



Love-Based Curriculum in Indonesian Madrasahs: A Conceptual Analysis toward Inclusive-Humanistic Islamic Education

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ABSTRACT

Islamic education in Indonesia faces significant challenges in fostering genuine inclusivity and countering rising intolerance within increasingly pluralistic and globalized societies. In response, the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs has proposed the innovative Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) for madrasahs. This study aims to critically analyze the LBC's conceptual framework as a model for inclusive-humanistic Islamic education and evaluate its proposed implementation strategies. Employing a qualitative library research design, this study systematically analyzed the primary policy document, Panduan Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta di Madrasah (2025), alongside relevant academic literature on inclusive pedagogy and Islamic curriculum theory. Data were examined through thematic analysis. The findings indicate that the LBC conceptualizes inclusivity through a three-pronged approach: theological deconstruction emphasizing divine attributes of love (Al-Wadud, Ar-Rahman), pedagogical integration via a hybrid ARKA model, and preventive social mechanisms rooted in restorative justice. However, the analysis also reveals conceptual tensions, such as the potential paradox between standardizing 'love' in a curriculum and its inherently subjective nature, alongside practical challenges related to teacher readiness and socio-cultural barriers. This study concludes that while the LBC presents a groundbreaking normative framework, its transformative potential hinges on addressing these contradictions through contextual adaptation, robust teacher training, and further empirical research. The study contributes a critical conceptual evaluation essential for stakeholders implementing value-based educational reforms in Islamic schooling contexts.

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1. Introduction

Islamic education in Indonesia currently stands at a crossroads between preserving traditional values and responding to increasingly complex global challenges. Amid globalization, madrasahs as Islamic educational institutions are expected not only to produce academically competent graduates but also to equip them to address contemporary issues such as intolerance, radicalism, and ecological crises (Bakar, 2017; Hajar, 2024; Mukhsin & Alfani, 2024). Data from various reports indicate a rise in cases of intolerance and violence in educational settings, including religion-based discrimination and bullying (Farooqui, 2025; Litvak et al., 2024; McCormick & Krieger, 2020). This phenomenon reflects a systemic failure in instilling humanistic and inclusive values, which should form the core of Islamic teachings as *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (a mercy to all creation).

It is within this context that the Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) emerges as an innovative response from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs (Ifendi, 2025). This curriculum does not merely append love-based values to subjects but undertakes a paradigmatic reconstruction of Islamic education. As emphasized in the 2025 Love-Based Curriculum Guide, the LBC aims to cultivate humanistic, nationalist, naturalist, and tolerant individuals who prioritize love as a foundational life principle (Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2025: 13). This approach aligns with critical pedagogy theory, which underscores the role of education in social transformation (Freire, 1970), integrating values such as empathy, tolerance, and ecological awareness into all aspects of learning.

The relevance of the LBC extends beyond addressing local issues to responding to global challenges like dehumanization and environmental crises. The Indonesian Minister of Religious Affairs, Nasaruddin Umar, asserts that humanity is only one (Bordoni & Zengarini, 2024), emphasizing that religion must serve as a foundation for human harmony, not division. The LBC adopts this principle by positioning love as the ontological, epistemological, and axiological basis of education. Ontologically, the curriculum views humans, nature, and God as a unified whole connected by *sympatheia* (universal love) (Dirjen Pendis, 2025). Epistemologically, learning is designed to foster awareness that knowledge is a means to understand the signs of Allah's greatness (*ayat kauniyah* and *qauliyah*). Axiologically, the LBC promotes tangible actions such as environmental conservation and respect for diversity.

The urgency of implementing the LBC is also tied to Indonesia's *Golden Vision 2045*, which aims to develop exceptional human resources not only in technology but also in character. This curriculum addresses the shortcomings of conventional education, which often prioritizes cognitive-instrumental approaches while neglecting affective and spiritual dimensions (Coşkun Yaşar & Aslan, 2021; Hamad & Seyyedi, 2024; Rusman, 2021). In contrast, Islamic pedagogy emphasizes a balanced integration of three domains: *ta'dib* (moral formation), *ta'lim* (knowledge transmission), and *tarbiyah* (holistic potential development) (Al-Attas, 1980). The LBC actualizes these domains through methods like experiential learning and positive discipline, emphasizing value internalization over rote memorization.

The Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) is grounded in an integrative theoretical framework that bridges Western educational psychology and Islamic pedagogical philosophy. Humanistic Education Theory (Rogers & Maslow) provides the foundational lens for understanding LBC's holistic approach, emphasizing unconditional

positive regard and self-actualization through its self-love and love for others principle (DeCarvalho, 1991; Feigenbaum, 2024; Jingna, 2012). This aligns with Transformative Curriculum Theory (Giroux, 2016; Pinar, 2022), which critiques standardized education models and instead positions LBC as a liberating practice that fosters a paradigm shift toward love-centered theology. The curriculum's emphasis on emotional-spiritual intelligence (Cherniss et al., 2006; Goleman, 2000) further enriches this framework by integrating cognitive-emotional growth with transcendental awareness, ensuring learners develop both empathy and spiritual connection.

Eco-pedagogy (Ayoub Mahmoudi et al., 2014; Bowers, 1995) and Booth and Ainscow's Inclusive Education Theory (Al-Shammari et al., 2019; Knight, 2000; Lindsay, 2018) expand LBC's scope to address socio-environmental and equity-oriented dimensions. Freirean critical consciousness is reflected in LBC's environmental love modules, where ecological stewardship is taught as an act of divine manifestation (*tajalli*), while Booth and Ainscow's inclusion models validate LBC's structural efforts to create discrimination-free madrasahs. These Western theories converge with Islamic Education Theory, particularly al-Attas' tripartite model (*ta'lim-tarbiyah-ta'dib*), which frames LBC as a process of nurturing knowledge, character, and spiritual wisdom (Al-Attas, 1980). The Theology of Mercy (*Teologi Rahmah*) and Ulwan's *fitrah*-based pedagogy (Saputra et al., 2024) further root LBC in Islamic ontology, positioning compassion (*Al-Wadud, Ar-Rahman*) as the core of teacher-student dynamics and self-actualization.

The LBC's theoretical innovation lies in its hybridity synthesizing experiential learning (Kolb et al., 2014), Freire's critical pedagogy (Ayoub Mahmoudi et al., 2014; Freire, 1970, 2020; Moon, 2007), and social learning (Albert Bandura & Walters, 1977) with Islamic concepts like *uswah hasanah* (exemplary modeling) and *ukhuwah insaniyah* (universal brotherhood). Iqbal's dynamic *khudi* (selfhood) (Iqbal, 2013) and Rahman's contextual hermeneutics (Rahman, 2017) further ensure the curriculum remains both authentically Islamic and responsive to modern challenges. By unifying these frameworks, LBC transcends the traditional-modern dichotomy, offering a transformative educational model where love operates as an epistemological, pedagogical, and ethical axis fulfilling al-Attas' vision of education as the cultivation of *adab* (harmonious existence) through *ilm*, *iman*, and *amal*.

Despite its significant policy implications, scholarly engagement with the LBC remains nascent and predominantly descriptive. Existing discussions often celebrate its normative ideals without subjecting its conceptual architecture, internal coherence, and practical feasibility to rigorous academic critique (Ifendi, 2025). Key questions remain unexplored: How does the LBC theoretically reconcile universal love ethics with particularistic Islamic theology? What are the potential contradictions in operationalizing a love-based framework within standardized curricular structures? Furthermore, there is a lack of analysis on the socio-political and cultural barriers that may impede its implementation in Indonesia's varied madrasah ecosystems. This study seeks to fill this gap by providing a critical, conceptual analysis of the LBC.

This study aims to critically analyze the LBC as a proposed model for inclusive-humanistic Islamic education in Indonesian madrasahs. Specifically, it seeks to: (1) deconstruct the LBC's conceptualization of inclusivity and its underlying theoretical synthesis; (2) map and evaluate its proposed pedagogical and implementation strategies; and (3) identify its potential conceptual tensions and practical challenges. By doing so, this study contributes to the field of Islamic education by offering the first integrated

conceptual critique of the LBC. It moves beyond mere policy description to engage in a socio-pedagogical analysis that highlights both the transformative potential and the inherent dilemmas of instituting a love-based paradigm in formal religious education.

Against this backdrop, this article analyzes: (1) How is the Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) conceptualized as a model for inclusive Islamic education?; (2) What implementation strategies integrate love-based values into madrasah learning?; and (3) How can the LBC address challenges of intolerance and dehumanization in Islamic education? Employing a descriptive qualitative approach with library research, this study examines policy documents, curriculum guides, and supporting literature. The analysis focuses on how the LBC represents a transformative effort to realize inclusive and humanistic Islamic education.

2. Method

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a library research design. The qualitative approach was selected for its capacity to facilitate in-depth textual interpretation and conceptual analysis, which is appropriate for examining policy documents and theoretical frameworks (Creswell, 2009). The library research method allowed for a comprehensive and critical examination of all relevant textual materials without spatial or temporal constraints (Chu, 2015).

The primary data source was the official policy document *Panduan Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta di Madrasah* (Kementerian Agama RI, 2025). This guide served as the foundational text for analyzing the LBC's stated philosophy, structure, and methods. Secondary data were sourced from academic literature on inclusive education, Islamic pedagogy, curriculum theory, and critical pedagogy. A systematic search was conducted using academic databases (Scopus, Google Scholar, DOAJ) with keywords including love-based curriculum, inclusive Islamic education, madrasah reform Indonesia, and value-based curriculum. The search was limited to publications from 2015 to 2025 to ensure contemporary relevance, prioritizing peer-reviewed journal articles and scholarly books.

Data analysis followed a systematic thematic analysis framework (Huberman & Miles, 2002), operationalized in three iterative stages as detailed in Table 1.

Table 1. Data Analysis Procedure and Sample Coding

Stage	Activity	Example from LBC Guide (Kemenag RI, 2025)	Initial Code
Data Reduction	Repeated close reading of the primary document.	<i>Love-based education emphasizes habituation and experience, not merely the memorization of values. (p. 7)</i>	Experiential Learning Focus
	Identification of meaningful units.	<i>The value of love for God (hablun minallah) is integrated into all learning activities. (p. 15)</i>	Vertical Integration

Data Display	Grouping initial codes into broader thematic categories.	Experiential Learning Focus, Project-Based Learning, Nature-Based Reflection	Theme: Contextual & Experiential Pedagogy
Conclusion Drawing & Verification	Interpreting the themes, relating them to secondary literature, and formulating critical arguments.	Interpreting the theme Contextual & Experiential Pedagogy through the lens of Freire's problem-posing education and Kolb's experiential learning theory to assess its transformative potential.	

The analysis focused on three core dimensions derived from the research objectives: (1) the conceptual model of inclusivity in the LBC, (2) its proposed implementation strategies, and (3) its framework for addressing intolerance. This process ensured that findings were grounded in the textual data while the discussion engaged critically with wider theoretical debates.

It is acknowledged that this study is a conceptual analysis based on documentary and literary sources. Consequently, it offers a critical perspective on the LBC's design and theoretical claims but cannot assess its empirical application or impact in actual madrasah settings. This limitation underscores the need for the future empirical research suggested in the conclusion.

3. Finding and Discussion

Finding

a. The LBC Concept as a Model of Inclusive Islamic Education

Analysis of the 2025 Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) Guide reveals that the LBC represents a paradigmatic breakthrough in contemporary Islamic education. This curriculum successfully creates a harmonious synthesis between classical Islamic educational thought and modern inclusivity demands. Its formulation process demonstrates a holistic, multidisciplinary approach where the Appreciative Inquiry (4D) framework is not merely adopted but creatively Islamized through the cultivation of fundamental Islamic values.

During the Discovery phase, the LBC Islamizes concepts by deeply connecting them with the Islamic tradition of *ma'rifatullah* (knowledge of God). This phase extends beyond theoretical introduction of love concepts, inviting learners to contemplate signs of divine love (*ayat kauniyah*) through contemplative approaches. In practice, students learn to read natural phenomena, social dynamics, and self-reflection as manifestations of divine mercy. Learning transforms from doctrinal transmission to a personal, transformative meaning-making process, with teachers serving as guiding murshids rather than absolute authorities (Dirjen Pendis, 2025).

The Dream phase demonstrates the LBC's bold, progressive educational vision. Moving beyond aspirations for quality madrasahs, the curriculum draws prophetic inspiration from Medina society as Islam's first historical prototype of inclusive

community. Detailed guide analysis shows how *al-muwathanab* (citizenship) and *al-'adalah al-ijtima'iyah* (social justice) values from the Medina Charter inspire designs for learning environments that honor diversity. Notably, this phase maintains strong transcendental dimensions by positioning *rahmatan lil'alamin* (mercy to all creation) as ultimate goals alongside worldly aspirations (Dirjen Pendis, 2025).

The Design phase reveals the LBC's sophisticated integration of diverse pedagogical approaches. Western-originated project-based learning creatively merges with pesantren traditions of *ta'limul muta'allim* (teaching methodology). Content analysis indicates that learning activities in the guide employ project methods combined with Islamic learning ethics cultivation. For instance, the Water-Saving Wudu project teaches scientific water conservation while nurturing ikhlas (sincerity) and tawadhu' (humility) in every action, creating multidimensional learning encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains (Dirjen Pendis, 2025).

The Destiny phase deserves special recognition for transforming rahmatan lil'alamin from rhetoric into operational evaluation frameworks. The guide designs assessment systems measuring not only academic achievement but also socio-spiritual learning impacts (Dirjen Pendis, 2025). Indicators like empathy development, prejudice reduction, and environmental awareness become success parameters, aligning with recent character education research (Berkowitz, 2021) emphasizing value education impact assessment.

A key finding is the LBC's simultaneous development of inclusivity across three domains: (1) social inclusivity through acceptance of student diversity; (2) epistemological inclusivity balancing three knowledge sources - naqli (Quran-Hadith), aqli (philosophical reasoning), and tajribi (empirical experience); and (3) most innovatively, spiritual inclusivity fostering cosmic interconnectedness awareness (sympathea).

The LBC's sympathea concept warrants special attention. Unlike secular inclusivity focusing solely on social aspects, the LBC develops understanding that inclusivity reflects spiritual awareness of creation's interconnectedness. In one inspired activity, students contemplate how their drinking water may have passed through other humans, plants, or animals - concrete visualization of cosmic unity. Such approaches, our analysis suggests, successfully transform inclusivity from policy into profound spiritual experience.

Theoretically, these findings strengthen Al-Attas' (1979) thesis about knowledge integration in Islamic education. However, the LBC progresses further by harmonizing not only academic disciplines but human existential dimensions - physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual. This arguably constitutes the LBC's most significant contribution to contemporary Islamic education theory development.

Table 2. Visualization of the LBC Concept as Inclusive Islamic Education

Dimension of Analysis	LBC Characteristics	Operational Mechanism	Educational Impact
Knowledge Synthesis	Hybridization: • Classical Islamic principles	Islamized 4D framework: • Ma'rifatullah (Discovery) • Madani society	Creation of an educational paradigm that is

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modern inclusivity needs 	vision (Dream) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBL & <i>ta'limul muta'allim</i> integration (Design) • <i>Rahmatan lil'alam</i> (Destiny) 	contextually Islamic yet globally relevant
Multidimensional Inclusivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social (accepting differences) • Epistemological (knowledge source integration) • Spiritual (sympathea) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Ukhuwah insaniyah</i>-based activities • Learning trilogy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Naqli</i> (Quran-Hadith) - <i>Aqli</i> (philosophical) - <i>Tajribi</i> (empirical) • Cross-background collaborative projects 	Students develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multicultural awareness • Epistemic flexibility • Spiritual connectivity
Learning Transformation	From doctrinal to experiential: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive → Affective-Spiritual • Individual → Communal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water-Saving Wudu module • Medina Charter simulation • Nature-based reflection • Cross-group peer mentoring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tolerance (pilot data) • Value internalization through experience • Education as <i>tadabbur alam</i> (nature contemplation)

In the knowledge synthesis dimension, the LBC performs a sophisticated Islamization process of the Appreciative Inquiry 4D framework. The Discovery phase is elevated into a spiritual journey to know Allah (*ma'rifatullah*) through signs of His love in the universe, far surpassing mere conceptual introduction. The Dream phase does not stop at conventional institutional vision development but is rooted in the prophetic ideals of Medina's pluralistic and harmonious society. Most remarkably, the LBC designs learning by combining modern Project-Based Learning methods with the pesantren tradition of *ta'limul muta'allim*, creating a unique hybrid approach. This entire process culminates in realizing *rahmatan lil'alam* not as a slogan but as measurable performance indicators.

The multidimensional inclusivity dimension in this table reveals the depth of the LBC's approach. Activities based on *ukhuwah insaniyah* (human brotherhood) is not an

empty figure but reflects a learning system that structurally builds awareness of human kinship. The LBC is not satisfied with superficial social inclusivity but establishes epistemological foundations through balanced integration of three knowledge sources: *naqli* (Quran-Hadith), *aqli* (philosophical reasoning), and *tajribi* (empirical experience). More profoundly, the LBC introduces a spiritual dimension through the *sympathea* concept teaching cosmic interconnectedness of all creation - an approach rarely found in conventional curricula.

The learning transformation depicted in this table demonstrates a paradigmatic leap from doctrinal approaches to experiences encompassing all human dimensions. For instance, the Water-Saving Wudu module does not merely teach purification rituals but serves as a medium integrating fiqh understanding, ecological awareness, and resource conservation. The Medina Charter simulation revives pluralistic values in contemporary contexts, while nature-based reflection and peer mentoring create spaces for authentic spiritual and social experiences. The impact is evident in pilot data showing a 40% increase in tolerance - a significant achievement in character education.

b. Implementation Strategies of Love-Based Values in the Love-Based Curriculum (LBC)

The implementation of the Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) in madrasah education settings is developed through three interrelated and mutually reinforcing main strategies. The first strategy involves vertical-horizontal integration that builds comprehensive internalization of love values. In the vertical aspect, love values are not taught as separate subjects but are integrated into daily worship practices. The Water-Saving Wudu module serves as a concrete example of how basic worship rituals like ablution become media for instilling ecological awareness. Students not only learn the proper fiqh procedures for ablution but are also guided to calculate water usage volume and reflect on its environmental impact, connecting individual piety with social responsibility.

In the horizontal aspect, love values are actualized through the *rahmah* mentoring program that intentionally pairs students from different backgrounds - economic, social, and religious - in reciprocal mentoring relationships. This program is designed to break the unconscious social segregation often formed in school environments. An affluent student might serve as an academic mentor for a less privileged peer while simultaneously learning about life's simplicity and resilience from their mentee. Such reciprocal exchanges create spaces for authentic empathy that far surpass mere tolerance theories.

The second equally crucial strategy is the LBC's contextual learning design. The deep learning approach with *kauniyah-qauliyah* verse reflection invites students to not only read sacred texts literally but discover their relevance to modern life realities. When studying the Quranic concept of *khilafah* (stewardship), for instance, students analyze human responsibility as earth's stewards in the context of current climate change and ecological crises. Compassionate communication becomes the primary conflict resolution method, where students train to express feelings and needs without hurting others - a life skill rarely taught in formal education.

Design thinking is applied in social projects challenging students to not only identify community problems but develop creative solutions based on Islamic values. A student group at a model madrasah successfully designed a Mobile Library program for out-of-school children in their area after rigorous empathy, problem definition, ideation, prototyping, and testing processes. Positive discipline based on prophetic mercy hadiths

replaces conventional punishment models, creating more humane learning environments that effectively shape character.

The third determining strategy for successful implementation is building a support ecosystem through tripartite collaboration. Teachers' roles as *murabbis* (educators) expand from mere instructors to spiritual guides mentoring students in all life aspects. ARKA method teacher training (Activation-Reflection-Conceptualization-Application) has proven to increase love-based pedagogical competence, as recorded in LBC pilot reports. Parents are actively involved as *qiwamah* (guardians) who not only monitor academic progress but also maintain love values consistency at home. Community collaboration as *shuhada 'alan nas* (witnesses to mankind) creates broader impact circles where madrasah best practices gain community reinforcement and appreciation.

These three strategies interlock like a sturdy spiderweb. Vertical-horizontal integration provides the conceptual framework, contextual learning design supplies implementation tools, while the support ecosystem ensures sustainability. The result is a values education model not trapped in conceptual romanticism but truly alive in madrasah daily practices. Model school data shows tangible changes in student attitudes and behaviors, where love values are no longer understood as lesson material but become lenses for viewing self, others, and the environment.

Table 3. Implementation Strategies of Love-Based Values in LBC

Strategy	Implementation	Exemplary Practices	Impact & Findings
Vertical-Horizontal Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vertical: Value internalization through ritual worship Horizontal: Value application in social relations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water-Saving Wudu module (fiqh-ecology integration) Cross-group <i>rahmah</i> mentoring program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing in water conservation awareness Reduction in social prejudice (baseline vs. 6-month data)
Contextual Learning Design	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Kauniyah-Qauliyah</i> deep learning Compassionate communication Social project design thinking Hadith-based positive discipline Nature-based learning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analysis of QS. Ar-Rum:41 on environmental damage I-Message training for emotional expression Student-led Mobile Library project Akhlaq-based reward system Madrasah garden as natural lab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students connect verses with real-world issues Reduction in student conflicts Social projects per school Active participation in eco-activities
Support Ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers as <i>murabbi</i> (mentors) Parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ARKA method teacher training Monthly parenting kits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teacher pedagogical competence

as <i>qiwamah</i> (guardians) • Community as <i>shuhada</i> ' <i>alan nas</i> (witnesses)	• Friendly Madrasah community forum	• Parental engagement • Community participation in madrasah programs
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In the vertical dimension, a transformative approach is achieved through the internalization of ritual worship values, as exemplified by the Water-Saving Wudu module, which successfully reconstructs religious education epistemology. This module not only teaches traditional *fiqh* aspects but transforms them into tools for ecological awareness by establishing cognitive bridges between individual piety and collective responsibility.

Horizontally, the *rahmah* mentoring program creates new social dynamics through structured interactions among naturally segregated groups. This reciprocal learning mechanism, where each participant serves dual roles as both learner and teacher, achieves a reduction in social prejudice while demonstrating the relevance of Allport's contact theory in modern educational contexts. The contextual learning design presented in this table reveals a unique synthesis of spiritual depth with emotional intelligence and social innovation. The nature-based learning approach combined with *kauniyah-qauliyah* verse analysis pushes students connecting religious texts with contemporary issues while developing critical religious literacy.

The student-initiated Mobile Library project serves as tangible evidence of how LBC values are transformed into social action. This initiative not only cultivates social entrepreneurship but also strengthens students' sense of agency. The tripartite support ecosystem comprising teachers, parents, and community members functions as the backbone for program sustainability. Teacher training using the ARKA method (Activation, Experience, Conceptualization, and Application) enhances pedagogical competence through reflective learning cycles, while monthly parenting kits effectively bridge diverse parental educational backgrounds with simple language and structured activities.

The Friendly Madrasah forum establishes community networks that not only reinforce LBC's social legitimacy but also create systems of public accountability. Theoretically, this implementation accommodates Bandura's Social Learning Theory through teacher modeling as *murabbi*, Kolb's Experiential Learning approach in the ARKA cycle, and Putnam's Social Capital concept through the formed tripartite networks.

From a policy perspective, these findings suggest the need for government-standardized ARKA-based teacher training models and dedicated time allocation for social projects at the madrasah level. Parenting kits prove effective as practical guides for parents from diverse backgrounds. However, challenges such as senior teachers' resistance to methodological changes and varying parental understanding of *qiwamah* roles in education must be anticipated.

c. The Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) as a Solution to Intolerance and Dehumanization

The Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) emerges as a transformative response to issues of intolerance and dehumanization in education, adopting an approach that is both

structural and cultural. *First*, the LBC implements theological deconstruction by replacing fear-based religious narratives with love-centered ones. This is achieved through emphasis on *Asmaul Husna* (divine attributes) like *Al-Wadud* (The Most Loving) and *Ar-Rahman* (The Most Compassionate), which form the foundation for human relations. Additionally, Islamic history content is designed to highlight Prophet Muhammad's (SAW) exemplary establishment of inclusive Medina society, where the Medina Charter serves as tangible evidence of Islam's commitment to peaceful coexistence. This approach successfully shifts student paradigms from rigid religious interpretations toward more humanistic and contextual perspectives.

Second, the LBC develops proactive preventive mechanisms to identify and counter intolerance before escalation. An early warning system enables teachers and administrators to detect behavioral indicators through social dynamics observation. When conflict potential is identified, *ukhuwah* (brotherhood)-based peer counseling activates, training students as peer mediators facilitating dialogue. For actual conflicts, restorative justice prioritizes relationship repair over punitive measures. These combined mechanisms create school environments emphasizing healing rather than repression.

Third, the LBC implements critical pedagogy through specialized modules like Love for Humanity, employing innovative empathy-building techniques. Perspective-taking exercises use simulations where students experience minority group positions, directly feeling discrimination impacts. Counter-narratives deconstruct prejudices through hadith analysis emphasizing equality. Social reconstruction engages students in interfaith community projects, fostering practical social cohesion. This approach transforms mindsets while driving tangible social action.

The LBC's success aligns with Wahbah al-Zuhaili's (1991) findings on *ukhuwah*'s effectiveness against radicalism. Theoretically, the LBC offers a hybrid model integrating Western educational theories (experiential learning, social reconstruction) with Islamic concepts (*tarbiyah*, *dakwah bil-hikmah*). This reforms Islamic education epistemology by shifting curricula from cognitive-instrumental to affective-spiritual orientations.

These findings suggest key policy recommendations: (1) enhancing teacher capacity in compassionate pedagogy integrating empathy; (2) developing alternative attitude-based assessment systems beyond cognitive testing; (3) longitudinal research on LBC's character-building impacts beyond school settings.

The LBC transcends curriculum status, representing a cultural movement to humanize Islamic education. As noted in Islamic Education Policy Analysis (2025), the LBC demonstrates that solving intolerance requires not just top-down regulation but consciousness transformation cultivated in classrooms, reflected in social interactions, and manifested in concrete actions. Thus, the LBC not only addresses contemporary issues but offers a relevant, humanistic framework for Islamic education in multicultural societies.

Table 4. LBC Strategies in Addressing Intolerance and Dehumanization

Strategic Component	Implementation Method	Success Indicators	Impact	Theoretical Basis
Theological Deconstruction	• Emphasis on Asmaul Husna (Al-Wadud, Ar-Rahman)	• Shift from fear-based to love-based religious	• Internalization of compassion in religious	Inclusive Theology (Al-Zuhaili, 1991)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusive historical content (Medina Charter) 	narratives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved text-based tolerance understanding 	practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of rigid doctrines 	
Preventive Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early warning system • Ukhuwah-based peer counseling • Restorative justice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early conflict detection • Non-hierarchical student-led resolution • Victim-perpetrator relationship repair 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65% reduction in intolerance cases (LBC Guidebook) • More responsive school environment 	Contact Theory (Allport, 1954) Restorative Justice (Zehr, 2002)
Critical Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perspective-taking (minority simulations) • Counter-narratives (tolerance hadiths) • Social reconstruction (interfaith projects) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased student empathy • Prejudice deconstruction • Tangible collaborative action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students design inclusive projects • Transformation of prejudice into solidarity 	Experiential Learning (Kolb, 1984) Critical Pedagogy (Freire, 1970)
Hybrid Model	Integration of Western theories (experiential learning) + Islamic concepts (tarbiyah)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher adoption of compassionate pedagogy • Observation-based assessment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum epistemology shift toward affective-spiritual • More humanistic education 	Hybrid Education Theory (Niyozov, 2009)

Table 3 comprehensively maps the strategies of the Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) in addressing intolerance and dehumanization through four integrative, multidisciplinary approaches.

First, theological deconstruction serves as the epistemological foundation. This strategy reconstructs religious narratives through two parallel approaches. Initially, by emphasizing Asmaul Husna (Al-Wadud, Ar-Rahman) which transforms theological frameworks from fear-sin paradigms to love-compassion orientations. Secondly, through inclusive historical content like the Medina Charter, functioning as counter-narratives against exclusive religious interpretations. Data demonstrates this approach's success in internalizing compassion values while reducing doctrinal rigidity, aligning with

al-Zuhaili's (1991) inclusive theology theory. This transformation is paradigmatic, affecting not only cognitive patterns but also daily religious practices.

Second, preventive mechanisms spanning detection to recovery. Three core components (early warning system, ukhuwah peer counseling, and restorative justice) form mutually reinforcing systems. The early warning system acts as social radar for conflict identification, ukhuwah peer counseling develops student-level conflict resolution capacity, while restorative justice provides community-based recovery frameworks. The 65% reduction in intolerance cases proves this model's effectiveness, theoretically integrating Allport's Contact Theory (prejudice reduction through interaction) with Zehr's (2002) Restorative Justice principles concerning victim-perpetrator-community healing. Implementation uniqueness lies in adapting these Western concepts within Islamic ukhuwah values.

Third, critical pedagogy as the change engine. Three synergistic methods operate here: perspective-taking develops cognitive empathy, counter-narratives deconstruct prejudices through religious textual authority, while social reconstruction transforms understanding into tangible action. This combination yields dual impacts - attitudinal change (empathy enhancement) and behavioral change (collaborative projects). The approach brilliantly blends Kolb's Experiential Learning with Freire's Critical Pedagogy, creating pedagogical models contextual to multicultural realities.

Fourth, an East-West hybrid synthesis model. Integrating Western theories (experiential learning) with Islamic concepts (tarbiyah) produces unique educational approaches transcending traditional-modern dichotomies. Compassionate pedagogy and attitude-based assessments reflect epistemological shifts from cognitive-instrumental to affective-spiritual paradigms. This aligns with Niyozov's (2009) Hybrid Education Theory concerning creative synthesis between Islamic educational traditions and contemporary pedagogical innovations.

Discussion

1. The LBC Concept as Inclusive Islamic Education

The first research finding on the LBC as inclusive Islamic education offers a significant epistemological breakthrough in contemporary Islamic education discourse. A critical analysis of these findings reveals multiple layers of complex theoretical understanding:

First, the Deconstruction of Islamic Education Epistemology. The LBC radically reconstructs traditional Islamic education epistemology through a hybrid approach as described by Niyozov (Niyozov, 2001). This process is not merely an adaptation of Western theories but a creative synthesis involving: dialectical integration between the objectivism paradigm of Islamic sciences and Western pedagogical constructivism (Niyozov, 2001); epistemic reciprocity, where the Islamic concept of *tarbiyah* not only receives but also contributes to global education theory; and critical contextualization of Western concepts within the framework of *maqasid al-sharia*. *Islamic education must not be trapped in the traditional-modern dichotomy but should create a new language that accommodates both* (Niyozov, 2001). The LBC actualizes this view through the ARKA model, which transforms Kolb's experiential learning (Kolb et al., 2014) into an Islamic pedagogical framework.

Second, ARKA as a Learning Transformation Model. Analysis of the ARKA approach (Banerjee & Roy, 2025) reveals that this model is not merely an adaptation of

Kolb's cycle (Kolb et al., 2014) but a reconstruction with unique characteristics: (1) Tawhid dimension. Each ARKA stage is bound by the concept of *ubudiyah* (servitude to God) as a metaphysical framework; (2) Integration of *qauliyah-kauniyah* verses. The conceptualization process always refers to the dialectic between text and reality; (3) Learning spiral. The ARKA cycle is iterative and cumulative, unlike Kolb's linear model. Classical Islamic learning theories, such as al-Zarnuji's concept of *tadarruj* (learning progression) in *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, find new expression in the ARKA model. This validates Niyozov's thesis on *the possibility of developing contemporary Islamic education theories that remain authentic yet relevant* (Niyozov, 2001).

Third, Critical Pedagogy in an Islamic Framework. The implementation of Freirean principles in the LBC demonstrates several conceptual innovations: (1) Conscientization (critical awareness) is integrated with *tazkiyatun nafs* (soul purification); (2) Dialogical practices are developed within the framework of traditional *majelis ilmu* (knowledge circles); (3) Problem-posing approaches are adapted into the *tadabbur ayat* (Quranic reflection) method. Freire (1970) states that *no education is neutral it either functions as an instrument of liberation or oppression*. The LBC proves that Islamic liberation values can form the basis of critical pedagogy without uncritically adopting the Marxist framework underlying Freire's thought.

Fourth, Social Learning Theory and the Value of Qudwah Hasanah. The adaptation of Bandura's theory (ALBERT Bandura & Doll, 2005) in the LBC reveals unique features: (1) Modeling encompasses not only behavioral but also spiritual dimensions (*qudwah hasanah*); (2) Reciprocal determinism is developed within the Islamic concept of *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation); (3) Self-efficacy is integrated with *tawakkul* (trust in God). Bandura emphasizes the importance of *observational learning through models that possess prestige and competence* (Albert Bandura & Walters, 1977). The LBC expands this by enriching modeling with spiritual exemplification (*uswah hasanah*) rooted in Islamic tradition.

The first research finding not only validates Niyozov's hybrid education theory (Niyozov, 2008) but surpasses it by offering a concrete model of how Western theories and Islamic concepts can be integrated without losing epistemological depth or practical relevance. The LBC as inclusive Islamic education has created a new paradigm with the potential to transform broader Islamic education discourse.

2. Implementation Strategies of Love-Based Values in the LBC

The second research finding on the implementation of love-based values in the Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) reveals a paradigmatic breakthrough in religious-based character education. This study demonstrates that the LBC successfully creates transformative mechanisms integrating spiritual, social, and ecological dimensions through innovative and contextual approaches.

At the level of vertical integration, the LBC deeply reconstructs traditional worship practices by transforming the ritual of *wudu* (ablution) into social action through the Water-Saving Wudu module. This approach represents a creative synthesis between classical *fiqh* and contemporary ecological awareness. From a practical theology perspective, this module actualizes the concept of *al-ibadah al-syumuliyah* (comprehensive worship) by organically connecting vertical (*hablum minallah*) and horizontal (*hablum minannas*) dimensions. The transformation of *wudu* from mere ritual purification to social transformation is based on a creative interpretation of the Prophet's hadith about charity for every joint of the human body, which in the LBC context is expanded to include

ecological responsibility. From a learning psychology perspective, this approach employs cognitive anchoring techniques, using the deeply rooted practice of *wudu* as a starting point to instill new values about water conservation while building a spiritual-emotional connection through reflection on the social impact of daily worship (Mukhsin et al., 2024).

In the horizontal integration dimension, the cross-group *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) mentoring program in the LBC offers significant development to Allport's contact theory (Pettigrew et al., 2011). Beyond relying solely on direct intergroup interaction, this program enriches traditional theory by building narrative empathy through life experience sharing, developing a superordinate identity based on universal Islamic values, and fostering collective efficacy through joint social projects. This approach also accommodates insights from Social Identity Theory (Hogg, 2016) by reducing in-group bias through the deconstruction of artificial social categories while constructing a dual identity that acknowledges differences while emphasizing unity.

The tripartite model involving teachers, parents, and the community in the LBC ecosystem provides an important theoretical contribution to understanding the social capital of education. This implementation uniquely develops Putnam's theory of bonding and bridging capital (Gelderblom, 2018). At the bonding capital level, the LBC strengthens internal cohesion through parenting kits and family forums that develop shared religious values as community glue. Meanwhile, at the bridging capital level, the program creates cross-cutting ties through structured intergroup interactions, develops social trust, and forms network diversity within a broader educational ecosystem.

However, the LBC implementation also faces several complex challenges. The paradox of inclusion emerges as a tension between value universalism and identity particularism, as well as the dilemma between value homogeneity and practical heterogeneity in the field. Impact measurement poses another challenge, particularly in evaluating long-term attitude changes and isolating program effects from external variables. Scalability issues also arise due to dependence on local actor quality and variations in value interpretations across communities.

These findings carry significant theoretical implications: Development of a Contact Plus model (Lien et al., 2021) that enriches traditional contact theory with spiritual-religious dimensions, narrative approaches, and collective social projects; A new conceptualization of religious social capital (Maselko et al., 2011), positioning spiritual capital as an integral dimension of social capital, with religious values functioning as social glue and religious communities as network platforms; An Ecological Religious Education model (Tomlinson, 2019) integrating micro-meso-macro systems, connecting private-public spheres, and bridging text with context.

Comparatively, the LBC findings both strengthen and critique certain Western theoretical assumptions. On one hand, this research reveals limitations in Allport's contact theory regarding spiritual dimensions, incompleteness in Putnam's social capital concept requiring transcendental enrichment, and the need to make value dimensions more explicit in Bronfenbrenner's ecological approach. On the other hand, these findings open opportunities for more productive dialogue between Western educational theories and Islamic intellectual traditions.

Thus, the implementation of love-based values in the LBC not only validates various Western educational and social theories but also enriches and expands them with new dimensions drawn from Islamic intellectual heritage. These findings offer a holistic

implementation framework with potential to transform value education practices more broadly while opening new horizons for developing contemporary religion-based educational theories.

3. The LBC's Strategies in Addressing Intolerance and Dehumanization

The third research finding on the LBC's strategies for tackling intolerance and dehumanization reveals a transformative, multidimensional approach. This study demonstrates how the LBC creates effective mechanisms through the integration of theological reconstruction, restorative approaches, and critical pedagogy, and all reinforcing one another.

a. Theological Deconstruction

In the aspect of theological deconstruction, the LBC creatively dismantles exclusive religious narratives by foregrounding *Asmaul Husna* (divine attributes) such as *Al-Wadud* (The Most Loving) and *Ar-Rahman* (The Most Compassionate) as theological foundations. This approach is not merely doctrinal but constructs a new epistemological framework for understanding human relations. The deconstruction process successfully shifts paradigms from legalistic-formalistic religious interpretations toward more substantive-humanistic approaches. This perspective transformation aligns with Mezirow's (2018) transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 2018), which emphasizes critical reflection on deeply held assumptions. The LBC facilitates this process through critical dialogue on religious texts and contemporary social contexts.

b. Preventive Mechanisms: Restorative Justice

The LBC's preventive mechanisms, based on restorative justice, represent a creative adaptation of the Islamic concept of *islah* (reconciliation) integrated with modern restorative approaches (McCluskey, 2018). Unlike retributive models focused on punishment, the LBC emphasizes relationship restoration and moral accountability, as underscored by Zehr (2002). What is unique is how the LBC contextualizes restorative justice principles within Islamic values such as forgiveness (*afw*), reconciliation (*sulh*), and reparation (*islah*).

c. Critical Pedagogy

In the dimension of critical pedagogy (McLaren, 2023), the LBC develops *perspective-taking* and *counter-narrative* methods that engage not only cognitive but also emotional-spiritual dimensions. Minority-position simulations are not merely superficial empathy exercises but are designed as existential deepening processes involving theological reflection. Counter-narratives are developed not by rejecting religious texts but by exploring inclusive dimensions within Islamic tradition itself. This approach yields what might be termed *religious critical consciousness* an awareness capable of questioning social assumptions while remaining rooted in spiritual values.

This research makes significant theoretical contributions in several aspects: (1) It enriches transformative learning theory by demonstrating how perspective change can be facilitated through value-based religious approaches; (2) The implementation of restorative justice in Islamic education offers an alternative model integrating local wisdom with contemporary theory; (3) The LBC's critical pedagogy shows how critical pedagogy can be developed without being secular or anti-religious.

However, the study also reveals theoretical challenges requiring attention: (1) The tension between dismantling exclusive religious interpretations and remaining faithful to textual authority; (2) The complexity of measuring long-term impacts of such transformative approaches, given that attitudinal and behavioral changes are often non-

linear; (3) The challenge of balancing restorative approaches with the need to maintain school discipline.

The findings have significant implications for educational theory and practice. Theoretically, this study offers a new model of how religious education can become a force for social inclusion and cultural transformation rather than mere doctrinal transmission. Practically, the LBC provides an adaptable template for other educational contexts facing similar challenges. Most importantly, this research demonstrates the potential of educational approaches that boldly synthesize tradition and modernity, religious values and contemporary pedagogical theories.

The LBC's strategies for addressing intolerance and dehumanization represent a qualitative leap in religious-based character education. Through careful integration of theological reconstruction, restorative approaches, and critical pedagogy, the LBC not only significantly reduces intolerance but also offers a new paradigm for Islamic education that is more relevant to contemporary multicultural societies. These findings reinforce the thesis that Islam's values when understood substantively and contextually can serve as solutions to modern social problems rather than being part of the problem itself.

4. Conclusion

This conceptual study has critically analyzed the Love-Based Curriculum (LBC) as a policy innovation aimed at fostering inclusive-humanistic education in Indonesian madrasahs. The analysis reveals that the LBC proposes a sophisticated, threefold model: (1) grounding inclusivity in a theology of divine love (*Al-Wadud*), (2) implementing it through integrative and experiential pedagogies like the ARKA model, and (3) addressing intolerance via a blend of theological reframing and restorative practices. The curriculum's emphasis on a tripartite support ecosystem of teachers, parents, and the community further strengthens its theoretical design.

The primary contribution of this study lies in its critical conceptual evaluation, which moves beyond descriptive policy analysis to identify the LBC's core tensions. The most significant of these is the paradox between seeking to standardize the profound, subjective ethic of 'love' within a formal curricular structure. Furthermore, the study highlights practical implementation barriers, including disparities in teacher readiness, varying socio-cultural receptivity, and potential bureaucratic inertia.

This study is limited by its documentary and conceptual nature. It analyzes the LBC's intended design but cannot assess its empirical application or impact. Therefore, the conclusions regarding challenges and potential are necessarily projective. Future research is essential to build upon this foundational analysis. Priority should be given to: (1) empirical case studies of early-adopter madrasahs to document implementation processes, adaptations, and obstacles; (2) qualitative investigations into teacher and student experiences of the LBC; and (3) action-research projects that develop and test context-sensitive tools for facilitating and assessing the complex values the LBC aims to nurture.

For policymakers and educators, this analysis suggests that the promise of the LBC will not be realized through mandate alone. Its success hinges on a long-term, supportive strategy centered on continuous teacher professional development, the creation of communities of practice among madrasahs, and a flexible approach that allows the curriculum to be meaningfully contextualized. If these conditions are met, the LBC has

the potential to inspire a significant and necessary transformation toward a more compassionate and inclusive Islamic education.

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