenting contributed to increased self-efficacy in students, particularly in terms of courage to express opinions, self-confidence in social interactions, and motivation to learn. Students who observe the success of significant figures in managing communication effectively develop the belief that they can do the same. Thus, the integration of Islamic role models and assertiveness training not only facilitates behavioural learning but also shapes the students' cognitive and affective structures that support character development and ongoing motivation to learn.

From an Islamic parenting perspective, integration with assertiveness training enriches the parenting function, focusing not only on behavioural control but also on strengthening students' self-awareness (Nasrin et al., 2025). A monotheism-based parenting pattern provides a theological foundation that every individual has dignity and responsibility as a servant of God, so that students are encouraged to recognise their potential and dare to take on positive roles. This is in line with the view of Al-Attas (1980), who emphasised that the goal of Islamic education is the formation of civilised individuals who can position themselves appropriately in relations with God, humans, and nature. Moral values in the Islamic Qur'an memorisation education system function as applicative parameters for the internalisation of monotheism and faith, which are manifested in three comprehensive relational dimensions. The vertical dimension that describes the transcendental relationship with Allah SWT is realised through the development of meaningful worship procedures and avoids formalistic ritualism. In contrast, the horizontal dimension in the context of social-community relations is focused on developing empathy, honesty, and responsibility in the dynamics of interaction within the Islamic boarding school community (Munir, Lubis, et al., 2025). Moral education in Islamic boarding schools encompasses not only behavioural norms but also customary practices through modelling (examples) of Asatidzah (leaders) and creating an environment that supports the internalisation of holistic values (Romadan, 2022).

This is reflected in several regulations at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School, built on a foundation of Islamic values, including worship, etiquette, and time discipline. Research findings indicate that a busy daily schedule from dawn to dusk is designed to foster positive spiritual and social habits. Students are not only taught to obey the rules but also to understand their meaning as part of their worship and moral development (Chamami et al., 2023). This aligns with previous research that found Islamic parenting styles significantly influence the character development of students (Nasrin et al., 2025). Field findings indicate that students who initially tended to be passive, afraid to express their opinions, and experienced a decline in learning motivation began to show positive changes after implementing an assertive parenting approach based on Islamic values. Therefore, integrating Islamic parenting and assertiveness training can be used as a systematic effort to bridge values and methods. Islamic values provide moral and spiritual orientation, while assertiveness training provides a practical way to internalise these values in the students' social lives.

### **Islamic Parenting and Assertiveness in Student Development**

Based on research findings, there are several implications experienced by students from this implementation. *First*, it strengthens the students' personal character, particularly in aspects of self-confidence, responsibility, and independence. Observations and interviews show that students who previously tended to be passive and afraid to express their opinions are beginning to show courage in communicating openly, both in learning forums and in daily interactions with their teachers. Assertiveness developed within an Islamic value framework helps students understand that expressing opinions honestly and politely is part of commendable morals (Delfriani et al., 2023). This finding aligns with previous studies that emphasise that strong character is formed through the integration of moral knowledge (moral knowing), moral feeling (moral feeling), and moral action (Kurniawan & Fitriyani, 2023).

*Second*, the quality of the educational relationship between the *ustadz* as teacher and students improves. The integration of Islamic parenting and assertiveness creates a dialogical and supportive climate, where students feel valued, heard, and understood. The sense of psychological safety created through assertive communication encourages students to be more open in expressing learning difficulties and personal issues. This supports the theory of Rogers & Allender (1983), which states that a learning environment characterised by empathy, acceptance, and authentic relationships will encourage the optimal development of individual potential.

Furthermore, from a learning motivation perspective, this integration has an impact on increasing students' intrinsic motivation. The improvement in the quality of student learning at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School is a direct manifestation of intrinsic motivation facilitated through the implementation of Islamic parenting and Assertive Training techniques. Students' mastery of the material and memorisation demonstrates empirically measurable progress, both in terms of fluency and accuracy of Quranic recitation and a comprehensive understanding of religious learning materials. This phenomenon occurs because Islamic parenting, particularly through its emphasis on rules based on Islamic values, justice, and equal opportunity, fosters spiritual awareness and a transcendental learning orientation, going beyond simply fulfilling formal obligations (Shengyao et al., 2024).

Active participation in discussions and explorations has seen a substantial increase in learning contexts. The application of an Islamic parenting approach, prioritising humanistic dialogue and providing an expressive space for students to articulate their personal perspectives, directly stimulates intellectual curiosity. Assertiveness training techniques, particularly through individual counselling services, play a crucial role in this dynamic. Students develop the ability to articulate their learning needs and challenges, which strengthens self-awareness and encourages proactivity in exploring material. This is in line with previous findings that assertiveness training is efficacious in improving self-esteem, academic achievement, and reducing stress levels in students (Parray & Kumar, 2022).

Based on field findings, students demonstrate greater enthusiasm for participating in learning activities and memorisation programs when they feel actively involved and given space to express their opinions. Assertiveness training also helps students develop self-efficacy, namely the belief in their ability to complete learning tasks. Bandura (1997) emphasised that self-efficacy is a key factor influencing individual motivation, persistence, and learning achievement. In the context of Islamic boarding schools, this self-confidence is strengthened by the foundation of monotheism, which instils the awareness that learning is part of worship and a mandate as servants of God. On the other hand, the integration of Islamic parenting with assertiveness training can also increase extrinsic motivation in students. Improving academic achievement, behavioural consistency, and the formation of positive discipline in students are direct manifestations of extrinsic motivation implemented through democratic parenting patterns and assertiveness training techniques. Research shows that the phenomenon of student academic achievement is influenced by the environment. High levels of stress can interfere with concentration and academic performance, as well as social and economic influences that result in decreased academic achievement (Shafira et al., 2025).

The findings indicate that students demonstrated measurable progress in exam scores, memorisation scores, and class rankings. This progress was a response to the systematically implemented reward and recognition system within a democratic parenting style, such as individual achievement-based appreciation and open recognition. The results indicate that Islamic boarding school students are more driven by intrinsic religious motivation, while non-Islamic boarding school students tend to be influenced by extrinsic motivation from their social and family environments (Auliah et al., 2021). Positive Reinforcement Techniques and In-depth Assertiveness Training can reinforce desired behaviours through the provision of positive consequences, thus encouraging students to achieve academic and memorisation targets. Increased student active participation in various learning and self-development activities is an empirical implication of extrinsic motivation fostered through Islamic parenting and assertiveness training techniques. The level of participation in engaging activities showed an apparent increase, as evidenced by the number of students registering or actively participating in activities such as drama, the Qur'an Learning and Teaching (MBA) program, post-Maghrib prayers, and Arabic language presentations. These activities serve as engaging external stimuli, designed to spark initial interest and encourage engagement, especially for students who may not yet have strong intrinsic motivation (Jan et al., 2023).

The implementation of Islamic parenting styles integrated with assertiveness training techniques at the Darul Madinah Islamic Boarding School in Madiun has proven effective in optimising student learning motivation, resulting in satisfactory academic achievement. This is evident from observations and documentation in annual evaluation reports, which show that 90% of final-year students were successfully accepted into state universities. This achievement demonstrates the success of the learning methodology in preparing students for intense academic competition. Furthermore, this academic achievement is bolstered by spiritual achievements, with 60% of students graduating in the 2024/2025 academic year achieving the target of memorising the Qur'an and participating in open evaluations. This demonstrates the balance between intellectual and spiritual achievement, a key characteristic of the Islamic boarding school education system. Indicators of increased student learning motivation are also reflected in the consistent implementation of religious obligations, which have reached optimal levels. Analysis of prayer attendance data for final-year students shows a near-perfect attendance rate. This demonstrates the deep internalisation of spiritual values in students' daily lives. The phenomenon of high participation in religious observances is not only a manifestation of external discipline but also a reflection of ingrained intrinsic motivation to achieve balance between academic and spiritual dimensions (Parrray & Kumar, 2022).

The theoretical implications of this research suggest that character formation and student learning motivation cannot be achieved solely through internalising values or strengthening skills separately. An integrative approach is needed that synergises a value framework (Islamic parenting) with relevant pedagogical strategies (assertiveness). Practically, these findings contribute to Islamic boarding school administrators developing parenting models that are more adaptive to students' psychological needs without abandoning the fundamental principles of Islamic education. Thus, the integration of Islamic parenting and assertiveness can be viewed as a transformative strategy in producing students with good character, religiousness, self-confidence, and sustained motivation to learn.



*Figure 1. Implications of Integrating Islamic Parenting and Assertiveness Training*

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, this study concludes that the integration of Islamic parenting and assertiveness training techniques at the Darul Madinah Tahfidzul Qur'an Islamic Boarding School plays a significant role in character formation and increasing students' learning motivation. Islamic parenting, based on the values of monotheism, morals, role models, and habits, provides a strong moral and spiritual framework. At the same time, assertiveness training techniques function as a pedagogical-psychological strategy that allows students to express themselves in a healthy, responsible, and civilised manner. Field findings indicate that the synergy of these two approaches is able to overcome the problems of low self-confidence, fear of communication, and decreased enthusiasm for learning in students by creating a dialogical, supportive, and humanistic parenting climate. Furthermore, this integration has an impact on strengthening the personal character of students, improving the quality of educational relationships between caregivers and students, and growing intrinsic and extrinsic learning motivation. Students show increased self-efficacy, courage to express opinions, discipline, and a commitment to continuous learning. Theoretically, these findings reinforce Bandura's social learning theory and Lickona's concept of character education, while enriching the body of Islamic education by offering an integrative parenting model that combines Islamic values and modern psychological approaches. Practically, this research contributes to the development of an applicable and contextual parenting model for tahfidz Islamic boarding schools in fostering students with strong, religious character and preparedness to face academic and social challenges. However, this research has limitations. It used a qualitative approach with a case study design in a single Islamic boarding school, making the findings contextual and not yet widely generalisable. Furthermore, the limited number of informants may limit the perspectives in representing the overall dynamics of student parenting. Therefore, future research is recommended to involve more diverse Islamic boarding school contexts and/or educational institutions using a mixed methods approach to strengthen the generalizability of the findings.

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