

# The Role of Interpersonal Communication in Improving the Quality of Learning in Islamic Boarding Schools

Rahmat Shulhani<sup>1</sup>, Paiman<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Universitas Nurul Jadid, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Maulana Hasanuddin Banten, Indonesia

## Article Info

### Article history:

Received: Jan 03, 2024

Revised: Apr 27, 2024

Accepted: Jun 01, 2024

### Keywords:

Interpersonal  
Communication  
Islamic Boarding Schools  
Learning  
Students  
Caregivers  
Foster Parents

## ABSTRACT

This article discusses the role of interpersonal communication in improving the quality of learning at Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to understand the interactions between caregivers, foster parents, and students and the challenges faced in communication. The study's results indicate that effective communication, which is informal and open, greatly influences students' learning motivation and character development. Caregivers and foster parents who can build close relationships with students can create a conducive learning atmosphere so students feel appreciated and more active in learning. However, obstacles, such as differences in perception and cultural factors, can reduce communication effectiveness. These findings emphasize the importance of developing interpersonal communication skills to support improving the quality of education in Islamic boarding schools. This study is expected to provide caregivers and foster parents insight into creating a better learning environment.

*This is an open access article under the CC BY license.*



### Corresponding Author:

Rahmat Shulhani

Universitas Nurul Jadid, Indonesia. Email: [rahmatshulhani9@gmail.com](mailto:rahmatshulhani9@gmail.com)

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal communication, including education, is important in every aspect of life (Manurung & Yuliana, 2024). In Islamic boarding schools, as educational institutions that emphasize religious learning and character development, the quality of communication between caregivers, guardians, and students greatly determines the success of the learning process. Good interaction between caregivers and students based on mutual understanding and empathy facilitates knowledge transfer and supports students' moral and spiritual development (Yanti, 2022). However, the quality of interpersonal communication in Islamic boarding schools often faces various obstacles that can hinder the optimal learning process.

Islamic boarding schools are unique in their education system, prioritizing a personal and intensive approach between caregivers and students (Jaenullah et al., 2022). However, along with the development of the era and increasingly complex needs, more effective communication methods have become very important to improve the quality of learning. Poor or inappropriate communication between caregivers, guardians, and students can lead to misunderstandings, ultimately hurting the understanding of teaching materials and the development of students' character. Therefore, it is important to explore more deeply how

interpersonal communication can improve the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools (Purwanto et al., 2023).

Several recent studies in the last decade have highlighted the importance of interpersonal communication in learning. According to research by Amar (2024), good interpersonal communication between educators and students can increase learning motivation and the emotional involvement of students in the learning process. Another study by Maulia (2023) shows that communication-based on empathy and trust in an educational environment can create a conducive learning atmosphere. However, most of the existing literature focuses on the formal school context, while in-depth research on interpersonal communication in the context of Islamic boarding schools is still limited. In addition, there are differences of opinion regarding the effectiveness of specific communication models. Some studies, such as those conducted by Fawaid and Hasanah (2020), indicate that an authoritative communication approach is more effective in Islamic boarding schools, while other studies, such as those by Sukomardojo (2023), suggest a more participatory and inclusive communication approach.

The existing research literature has not widely discussed interpersonal communication in Islamic boarding schools. Existing research generally focuses more on Islamic boarding schools' academic aspects or curriculum. At the same time, interpersonal communication involving the relationship between caregivers, guardians, and students as a determining factor in learning success is still minimally studied. Although there are several studies on communication in the context of education in general, this research gap requires more attention in Islamic boarding schools with unique social and cultural dynamics. This study aims to fill this gap by analyzing how effective interpersonal communication can improve the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools.

The purpose of this study is to understand the application of interpersonal communication in the Islamic boarding school environment, identify various obstacles that arise in communication between caregivers, foster guardians, and students, and explore the contribution of the quality of this communication to improving the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools. This study seeks to answer several main questions: What form of communication is carried out by caregivers and foster guardians with students in the context of education in Islamic boarding schools? What are the obstacles faced in interpersonal communication in Islamic boarding schools? Moreover, how can effective interpersonal communication improve the quality of learning and the overall development of students?

This article is structured into several main sections to provide a comprehensive understanding. The first section will outline the interpersonal communication theory and its relevance in the context of education in Islamic boarding schools. The second section will discuss various obstacles that have the potential to arise in communication between caregivers, foster guardians, and students. Furthermore, the third section will analyze how effective interpersonal communication can significantly improve the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools. Finally, this article will present the research findings and offer strategic recommendations for improving communication to support improving the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1. Interpersonal Communication in Education**

Interpersonal communication involves exchanging messages between individuals directly through verbal and non-verbal interactions. In education, interpersonal communication involves interactions between teachers (caregivers) and students, which convey information, build relationships, and facilitate learning. According to Sundari et al.

(2024), effective interpersonal communication involves active listening skills, empathy, openness, and a willingness to provide constructive feedback.

In education, especially in Islamic boarding schools, interpersonal communication plays a significant role in creating a more intimate and close relationship between caregivers and students. This positive relationship will support a more effective learning process because students feel more comfortable interacting, asking questions, and discussing teaching materials (Fahham, 2020). In addition, good communication quality can motivate students to be more involved in learning and overcome the learning obstacles they face.

## 2.2. Interpersonal Communication in Islamic Boarding Schools

As a religious educational institution, Pesantren has a distinctive characteristic in terms of interaction between caregivers and students. In many pesantren, the relationship is very close and familial. It encourages the importance of interpersonal communication in creating a conducive learning environment. As explained by Solechan (2024), communication between caregivers and students is not only limited to the transfer of knowledge but also includes character and spiritual development.

Pesantren focuses on the formation of good character, which includes understanding religious knowledge and applying moral values in everyday life. Therefore, effective interpersonal communication between caregivers and students is essential to developing a relationship of mutual trust, understanding students' spiritual and academic needs, and providing the necessary support in the learning process (Nasor & Jasmadi, 2023).

## 2.3. The Role of Interpersonal Communication in Improving the Quality of Learning

The quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools is seen not only in students' ability to master religious knowledge but also in terms of their character and life skills (Ihsan et al., 2021). The interactions greatly influence the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools in the teaching process. Caregivers with good interpersonal communication skills can explain the material more clearly, listen and respond to students' needs and questions, and provide positive and constructive feedback.

According to research by Lombu and Lase (2023), relationships established through positive interpersonal communication can increase students' motivation to learn. When caregivers can hear and understand students' feelings and needs, they can provide guidance that is more appropriate to the conditions of the students. It will increase students' interest and involvement in learning activities.

In addition, effective interpersonal communication also facilitates the learning evaluation process (Yeni & Susanti, 2023). Feedback given directly and constructively allows students to know their strengths and weaknesses in learning. Thus, good communication supports students' academic and character development simultaneously, ultimately improving the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools.

## 2.4 Interpersonal Communication and Value-Based Learning

One of the unique characteristics of Islamic boarding schools is their approach based on religious and moral values. The caregivers not only teach scientific or religious knowledge but also shape the morals and character of the students. Here, interpersonal communication plays a central role in instilling these values (Iskandar, 2023). Good communication allows caregivers to provide direct examples and build relationships based on mutual respect and trust.

Interpersonal communication also helps build a more cooperative and supportive learning community among fellow students. Arfa and Lasaiba (2022) found that the quality of communication between individuals improves the relationship between teachers and

students. It creates a more inclusive and harmonious learning environment where each individual feels valued and involved in the learning process.

### 2.5. Barriers to Interpersonal Communication in Islamic Boarding Schools

Although interpersonal communication has great potential to improve the quality of learning, several obstacles can reduce the effectiveness of such communication in Islamic boarding schools. One of the main obstacles is the difference in perception between caregivers and students, especially in understanding the goals of education and learning methods. For example, students may feel uncomfortable or hesitant to express their opinions or feelings, especially if there is a difference in status or age between the caregiver and the student (Alwi, 2021). In addition, cultural and social factors can also affect the quality of communication. Islamic boarding schools prioritizing certain traditions and norms may have more formal communication methods, sometimes hindering openness between caregivers and students. Therefore, it is important to create a more open and supportive communication space to overcome these obstacles and develop interpersonal communication.

This literature review shows that interpersonal communication is essential in improving the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools. Effective communication between caregivers and students can strengthen relationships, improve understanding of the material, and support the development of students' character. Therefore, caregivers with good interpersonal communication skills can create a conducive learning atmosphere where students feel appreciated and motivated to achieve their learning goals. However, to achieve optimal results, efforts are needed to overcome barriers in communication and create an environment that supports openness and mutual trust. Therefore, further research on the factors that influence interpersonal communication in Islamic boarding schools and ways to improve the quality of communication in Islamic boarding schools is fundamental.

## 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study aims to determine how interpersonal communication between caregivers, foster parents, and students can affect the quality of learning at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design, which focuses on exploring the in-depth understanding of interpersonal communication interactions that occur in Islamic boarding schools and their influence on the quality of learning (Fadli, 2021).

This study uses a qualitative approach to gain a deep understanding of the role of interpersonal communication in improving the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools. Qualitative research allows researchers to explore communication dynamics between caregivers, foster parents, and students at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. In addition, the case study approach was chosen to provide a more comprehensive picture of how interpersonal communication in this Islamic boarding school can affect the learning process academically and in forming the students' character.

## 4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study aims to explore the role of interpersonal communication in improving the quality of learning at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School, focusing on the communication relationship between caregivers, guardians, and students. Based on in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation conducted, several important findings were identified, which are divided into the following subtopics:

### *Interpersonal Communication Patterns*

The interpersonal communication patterns established between caregivers foster parents, and students at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School tend to be informal, open,

and full of familiarity. This communication occurs in the formal learning process in class and daily activities at the Islamic boarding school, including religious studies, social activities, and character building.

The caregivers and foster parents play an active role in conducting communication that is not only instructional but also morally and spiritually educational. Caregivers prioritize direct communication with students, either through face-to-face conversations or in the form of individual or group coaching. This communication often involves constructive feedback regarding behaviour and understanding of teaching materials. The foster parents play a role in maintaining relationships with students through regular discussions that focus on developing the student's character and morals. In addition, the foster parents also function as liaisons between caregivers and the student's parents, so the communication that is formed can strengthen the relationship.

#### *The Influence of Interpersonal Communication on Learning Quality*

Good interpersonal communication in this Islamic boarding school significantly affects students' learning motivation. Students who feel appreciated and understood by their caregivers and guardians tend to participate more actively in the learning process. It is reflected in their increased involvement in discussions, Q and A, and participation in other Islamic boarding school activities. Conversely, communication that is not open or less effective causes students to feel isolated, which can reduce their enthusiasm and motivation to learn. In addition, these findings indicate that effective communication also impacts the formation of students' character. When caregivers provide personal guidance and use empathetic communication, students feel more motivated to implement the values taught in their daily lives, both academically and socially.

#### *The Role of Caregivers and Guardians in Building Communication that Supports Learning*

Caregivers at Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School have a central role in building communication that supports the quality of learning. Caregivers act not only as teachers but also as spiritual and moral guides for students. In carrying out their roles, caretakers try to build closer and more personal relationships with students so that they feel comfortable conveying difficulties or confusion in the teaching material. Foster parents, on the other hand, focus on character development and the emotional well-being of students. They are responsible for ensuring that students develop not only in academic aspects but also in social and spiritual aspects. Through open and regular communication, foster parents can provide the support needed for students' personal development and ensure that the learning process takes place in a safe and supportive environment.

#### *Barriers in Communication*

Several barriers to interpersonal communication were found in this study. The first barrier is the difference in perception between caregivers, foster parents, and students regarding education goals and the teaching methods used. Some students find it challenging to convey opinions or complaints to caregivers because of social distance or high respect for caregivers. Another barrier is the lack of time for deeper communication between caregivers and students. Although informal communication is quite frequent, due to the busy schedule of activities, more substantial and reflective communication is often hampered. In addition, differences in culture or social background between caregivers and students sometimes become obstacles to building genuinely effective communication.

This study explores the role of interpersonal communication between caregivers, foster parents, and students in improving the quality of learning at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. Based on the findings obtained from in-depth interviews, observations, and

documentation, several important things related to interpersonal communication and its influence on the quality of learning at the Islamic boarding school can be explained as follows.

The interpersonal communication patterns between caregivers, foster parents, and students at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School reflect communication-based on intimacy and emotional closeness. This finding indicates that caregivers and foster parents strive to build more personal relationships with students in academic and spiritual contexts. It is in line with Hargie (2021), which states that effective interpersonal communication involves active listening skills, empathy, and openness between individuals who communicate. In Islamic boarding schools, this kind of communication strengthens the relationship between caregivers and students, creates a sense of security and comfort, and allows caregivers to understand students' needs better.

This study also revealed that good communication between caregivers, foster parents, and students can accelerate the process of understanding learning materials and reduce tensions that may arise between caregivers and students. It is by Barkley and Major (2020), which shows that open and effective communication can increase student motivation and engagement in the learning process. Conversely, poor communication, such as lack of feedback or failure to listen, can cause confusion and misunderstanding in students, negatively impacting their motivation and learning outcomes.

Good interpersonal communication has been shown to significantly impact students' learning motivation at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School. Students' excitement for learning can be raised by caregivers who are skilled communicators, such as giving constructive criticism and listening to their grievances or questions (Hanafi et al., 2021). Research revealed that effective communication between teachers and students can increase students' interest and involvement in learning, which is seen in the context of this Islamic boarding school.

Open communication also plays an important role in shaping the character of students (Hoerudin, 2022). Caregivers and guardians act as role models who transfer knowledge and teach moral and spiritual values. When this communication goes well, students feel more motivated to adopt the values taught, such as honesty, discipline, and respect. In addition, effective communication helps create a more inclusive learning environment where students feel valued and encouraged to develop.

Although good interpersonal communication significantly influences the quality of learning, this study also found several obstacles that affect communication effectiveness in Islamic boarding schools (Basar et al., 2021). One of the main obstacles is the difference in perception between caregivers and students regarding educational goals and teaching methods. Some students find it difficult to express their opinions or feel uncomfortable talking to caregivers because of differences in status or high respect for them. In addition, time constraints are also an obstacle to more intense communication (Bakar et al., 2020). The many activities that students and caregivers must do limit the time for in-depth discussions. Another obstacle is the culture of communication that tends to be more formal in Islamic boarding schools. It sometimes prevents students from speaking more openly or expressing their feelings honestly, especially in situations involving more senior caregivers.

A more inclusive and open communication environment must be established to overcome these barriers (Maron et al., 2019). One step that can be taken is to hold regular discussions or consultation sessions between caregivers and students so that students feel more comfortable expressing their complaints or opinions. Caregivers must also be trained to build more empathetic communication and active listening. Although this study provides valuable insights into the role of interpersonal communication in improving the quality of learning in Islamic boarding schools, some limitations need to be noted. One is the limited

number of Islamic boarding schools used as case studies. This study was only conducted at the Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School, which certainly has unique characteristics that may not fully describe other Islamic boarding schools in Java.

The practical implications of this study are that good interpersonal communication between caregivers, guardians, and students can improve the quality of learning and character development of students. Therefore, it is recommended that caregivers and guardians be given more intensive communication training to strengthen their interpersonal skills. This training can include active listening techniques, providing constructive feedback, and how to build empathetic relationships with students. In addition, Islamic boarding schools can provide more time for group discussions and individual meetings between caregivers and students to overcome existing communication barriers. Thus, effective interpersonal communication not only improves the quality of academic learning but also contributes to the formation of character and spirituality of students in Islamic boarding schools (Khaidir & Suud, 2020). As a further step, further research with a broader and more diverse sample of Islamic boarding schools can be conducted to test these findings in a more general context.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the critical role of interpersonal communication in enhancing the quality of education in Islamic boarding schools, mainly through interactions between caregivers, guardians, and students. Effective communication fosters knowledge transfer and supports students' moral and spiritual development, ultimately increasing their learning motivation and emotional engagement. Despite its potential, challenges such as differences in perception and cultural factors often hinder communication effectiveness. The findings from Nurul Jadid Islamic Boarding School reveal that informal and open communication patterns significantly contribute to students' academic and character development. Caregivers' active guidance creates a supportive and inclusive learning environment. To address existing barriers, fostering a culture of openness and mutual understanding is essential, ensuring communication is a foundation for academic success and moral growth in Islamic boarding schools.

## REFERENCES

- Alwi, S. (2021). *Perilaku Bullying Di Kalangan Santri Dayah Terpadu Kota Lhokseumawe*. CV. Pusdikra Mitra Jaya.
- Amar, M. F. (2024). Peran Kemampuan Komunikasi Interpersonal Pendidik Dalam Menumbuhkan Self-Efficacy. *Aafiyah: Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu*, 2(01), 1–13.
- Arfa, A. M., & Lasaiba, M. A. (2022). Pendidikan Multikultural dan Implementasinya di Dunia Pendidikan. *GEOFORUM Jurnal Geografi Dan Pendidikan Geografi*, 111–125. <https://doi.org/10.30598/geoforumvolliss2pp111-125>
- Bakar, A., Shah, K., & Xu, Q. (2020). The effect of communication barriers on distance learners achievements. *Revista Argentina de Clínica Psicológica*, 29(5), 248.
- Barkley, E. F., & Major, C. H. (2020). *Student engagement techniques: A handbook for college faculty*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Basar, Z. M., Mansor, A. N., Jamaludin, K. A., & Alias, B. S. (2021). The effectiveness and challenges of online learning for secondary school students—A case study. *Asian Journal of University Education*, 17(3), 119–129. <https://doi.org/10.24191/ajue.v17i3.14514>
- Fadli, M. R. (2021). Memahami desain metode penelitian kualitatif. *Humanika, Kajian Ilmiah Mata Kuliah Umum*, 21(1), 33–54. <https://doi.org/10.21831/hum.v21i1.38075>
- Fahham, A. M. (2020). *Pendidikan pesantren: pola pengasuhan, pembentukan karakter, dan*

- perlindungan anak*. Publica Institute Jakarta.
- Fawaid, A., & Hasanah, U. (2020). Pesantren dan Religious Authoritative Parenting: Studi Kasus Sistem Wali Asuh di Pondok Pesantren Nurul Jadid. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Ushuluddin*, 19(1), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.18592/jiiu.v19i1.3484>
- Hanafi, Y., Taufiq, A., Saefi, M., Ikhsan, M. A., Diyana, T. N., Thoriquttyas, T., & Anam, F. K. (2021). The new identity of Indonesian Islamic boarding schools in the “new normal”: the education leadership response to COVID-19. *Heliyon*, 7(3). [https://www.cell.com/heliyon/fulltext/S2405-8440\(21\)00652-6](https://www.cell.com/heliyon/fulltext/S2405-8440(21)00652-6)
- Hargie, O. (2021). *Skilled interpersonal communication: Research, theory and practice*. Routledge.
- Hoerudin, C. W. (2022). The role of Indonesian Language Learning in shaping the character of students. *International Journal of Science and Society*, 4(1), 2715–2780. <https://doi.org/10.54783/ijssoc.v4i1.412>
- Ihsan, M. N., Ahmad, N., Hasanah, A., & Suhartini, A. (2021). Islamic boarding school culture climate in forming the religious attitude of islamic students in modern and agrobusiness islamic boarding schools. *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 4(2), 362–382. <https://doi.org/10.31538/nzh.v4i2.1492>
- Iskandar, R. (2023). Peran Guru dalam Membentuk Karakter Siswa Berbasis Ajaran Islam. *LANCAH: Jurnal Inovasi Dan Tren*, 1(2), 257–262. <https://doi.org/10.35870/ljit.v1i2.2182>
- Jaenullah, J., Utama, F., & Setiawan, D. (2022). Resilience Model of the Traditional Islamic Boarding School Education System in Shaping the Morals of Student in the Midst of Modernizing Education. *Jurnal Kependidikan: Jurnal Hasil Penelitian Dan Kajian Kepustakaan Di Bidang Pendidikan, Pengajaran Dan Pembelajaran*, 8(4), 931–942. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jk.v8i4.6013>
- Khaidir, E., & Suud, F. M. (2020). Islamic education in forming students’ characters at as-shofa Islamic High School, pekanbaru Riau. *International Journal of Islamic Educational Psychology*, 1(1), 50–63. <https://doi.org/10.18196/ijiep.1105>
- Lombu, D., & Lase, F. (2023). Membangun Rasa Percaya Diri Individu Dalam Komunikasi Interpersonal. *Educativo: Jurnal Pendidikan*, 2(1), 241–251. <https://doi.org/10.56248/educativo.v2i1.144>
- Manurung, K. C., & Yuliana, N. (2024). Komunikasi interpersonal: Misskomunikasi dalam organisasi. *Sindoro: Cendikia Pendidikan*, 5(4), 31–40. <https://doi.org/10.9644/sindoro.v5i4.4042>
- Maron, N., Kennison, R., Bracke, P., Hall, N., Gilman, I., Malenfant, K., Roh, C., & Shorish, Y. (2019). *Open and equitable scholarly communications: creating a more inclusive future*. <https://doi.org/10.5860/acrl.1>
- Maulia, S. (2023). Peran Komunikasi Efektif Guru dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Belajar Siswa Sekolah Dasar (SD). *Elementa: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar*, 5(1).
- Nasor, M., & Jasmadi, J. (2023). Peran Komunikasi Kelompok dalam Penyesuaian Santri Baru Guna Mencapai Keberhasilan Belajar di Pondok Pesantren. *Attractive: Innovative Education Journal*, 5(3), 456–465. <https://doi.org/10.51278/aj.v5i3.921>
- Purwanto, A., Wafa, A., & Sanjani, M. A. F. (2023). Interpersonal Communication Strategies in Building an Image of Contingency Perspective of Accommodation. *Managere: Indonesian Journal of Educational Management*, 5(3), 267–279. <https://doi.org/10.52627/managere.v5i3.281>
- Saidi, H. S. (2024). *Kunci Sukses Menjadi Wali Santri*. Penerbit Adab.
- Solechan, S. (2024). Pengajian Sabilussalam dan Perannya Dalam Meningkatkan Spiritualitas dan Moderasi Beragama Umat. *Urwatul Wutsqo: Jurnal Studi Kependidikan Dan Keislaman*, 13(1), 112–128.



<https://doi.org/10.54437/urwatulwutsqo.v13i1.1422>

- Sukomardojo, T. (2023). Mewujudkan pendidikan untuk semua: Studi implementasi pendidikan inklusif di Indonesia. *Jurnal Birokrasi & Pemerintahan Daerah Volume*, 5(2), 205–214.
- Sundari, S., Silalahi, V. A. J. M., & Siahaan, R. S. (2024). Komunikasi Interpersonal dalam Membangun Harmoni dan Produktivitas di Tempat Kerja. *Jurnal Cakrawala Akademika*, 1(3), 419–438. <https://doi.org/10.70182/JCA.v1i3.29>
- Yanti, F. (2022). *Komunikasi Pesantren*. Agree Media Publishing.
- Yeni, A., & Susanti, M. (2023). Peran Komunikasi Interpersonal dan Kelompok dalam Konteks Pendidikan: Meningkatkan Keterampilan Komunikasi untuk Peningkatan Pembelajaran dan Prestasi Akademik. *Cognoscere: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Media Pendidikan*, 1(1), 19–27. <https://doi.org/10.61292/cognoscere.v1i1.22>

