



Assertive Behavior of Students Based on the Perspective of Parenting, Culture, and Self-Esteem: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Article Information:

Received: September 2025

Revised: October 2025

Accepted: October 2025

Published: October 2025

Keywords:

Assertive Behavior, Student, Parenting, Culture, Self-esteem, Systematic Literature Review.

Assertive behavior is essential in an individual's life. Good assertive behavior can positively influence one's well-being. Several factors may influence different assertive behaviors in individuals, necessitating analysis. Consequently, it is essential to examine and assess pupils' assertive behavior from various perspectives. This study aimed to analyze students' assertive behavior through the lenses of parenting, culture, and self-esteem. This research employs a comprehensive literature review methodology. This systematic literature review was carried out in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, encompassing the phases of identification, screening, and inclusion. Literature sources were obtained from Scopus and Web of Science. An exhaustive systematic literature evaluation concluded that parents, culture, and self-esteem are factors of students' assertive behavior. The researchers proposed several subsequent studies informed by the findings of this research. This entails investigating additional parenting styles that have not been examined in this work, in relation to assertive behavior. Subsequently, undertaking a study on assertive behavior by assimilating it with the prevailing culture in Indonesia.

How to Cite this Article

Syahputra, M. E., Syukur, Y., Wahid, A., Althafunnisa, S. N., Sihombing, S. C., & Mukhtahari, M. (2025). Assertive Behavior of Students Based on the Perspective of Parenting, Culture, and Self-Esteem: A Systematic Literature Review. *Al-Musyrif: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling Islam*, 8(2), 247-259. <https://doi.org/10.38073/almusyrif.v8i2.3493>

INTRODUCTION

Adolescents are characterised by instability and tension, as at this phase, they confront the simultaneous challenges of complex emotions and the pressure (Buchanan et al., 2023; Casey et al., 2010; Zimmermann et al., 2022) to fulfil societal and personal expectations and demands (Havighurst, 1972). The success or failure of an individual in one stage of development can significantly impact their ability to meet other social expectations. It may lead to issues and disorders in later life (Grzegorzewska et al., 2025). A crucial developmental challenge for adolescents is the establishment of social ties with others (Do et al., 2024).

In accomplishing the developmental goal of establishing social interactions, adolescents ought to cultivate connections with individuals of either gender; nevertheless, they frequently encounter challenges and obstacles. Numerous adolescents struggle to exercise self-restraint, sometimes disregarding their own interests in interpersonal connections. This phenomenon arises from individuals' deficient assertive behavior. Assertive behavior refers to an individual's capacity to candidly and transparently articulate their beliefs and emotions, while also acknowledging the feelings, thoughts, and rights of others (Gultekin et al., 2018; Lambertz-Berndt & Blight, 2016). Individuals showing good assertive behavior can articulate their desires clearly, demonstrate empathy, respect others, and assertively decline demands (Uzuntarla et al., 2016). Assertive behavior is crucial for adolescents, as it significantly influences their future social relationships and interactions (Ngailianniang et al., 2023; Parray & Kumar, 2017; Pradana, 2022). Mimhamimdala & Syukur (2025) asserted that assertive behavior is crucial for individuals in the growth and development stage, as this phase profoundly influences their future.

The assertive behavior of contemporary adolescents requires significant attention and improvement. Hanjagi's et al. (2025) research at Bagalkot High School revealed that 24.16% of students exhibited high assertive behavior, 62.5% shown moderate aggressive behavior, and 13.33% displayed low assertive behavior. Moreover, Assalam's et al. (2024) study indicated that the assertive behavior of class XI students at SMK Negeri 7 Semarang revealed that, on average, 58% of students fell within the moderate category, 19% within the low category, and 24% within the high category. Asysyura's et al. (2020) study on adolescents in West Sumatra revealed that 21% exhibited high aggressive behavior, 71.8% fell into the intermediate category, and 7.2% demonstrated low assertive behavior.

The research indicates that there are now very few adolescents exhibiting high levels of assertive behaviors, highlighting the necessity for careful attention to the condition of adolescent assertiveness. Assertive behavior is a social skill that should be ingrained in individuals (Cherifa et al., 2022) and is a vital life skill (Husnah et al., 2022; Wahid et al., 2024). Numerous studies demonstrate the significance of assertive behavior in the social lives of adolescents. López-Barranco et al. (2023) indicated that strong assertive behavior may serve as a protective factor against sexual violence in persons. Furthermore, Simarmata's & Rahayu's (2018) research established a positive and

significant association between assertive behavior and social adjustment in adolescents. Higher assertive behavior in teenagers correlates with improved social adjustment. Psychologists assert that several mental health illnesses may arise from indecisiveness, rejection, or the inability to articulate thoughts and emotions honestly. Numerous studies indicate that assertive behavior within the home context positively influences children's psychological well-being (Eskin, 2003; Jourshari et al., 2022; Ralte et al., 2024). Various research findings indicate the significant impact of assertive behavior in adolescents. In this context, assertive behavior can influence multiple facets of life.

Upon thorough examination, multiple factors affect individuals' assertive behavior. Alternatively, research has empirically investigated the factors that can form and impact aggressive behavior in individuals. No systematic analysis of the literature concerning these aspects has been conducted in this instance. Alberti & Emmons (2017) suggest that various factors can affect assertive conduct, including gender, self-esteem, parenting, culture, and educational attainment. This study will carefully examine and evaluate reputable literature on students' perceptions of assertive behavior through the lenses of parenting, culture, and educational attainment. It aims to determine whether each of these characteristics contributes to or influences an individual's aggressive behavior. This research is significant because there is presently no comprehensive systematic evaluation of the three stated criteria and their impact on teenage assertive behavior. This systematic literature review will offer guidance, opportunities, and prospects for future research on assertive behavior.

METHOD

This study employs the systematic literature review methodology. It performs an in-depth analysis of prior articles to address the research questions. This study requires literature that describes the relevant elements of parenting, culture, and education level in their influence on students' assertive behaviour. The literature analysed in this study is sourced from reputable international journals, ensuring high legitimacy of the data produced. Sources for the literature review were obtained from Scopus and Web of Science. This systematic literature review adhered to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines, encompassing the phases of identification, screening, suitability, and inclusion (Mielgo-Conde et al., 2021; Wahid & Neviyarni, 2024). The subsequent section will present a flowchart depicting the stages of the systematic literature review process.

The literature selection process for the systematic review was conducted using specified criteria (Zawacki-Richter et al., n.d.). The primary criteria for selecting literature for analysis are journal articles a) concerning student assertive behaviour in relation to parenting, culture, and self-esteem; b) published from 2015 to 2025; and c) sourced from journals indexed in Scopus and Web of Science. The exclusion criteria are publications a) unrelated to parenting, culture, and self-esteem concerning assertive behaviour; b) published outside the period of 2015 to 2025; and c) not indexed in Scopus and Web of Science.

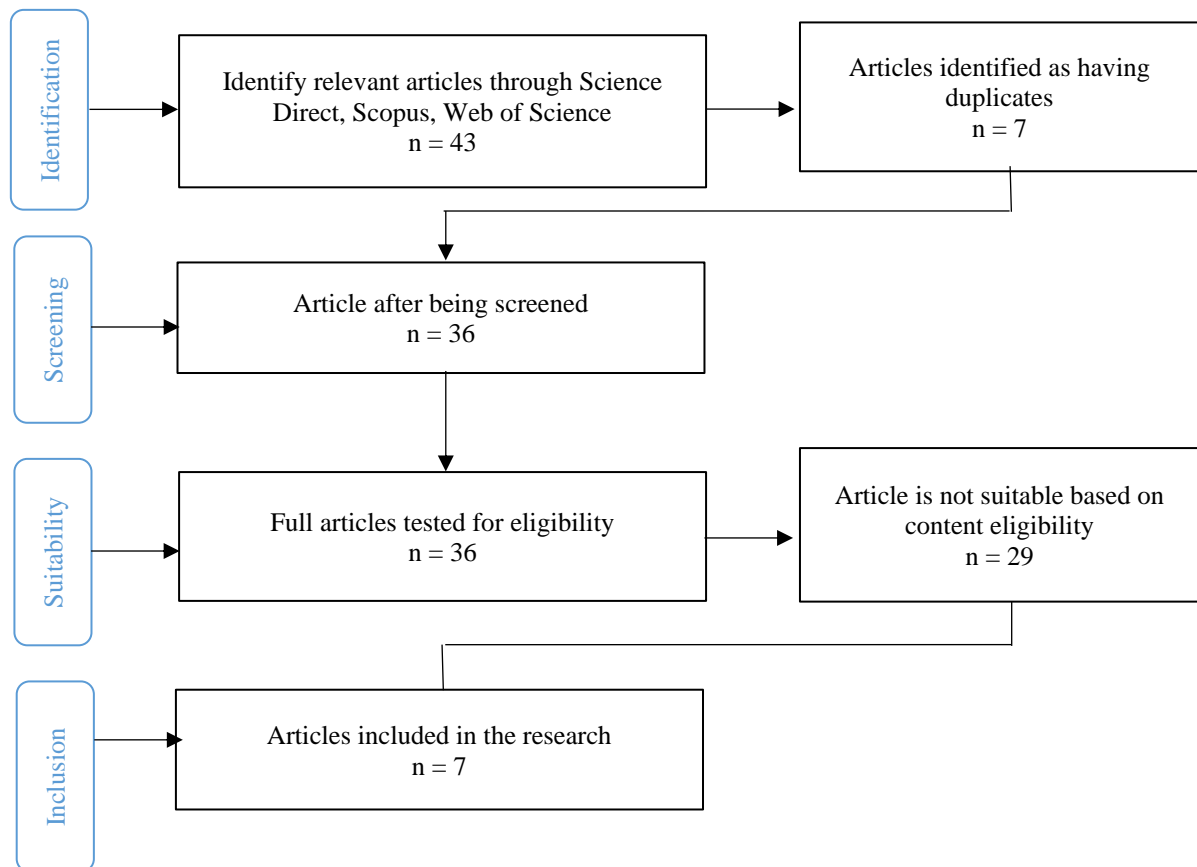


Figure 1. Flow Chart Systematic Literature Review

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data Extraction

Seven articles are included in the analysis after publication selection. Table 1 presents several of these articles.

Analysis of the Influence of Parenting Styles on Students' Assertive Behavior

Assertive behaviour is influenced by how parents treat and nurture their children. Researchers worldwide believe that parenting skills and behaviours influence every facet of a child's life throughout the lifespan (Alayi et al., 2011; Jourshari et al., 2022). Parenting constitutes the essential behavioural conditioning of children's character and social development. Various parenting styles can influence children's psychological and social development in multiple ways. To achieve the critical goal of parenting, different parents employ diverse styles or methods (Sochukwuma et al., 2020). Ultimately, each parent possesses unique characteristics in raising their children, particularly in light of the speedy advancement of information technology. Syukur et al. (2024) assert that the advent of digital technology poses significant challenges for parents worldwide

Table 1. Articles Included in the Study

No	Researcher	Country	Method	Journal
1	(Jourshari et al., 2022)	Iran	Descriptive-correlational	Iranian Rehabilitation Journal
2	(Bartholomeu et al., 2016)	Brazil	Correlational study	Sage Open
3	(Parham et al., 2015)	USA	Cross Sectional Study	Journal of Management Development
4	(Cherifa et al., 2022)	Tunisia	Cross Sectional Study	Libyan Journal of Medicine
5	(Oducado, 2021)	Philippines	Cross Sectional Study	Belitung Nursing Journal
6	(Madu et al., 2023)	Nigeria	Cross Sectional Study	African Journal of Biomedical Research
7	(Hamraoui et al., 2023)	Morocco	Cross Sectional Study	Middle East Current Psychiatry

Numerous academics globally have conducted analyses on the impact of parenting on children's assertive behavior. For instance, Jourshari's et al. (2022) study investigates the correlation between parenting styles and children's aggressive behavior. The instruments in this study were the Persian version of the Baumrind Parenting Scale and the Adaptive and Aggressive Assertiveness Scale (AAAS). The study examined three parenting styles—authoritative, permissive, and authoritarian—in their impact on assertive conduct. The data indicate that only two parenting styles can significantly predict children's assertive behavior: authoritative and permissive, with overall effects of 0.22 and 0.20, respectively. The test results indicated that authoritarian parenting does not significantly affect children's assertive behavior.

Additionally, Bartholomeu et al. (2016) conducted studies that thoroughly investigated the impact of parental parenting on students' assertive behavior, indicating a favorable correlation between the two. The study reveals that two parenting models most effectively account for student assertive behavior. The study indicates that parents who engage in physical violence instill low assertive behavior in their children. Parents who engage in negative monitoring can enhance their children's assertive behavior. In this context, negative monitoring refers to parenting characterized by excessive parental control over children's lives and repetitive instructions. The conclusion of his research indicates that negative parenting is a factor in children's assertive behavior.

The literature research indicates that parenting significantly influences several aspects of a child's life over their lifespan. Research undertaken by specialists finds that parental upbringing significantly influences and can predict children's assertive behaviour. Consequently, parents should adopt optimal parenting styles that foster children's assertive behaviour, such as authoritative or permissive approaches. They should avoid harmful parenting practices, such as physical violence, which adversely impact children's assertive behaviour. While specific detrimental parenting patterns, such

as negative monitoring, may inadvertently foster assertive behaviour in children, parents should adopt good parenting practices.

Analysis of the Influence of Culture on Students' Assertive Behavior

Culture is a determinant in the development of assertive behaviour among individuals (Alberti & Emmons, 2017; Binuja & Nagarajaiah, 2020; Niikura, 1999; Sheinov, 2015). A culture undoubtedly possesses distinct laws and structures that individuals subsequently internalise. Cultural differences will influence the development of each individual's personality, particularly their assertive behavior. The culture of a nation embodies the language, values, beliefs, traditions, and customs that a community acquires and embraces. Culture is shaped by the mindset transmitted from parents to children and among individuals within society (Parham et al., 2015).

Comparative studies on assertive behaviour show that cultural or ethnic groups demonstrate differences in assertiveness. Binuja & Nagarajaiah (2020) believe that culture and religion influence individual assertive behaviour to some extent, though this influence is constrained and can be controlled through appropriate training. This research, grounded in the comprehensive analysis of Parham et al. (2015), examines variations in assertive behaviour from multiple dimensions, including a national culture perspective. This study sampled 243 kids, comprising 146 African-American students, 27 white American students, and 58 Vietnamese students. The findings indicated that the average assertive behaviour score for white American students was 20.407, surpassing the scores of African American students (16.164) and Vietnamese students (12.724). While the scores indicate that the difference is not statistically significant, it may be concluded that variations in individual assertive behaviour exist from a cultural standpoint.

The results align with prior studies. For instance, Florian & Zernitsky-Shurka (1987) study examined the influence of cultural perceptions on assertive behaviour. This analysis identifies two distinct cultures: Arab and Jewish. The findings of this investigation reveal data pertinent to the analysed topic, indicating disparities between individuals from the two cultures. Overall, Arab pupils exhibited lower levels of assertiveness than their Jewish counterparts. This story illustrates how forceful behaviour is shaped by a community's rules, traditions, and practices. For instance, traditional Asian societies consistently prioritise softness and indirectness, eschewing direct communication. In Asian culture, a direct or aggressive approach is sometimes perceived as impolite and less sophisticated (Binuja & Nagarajaiah, 2020). Haglund asserts that Asian cultures prioritise self-restraint and mutual respect, hence perceiving assertiveness as inappropriate (Collier, 1986).

These views will then influence the behaviour of individuals within that culture. Every language, rule, value, and belief inside a culture influences the behaviour of its adherents. Assertive behaviour is shaped by the culture an individual embraces. Consequently, the findings of the subsequent systematic literature review indicate that culture influences individual behaviour in accordance with its overarching values and norms, including the expression of assertiveness. The impact of culture on assertive behaviour is relatively small and can be addressed through appropriate training.

Analysis of the Influence of Self-Esteem on Students' Assertive Behavior

Factors shaping individual assertive behaviour may originate from both internal and external sources. The two factors that have been previously subjected to systematic

study are those external to the individual. This section will explore and analyse how an internal element influences students' assertive behaviour. Self-esteem is a significant internal factor influencing students' assertive behaviour (Alberti & Emmons, 2017; Karagözoğlu et al., 2008; Miraucourt et al., 2022; Niyogi et al., 2020; Venkatesh & Sabesan, 2019). Self-esteem pertains to an individual's self-perception and the subsequent positive and negative emotions and values derived from self-evaluation (Ilhan et al., 2016). Positive appraisals increase self-esteem, while negative appraisals decrease it.

According to Yendi et al. (2015), self-esteem is an internal concept in which individuals perceive and evaluate themselves as significant, valuable, competent, and beneficial to life. Cruijsen & Boyer (2021) assert that self-esteem is a cognitive construct that represents an assessment of an individual's value or self-worth. Overholzer et al. (Wiechert et al., 2023) noted that individuals with low self-esteem frequently perceive themselves as worthless and incompetent, significantly affecting their cognition, emotions, and reactions to life events. Rosenberg asserts that individuals with high self-esteem sustain positive self-regard and satisfaction with their accomplishments, foster healthy interpersonal connections, and take pride in their professional achievements and decisions (Manomenidis et al., 2017).

Cherifa et al. (2022) performed studies to experimentally examine the impact of self-esteem on individual assertive behavior. This research was undertaken on 125 students from the Faculty of Medicine in Sousse, Tunisia. The instruments used in data collection included sociodemographic data, the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule (RAS), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem (RSE) Scale, the Interpersonal Communication Skills Inventory (ICSI), the Short-Form 36 (SF-36) Quality of Life Questionnaire, and the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12). The linear regression results showed that individual self-esteem levels can predict assertive behavior by 14.99%. The positive link between assertive behavior and self-esteem stems from the observation that assertive individuals tend to have higher psychological well-being and less emotional instability than their less assertive counterparts.

Additionally, Oducado (2021) examined a research involving 403 nursing personnel from two hospitals in the western region of Visayas, Philippines. The findings demonstrated a positive association between self-esteem and assertive behavior, with a correlation coefficient of 0.216 and a significance level of 0.001. A robust self-esteem is crucial for developing assertiveness, but assertiveness can also enhance self-esteem. Moreover, individuals with low self-esteem sometimes struggle to assert their views or make personal decisions.

Furthermore, Madu's et al. (2023) study which examined the impact of self-esteem on assertive behavior. This study sampled 192 nursing students from three nursing schools in Nigeria. The instruments employed for data collection were the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule. The data analysis results revealed that the Pearson correlation coefficient demonstrated a significant positive correlation between self-esteem and assertiveness scores ($r = 0.242$, $P = 0.006$). This suggests that nursing students with high self-esteem will exhibit good assertive

behavior. This study proposes assessing individuals' self-esteem and assertive behavior, followed by appropriate interventions to improve these skills.

Consistent with other prior studies, Hamraoui et al. (2023) experimentally examined the relationship between self-esteem and individual assertive behaviors. This study targeted 336 students from the Faculty of Medicine in Casablanca, Morocco. In the sample, 70% were female ($n = 235$) and 30% were male ($n = 101$). The instruments employed to assess self-esteem factors and assertive behavior are consistent with prior studies, specifically the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES) and the Rathus Assertiveness Schedule. The findings of this study indicate a significant correlation between self-esteem and assertive behavior ($p < 0.001$). The relationship is mutually beneficial, as increased assertiveness strengthens self-esteem. This study also proposes therapy options to enhance these factors.

A systematic review of the literature concludes that self-esteem is an internal determinant of assertive behavior. Thus, school counselors are responsible for monitoring and assessing children's self-esteem levels. This element influences numerous other aspects of students' lives, including assertive behavior. Vaughan-Johnston et al. (2020) clarify that self-esteem correlates with various dimensions, including self-defense behavior, which is a component of individual assertiveness as previously described. Darjan et al. (2020) believe that healthy self-esteem is a crucial attribute required for growing assertiveness. Moreover, scientific research has recognized poor self-esteem as a significant contributor to mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and suicidal thinking.

CONCLUSION

Assertive behavior in students is a fundamental competence that significantly influences their future social connections and interactions. This factor is crucial to address, as it contributes to increased positive social ties among students and influences several other areas of life. A comprehensive systematic literature review found that parental parenting styles, cultural influences, and self-esteem are indicators of assertive behavior among students. Parental upbringing is a factor in students' assertive behavior; therefore, parents should employ effective parenting techniques, such as authoritative or permissive approaches. The study indicates a positive effect on students' assertive behavior. These findings suggest new possibilities for researchers to investigate additional parenting styles not addressed in this article in relation to assertive behavior variables. Cultural influences can affect assertive behavior in students, as language, norms, values, and beliefs within a culture affect the behaviors of its adherents. The impact of culture on assertive behavior can be mitigated through appropriate training. The researchers recommend that subsequent studies examine the impact of Indonesian culture on students' assertive behavior. The last factor analyzed in this study is self-esteem. A thorough investigation indicated that self-esteem is an internal predictor of assertive behavior. Consequently, school counselors must monitor and assess students' self-esteem.

This systematic literature review indicates that school counselors should focus on students' assertive behavior and then examine the factors that influence its levels.

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