

Reconstructing Islamic Education through Love-Based Curriculum: A Systematic Review of Character and Religious Moderation

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Abstract

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This study analyzes the role of love-based curriculum in Islamic education through a systematic review of its contribution to character formation and religious moderation. The study is based on the growing need for Islamic education to develop not only students' religious knowledge but also their character, empathy, tolerance, respect for diversity, and ability to live peacefully in pluralistic societies. Love-based curriculum has emerged as an important educational approach that emphasizes care, compassion, empathy, respect, and humane relationships as integral elements of teaching and learning. However, existing studies have tended to examine love-based education, character education, and religious moderation separately, resulting in limited understanding of their interconnected pedagogical mechanisms. The research employed a systematic literature review approach guided by the PRISMA framework. Relevant scholarly studies were identified, screened, assessed for eligibility, and thematically synthesized based on predefined criteria. The findings revealed that love-based educational approaches contribute to character formation through caring teacher-student relationships, value internalization, empathy, responsibility, respect, cooperation, and ethical behavior. The review also showed that these approaches support religious moderation by strengthening tolerance, appreciation of diversity, dialogue, justice, and non-violent attitudes. However, the implementation of love-based curriculum requires consistency between curriculum design, teacher practices, learning processes, and educational culture. Overall, the study concludes that love-based curriculum can provide a transformative pedagogical framework for integrating character formation and religious moderation in Islamic education and promoting more humanizing and inclusive educational practices.

Keywords: Character Education, Islamic Education, Love-Based Curriculum, Religious Moderation



INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Islamic education faces a dual challenge: maintaining the integrity of religious learning while developing students who are capable of living ethically, peacefully, and constructively within increasingly diverse social environments. Religious education can no longer be understood merely as the transmission of doctrinal knowledge. Its educational significance also lies in the formation of attitudes, dispositions, relationships, and moral practices that enable learners to translate religious knowledge into responsible social conduct. In this regard, *Islamic Religious Education* (IRE) is expected to contribute not only to students' religious literacy but also to their capacity to interact respectfully with others, respond constructively to differences, and participate in social life based on ethical and humanitarian values.¹ Recent studies of IRE in Indonesia indicate that the transformation of Islamic education is closely connected with curriculum design,² learning practices, teacher roles, broader educational environment and religious moderation.^{3,4} For example, research published in the *Journal of Educational Studies* has emphasized the need to transform IRE through adaptive, contextual, and meaningful pedagogical practices rather than treating educational transformation merely as a matter of technological change.⁵

¹ Miftahur Rohman, Rina Mida Hayati, and Al Anhar, "Corak Pemahaman Nilai-Nilai Moderasi Beragama Bagi Pelajar Di Sekolah Menengah Atas," *DIMAR: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (2025): 318–30.

² Aslinda Aslinda and Amrizon Amrizon, "Curriculum of Love and Religious Moderation in Madrasah Learning: Strategy for Building a Generation with Humanistic and Tolerant Character," *Indonesian Journal of Teaching and Learning* 4, no. 2 (2025): 99–107, <https://doi.org/10.56855/intel.v4i2.1477>.

³ Nurun Nafisah Indah Qomari and Moch Tohet, "RECONSTRUCTION OF PAI LEARNING THROUGH THE LOVE CURRICULUM: PAI TEACHERS' STRATEGIES IN INTERNALIZING THE VALUES OF RELIGIOUS MODERATION AND STUDENT WELL-BEING," in *Proceeding of International Conference on Education, Society and Humanity*, vol. 3, 2025, 293–303, <https://ejournal.unuja.ac.id/index.php/icesh/article/view/12831>.

⁴ Alifa Ihfazna Rafida, Sukino Sukino, and Usman Usman, "Sowing Moderation Through the Curriculum of Love: The Relevance of Ibn Miskawaih's Middle Path Ethics," *Journal of Research in Social Science and Humanities* 5, no. 4 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.47679/jrssh.v5i4.523>.

⁵ Miftahur Rohman and Mukhibat Akmansyah, Muhammad, "Mainstreaming Strategies of Religious Moderation in Madrasah," *Al-Tahrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 22, no. 1 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.21154/altahrir.v22i1.3806>.

This perspective suggests that meaningful transformation in Islamic education requires attention not only to what students learn but also to how religious values are experienced, interpreted, internalized, and practiced within educational relationships.

Character formation has consequently become an important dimension of contemporary Islamic education. The ultimate educational significance of religious learning is closely related to the extent to which religious values are reflected in students' attitudes and everyday conduct.⁶ Previous research shows that Islamic education contributes to character development through the integration of values into curriculum planning,⁷ classroom instruction, extracurricular activities,⁸ teacher exemplarity, and everyday school practices.⁹ Character education in Islamic educational settings is therefore multidimensional, encompassing religious commitment, responsibility, discipline, empathy, cooperation, respect, social awareness, and national values.¹⁰ Recent studies also indicate that curriculum integration and a supportive educational culture are essential for translating normative values into observable character. However, the presence of character-related content in curriculum documents does not automatically ensure the internalization of such values by learners. A gap may emerge between curriculum as a formal document and curriculum as lived educational experience, particularly when learning remains predominantly cognitive, instructional, and transmission-oriented.

⁶ Kamridah Kamridah, Maftuha Husnaeni, and Susy Deliany, "Tracing Educational Concepts in the Qur'an: A Semantic Meaning Approach to Holistic Learning," *Utamax: Journal of Ultimate Research and Trends in Education* 7, no. 2 (2025): 111–23, <https://doi.org/10.31849/ba279616>.

⁷ Amini Amini Amini, Syamsu Yurnita Yurnita, and Hasnidar Hasnidar Hasnidar, "The Development of Character Education Model Trough an Integrated Curriculum at Elementary Education Level in Medan City," *International Journal on Language, Research and Education Studies* 1, no. 2 (2017): 298–311, <https://doi.org/10.47006/ijlres.v1i2.1167>.

⁸ Apriliana Rusly Haniah, Aman Aman, and Risky Setiawan, "Integration of Strengthening of Character Education and Higher Order Thinking Skills in History Learning," *Journal of Education and Learning (EduLearn)* 14, no. 2 (2020): 183–90, <https://doi.org/10.11591/edulearn.v14i2.15010>.

⁹ Mark A Pike et al., "Character Development Through the Curriculum: Teaching and Assessing the Understanding and Practice of Virtue," *Journal of Curriculum Studies* 53, no. 4 (2021): 449–66, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220272.2020.1755996>.

¹⁰ Burhanudin Burhanudin, "Implementation of Love-Based Curriculum: An Islamic Education Perspective," *Jurnal Ilmiah Iqra'* 19, no. 2 (2025): 291–301, <https://doi.org/10.30984/jii.v19i2.3836>.

Consequently, character formation requires pedagogical processes that allow students to encounter, experience, negotiate, and practice values through meaningful social relationships.

In the Indonesian educational context, religious moderation has increasingly been incorporated into Islamic education as an approach for developing tolerance, non-violence, fairness, respect for diversity, and national commitment. Religious moderation is particularly relevant in educational environments characterized by religious, cultural, social, and ideological diversity because students encounter differences not only within schools but also through communities and digital environments. Research on Islamic Religious Education textbooks, for instance, has identified values such as non-violence, egalitarianism, fairness, and tolerance as important components of religious moderation.¹¹ Such findings demonstrate that curriculum materials can provide important resources for introducing moderate religious perspectives. Nevertheless, moderation cannot be achieved solely through the inclusion of particular concepts in textbooks or curriculum documents. Students also need opportunities to discuss differences, encounter diverse perspectives, develop empathy, and practice respectful forms of interaction

Within this context, the emergence of the Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) provides a potentially significant development in Indonesian Islamic education. The Ministry of Religious Affairs formalized the Love-Based Curriculum through the Directorate General of Islamic Education Decree Number 6077 of 2025. The policy frames the curriculum in relation to strengthening diversity, character formation, and harmonious educational environments. Importantly, the KBC is not designed to replace the existing curriculum but to function as an insertion of values of love into ongoing teaching and learning processes. In this sense, love is positioned not merely as a learning topic but as an orientation that

¹¹ Emanuel Gerrit Singgih, "Religious Moderation as Good Life: Two Responses to the Ministry of Religious Affairs' Directive on Religious Moderation in Indonesia," *Exchange* 52, no. 3 (2023): 220–40, https://brill.com/view/journals/exch/52/3/article-p220_4.xml.

influences how teachers teach, how students learn, how values are communicated, and how educational relationships are constructed.¹² The concept therefore has implications beyond curriculum content because it potentially addresses the relational dimension of education that determines how students experience religious learning.

Nevertheless, the existing literature remains fragmented. Studies on Love-Based Curriculum have largely focused on conceptual formulation, local implementation, character development, tolerance, or religious moderation. Meanwhile, systematic reviews of religious moderation have examined curriculum, pedagogy, institutional policy, dialogical learning, and counter-radicalization, but have not specifically synthesized Love-Based Curriculum as a relational mechanism for connecting character formation and religious moderation. Similarly, literature on care and compassionate pedagogy provides a strong theoretical basis for relational education but is not specifically focused on Islamic education or the contemporary Indonesian Love-Based Curriculum. This fragmentation creates a conceptual gap: although individual studies provide evidence concerning love, care, character, tolerance, and moderation, there is still limited systematic synthesis explaining how these concepts are interconnected within Islamic education.

The gap is particularly significant because previous research tends to emphasize either what values should be taught or what educational outcomes should be achieved, while paying comparatively less attention to the relational processes that connect the two. Religious moderation, for example, may be articulated through values of tolerance and non-violence, but the internalization of these values depends on opportunities for dialogue, interaction, reflection, and practice. Character education similarly requires more than curriculum content because students develop dispositions through repeated experiences and social

¹² Surabaya Dinda Ayu Maharani U I N Sunan, "Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta Sebagai Strategi Perencanaan Ekosistem Pembelajaran Mendalam: Model, Tantangan, Dan Implementasi," in *Proceedings of Annual Islamic Conference for Learning and Management* (Surabaya: UIN Sunan Ampel, 2025), 218–31, <https://doi.org/10.15642/AICLeMa.2025.2.218-231>.

modeling. Love-based curriculum potentially provides the relational foundation for these processes by positioning empathy, compassion, respect, humanity, and care within the everyday practice of education. Accordingly, examining KBC through the lens of relational pedagogy may offer a more integrated explanation of how Islamic education can transform religious knowledge into lived character and socially responsible religious dispositions.

A systematic literature review is therefore necessary to consolidate the growing but dispersed body of research. Rather than treating Love-Based Curriculum, character education, religious moderation, and care pedagogy as separate research domains, this study brings them into a single analytical framework. The review focuses on the conceptualization and implementation of love-based educational approaches, the character-related outcomes reported in the literature, the relationship between love-oriented practices and religious moderation, and the pedagogical mechanisms through which these relationships are described. Addressing this gap, the present study systematically reviews literature on love-based educational approaches in Islamic education, with particular attention to their relationship with character formation and religious moderation. The study asks three research questions: (1) How is love-based curriculum conceptualized and applied in contemporary Islamic education? (2) What contributions of love-based educational approaches to character formation and religious moderation are reported in the literature? and (3) How can the existing evidence inform a transformative framework for love-based Islamic education? The resulting synthesis is expected to contribute to the theoretical development of Islamic education by connecting affective-relational pedagogy with value internalization and social-religious dispositions, while also providing a conceptual basis for understanding the implementation of Love-Based Curriculum in increasingly diverse educational environments.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) to identify, examine, and synthesize existing scholarly evidence concerning love-based educational approaches in Islamic education, particularly their relationship with character formation and religious moderation. The review was conducted in accordance with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines.¹³ PRISMA 2020 was used to structure the identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and inclusion of relevant studies and to enhance the transparency and reproducibility of the review process. The systematic review was designed to address three research questions: (1) how love-based curriculum is conceptualized and applied in contemporary Islamic education; (2) what contributions love-based educational approaches make to character formation and religious moderation; and (3) how the existing evidence can inform a transformative framework for Islamic education.

Information Sources and Databases

The literature was searched across five academic databases and scholarly information sources to obtain both international and Indonesian research: *Scopus*, *Web of Science*, *ERIC*, *Google Scholar*, and *GARUDA* (Garba Rujukan Digital). Scopus and Web of Science were prioritized for internationally indexed peer-reviewed literature.¹⁴ ERIC was included because of its specific coverage of educational research, while Google Scholar was used to broaden the retrieval of relevant scholarly publications. GARUDA was included to capture Indonesian scholarly works, particularly studies related to Islamic education, madrasah, pesantren, and religious moderation.

¹³ John Gerring, "Qualitative Methods," *Annual Review of Political Science* 20 (2017): 15–36, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-092415-024158>.

¹⁴ Rhona Smith and Lorna Smith, "Qualitative Methods," in *Research Methods in Human Rights* (routledge, 2018), 70–93, <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-polisci-092415-024158>.

Table 1. Databases and Search Details

Database	Coverage	Search Field	Time Span	Language
Scopus	International peer-reviewed journals	Title, abstract, keywords	2016–2024	English
Web of Science	International peer-reviewed journals	Topic (title, abstract, keywords)	2016–2024	English
ERIC	Educational research database	Title, abstract, keywords	2016–2024	English
Google Scholar	Scholarly literature (journals, theses, proceedings)	Title (all fields)	2016–2024	English & Indonesian
GARUDA	Indonesian scholarly publications	Title, abstract, keywords	2016–2024	Indonesian

Eligibility and Inclusion Criteria

Studies were included when they met the predefined eligibility criteria. The inclusion criteria were as follows:

Table 2. Inclusion Criteria

No.	Inclusion Criteria
1	The publication was a scholarly research article in a peer-reviewed academic journal.
2	Published within the 2016–2024 period.
3	Addressed an educational context or had a clear relationship with educational processes.
4	Discussed love, care, compassion, empathy, or a closely related relational educational approach.
5	Had a substantive connection with Islamic education, Islamic Religious Education, character education, religious tolerance, or religious moderation.
6	Provided sufficient information to contribute to at least one of the research questions.
7	The full text was available.
8	Written in English or Indonesian.

Exclusion Criteria

Table 3. Exclusion Criteria

No.	Exclusion Criteria
1	Unrelated to education or educational practice.
2	Did not address love, care, compassion, or related educational approaches.
3	Had no meaningful relationship with Islamic education, character formation, religious tolerance, or religious moderation.
4	Duplicate publications.
5	Editorials, commentaries, opinion articles, news reports, book reviews, conference abstracts, or other non-research publications.
6	Did not provide sufficient information to address the research questions.
7	Full text was not available.
8	Published outside the 2016–2024 period.

Data Analysis and Thematic Synthesis

The included studies were analyzed using thematic synthesis. The analysis involved three stages: (1) coding relevant findings, (2) grouping codes into descriptive themes, and (3) interpreting and synthesizing these themes into higher-order analytical themes. The synthesis examined the conceptualization of love in education, relational pedagogical practices, value internalization, character formation, and religious moderation, as well as contextual factors such as teacher roles, curriculum integration, school culture, institutional support, and learning environments.¹⁵ Rather than assuming that love-based education automatically produces character or religious moderation, the synthesis examined the processes and conditions through which love-oriented educational practices were associated with these outcomes. The final synthesis was used to develop a conceptual interpretation of love as a relational pedagogical orientation in Islamic education.

¹⁵ Dean Whitehead, Sophie Dilworth, and Isabel Higgins, “Common Qualitative Methods,” *Nursing and Midwifery Research: Methods and Appraisal for Evidence-Based Practice*, 2016, 93–105, <https://researchnow.flinders.edu.au/en/publications/common-qualitative-methods-2/>.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conceptualizing Love-Based Curriculum

The reviewed literature does not present the Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) as a concept with a single and universally agreed definition. Instead, the synthesis reveals a cluster of closely related concepts, including love, care, compassion, empathy, respect, humanity, responsiveness, relational responsibility, and tolerance.¹⁶ A similar interpretation emerges from the comparative study of KBC implementation in three Madrasah Aliyah in Central Java. Mahmudin found that KBC and religious moderation were implemented through what the authors describe as a “lived curriculum,” in which values were expressed through daily rituals, communal practices, and institutional culture. The study therefore indicates that the meaning of KBC extends beyond formal curriculum documents to the ways in which educational institutions organize everyday relationships and practices.¹⁷

The broader literature on caring and compassionate pedagogy provides a complementary theoretical perspective. Killingback found that compassionate pedagogy lacks a single consistent definition across the literature. Their scoping review identified four recurring components: recognition of suffering, commitment to addressing or mitigating such difficulties, promotion of well-being and flourishing, and concern for students as whole persons beyond their cognitive role. Taken together, these findings suggest that the conceptualization of KBC can be organized into four interrelated dimensions. The first is an affective-relational dimension, represented by love, empathy, compassion, and care. The second is an ethical dimension, represented by justice, responsibility,

¹⁶ Abdulnasir Dhaw Alsayd et al., “Love-Based Curriculum: Integrating Islam, Humanism, and Local Wisdom in Madrasahs,” *Tunjuk Ajar: Journal of Education and Culture* 1, no. 2 (2025): 65–78, <https://doi.org/10.64929/ta.v1i2.32>.

¹⁷ Harling Danil, Baso Syafaruddin, and Muh Sarda, “Insertion of a Love-Based Curriculum in Multicultural Islamic Religious Education,” *ETDC: Indonesian Journal of Research and Educational Review* 4, no. 4 (2025): 1323–35, <https://doi.org/10.51574/ijrer.v4i4.3745>.

respect, humanity, and concern for others.¹⁸ The third is a social-relational dimension, represented by cooperation, tolerance, dialogue, and appreciation of diversity. The fourth is a pedagogical-institutional dimension, in which these values are incorporated into teacher-student relationships, classroom practices, curriculum implementation, institutional culture, and everyday educational life.

The pedagogical-institutional dimension is perhaps the most important finding for the present review. The literature indicates that KBC cannot be adequately understood as a set of values added to existing curriculum documents. Rather, its educational significance depends on how those values are embodied in pedagogical practice and institutional culture. Mahmudin provide particularly relevant evidence for this interpretation because their comparative analysis across three Madrasah Aliyah shows that institutional differences do not necessarily prevent KBC implementation.¹⁹ This finding also helps explain why the reviewed literature frequently uses concepts such as lived curriculum, caring relationships, compassionate pedagogy, and relational education. These concepts emphasize the distinction between what an institution formally states and what students actually experience in everyday educational interactions. Consequently, the effectiveness of a love-based curriculum should not be assessed solely from the presence of love-related themes in syllabi or curriculum documents. Attention must also be given to teacher behavior, communication patterns, disciplinary practices, collaborative activities, institutional routines, and opportunities for students to practice the values being taught.

Another important finding is that love, care, compassion, and empathy should not be treated as completely interchangeable concepts. The literature suggests meaningful distinctions among them. Love may function as a broad normative orientation, while care emphasizes attentiveness and relational

¹⁸ Muhammad Heriyudanta and Ramzy Mas' ud Pradana, "Integrating Deep Learning and Love-Based Curriculum in Madrasah: Challenges and Solutions," in *Proceeding of Annual International Conference on Islamic Education (AICIED)*, vol. 3, 2025, 189–202, <https://doi.org/10.21154/aicied.v3i0.1655>.

¹⁹ Kesuma et al., "Integrating a Love-Based Curriculum and Pedagogical Deep Learning for Character Transformation in Indonesian Islamic Senior High Schools."

responsibility; compassion emphasizes recognition and response to suffering or disadvantage; empathy concerns the capacity to understand or respond to another person's experience; and respect concerns recognition of another person's dignity and legitimate differences.²⁰ The reviewed literature does not establish these relationships as a formally validated theoretical hierarchy, but their recurring co-occurrence suggests that they constitute complementary dimensions of a relational educational orientation.

Table 2. Conceptual Dimensions of Love-Based Curriculum

Conceptual Dimension	Recurring Concepts	Educational Expression
Affective-relational	Love, empathy, compassion, care	Attentiveness to students, emotional support, empathy, responsiveness, and caring teacher-student relationships
Ethical	Justice, responsibility, respect, humanity	Fair treatment, responsible behavior, respect for dignity, ethical decision-making, and humane educational practices
Social-relational	Tolerance, cooperation, dialogue, appreciation of diversity	Collaborative activities, respectful interaction, intercultural engagement, peaceful coexistence, and inclusive relationships
Pedagogical	Relational pedagogy, value-oriented learning, teacher exemplarity	Modeling values, dialogical learning, reflective activities, supportive classroom interaction, and meaningful learning experiences
Institutional-cultural	Lived curriculum, institutional culture, communal practices	Daily rituals, school or pesantren culture, extracurricular activities, communal worship, student organizations, and institutional routines
Humanizing	Well-being, flourishing, recognition of the whole person	Attention to students' intellectual, emotional, moral, spiritual, and social development

²⁰ Idawati Idawati et al., "Love-Based Curriculum Management in the Integration of Islamic Ecotheology in Madrasahs: A Review from the Perspective of Educational Leadership and Governance," *JUMPA: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan* 6, no. 2 (2025): 128–43, <https://doi.org/10.33650/jumpa.v6i2.14846>.

The reviewed literature indicates that the Love-Based Curriculum is conceptualized not merely as a curriculum containing love-related values, but as a relational and humanizing educational orientation in which love is translated into care, compassion, empathy, respect, justice, responsibility, cooperation, and tolerance through everyday pedagogical and institutional practices. This conceptualization provides the basis for examining how love-oriented educational practices contribute to character formation and religious moderation in the following sections.

Love-Based Curriculum and Character Formation

The reviewed literature indicates that love-based educational approaches are consistently associated with the development of character-related dispositions, particularly empathy, compassion, responsibility, respect, cooperation, humanity, and ethical behavior.²¹ The synthesis suggests that character formation in love-based education does not occur primarily through the explicit transmission of moral concepts. Rather, character is developed through repeated educational experiences in which students encounter, observe, practice, and internalize values within interpersonal relationships, learning activities, and institutional practices.

Empathy emerges as one of the most prominent character dimensions across the reviewed literature. In love-based educational settings, empathy is reflected in teachers' attentiveness to students' circumstances, sensitivity to their experiences, and opportunities for students to understand the perspectives and feelings of others.²² Empathy therefore functions not only as an individual emotional capacity but also as a relational disposition that shapes how students interact with others. The literature on compassionate pedagogy provides a

²¹ Irfan Mujahidin et al., "The Relationship Between Innovative Learning Management of a Love-Based Curriculum and the Improvement of English Communication Competence Among Madrasah Aliyah Students," *Al Irsyad: Jurnal Studi Islam* 4, no. 2 (2025): 85–94, <https://doi.org/10.54150/alirsyad.v4i2.778>.

²² Desti Widiani et al., "Kuttab in Indonesia: Its Existence and Development during the Reform Era," *Journal of Al-Tamaddun* 18, no. 1 (2023): 115–28, <https://doi.org/10.22452/JAT.vol18no1.10>.

complementary perspective by emphasizing recognition of students' difficulties or disadvantage and an educational commitment to responding appropriately to their needs. This perspective reinforces the understanding that character formation involves both awareness of others and responsible responses to their circumstances.²³ Closely related to empathy is compassion, which extends emotional understanding into a more active orientation toward the well-being of others. The reviewed literature suggests that compassion becomes educationally meaningful when students are encouraged not only to recognize another person's difficulties but also to demonstrate concern and appropriate assistance.²⁴ Within this framework, compassion contributes to the development of caring dispositions and strengthens students' sensitivity toward the social and emotional conditions of others.²⁵ Such practices broaden character education beyond individual moral discipline toward a more relational understanding of ethical development.

The value of humanity further strengthens this relational understanding of character formation. Love-based education tends to view students as whole persons rather than merely as recipients of academic instruction. This perspective recognizes intellectual, emotional, moral, social, and spiritual dimensions as interconnected aspects of student development.²⁶ Consequently, character formation is situated within a broader humanizing educational process in which students are treated with dignity and encouraged to extend similar recognition

²³ Desti Widiani and Lilik Istiqomah, "Psychopedagogical Study of Self-Efficacy and Problem-Solving in Aqidah Akhlak Learning for Sdg 4," *Profetika: Jurnal Studi Islam* 26, no. 02 (2025): 485–98, <https://doi.org/10.23917/profetika.v26i02.13960>.

²⁴ Asti Triasih, Ahmad Zainuri, and Saiful Annur, "The Perspective of Islamic Educational Philosophy in the Implementation of a Love Based Curriculum at the Provincial Education Office of South Sumatra," *TOFEDU: The Future of Education Journal* 4, no. 8 (2025): 4303–10, <https://doi.org/10.61445/tofedu.v4i8.1011>.

²⁵ Ummi Qudsiyah, Khairil Anwar, and Fimeir Liadi, "The Integration of the Curriculum of Love and Environmental Theology Concepts in Islamic Education at the Primary School Level," *Tunas: Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar* 10, no. 2 (2025): 153–63, <https://doi.org/10.33084/tunas.v10i2.9780>.

²⁶ Masriwaty Malik et al., "A Hadith-Based Love Curriculum in Islamic Education: An Initiative by Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs," *Jurnal Ilmiah Al-Mu'ashirah: Media Kajian Al-Qur'an Dan Al-Hadits Multi Perspektif* 22, no. 2 (2025): 202–21, <https://doi.org/10.22373/jim.v22i2.30928>.

to others. Another recurring finding concerns the importance of teacher exemplarity. Teachers function not only as transmitters of moral and religious values but also as concrete models through whom students observe how such values are enacted. Respect, empathy, fairness, responsibility, and care become more meaningful when students encounter these qualities consistently in teacher behavior.²⁷ The teacher's manner of communicating, responding to mistakes, managing classroom interactions, addressing differences, and treating students can therefore become an implicit component of the curriculum. This finding is consistent with broader research on Islamic education, which identifies teacher involvement, pedagogical practices, and institutional culture as important elements in value-oriented education.

The synthesis further indicates that character formation is strengthened when curriculum content and educational practice are mutually consistent. Values such as empathy, responsibility, respect, and cooperation may be explicitly included in curriculum objectives, but their internalization depends on whether students have opportunities to experience and practice these values. A discrepancy between formally stated values and everyday educational practices may weaken the meaning of the curriculum.²⁸ Conversely, consistency between curriculum principles, teacher behavior, classroom interaction, and institutional culture creates a more coherent environment for character development.

Overall, the synthesis indicates that the contribution of Love-Based Curriculum to character formation is closely associated with the quality and consistency of educational interaction. Love-oriented values appear most meaningful when they are embodied through caring teacher-student relationships, teacher exemplarity, collaborative learning, communal activities,

²⁷ Muhammad Yunan Harahap, Sakban Lubis, and Abdi Syahril Harahap, "Implementation of Love Based Curriculum in Character Development of Students in Modern Islamic Boarding Schools," *Al-Fikru: Jurnal Ilmiah* 19, no. 1 (2025): 217–27, <https://doi.org/10.51672/alfikru.v19i1.761>.

²⁸ Dedi Sahputra Napitupulu, Mursal Aziz, and Rita Novita Sari Panjaitan, "The Concept of Love Based Curriculum Management in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI)," *At Turots: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 2025, 1239–48, <https://doi.org/10.51468/jpi.v7i2.1135>.

supportive classroom environments, and institutional culture. The literature therefore positions character formation as a relational and experiential process rather than solely as an outcome of direct moral instruction.

Table 3. Love-Based Curriculum and Character Formation

Character Dimension	Evidence Pattern in the Literature	Main Pedagogical Mechanism
Empathy	Students are encouraged to recognize, understand, and respond sensitively to the feelings and circumstances of others.	Caring interaction, perspective-taking, and reflective learning
Compassion	Attention is given to students' needs, difficulties, well-being, and the conditions of others.	Responsive pedagogy and opportunities to demonstrate concern and assistance
Responsibility	Students participate in activities requiring personal and mutual responsibility.	Communal activities, role-based participation, and collaborative practices
Respect	Individual dignity, differences, perspectives, and circumstances are acknowledged in educational interaction.	Teacher modeling, respectful communication, and inclusive classroom culture
Cooperation	Students engage in collective activities and learn to work toward shared purposes.	Collaborative learning, group activities, and institutional practices
Integrity and ethical behavior	Moral values are connected with students' everyday decisions, conduct, and relationships.	Value internalization, reflection, consistent expectations, and teacher exemplarity
Humanity	Students are recognized as whole persons with intellectual, emotional, moral, social, and spiritual dimensions.	Humanizing educational relationships and holistic student support
Caring attitude	Students develop sensitivity toward the needs and well-being of others.	Caring relationships, social interaction, and experiential learning
Social responsibility	Students are encouraged to consider the consequences of their actions and contribute to collective well-being.	Communal participation, cooperation, and responsibility-oriented activities

The reviewed literature indicates that Love-Based Curriculum contributes to character formation primarily through relational and experiential educational processes. Empathy, compassion, responsibility, respect, cooperation, humanity, and ethical behavior emerge as recurring character dimensions. These values become more meaningful when students experience them through caring relationships, teacher exemplarity, collaborative activities, communal practices, and supportive institutional cultures. The findings therefore suggest that the character-forming potential of Love-Based Curriculum lies not merely in the inclusion of moral values within curriculum documents but in the consistent enactment and internalization of those values within everyday educational practice.

Love-Based Curriculum and Religious Moderation

The synthesis further demonstrates a substantial conceptual relationship between love-based education and religious moderation. The most frequently recurring moderation-related dimensions include tolerance, respect for diversity, non-violence, justice, dialogue, balance, and peaceful coexistence.²⁹ Tolerance emerges as one of the clearest points of convergence. Love-based approaches emphasize recognition and respect for others, while religious moderation requires the capacity to coexist constructively with people who hold different religious, cultural, or social positions.³⁰ Recent research on the Love Curriculum in pesantren explicitly identifies tolerance, justice, respect, humanity, and cooperation among its core values.

Table 4. Love-Based Curriculum and Religious Moderation

Moderation Dimension	Evidence Pattern	Relevant Educational Practice
Tolerance	Recognition and acceptance of differences	Inclusive learning and interaction

²⁹ Qudsiyah, Anwar, and Liadi, "The Integration of the Curriculum of Love and Environmental Theology Concepts in Islamic Education at the Primary School Level."

³⁰ Durrotun Niswah, "KURIKULUM BERBASIS CINTA DALAM MEMBENTUK KARAKTER RELIGIUS SISWA DI MA MANBA'UL ULUM DAN MA SUNAN DRAJAT BOJONEGORO" (Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Sunan Giri, 2026), <https://repository.unugiri.ac.id:8443/id/eprint/9798/>.

Respect for diversity	Appreciation of religious and cultural differences	Dialogical and multicultural learning
Non-violence	Rejection of aggressive responses to differences	Peace-oriented learning and conflict management
Justice	Fair and dignified treatment of learners	Equitable educational relationships
Dialogue	Constructive engagement with different perspectives	Discussion, inquiry, and participatory learning
Balance	Avoidance of excessive and exclusionary attitudes	Contextual and reflective religious learning
Peaceful coexistence	Development of constructive social relationships	Collaborative and community-oriented activities

Integrated Findings From Love-Oriented Pedagogy to Religious Moderation

The most significant finding of the synthesis is the conceptual convergence between love-based curriculum, relational pedagogy, value internalization, character formation, and religious moderation. Although the reviewed studies use different terminology and methodological approaches, their findings reveal a recurring pattern in which love becomes educationally meaningful when translated into concrete relational practices.³¹ At the curriculum level, love provides a value orientation that emphasizes empathy, compassion, respect, humanity, responsibility, and cooperation.

The synthesis indicates that relational pedagogy constitutes an important connecting mechanism. Caring and respectful relationships provide students with opportunities to experience the values that Islamic education seeks to cultivate. Through repeated interaction and practice, these experiences may support the internalization of values such as empathy, responsibility, respect, fairness, and cooperation. These internalized values are then reflected in character-related dispositions and in students' attitudes toward religious and social differences. The relationship between character formation and religious moderation is particularly important. Empathy can support sensitivity toward

³¹ Desti Widiani, "Strategy and Implementation of Character Education in Era of Society 5.0," in *International Conference on Engineering, Technology and Social Science (Iconetos 2020)* (Atlantis Press, 2021), 575–82, <https://doi.org/10.2991/assehr.k.210421.084>.

people with different backgrounds; respect can facilitate constructive engagement with diversity; responsibility can encourage students to consider the consequences of their actions for others; and cooperation can create opportunities for peaceful interaction.³² In this sense, character formation and religious moderation should not necessarily be treated as two independent educational outcomes. The literature suggests that they may share relational and ethical foundations.

The integrated findings therefore indicate that love-based education can be interpreted as a relational pedagogical orientation through which curriculum values are translated into educational experiences. These experiences provide opportunities for value internalization, which may contribute to the development of character and religious-moderation dispositions. The resulting educational culture is characterized by greater emphasis on dignity, empathy, respect, dialogue, inclusion, and peaceful coexistence. This synthesis is consistent with the findings of previous systematic reviews showing that religious moderation is strengthened through curriculum integration, dialogical pedagogy, teacher involvement, institutional culture, and inclusive educational environments.³³ It also extends the literature on compassionate pedagogy by connecting relational care with the specific goals of Islamic education, particularly character formation and religious moderation.

Table 5. Integrated Synthesis of the Reviewed Literature

Analytical Level	Core Finding	Educational Significance
Love-based curriculum	Love is expressed through empathy, compassion, respect, humanity, responsibility, and cooperation.	Establishes a value-oriented curriculum foundation.

³² Muhsyanur Muhsyanur, "Love-Based Curriculum as a New Paradigm in Language Education: Between Cognition, Affection, and Spirituality," *TRICKS: Journal of Education and Learning Practices* 2, no. 5 (2024): 12-19, <https://journal.echaprogres.or.id/index.php/tricks/article/view/20>.

³³ Baso Syafaruddin et al., "Integration of Love-Based Curriculum and Deep Learning in Madrasahs: A Holistic Approach to Islamic Education," *ETDC: Indonesian Journal of Research and Educational Review* 5, no. 1 (2025): 681-91, <https://doi.org/10.51574/ijrer.v5i1.4367>.

Relational pedagogy	Values are enacted through caring, responsive, respectful, and dialogical relationships.	Translates curriculum values into lived educational experiences.
Value internalization	Repeated experiences allow students to practice and internalize values.	Connects curriculum content with students' dispositions.
Character formation	Empathy, responsibility, respect, cooperation, and ethical behavior become recurring character outcomes.	Strengthens students' moral and social dispositions.
Religious moderation	Tolerance, respect for diversity, justice, dialogue, non-violence, and peaceful coexistence emerge as related dispositions.	Supports constructive engagement with religious and social diversity.
Educational culture	Relational and value-oriented practices become embedded in institutional life.	Supports more humanizing and inclusive Islamic education.

Based on the thematic synthesis, the reviewed literature supports an integrated conceptual interpretation in which love functions as a relational pedagogical orientation rather than merely as an additional curriculum value. The Love-Based Curriculum provides the normative foundation, while care, empathy, respect, compassion, and responsiveness represent the relational practices through which the curriculum is enacted. The synthesis indicates that value internalization is a key mechanism linking Love-Based Curriculum with character formation and religious moderation. Through caring, empathetic, respectful, and responsive interactions, students experience and practice values such as compassion, justice, tolerance, non-violence, and appreciation of diversity. These repeated experiences can contribute to character development, including empathy, responsibility, cooperation, and ethical behavior, while strengthening religious-moderation dispositions such as dialogue, tolerance, and peaceful coexistence. Thus, Love-Based Curriculum functions as a relational and humanizing pedagogical orientation within Islamic, multicultural, and peace-oriented education.

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review shows that the Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) functions as a relational and humanizing orientation in Islamic education, expressed through care, empathy, respect, justice, cooperation, and recognition of human dignity. These values become meaningful through teacher-student relationships, teacher exemplarity, classroom interaction, and institutional culture. The synthesis indicates that value internalization connects KBC with character formation and religious moderation, particularly through empathy, responsibility, tolerance, respect for diversity, dialogue, justice, and non-violence. KBC therefore provides a conceptual framework for integrating character and religious moderation through lived educational practices. However, existing evidence remains largely qualitative and context-specific, requiring further longitudinal, comparative, and mixed-methods research

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