

Intervention to Improve Assertive Behavior in The Educational World: A Literature Review

Pahmiah, Nida Hasanati, Salsabila

Universitas Muhammadiyah Malang, Malang, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the role of assertive behavior in educational contexts and to identify effective interventions to improve assertive behavior skills among students. Assertive behavior is defined as the ability to express thoughts, feelings, and needs in a clear and direct manner, while respecting others. In an academic context, this skill contributes to better academic achievement, more effective stress management, and positive interpersonal relationships. This study used a systematic review of the literature indexed in Scopus, PubMed, and Google Scholar databases from 2019 to 2024. The results of the review indicate that assertiveness training-based interventions, psychoeducational programs, and supportive environment-based approaches can significantly improve assertive behavior among students. This study concludes that the development of assertiveness skills should be an integral part of the educational curriculum with the aim of equipping students with the necessary skills to face the challenges of academic and professional life in the future.

Keywords: *Assertive, interventions, educational*

Corresponding author

Name : Pahmiah

Email : miahpahmiah@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Education not only aims to provide academic knowledge but also to shape individuals who possess social, emotional, and cognitive skills. These abilities are necessary for individuals to function effectively in their personal, social, and professional lives in the future. One of the important skills to be developed in education is the ability to communicate effectively and manage conflicts in a healthy way. In this regard, assertive behavior emerges as one of the key skills that plays a role in supporting the personal and social development of students at various educational levels. In the context of modern education, the enhancement of social, emotional, and behavioral skills that support students' academic and professional lives has become a top priority. Assertiveness is one of the skills that can help students and university students express themselves in a firm, clear manner while still respecting others. This is important considering that assertive ability is closely related to independence, self-confidence, and the ability to interact in various social situations (Alberti and Emmons, 2017).

Previous research has shown that the development of assertive skills significantly impacts academic and social outcomes. Assertiveness allows individuals to express their needs and feelings without being aggressive or passive, which ultimately helps avoid miscommunication and unnecessary conflicts (Rathus 1973). In both school and higher education environments, assertive behavior is highly relevant, as individuals who can be assertive tend to be more active in academic and social activities, and have better abilities in managing stress and pressure often faced in academic life (Apriani et. al, 2024).

One of the most important social skills in supporting academic and professional success is the ability to communicate effectively and manage social interactions well. Assertive behavior has become one of the social and emotional skills increasingly recognized as important in education, both at the school and university levels. This behavior refers to a person's ability to express their thoughts, feelings, and needs assertively, clearly, and while still respecting the rights of others. In the world of education, these skills play an important role in academic success, stress management, and the development of healthy social relationships (Ampuno, 2020).

The development of assertive behavior can begin early, starting from school. School is an environment where students learn to interact with peers, teachers, and other staff. Students who are able to communicate assertively are better equipped to handle conflicts, resist peer pressure, and express their needs without intimidating or dominating others. This behavior supports the formation of positive social relationships and provides a strong foundation for academic success at higher levels (Postolati, 2017). In the study, it is mentioned that students who lack interpersonal communication skills will feel inferior when expressing their opinions. Students who are less capable of interpersonal communication with others may feel embarrassed to start a friendship (Isti'adah and Permana, 2017). Communication patterns like this can affect students' emotional well-being and impact their academic engagement. Less assertive students, for example, may find it easier to become stressed by school assignments or have difficulty asking teachers for help when they encounter learning difficulties (Aprilistyan and Ikhwan, 2022).

Assertive behavior is highly relevant for managing more complex academic demands, participating in class discussions, and collaborating on group projects while students are in college (Yosep et al., 2024). Students who are able to be assertive tend to be more active in voicing their opinions, brave in asking questions when they do not understand the material, and more effective in collaborating within a team. This not only affects their academic performance but also the quality of interpersonal relationships they build with professors, peers, and project partners (Firmawati and Sa'adah, 2023) (Puji, Aditya, and Gismin, 2024).

The development of assertive behavior among students also has long-term impacts, as these skills will help them in their professional lives. In the workplace, the ability to communicate assertively is necessary for leading, working collaboratively, and managing conflicts in an often high-pressure environment (Khan, 2012) The literature review shows that interventions to develop assertive behavior should ideally start during school years, as at this stage students are in the process of forming their communication patterns. School intervention programs, such as assertiveness training

or emotional management, can help students develop healthy communication skills. In several studies, classroom-based assertiveness training has proven effective in helping students cope with peer pressure, participate in class discussions, and manage conflicts in a more productive manner. Techniques such as role-playing, conflict simulations, and group discussions provide opportunities for students to practice assertive communication in realistic social situations.

At the school level, the reinforcement of assertive behavior can also be done by involving parents and teachers. Teachers can facilitate a supportive classroom environment where students are encouraged to express their opinions without fear of being judged or punished. For example, teachers can provide constructive feedback when students attempt to assert their opinions, which will help students build their confidence in communication (Wastuti and Haryati, 2019).

The purpose of this systematic review is to gather empirical evidence from various studies conducted over a specific period, as covered by articles indexed in the Scopus, PubMed, and Google Scholar databases from 2019 to 2024 with the keywords assertive behavior or Student. Through this approach, we can gain a deep understanding of how assertive behavior can be used as a tool to enhance self-development among the student population. Thus, this systematic review is expected to provide valuable insights for further development in this context and to lay a strong foundation for more effective interventions and educational approaches in the future.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses the Library Study method or Systematic Literature Review (SLR) based on the PRISMA guidelines (Protocol Review Systematic and Meta-Analysis) (Moher et al., 2009). This study adopts a careful and structured approach using the PRISMA method to explore the complexities of self-development through assertive behavior among students. By following the steps outlined by PRISMA, this systematic review aims not only to present the latest evidence but also to uncover nuances that may be hidden behind the walls of academic literature. Through this literature review, it is hoped that researchers can delve deeper into the knowledge of the chosen field of study and the issues being investigated. The process of conducting a systematic review begins with the planning stage (identification of benefits and development), where researchers formulate review questions using the PICO (Population, Concept, Context) framework to determine the scope of the study. The research question in this systematic review is what forms of self-development can enhance assertive behavior in students. Next, the implementation of the review (pencarian jurnal, seleksi, penilaian kualitas, melakukan ekstraksi dan sintesis). The researcher designed an appropriate search protocol with the main keywords "Assertive" OR "Assertiveness" OR "Assertive Behavior" AND College Student to be used in search databases such as Scopus. After that, all the obtained journals were downloaded and checked for duplicates using the Rayyan application. After the duplicate check, the authors conducted a screening by reviewing the titles and abstracts. The journals that pass with appropriate titles and abstracts will be rechecked in their entirety. Out of the 252 journals found, only 10 journals met the specific criteria, which is to discuss training or self-development of students in improving assertive behavior. The final stage involves

the creation of a report based on the selected journals, in accordance with the established criteria, such as publication years (2019-2024), language (English and Indonesian), and clarification of research methods. The flowchart of the journal selection process can be seen in Figure 1. The limitations in this systematic review are: (1) the journals discuss self-development to improve assertive behavior, (2) the research subjects are in the developmental stages of adolescence and early adulthood, (3) the journals used are in English and Indonesian, (4) the types of research are quantitative, qualitative, experimental, or intervention studies, (5) the research was conducted within the last 5 years, from 2019 to 2024. Journals that meet the criteria will be included in the discussion.

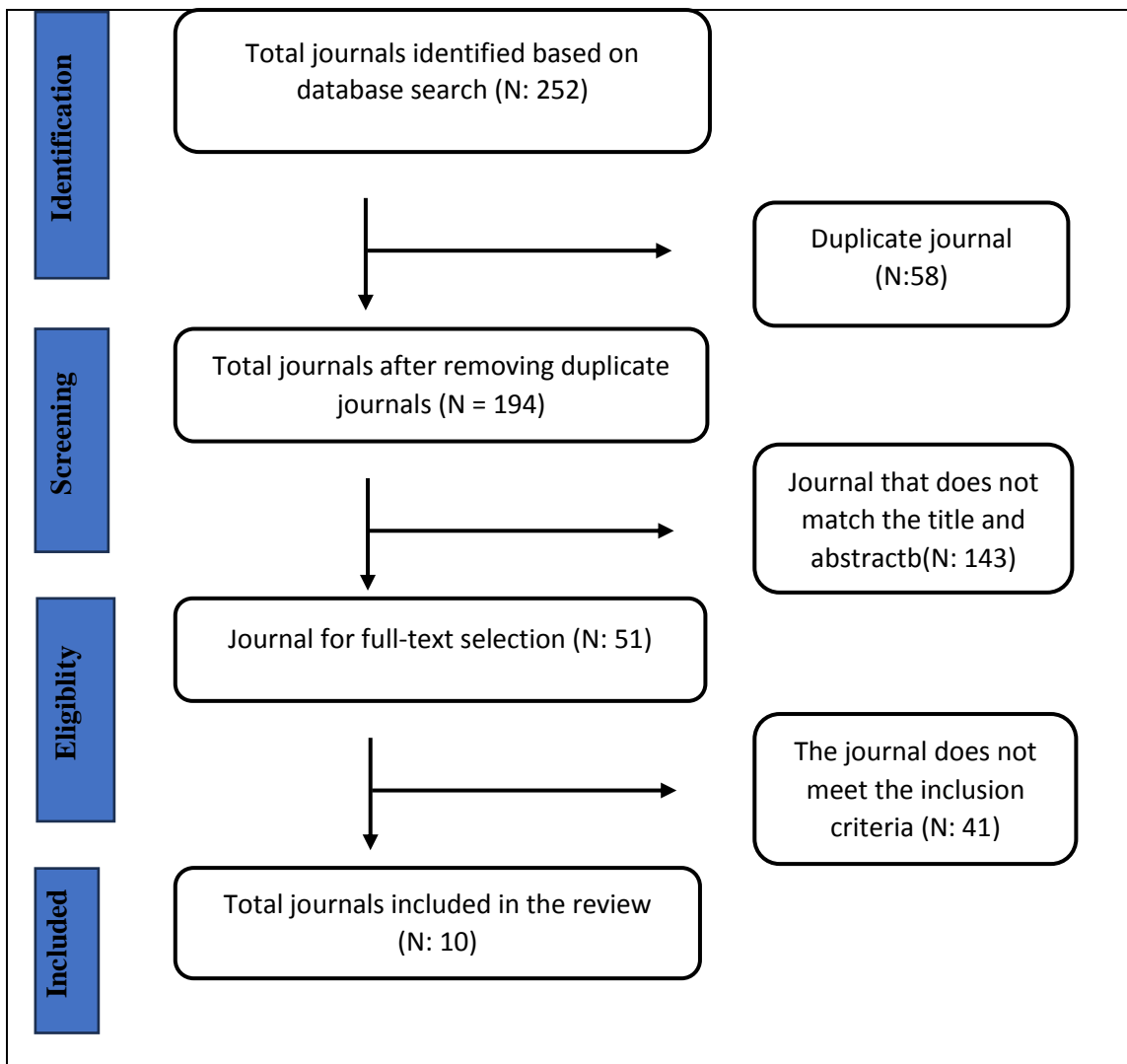


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram

FINDINGS

A systematic review of the literature on Enhancing Self-Development through Assertive Behavior in students provides deep insights into how assertive behavior affects various aspects of students' academic and social lives. Based on previously studied research reviewed systematically, it was found that assertive behavior not only

enables students to articulate their opinions clearly but also helps in building effective communication skills (Aprilistyan and Ikhwan, 2022). Students who are able to develop assertive skills tend to have a higher level of confidence in expressing their ideas in both academic and social contexts (Anfajaya, 2016).

Relevant research shows that self-development through assertive behavior is also closely related to students' ability to handle conflicts and stressful situations (Hernández-Xumet et al., 2023). For example, students trained in assertive behavior are more likely to manage interpersonal conflicts constructively, enhancing harmony in their academic and social environments. Additionally, assertive skills have also been shown to positively impact students' ability to take initiative in their learning, increasing active participation in class discussions and expanding their social networks on campus (Postolati, 2017).

To see the various forms of self-development by students in an effort to improve assertive behavior, please refer to the following:

Table 1. Interventions to Improve Assertive Behavior in the Educational World

NO	TITLE	AUTHORS	SUBJECT	RESEARCH RESULTS
1	Meningkatkan Perilaku Asertif melalui Layanan Bimbingan Kelompok dengan Teknik Role Play pada Siswa Kelas X di SMA Negeri 1 Nglames Tahun Ajaran 2023/2024 (Apriani et al., 2024)	Heny Apriani, Dwi Zaini Imron Susilo, Dahlia Novarianing Asri	10th-grade students at SMA Negeri 1 Nglames for the 2023/2024 academic year	All students experienced a significant increase in assertive behavior, such as the ability to express feelings, maintain personal rights, have high self-esteem, and create honest relationships. Through group counseling services with role play techniques, it has been proven to enhance students' assertive behavior by understanding the importance of assertive behavior, directly experiencing assertive behavior, and actively engaging in scriptwriting.
2.	Pelatihan Self Esteem untuk Meningkatkan Keasertifan Mahasiswi (Zahra et al., 2023)	Alifah Zahra, Nursyafinka, Nurul Hasbi, Agelia	Psychology students from the 7th batch, totaling 6 people	Self-Esteem Training to Enhance the Assertiveness of Female Students is the fear that others will not accept the individual if there is minimal management, which will lead to low self-esteem.

3.	Assertive skills: a comparison of two group interventions with Brazilian university students (de Sousa and da Costa Padovani, 2021)	Conceição Reis de Sousa dan Ricardo da Costa Padovan	25 Students (24 Female & 1 Male)	The research results show that both interventions, namely rational emotive behavioral therapy and education, are effective in reducing irrational beliefs and improving assertiveness skills. Rational emotive behavioral therapy proves to be more effective compared to psychoeducation, which can encourage greater changes in assertive behavior and subjective well-being among Brazilian students.
4.	Efektivitas Metode AMT (<i>Achievement Motivation Training</i>) Guna Meningkatkan Perilaku Asertif Siswa SMP Muhammadiyah 04 Singosari. (Anggraini, Jamaludin Ma'mun, and Wahyu Widodo, 2024)	Shalsabillah Indah Anggraini, Muhammad Jamaludin ma'mun, Rinto Wahyu Widodo	37 students in the 9th grade at SMP Muhammadiyah 04 Singosari	The AMT method is a method that can improve the assertive behavior of students at SMP Muhammadiyah 04 Singosari. It can be interpreted that assertive behavior can be learned and improved in various ways, one of which is through the AMT method.
5.	Meningkatkan Perilaku Asertif Melalui Konseling Kelompok Dengan Teknik <i>Assertive Training</i> pada Peserta Didik Kelas VIII B SMP Negeri 37 Semarang (Sari,	Fatma Kurnia Sari, Venty, Kristina Yuliati	6 8th Grade Students at SMP Negeri 37 Semarang	Group counseling with assertive training techniques is effectively used to improve the assertive behavior of 8th-grade students at SMP Negeri 37 Semarang .

	Venty, and Yuliati, 2023)			
6.	Penggunaan Teknik Kursi Kosong untuk Meningkatkan Perilaku Asertif Siswa Korban <i>Bullying</i> (Fakhri et al., 2023)	Fakhri, Nadia, Muliawati, Muhammad Asri	5 students from the 11th grade at MTS Yaspendi Aceh Tamiang	The use of the empty chair technique in group counseling significantly contributes to the empowerment and improvement of assertive behavior in high school students who are victims of bullying
7.	Penerapan Teknik Role Playing Terhadap Perilaku Asertif dan Empati Siswa SMA Negeri 12 Makassar.(D and Arifin, 2023)	Nurhidayat ullah D, Agustan Arifin	30 tenth-grade students at SMA Negeri 12 Makassar	The influence of role playing on the assertive behavior and empathy of students at SMA Negeri 12 Makassar can be summarized as follows. There is a positive influence of role playing implementation on the assertive behavior of students at SMA Negeri 12 Makassar. There is a positive influence of roleplaying implementation on the empathy of students at SMA Negeri 12 Makassar.
8.	Meningkatkan Perilaku Asertif Peserta Didik Melalui Layanan Bimbingan Klasika Dengan Metode Psikodrama. (Wijayanti, 2022)	Eka Yulia Wijayanti	30 Eleventh Grade Students at SMA Negeri 3 Tegal	Assertive behavior can be enhanced through classical guidance services using the psychodrama method
9.	Efektivitas Bimbingan Kelompok dengan Menggunakan Metode Brainstorming untuk Meningkatkan	Yulia Moranita, Fitria Kasih, Fuaddillah Putra	12 Eleventh Grade Students at SMA Negeri 1 Ranah Batahan	The effectiveness of group guidance using the brainstorming method to improve assertive behavior among students in class XI IPS 4 SMA N 1 Ranah Batahan.

	Perilaku Asertif dengan Teman Sebaya (Studi pada Peserta Didik Kelas XI IPS SMA N 1 Ranah Batahan Kabupaten Pasaman Barat) (Moranita, Kasih, and Putra, 2022)			
10.	Penerapan teknik role playing dalam bimbingan kelompok untuk meningkatkan perilaku asertif siswa (Maisyaroh and Dewi Astuti, 2024)	Sri Maisyaroh, Anita Dewi Astuti	10th-grade MPLB students at SMK Muhammadiyah 1 Wates	The application of role-playing techniques in group counseling services is effective in improving students' assertive behavior.

From the explanation above, it can be seen that various intervention techniques implemented can enhance assertive behavior in the educational world with a diverse range of research subject backgrounds. In a study conducted by (Apriani et al., 2024) (D and Arifin, 2023) (Maisyaroh and Dewi Astuti, 2024) proving that the Role Play Technique can significantly enhance assertive behavior, such as the ability to express feelings, maintain personal rights, have high self-esteem, and create honest relationships. This is in line with the research (Yuningsih et al., 2023) which states that assertive communication training can help students increase their self-confidence and reduce bullying problems through effective communication skills and conflict resolution with a more proactive approach. Another group guidance method that can be used to enhance assertive behavior in students is the Brainstorming method. This was conveyed in the research (Moranita et al., 2022) showing that the brainstorming method is effective in improving students' assertive behavior. In (Surya, 2020) explaining that stating that brainstorming is capable of generating many ideas from a group of people in a very short time, brainstorming is usually a group activity that produces a large number of ideas, and a group of people not only complements each other with extensive experience but also ensures the exchange of ideas and mutual filling, brainstorming is a creative method for product design by generating as many creative ideas as possible spontaneously.

Another intervention is presented by (Zahra et al., 2023) stating that Self Esteem training can improve assertive behavior in the fear of not being accepted by

others. Meanwhile, in the research (Anggraini et al., 2024) explaining that one way to improve students' assertive behavior is through the AMT (Achievement Motivation Training) method. The AMT (Achievement Motivation Training) method is based on the learning psychology approach, which can include the meaning of the material being studied, the frequency of reinforcement, and the assignments given, and can play an important role in efforts to achieve a rapid improvement in behavior.

Another training method used to improve students' assertive behavior is training with the empty chair technique. This was conveyed in the research (Fakhri et al., 2023) concluded that the use of the empty chair technique in group counseling significantly contributes to the empowerment of assertiveness behavior improvement in high school students who are victims of bullying .

The development of assertive skills has a significant effect in the broader educational world, in addition to the direct benefits for students. In the long term, incorporating assertiveness training into the educational curriculum can support institutional goals to create an inclusive environment and foster the personal development of each student. This can improve student retention, enhance their motivation, and increase their engagement in the learning process (Amiri et al. 2020). In the research (Wijayanti, 2022) shows that students are increasingly understanding their potential, enhancing their abilities and creativity in role-playing, and becoming skilled at managing emotions to dare to ask and answer during class discussions. This proves that classical guidance services through the psychodrama method can improve assertive behavior in students.

This review also notes that there is variation in the intervention approaches that have been used to enhance assertive behavior across different groups. Some studies emphasize the importance of an active learning-oriented approach, which allows individuals to practice and apply their assertive skills in real contexts. Meanwhile, other approaches may focus more on developing interpersonal skills through simulations, role play, rewards, study groups, or case-based training to enhance understanding of the importance of effective communication in various situations.

The implications of this review highlight the need for collaboration among various stakeholders both within and outside the education sector. By building strong collaboration, each element can be more effective in designing and implementing programs that support the sustainable development of assertive skills. Additionally, the integration of assertive skills into the curriculum can help ensure that the training received is consistent and measurable, aligning with modern challenges in the educational and professional worlds.

In addition to its direct benefits in the educational context, self-development through assertive behavior also has significant implications in preparing each element to face increasingly complex and global career demands. Assertive skills not only enable adaptation to rapid changes in the work environment but also prepare them to become effective and collaborative leaders in various professional fields. Therefore, investing in the development of assertive skills in the educational world is not only relevant but also strategic in supporting long-term success.

In general, the importance of developing assertive behavior in personal development, further research needs to explore how contextual factors such as organizational culture, teaching approaches, and individual characteristics can influence the effectiveness of assertive behavior interventions. Thus, deeper knowledge and a holistic understanding can provide stronger guidance in designing programs that meet the needs.

CONCLUSION

This literature review shows that various interventions have been developed and proven effective in enhancing assertive behavior in the educational world. Some of the most popular methods include assertive communication training, role-playing, discussions, respect training, the empty chair technique, psychodrama-based approaches, and achievement motivation training. (AMT). Routine interventions help students become more confident, control their emotions, protect their rights, and learn to communicate effectively to resolve conflicts in the educational environment.

This review shows that active and contextual learning approaches, such as case-based training and simulations, are very effective in improving assertive behavior. The short-term benefits of this intervention include the improvement of students' social skills. It also has long-term benefits, namely preparing students to face professional challenges in the future. This review also shows that various variables, such as individual characteristics, organizational culture, and teaching methods, affect the success rate of the intervention. Therefore, it is important for stakeholders in the education sector to continuously incorporate assertive skills into the curriculum so that students can widely benefit from them in various educational contexts.

STATEMENT

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