

LOCAL WISDOM-BASED GENDER-TRANSFORMATIVE PARENTING FOR PREVENTING CHILD VIOLENCE IN MUSLIM COMMUNITIES OF WEST NUSA TENGGARA

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Abstract

Violence against children remains a serious social problem in Indonesia, including in the West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) region, which is inhabited by three major ethnic groups: Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo (Sasambo). The problem lies not only in economic and educational factors but also in gender-insensitive child-rearing practices that overlook local values. This article examines gender-transformative parenting based on local wisdom as a strategy to prevent violence against children among these three ethnic groups. It employs a descriptive qualitative approach within a phenomenological paradigm, drawing on literature reviews and field data analysis. The study shows that child-rearing patterns in the Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo (Sasambo) communities are still influenced by patriarchal structures. However, these communities also uphold noble values such as respect, responsibility, cooperation, and compassion, which can serve as a foundation for preventing violence. A gender perspective plays an important role in balancing the roles of fathers and mothers in parenting. At the same time, local wisdom practices, such as deliberation (Pepaduan in the Sasak, Satemung Panangar

in the Samawa, and Mbolu Weki in the Mbojo) and communal responsibility in problem-solving (Wirang in the Sasak, Basiru in the Samawa, and Karawi Kabuju in the Mbojo), function as social mechanisms for shaping children's character in a humanistic manner. This study confirms that the synergy between cultural values and a gender-equality approach to parenting is an effective strategy for preventing violence against children. Future studies should explore more diverse local wisdom-based parenting models beyond this setting to prevent child violence.

Kekerasan terhadap anak masih menjadi masalah sosial yang serius di Indonesia, termasuk di wilayah Nusa Tenggara Barat (NTB), yang dihuni oleh tiga kelompok etnis utama, yaitu Sasak, Samawa, dan Mbojo (Sasambo). Permasalahan ini tidak hanya terletak pada faktor ekonomi dan pendidikan, tetapi juga pada pola pengasuhan anak yang tidak sensitif gender dan mengabaikan nilai-nilai lokal. Artikel ini mengkaji pengasuhan transformatif gender berbasis kearifan lokal sebagai strategi untuk mencegah kekerasan terhadap anak di antara ketiga kelompok etnis tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dalam paradigma fenomenologi dengan memanfaatkan kajian pustaka dan analisis data lapangan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pola pengasuhan anak dalam masyarakat Sasak, Samawa, dan Mbojo (Sasambo) masih dipengaruhi oleh struktur patriarki. Namun demikian, masyarakat tersebut juga menjunjung tinggi nilai-nilai luhur seperti rasa hormat, tanggung jawab, kerja sama, dan kasih sayang yang dapat menjadi dasar pencegahan kekerasan. Perspektif gender berperan penting dalam menyeimbangkan peran ayah dan ibu dalam pengasuhan. Pada saat yang sama, praktik kearifan lokal seperti musyawarah (Pepaduan pada masyarakat Sasak, Satemung Panangar pada masyarakat Samawa, dan Mbolu Weki pada masyarakat Mbojo), serta tanggung jawab komunal dalam penyelesaian masalah (Wirang pada masyarakat Sasak, Basiru pada masyarakat Samawa, dan Karawi Kabuju pada masyarakat Mbojo), berfungsi sebagai mekanisme sosial dalam membentuk karakter anak secara humanis. Penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa sinergi antara nilai-nilai budaya dan pendekatan kesetaraan gender dalam pengasuhan merupakan strategi yang efektif untuk mencegah kekerasan terhadap anak. Penelitian selanjutnya disarankan untuk mengeksplorasi model-model pengasuhan berbasis kearifan lokal yang lebih beragam di luar konteks penelitian ini guna mencegah kekerasan terhadap anak.

Keywords: *child violence prevention, gender-transformative parenting, local wisdom, Muslim communities, Sasak culture*

Introduction

Violence against children is a global issue that has become a serious concern among practitioners, academics, and governments alike. Globally,

three-quarters of children aged 2 to 4 years experience harsh discipline from their parents and caregivers (WHO, 2020). According to a report from the World Health Organization (WHO), in 2022, 1 billion children aged 2-17 years worldwide were victims of physical, emotional, and sexual violence in their environment (WHO, 2022). This violence hurts children's mental health, social development, and well-being into adulthood (Alexandra et al., 2023; Sakroni, 2021; Gupta et al., 2023). One of the leading causes of violence against children is the inequality of power relations and gender roles within the family, where patriarchal norms and gender stereotypes often give rise unbalanced of role of parent in raising children. This ruins parenting and increases the risk of violence against children (Miranda & Rumilah, 2024; Arifin et al., 2023; Idris, 2022; Peterman et al., 2020; Putra, 2024).

In many societies, including Indonesia, rigid gender norms place women in the primary caregiving role, while men hold the role of breadwinner. This view not only creates an imbalance in the burden of caregiving but also increases the potential for violence when there are conflicts in the division of household responsibilities. Violence often arises as a result of stress, social pressure, and the inability to meet traditional gender expectations. This is also supported by research showing that unequal gender caregiving increases children's vulnerability to violence, both physical and emotional (Maulida, 2024; Rahman, 2024; Saepuloh, 2021; Pundir et al., 2020; Skar et al., 2021).

In Indonesia, particularly in the province of West Nusa Tenggara (*Nusa Tenggara Barat/NTB*), violence against children remains a significant challenge, especially in the context of the Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo ethnics. Data from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection reveals that NTB ranks 11th out of 38 provinces in terms of child abuse victims, with 606 cases (Kemenpan, 2024). One of the contributing factors is that the community still adheres to traditional norms that regulate gender roles, which often burden women as the primary caregivers, and sometimes normalizes violence as a means of disciplining children. In this context, rigid traditional gender norms can exacerbate inequality and power relations within families, increase the potential for violence, and hinder children's development in a healthy environment. Families, especially mothers or caregivers who are depressed, tend to use harsh disciplinary measures (physical punishment and psychological aggression) against children (Jha et al., 2023).

However, the Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo communities also have rich local wisdom, such as the values of cooperation, deliberation (*Pepaduan* in

the Sasak tribe, *Satemung Panangar* in the Samawa tribe, *Mbolo Weki* in the Mbojo tribe), and communal responsibility to face and solve those problems (*Wirang* in the Sasak tribe, *Basiru* in the Samawa tribe, *Karawi Kabuju* in the Mbojo tribe). These values emphasize the importance of involving all family members and society alike in solving problems together. By integrating this local wisdom into parenting, there is great potential to promote gender equality in the family, which can ultimately prevent violence against children.

At the global level, researchers and practitioners have begun developing gender-transformative parenting approaches to promote a more equal division of roles between men and women within the family (Backhaus et al., 2023). Gender-transformative parenting aims to change unfair gender norms and create an inclusive, safe, and supportive environment for children's growth (UNICEF, 2024). Several studies show that more gender-equitable parenting models can reduce violence against children, improve child welfare, and improve overall family dynamics (Putra, 2024; Jovani, 2024; Afifah, 2023; Nisa & Ardianto, 2022; Mulyana, 2022).

Gender issues have been discussed intensively separately, but research on gender transformative parenting in the Indonesian context, especially in communities that still uphold traditional values, is still minimal. Most research in Indonesia focuses on gender equality issues in education and the public sector (Aini, 2024; Novianti et al., 2024; Nurhayati et al., 2024) but rarely discusses how gender norms in the family directly impact parenting and violence against children. Furthermore, although some studies have begun to highlight the role of local wisdom in social development (Alawiyah et al., 2021; Saputra et al., 2021; Mahmudah, 2022), few have linked local wisdom to gender-based parenting. Local wisdom, such as the values of deliberation, mutual assistance, and family cooperation, actually has great potential to support more gender-equitable parenting. However, to date, there has been hardly any study that specifically integrates gender-transformative parenting with local wisdom in Indonesia. Therefore, this study fills this gap.

Family life is shaped by both socially constructed roles and deeply rooted cultural values. Gender theory emphasizes that the roles of men and women are socially constructed and therefore open to change and transformation, highlighting the importance of equality and equity within family relations (Butler, 1990; Oakley, 1972) as well as parent-child ties. At the same time, local wisdom reflects culturally embedded norms such as mutual care, respect, and communal responsibility, which function as moral guidelines in many societies

(Geertz, 1973). These perspectives on gender equality in cultural contexts ensure that social transformation remains both meaningful and sustainable and do not destabilize society.

Transformative parenting emphasizes the role of parenting in reshaping social norms and fostering children's critical consciousness. Drawing on transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991) and critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970), transformative parenting encourages parents to move beyond traditional role transmission toward reflective and emancipatory practices. In this model, parenting is not only about nurturing and discipline but also about empowering children to question inequality, including gender bias, while remaining rooted in cultural values. When integrated with established parenting frameworks such as Baumrind's (1967) authoritative model, transformative parenting promotes shared caregiving roles, open communication, and the cultivation of empathy and social responsibility. This theoretical perspective is used in the present study.

Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a phenomenological paradigm. This approach was chosen because the study's main objective is to understand the social meanings, values, and practices of child rearing through the experiences and cultural constructs of the Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo communities. According to Creswell, phenomenological research seeks to capture the essence of human experience as experienced by individuals in a particular context (Creswell, 2014). This approach allows the researchers to examine the relationships among parenting, gender values, and local wisdom as a unified social system. This type of research is field research enriched with library research.

Data collection in this study was conducted through four primary methods: in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to explore informants' experiences and views on child rearing, gender roles, and the influence of customs. The total number of informants from three ethnic groups reached 170, including religious and *adat*/community leaders, lay people (parents), representatives of non-governmental organizations, members of Islamic organizations, and district and sub-district government officials. The focus group discussion was conducted in Mataram (twice), Sumbawa (once), and Bima-Dompu (once). The invited participants came from various backgrounds, including government officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations, members of Islamic

organizations, and parents. Participatory observation of social activities such as *begawe* in Lombok, *basiru* in Sumbawa, and *karawi kabuju* in Bima, which reflect social values and moral education for children. This study also collected relevant documents/archives, such as regional bylaws (*peraturan daerah*) and village regulations (*peraturan desa/awiq-awiq*), as well as community records. To strengthen the theoretical basis of the research, library data were obtained from previous research, anthropology literature, gender studies, and relevant customary law.

The collected data were then reduced, categorized, and tested through triangulation to maintain the validity and reliability of the findings. Data analysis used Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model, which includes data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and verification to find patterns, conceptual relationships, and the social meaning of the phenomena studied (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This study also uses a gender analysis framework (GAF) to assess the division of caregiving roles between men and women, and an analysis of local wisdom to understand the cultural norms that influence child protection. Validity is maintained through triangulation of sources and methods.

Findings and Discussion

Parenting is a strategy parents use to guide and shape their children's character. According to Baumrind, parenting styles include authoritarian, democratic, and permissive, each with different implications for emotional and social development (Baumrind, 1967). In traditional communities such as the Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo in NTB, child rearing is influenced by traditional values, religion, and social structures, resulting in collective parenting that involves the extended family and traditional leaders. The gender perspective is important because social constructs regarding the roles of men and women often place mothers as the primary caregivers. At the same time, fathers are the decision makers, thereby reinforcing inequalities in domestic roles. The gender equality approach, as emphasized by Scott (1986) and Kabeer (1999), encourages fathers' involvement in the emotional and functional aspects of parenting and positions maternal values, considered powerful in cultural feminism, as a moral force in the family. In social environments rich in local wisdom, such as *besemeton* and *begawe* in Sasak society, *kangila* and *basiru* in Samawa society, and *maja labo dahu* and *karawi kabuju* in Mbojo society, these serve as non-formal education that instills morals, responsibility, and a sense of

togetherness; however, without gender analysis, these values have the potential to perpetuate harsh disciplinary practices that are not child-friendly (Khairina & Soedirham, 2022).

The three major ethnic groups in NTB, namely the Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo, despite their ethnographic differences, share common values in upholding family honor, social solidarity, and adherence to customary norms and Islam. In general, child rearing is carried out within an extended family system. The responsibility for children is borne not only by parents but also by grandparents, uncles, aunts, and even close neighbors (Dinas Pemberdayaan Perempuan, 2023).

This parenting model reinforces communal social control, but on the other hand, it can create pressure on children, especially if the values applied are still patriarchal. For example, boys are educated to become future heads of families, while girls are directed toward domestic roles and modesty. In many cases, these differences create gender gaps in children's emotional and social development.

Field research in Lombok, Sumbawa, and Bima shows that parents still apply both authoritative and authoritarian parenting styles simultaneously. The authoritative style is used in terms of education and social responsibility, while the authoritarian style is applied to discipline or moral behavior (Lalu Sahrudin, interview, February 24, 2024; Nurhidayah, interview, November 15, 2025). Although some communities have begun to accept more democratic modern parenting styles, traditional norms remain the main framework for shaping children's character.

Childcare in NTB, as documented in the interviews with several informants from the three ethnic communities, consists of three stages: pregnancy, postnatal, and childhood to adolescence. During pregnancy, child care practices in Lombok begin with a ritual of washing the pregnant mother's stomach, *bisok tian* or *bretes*, at seven months. In Mareje, West Lombok, this is done at three, six, and nine months of pregnancy. Meanwhile, in Sumbawa, it begins at three months of pregnancy with a *dzikiran* ritual and at seven months with a *biso tian* ritual, washing the pregnant mother's stomach. Among the Mbojo, childcare begins at seven months of pregnancy with the *nuju bulanan* or *do'a kiri loko* ritual. This involves praying for the baby's head to face upwards so that the *kiri weki* turns downwards for a smooth delivery.

When a child is born in the village of Lendang Nangke, East Lombok, a special ritual called *belah tangkel* (splitting coconut shells) is performed for

the birth of the first child. Prayers accompany this ritual for a good birth, smooth delivery, and a healthy baby (L. Malik Hidayat, interview, May 13, 2025). Then, the placenta is buried to the right or left of the house door. The baby is given a name on the seventh day after birth, with a *medak api* ritual to extinguish the fire, followed by a *molang malik* ritual (to ward off bad luck), and the *kyais* and close relatives are invited to pray and eat together. A few days later, the *ngurisan* ritual is performed, which involves cutting the baby's hair (*aqiqah*) and inviting more people to pray and celebrate.

In Sumbawa society, after birth, a ritual is held to bury the placenta in the yard of the house or cast it into the sea. Next, a *beang singen* ceremony is held to give the newborn baby a name. This is followed by the *gunting bulu* ritual, cutting the baby's hair, and the *beterok* ritual, piercing the ears of baby girls. The *turin tana* ritual involves placing the child's feet on the mosque floor so that the first ground the child steps on is holy ground (Aries Zulkarnain, February 28, 2025, Hasanudin, interview, April 18, 2025). At the age of 9-12 years, the *Batoba* tradition of repentance, namely circumcision, is held. For girls aged 5-7 years, the *sesak rurung* tradition is held, which is female circumcision. This tradition is intended to control the child's sexual desire and morality.

Meanwhile, in the Mbojo tribe, after a baby is born, the father recites the *adhan* in the baby's right ear and the *iqamah* in the left ear so that the first words heard and written in the child's heart and mind are words of goodness. The *aqiqah* ceremony is held when the baby is seven days old. If this is not possible, it is held on the fourteenth or twenty-first day. If this is also not possible, it is postponed until the family can do so (Abubakar, interview, May 28, 2025). The *aqiqah* ceremony begins with the *cafi sari* sweeping or cleaning the floor, the *boru* cutting hair, and the *dore* stepping on the ground. *Cafi sari* is performed in the morning as an initial effort by parents to teach their children to maintain environmental cleanliness. In the afternoon or evening, *aqiqah* prayers, *asrakal*, *marhaban*, and *barzanji* are held, followed by hair cutting and naming (Abubakar Aziz, interview, May 28, 2025).

During childhood, parents in Lombok practice two modes of parenting: *bedede*, a form of parenting focused on character building and teaching ethics and manners, and *bedengah*, physical parenting such as feeding, bathing, and teaching children to walk and run. The Samawa and Mbojo people carry out the same parenting practices. They teach children from an early age not only to behave politely and to speak softly but also to practice Islamic law, such as prayer, fasting, reciting the Quran, and so on.

The model of child care during pregnancy and birth among these three tribes does not differentiate between boys and girls. Boys and girls are treated equally according to custom. This aligns with Barlas' (2002) concepts of *tawhidic* equality and gender partnership, which reject all forms of human domination over other humans, including the differential treatment of male and female infants.

Childcare from a Gender Perspective

From a gender perspective, childcare in Sasambo society reflects the traditional division of roles between fathers and mothers. Fathers are generally seen as figures of authority and enforcers of discipline, while mothers are considered the primary caregivers and guardians of family morals. This structure reflects a strong patriarchal system, as found in agrarian and religious societies in Southeast Asia (Moser, 1993).

However, this study also found social transformations among young families in urban areas such as Mataram and Bima. Fathers are increasingly involved in domestic activities and in children's education. Fathers not only work in the fields or teach at school, but also help with chores, teach their children, and take them to school (H. Masrun Ahmad, interview, November 15, 2025). This shift indicates a new awareness of gender equality in caregiving roles.

A gender approach to parenting requires not only a balance of roles but also fairness in the division of emotional responsibilities. According to Gender and Development (GAD) theory, equality does not mean absolute sameness, but rather recognition of different contributions that are equally important to family well-being. In this context, feminine values such as affection, gentleness, and empathy, which are associated with mothers, must be complemented by the values of responsibility, assertiveness, and protection associated with fathers. This combination creates a more harmonious and violence-free parenting style (Moser, 1993).

Male involvement in parenting also has implications for social change. Boys who grow up with warm, non-repressive fathers tend to show greater empathy, while girls who see their father respect their mother tend to understand gender equality from an early age. Thus, equal parenting is not only a family strategy but also a mechanism for preventing future structural violence.

Local Wisdom in Child Care

The Sasak

Child care in Sasak society is based on the values of *besemeton* (close kinship) and *begawe* (cooperation). These values emphasize the importance of collective responsibility for children in the neighborhood. The local expression “*anak bau dedare, dedare bau anak*” (children smell like their parent, parents smell like their children) illustrates that all children in the village have the right to shared attention and guidance (Dinas Pemberdayaan Perempuan, 2023).

However, there is also a strong element of patriarchy, especially in the concept of *merariq* (marriage by “eloping” with a girl). Although this tradition has now been reinterpreted legally and socially, the old values that place women as passive parties still influence the education of girls. Therefore, cultural reinterpretation is needed so that *besemeton* values remain the foundation of togetherness without sacrificing gender equality (Moser, 1993).

The strengths of the Sasak community’s parenting style lie in its collective orientation and high religiosity. Children’s education is not only carried out at home but also through religious institutions such as religious classes and Islamic boarding schools. Islamic values such as compassion (*rahmah*) and social responsibility (*ukhuwah*) are internalized from an early age, which has great potential to prevent violence against children.

The Samawa

The Samawa people are known for their concept of *kangila* (self-respect) and shame. This value forms the moral foundation for educating children to maintain their personal honor and that of their family. Samawa parents educate their children to be obedient, polite, and brave enough to take responsibility for their actions. As Aries Zulkarnain, a traditional leader in Sumbawa, stated, Samawa children must not embarrass their parents in public (Aries Zulkarnain, interview, February 28, 2025).

However, the concept of *kangila* sometimes leads to harsh discipline that can result in physical or verbal abuse, especially towards boys who are considered to have violated social norms. For this reason, the value of *kangila* needs to be reinterpreted as dignified *kangila*, which means maintaining honor without causing harm. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce the concept of positive *kangila*, in which discipline is applied through communication and emotional guidance rather than punishment.

The Mbojo

The Mbojo community in Bima placed *maja labo dahu* (shame and fear) at the center of child rearing. Mbojo children are taught to be ashamed and afraid of neglecting their obligations and committing prohibitions, both in terms of religion and customs. These values foster a strong sense of social responsibility but can also create moral pressure when interpreted rigidly.

Child rearing in Mbojo society is closely tied to Islamic religious norms and local customs (Mbojo customs). Fathers act as protectors and enforcers of discipline, while mothers are the primary caregivers in moral education. This is implemented in the *rimpu* tradition, where women cover their bodies with traditional cloth, which is not only a symbol of modesty but also a cultural identity that instills respect for oneself and others.

In the context of violence prevention, the value of *maja labo dahu* can serve as a basis for building children's character to love peace, provided it is interpreted as a sense of responsibility. Customary institutions such as *Sara Dana Mbojo* can initiate the development of family counseling programs. It emphasizes the equal roles of parents in children's education (Moser, 1993; Rokhim & Sukardi, 2022).

Synergy between Local Wisdom and Gender Equality

The local wisdom of Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo has great potential to be used as a basis for preventing violence against children, as long as they are reinterpreted in accordance with the principles of gender equality. The values of *besemeton* (Sasak), *kangila* (Samawa), and *maja labo dahu* (Mbojo) share similar social functions: maintaining honor, solidarity, and responsibility. However, in reality, these values are often used to justify harsh social control over children. Therefore, efforts are needed to reformulate cultural values through family and community education. The NTB regional government, through the Child-Friendly Village program, can utilize local wisdom as an instrument for socializing non-violent values that are more acceptable to the community than a formal legal approach alone.

The synergy between the gender approach and local wisdom creates three main principles of ideal parenting: (1) Equal roles for fathers and mothers in shaping children's characters with love and open communication; (2) Education based on humanistic cultural values, where children are taught respect, empathy, and responsibility through local traditions; and (3) Discipline without violence, changing the paradigm from physical punishment to dialogue

and moral exemplary behavior. Thus, the combination of traditional values and modern approaches makes the Sasambo community an example of how local wisdom can be a social bulwark against child abuse, rather than a source of legitimization for violence.

Child-rearing Patterns in Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo Communities

The three major ethnic groups in NTB, Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo, have strong social value systems based on Islam and customs. Interviews with L. Ali Yudia, a religious and traditional leader in East Lombok, revealed that the Sasak people regard children as divine gifts who must be raised with love, patience, and exemplary behavior. A local saying states: “*Anak ndeq dekan tebeang, ndeq dekan siq tepentuq, tebeang endah malem, tepentuq endah barak.*” (Children should not be neglected, nor should they be overly pressured; they should be educated gently, but firmly in the truth) (L. Ali Yudia, interview, March 9, 2025). This expression reflects a democratic-religious parenting style that combines moral firmness with spiritual affection. This style parallels Baumrind’s concept of authoritative parenting, a balanced approach between control and affection, which has been proven to be the most effective effort to shape children with independent and empathetic personalities (Baumrind, 1967).

The people of Sumbawa have a philosophy of “*Adat barenti ko syara’, syara’ barenti ko kitabullah*”, which means that Sumbawa customs adhere strictly to Islamic law, and Islamic law follows the Holy Qur’an. This principle means that customs must not conflict with religious teachings. In addition, in raising children, the Samawa community adheres to the philosophy of *Kataket boat lenge, Kangila ko Nene* (fear of doing evil because of shame before Allah, who always sees every action of His servants). Children are taught to feel *kangila* (shame) if they commit moral violations. Aries Zulkarnain, a traditional leader in Sumbawa, explains that *kangila* is not just social shame, but a spiritual awareness that Allah watches every action. Thus, shame becomes an internal control against violence and negative behavior in the family (Aries Zulkarnain, interview, February 28, 2025).

In Mbojo society (Bima-Dompu), the central values that color child rearing, as mentioned above, are *maja labo dahu* (shame and fear). Shame and fear of leaving religious commands and shame and fear of committing religious prohibitions. If *Maja Labo Dahu* is violated, the child is not the only one to feel shame; the extended family also shares in it. This principle forms the basis for instilling morals and character in children from an early age. In Mbojo

families, supervising children is the responsibility not only of parents but also of the extended family and neighbors. An informant, Nurhidayah, a teacher in the village of Roka-Belo, Bima, explained: “If a child does something wrong, acts rudely, or uses foul language, it is not only the parents who reprimand them, but the closest neighbors also feel obliged to reprimand and advise them” (Nurhidayah, interview, 2024). This shows the existence of a communal parenting system, which, according to Geertz, is characteristic of Indonesia’s communal-oriented societies, where social responsibility is attached to kinship and village networks (Geertz, 1996).

Gender Perspectives in Traditional Parenting

In the traditions of these three tribes, gender roles tend to be complementary rather than competitive. Fathers act as protectors and breadwinners, while mothers act as moral educators and primary caregivers. However, interviews show that values are shifting with modernization and increasing gender awareness.

TGH. Munajib Kholid, religious leader of the al-Halimi Gunungsari Islamic boarding school, stated: “Many Sasak mothers now work, but the responsibility of educating children remains their main task. Fathers are also starting to help with childcare” (TGH. Munajib Kholid, interview, August 2, 2025). This is reinforced by observations in the village of Sukadane, Central Lombok, where a father carried his sleeping child while answering the researchers’ questions. This shows a transition toward gender equality in parenting, with both parents sharing roles more equally. This phenomenon is in line with the concept of gender partnership in Islam, as explained by Asma Barlas, that the relationship between men and women in the household should be based on the principle of *tawhidic* equality, spiritual equality before Allah (Barlas, 2002).

Meanwhile, in Samawa and Mbojo communities, patriarchal values remain strong, but they are not oppressive. On the contrary, their traditional patriarchal structure serves to protect children and women. For example, in the Samawa custom, there is a saying: *ya beri, nongka ya pedi*, which means that parents love their children, but do not spoil them. This means that parents are firm with their children for their children’s future. However, this firmness is not intended to oppress or hurt them, but for the children’s own good. In this case, men are obliged to protect the family, while women instill morality and raise the sense of shame (*kangila*).

Violence in the Local Gender Perspective

Although normatively all three tribes reject violence against children, social reality shows that there are forms of violence that are still culturally accepted, primarily symbolic and verbal violence. For example, scaring children or hitting them lightly to discipline them is still considered normal in some communities. According to an interview with Syukron, an activist with the NTB Child Protection Agency (LPA), many parents are unaware that scolding children in public or frightening them with supernatural beings is a form of psychological violence. They consider it an effective educational method (Syukron, interview, July 3, 2025). This condition indicates a cultural gap between traditional norms and modern children's rights. However, it is precisely from these traditional values that a violence prevention approach can be developed, namely by reviving the values of shame (*kangila*), brotherhood (*besemeton*), and shame and fear (*maja labo dahu*) in a new, more child-friendly context.

Local Wisdom as a Basis for Preventing Violence against Children

The local wisdom of the three tribes in NTB has excellent potential as a preventive strategy against violence against children. Values such as *begawe*, *basiru*, and *karawi kabuju* contain principles of compassion, cooperation, and social control.

Religious and Communal Values

Sasak families instill religious values through *ngaji leq guru* (studying the Qur'an with a teacher), where children are taught manners and morality through the Qur'an. This is a form of Islamic character education that is culturally embedded in customs. As stated by TGH. Suaeb Yusuf, religious leader of the Islamic boarding school in Teluk Kodek Malaka, North Lombok Regency: "Children who study with a teacher are not only taught to read the Qur'an but also taught manners, politeness, respect for parents, not to lie, and not to hit each other" (TGH. Suaeb Yusuf, interview, July 26, 2025). Thus, *ngaji leq guru* serves as a socio-religious system that instills non-violent values (peaceful upbringing) internally, in accordance with the principle of *rahmah* in Islam.

A similar statement was expressed by H. Abubakar Aziz, a religious leader in Bima, who said that Bima children are instilled with religious values from an early age through Quranic education by their parents at home and by

teachers at school (H. Abubakar Aziz, interview, November 17, 2025). Teachers must accompany al-Qur’an education, as they will teach children how to read it and explain its contents, which can be applied in children’s daily lives. Bima local wisdom maintains *ka ulu nempa guru sawatipu nempa ruma*, which means to prioritize respecting teachers before worshipping God, because teachers are the first people to introduce God to students through their teachings.

Values of Mutual Cooperation and Social Solidarity

In the Sasak culture, there are practices known as *begawe* (working together), *begibung* (eating together), and *semeton* (brotherhood) that instill solidarity and social equality. In this practice, children are encouraged from an early age to participate without distinction of gender. The value of cooperation teaches children to appreciate collective effort and avoid selfish attitudes, which, in the long run, prevents aggressive behavior.

In Samawa society, the tradition of *barapan kebo* (buffalo fighting) is not just entertainment, but a social tool for instilling the values of sportsmanship and emotional control in boys. Children are taught to be strong, but not rude—to be “firm but polite.” Meanwhile, in Bima, the traditions of *karawi kabuju* (cooperation), *maja labo dahu* (shame and fear), *rimpu* (wearing a hijab), and *ka ulu nempa guru sawatipu nempa ruma* symbolize solidarity, self-control, and respect for teachers. This moral education contributes to the formation of a non-discriminatory gender culture and the protection of children from sexual violence (Rokhim & Sukardi, 2022).

Integrative Analysis: Gender, Customs, and Violence Prevention

When analyzed integratively, the local values of the three tribes can be mapped into three main dimensions:

Table 1. Dimensions of local values

Value Dimensions	Local Patterns	Impact on Violence Prevention
Religiousness	<i>Ngaji leq guru, Kangila, Maja labo dahu, rimpu</i>	Instilling moral and spiritual awareness to reject violence
Socio-Cultural	<i>Begawe, Barapan kebo, Karawi Kabuju</i>	Forming community-based social control
Gender and Family	Complementary division of roles between fathers and mothers	Encouraging collaboration and emotional warmth within the family

How are these values theoretically integrated? Gender equality plays a central role in preventing violence against children by transforming unequal power relations within the family. Gender theory criticizes rigid hierarchies—where authority is concentrated in one gender—that often accept control, domination, and even violence as acceptable norms. Butler (1990) and Oakley (1972) maintain that gender roles are not static and given but socially constructed and can therefore be reshaped toward more egalitarian and non-violent relationships. In parenting contexts, gender equality encourages shared responsibilities, mutual respect, and non-authoritarian communication, which reduces the likelihood of abusive behavior. Furthermore, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) emphasizes non-discrimination and the protection of children from all forms of violence, aligning closely with gender-equitable parenting practices.

At the same time, custom (*adat*) in certain communities, such as West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia, and many other countries, constitutes another important factor in social practice. Customary values (local wisdom) can function as powerful protective mechanisms when reinterpreted to support children's rights. Geertz (1973) demonstrates that cultural norms shape moral behavior and social expectations, including how children are treated within families. Many local traditions—such as communal care, respect for human dignity, and collective responsibility—can be mobilized to discourage violence and promote nurturing parenting.

As this study's data show, local wisdom from three ethnic groups can be used to strengthen an egalitarian, patterned model of parenting, where father and mother responsibilities and work can be adjusted to a changing society. When combined with transformative approaches inspired by Paulo Freire (1970), these cultural values can be critically reinterpreted to challenge harmful practices, including those justified in the name of tradition, and even religion. Thus, the integration of gender equality and culturally grounded norms and religion creates a context-sensitive framework for violence prevention, where families are encouraged to maintain cultural identity while fostering safe, respectful, and non-violent environments for children.

The findings of this present study are also relevant to the international comparative perspective. In a critical survey and comprehensive study across four countries, Meinhart et al. (2024) advocate a strong recommendation for successful gender-transformative parenting. Based on two focused programs of the parenting, namely Safe at Home and Sibling Support for Adolescent

Girls in four countries, they suggest that programmers must recognize the diversity of family background in different social and humanitarian settings, endorse a full participation of all parties concerned, set realistic parameters and objectives and “ensure pathways to scale and sustainability with the initial program design”. While such a study emphasized excellent program design at home and for siblings, this present study offers an analysis of the parenting model grounded in local wisdom and a reinterpretation of gender roles to create gender-based transformative parenting. Quoting UNICEF (2004, pp. 1-2) that “gender transformative parenting programming can empower individuals, especially caregivers, to challenge and transform the deeply ingrained norms that may perpetuate violence”, Meinhart et al. (2024) argued that healthier and safer family, with the indication of zero or minimum violence against intimate partners and children, is attainable through gender transformative parenting.

We also recognize the important role of parents and social commitment in ensuring the project’s success. As we explained, rigid gender roles and the strict division of male and female work in family and society have steadily changed in West Nusa Tenggara. Male religious and community leaders, and fathers, are now willing to accept the change and support more active father participation in childcare. This finding echoes similarities in other societies worldwide. For example, a study on the Ugandan parenting program (Wight et al., 2022) suggests that male participation in improving family respectability and father involvement in promoting gender norms are two key issues to support gender transformative parenting. The case study from Kenya (Ogutu, 2025) reveals that family-based violence, both in the form of intimate partner violence and violence against children, can be reduced through gender-transformative parenting.

Conclusion

This study shows that child-rearing practices amongst the Sasak, Samawa, and Mbojo are grounded in a combination of religious values (Islam) and local customs that emphasize social harmony, compassion, and collective responsibility. Although there are variations in terminology and practice, all three share the same goal: raising children to be moral, empathetic, and disciplined without resorting to violence. The Sasak instills gentle parenting and role modeling, as reflected in the principles of *tebeang endah malem and tepentuaq endah barak*; the Samawa emphasizes *kangila* as moral control; while the Mbojo highlights

maja labo dahu (shame and fear) through collective supervision by the extended family. These three values demonstrate a communal-religious parenting model that balances children's rights, parental responsibilities, and the community's role, while supporting the concept of gender partnership, in which the roles of men and women complement each other in parenting.

The local wisdom-based parenting approach prevents physical, verbal, and psychological violence against children because customary norms function as a social mechanism that controls the behavior of parents and the community. Religious values also strengthen the moral awareness that children are a divine trust whose rights must be protected. At the same time, complementary gender roles encourage emotional and collaborative involvement between fathers and mothers. Therefore, preventing violence against children cannot rely solely on legal or formal educational approaches, but also requires strengthening the cultural and religious values that exist within society as a foundation for humane and sustainable social care.

This study proposes a critical analysis of transformative parenting grounded in local wisdom, gender equality, and the religious norms of the people of West Nusa Tenggara. The next prospective study can expand the investigation beyond the study's locus to discover more diverse models of parenting based on local wisdom to prevent violence against children.

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