Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam Indonesia (JPAII)
Vol. 7, No. 5, October 2026, pp. 368~377
ISSN: 2722-628X, DOI: 10.37251/jpaii.v7i5.3875

Love-Based Curriculum Management in Strengthening Students' Religious Character at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Assalam 1 Wado Blora

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Article Info

Article history:

Received Sept 30, 2026
Revised Oct 07, 2026
Accepted Oct 08, 2026
Online First Oct 29, 2026

Keywords:

Curriculum Management
Love-Based Curriculum
Religious Character

ABSTRACT

Purpose of the Study: This study aims to examine how the Love-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta/KBC) is managed at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Assalam 1 Wado, Blora, and how its planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation support the strengthening of students' religious character within the madrasah context.

Methodology: A qualitative case study was conducted at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Assalam 1 Wado, Blora. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and document analysis involving nine informants selected purposively. The study was conducted from September 5 to 28, 2026. Data were analyzed through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification, supported by source and technique triangulation.

Main Findings: KBC management was implemented through planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation. Planning included curriculum adjustment and *Panca Cinta* mapping; organization involved responsibility distribution and teacher collaboration; implementation included value-based learning, role modeling, religious habituation, and madrasah culture; and evaluation involved monitoring, mentoring, and follow-up. These practices supported students' repeated experiences of worship, discipline, responsibility, social awareness, and positive behavior.

Novelty/Originality of this Study: This study contributes an empirical framework showing how *Panca Cinta* values can be translated into an integrated curriculum management process at a primary madrasah. Its originality lies in connecting planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation with value-based learning, teacher role modeling, habituation, and madrasah culture, offering a context-specific explanation of KBC implementation beyond a standalone character program.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Love-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta/KBC) has increasingly gained a significant position within Indonesia's madrasah education policy. The Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia issued Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 6077 of 2025 concerning the Guidelines for the Love-Based Curriculum, directing madrasahs to integrate the value of love throughout the educational process. This approach is developed through the concept of Panca Cinta (Five Dimensions of Love),

encompassing love for Allah and His Messenger, love for knowledge, love for the environment, love for oneself and fellow human beings, and love for the homeland [1]. The implementation of this policy was subsequently reinforced through Circular Letter Number 9 of 2025 concerning the Implementation of the Love-Based Curriculum and Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation Number 1503 of 2025, which positions Panca Cinta as an integral component of efforts to strengthen students' character in madrasahs [2], [3]. This development indicates that love-based education has moved beyond a normative idea toward becoming part of the madrasah education policy agenda. Nevertheless, its implementation at the institutional level requires curriculum management capable of translating the values of love into curriculum planning, classroom instruction, habituation, madrasah culture, and students' everyday experiences. Therefore, the KBC represents an important phenomenon for examination within the broader context of Islamic educational management.

The urgency of developing education based on positive relationships is also reflected in continuing concerns regarding child protection and well-being within Indonesia's educational environment. UNICEF Indonesia reported that approximately 18% of girls and 24% of boys experienced bullying or humiliating treatment at school, indicating that educational settings continue to face challenges in creating safe environments that respect students' dignity [4]. This concern corresponds with global attention to the importance of educational environments that support children's social and emotional development. UNESCO identifies social and emotional learning as an important component of education systems because it encompasses the capacity to establish positive relationships, demonstrate empathy and care, regulate emotions, and make responsible decisions [5]. Within the context of madrasah education, these needs acquire an additional dimension because education is directed not only toward students' social and emotional development but also toward the formation of character grounded in Islamic values. The KBC provides a framework that connects the vertical relationship between humans and Allah with interpersonal relationships, love of knowledge, environmental awareness, and love for the homeland [1]. Thus, the central issue is not merely the application of the concept of love in teaching and learning, but how curriculum management can ensure that these values are systematically embedded in the life of the madrasah and thereby contribute to strengthening students' religious character.

The literature on character education at the primary education level indicates that religious character has become an important dimension of Islamic education. A systematic review conducted by Arif et al. [6] of 483 publications published between 2014 and 2024 demonstrates that character education research in Indonesian Islamic primary schools encompasses various approaches, including the strengthening of religious character through curricula, madrasah programs, school culture, habituation, and family involvement. Hidayah et al. [7] likewise emphasize religious character education as a strategic process at the primary school level because religious values need to be cultivated from the earliest stages of education. In practice, Sari and Amrullah [8] demonstrate that religious character education in primary schools is implemented through habituation activities and the integration of values into school activities, while Febriyanti and Amrullah [9] highlight Islamic habituation as one of the mechanisms for developing religious character. This body of literature demonstrates that religious character is not developed solely through separate religious instruction but through an educational process involving learning, role modeling, habituation, and the school environment. Nevertheless, much of the existing research continues to approach religious character primarily as an educational program or practice, while the relationship between curriculum management as a system for organizing values and the formation of religious character requires further investigation.

Research on curriculum management has increasingly demonstrated that character formation requires systematic management throughout the stages of planning, implementation, and evaluation. Sorfina and Hidayati [10], for example, demonstrate that character education curriculum management encompasses planning, organizing, implementation, and evaluation processes that are influenced by both internal and external institutional factors. Surahaman and Nayla [11] position curriculum management as a strategic instrument for integrating Islamic values into the overall direction of education rather than treating the curriculum merely as an administrative document. Handoko [12] likewise demonstrates that Islamic education curriculum management can integrate character values through classroom learning and school culture. Meanwhile, Aliyya et al. [13] specifically examine the Love-Based Curriculum as a paradigm of Islamic education that integrates compassion, empathy, and tolerance to foster Islamic and humanistic character. However, this study remains primarily conceptual or literature-based. Empirical research examining how a love-based curriculum is planned, implemented, and evaluated at the madrasah ibtidaiyah level, as well as how these processes relate to the strengthening of students' religious character, remains limited. This gap provides the basis for the present study at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Assalam 1 Wado, Blora.

This limitation indicates a more specific research gap. Existing studies have provided valuable explanations of religious character formation, curriculum management, and the conceptual foundations of KBC, but they have not sufficiently explained how love is operationalized as an organizing principle of curriculum management in an Islamic primary school context. In particular, empirical accounts of the relationship between curriculum planning and organization, the implementation of love-based learning and habituation, and the evaluation of these practices in relation to religious character remain limited [14]. The present study addresses

this gap by examining KBC as a curriculum management process rather than solely as a pedagogical approach or a set of moral values [15].

The urgency of this study lies in the need to understand how the policy orientation of KBC can be translated into consistent educational practices within the madrasah. Religious character cannot be developed solely through the transmission of religious knowledge; it also requires an educational environment in which values are reflected in learning, relationships, habituation, institutional culture, and everyday interactions. Accordingly, this study aims to: (1) analyze the planning and organization of the love-based curriculum at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Assalam 1 Wado, Blora; (2) examine the implementation of the love-based curriculum in classroom learning and madrasah culture and its contribution to strengthening students' religious character; and (3) formulate a love-based curriculum management model that explains the relationship between curriculum management and the strengthening of religious character in Islamic primary education. The novelty of this study lies in positioning love not merely as a pedagogical value or moral orientation, but as a principle of curriculum management that connects curriculum planning, organization, implementation, evaluation, learning practices, and institutional culture. By examining these processes empirically at the madrasah ibtidaiyah level, the study contributes an integrated perspective on how KBC can function as a curriculum management strategy for strengthening religious character [16]. This perspective connects three areas that have largely been examined separately in previous research: curriculum management, love-based education, and religious character formation in Islamic primary education.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine the management of the Love-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta/KBC) in strengthening students' religious character. A case study was selected because the research focused on understanding KBC management in depth within a single institutional context, particularly its planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation [17]. The study was conducted for 23 days, from September 5 to 28, 2026, at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Assalam 1 Wado, Blora, which had implemented KBC since the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The site was purposively selected because KBC and Deep Learning had been integrated into the madrasah curriculum and reflected in various Panca Cinta-based activities, including morning prayers, Asmaul Husna recitation, tadarus, congregational prayers, literacy, social activities, environmental care, and habituation practices promoting love for the homeland. The qualitative approach enabled the phenomenon to be examined through the experiences and practices of educational stakeholders in their natural setting [18].

2.2. Participants and Data Sources

Research participants were selected through purposive sampling [19], based on their involvement in or experience with KBC management and implementation. The study involved nine informants: the head of the madrasah, vice principal for curriculum affairs, Islamic education teacher, classroom teacher, and five students. The head of the madrasah provided information on KBC policies and management; the vice principal explained curriculum planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation; teachers described the integration of KBC into learning and habituation; and students shared their experiences of participating in KBC-related activities and religious practices. Secondary data included KBC-integrated curriculum documents, Alur Tujuan Pembelajaran (ATP), teaching modules, the Panca Cinta mapping matrix, the monitoring book for the 7 Kebiasaan Anak Indonesia Hebat, attitude journals, activity schedules, and program documentation. The informant codes and information focus are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Informants

No.	Code	Informant	Number	Information Focus
1	KS	Head of the Madrasah	1	KBC policies, planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation
2	WK	Vice Principal for Curriculum Affairs	1	Planning, *Panca Cinta* mapping, learning materials, and evaluation
3	GPAI	Islamic Religious Education (PAI) Teacher	1	Integration of love-based values into learning and religious habituation
4	GK	Classroom Teacher	1	KBC implementation, habituation, monitoring, and communication with parents
5	S1–S5	Students of MI Assalam 1 Wado, Blora	5	Experiences of participating in the KBC and changes in religious character

No.	Code	Informant	Number	Information Focus
Total			9	

The composition of informants was designed to capture KBC management from both institutional and experiential perspectives. The head of the madrasah and vice principal provided information on curriculum management and program coordination, teachers contributed information on classroom implementation and religious habituation, and students provided experiential accounts of KBC-related practices in their daily activities. The use of these different perspectives enabled the researchers to compare information across levels of KBC implementation and supported the triangulation process.

2.3. Research Instruments and Indicators

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation. The interview guide explored KBC management and students' religious character, while observation focused on KBC implementation, habituation, madrasah culture, and students' observable behaviors. Documentation was used to examine curriculum documents and evidence of program implementation. The study focused on two aspects: KBC management and students' religious character. KBC management was analyzed through four indicators: planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation, while religious character was examined through worship, discipline, morality, concern for others, responsibility, and habituation of positive behaviors. These indicators guided the development of the interview and observation instruments and the selection of relevant documents, thereby maintaining consistency between data collection and the presentation of findings.

2.4. Research Procedures

The research was conducted through preparation, data collection, and analysis. During preparation, the research site and participants were determined purposively according to the research focus. Data were then collected through semi-structured interviews, observations, and documentation. Interviews explored participants' experiences and practices related to KBC management and religious character; observations examined KBC implementation and students' behaviors and documentation provided supporting evidence of curriculum planning and program implementation. Data collection and analysis were conducted interactively so that information from different sources could be compared throughout the research process.

2.5. Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

Data were analyzed interactively through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification [20]. Data from interviews, observations, and documents were organized according to the research indicators and compared across sources to identify patterns related to KBC management, Panca Cinta implementation, madrasah culture, and students' religious character. The credibility of the findings was strengthened through source and technique triangulation. Source triangulation involved comparing information from the head of the madrasah, vice principal, teachers, and students, while technique triangulation compared interview data with observations and documentary evidence. This process was used to verify the consistency of information and strengthen the interpretation of the findings.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Planning and Organization of the Love-Based Curriculum at MI Assalam 1 Wado, Blora

The planning of the Love-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta/KBC) at MI Assalam 1 Wado, Blora, began with adjustments to the madrasah curriculum documents following the implementation of KBC in the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. The process involved a curriculum team comprising the head of the madrasah, teachers, the vice principal for curriculum affairs, classroom teachers, the foundation, and the madrasah committee. The vice principal for curriculum affairs explained that the madrasah first reviewed its previous curriculum following the issuance of the KBC circular letter, gathered input from teachers through meetings, and involved the madrasah committee. The process resulted in an institutional curriculum document integrating Deep Learning and KBC, which subsequently became a reference for teachers. The head of the madrasah also explained that students' character-related needs were identified through initial or diagnostic assessments. According to the head of the madrasah, KBC is understood as *"a learning approach that humanizes human beings"* (KS, September 15, 2026). Meanwhile, a classroom teacher interpreted KBC as *"a way of educating that puts more emphasis on the heart, so children are treated as human beings rather than simply being told what to do"* (GK, September 15, 2026). These findings show that KBC planning involved both curriculum adjustment and a shift in teachers' perspectives toward students.

At the instructional level, the values of love were translated into learning objectives, teaching modules, and classroom activities. The vice principal for curriculum affairs explained that each learning topic was expected to incorporate at least one value of love so that learning outcomes addressed not only cognitive

achievement but also character development. These values were mapped through a *Panca Cinta* matrix to prevent their implementation from being concentrated in particular subjects. Love for Allah and His Messenger was integrated primarily into Islamic Religious Education (PAI); love for knowledge through Indonesian language and literacy activities; love for oneself and others through Physical Education and Civic Education; love for the environment through Natural Sciences and *Jumat Bersih*; and love for the homeland through Social Studies and flag ceremonies. The Islamic education teacher explained *"that understanding Qur'anic content could represent love for Allah and His Messenger, learning could represent love for knowledge, cleanliness could represent love for the environment, and proper conduct could represent concern for others"* (GPAI, September 15, 2026). Thus, KBC planning was organized as a cross-curricular process rather than as a separate program.

Program organization was realized through the distribution of responsibilities among different elements of the madrasah. The vice principal for curriculum affairs explained that responsibilities were formalized through a decree issued by the head of the madrasah. The Islamic education teacher was responsible for congregational prayers, while classroom teachers were responsible for morning prayers, *tadarus*, and *Asmaul Husna*. Weekly activities such as *Jumat Bersih*, *Jumat Literasi*, and physical exercise were organized through a rotating duty schedule. Classroom teachers also coordinated with the Islamic education teacher for *Dhuha* and *Zuhur* prayers and with the vice principal for curriculum affairs regarding teaching modules. The Islamic education teacher stated that *"coordination takes place collaboratively" and that classroom teachers sometimes directly observed the implementation of KBC-based learning"* (GPAI, September 15, 2026). This distribution indicates that responsibility for KBC implementation was shared across teachers rather than concentrated in the PAI teacher.

Planning was also translated into time allocation and instructional resources. Because the instructional schedule was relatively dense, habituation activities were arranged at times that minimized disruption to core learning. Morning prayers and *Asmaul Husna* were conducted before the school bell, *Dhuha* prayer during the first break, and *Jumat Bersih* and physical exercise during the first Friday period. Teachers were also provided with teaching-module templates containing a dedicated section for incorporating love values. The vice principal explained that *"teachers only need to fill it in; they do not have to start from scratch"* (WK, September 15, 2026). Additional support was provided through the Ibnu Sina Teacher Working Group (KKG) and guidance from the school supervisor. The Islamic education teacher also reported *"that initial preparation of teaching modules was guided by the head of the madrasah"* (GPAI, September 15, 2026).

Students' accounts further showed that the planned and organized activities were visible in their everyday experiences. Students described *"greeting and shaking hands with teachers, murojaah, collective prayer, Asmaul Husna, tadarus, and congregational Dhuha and Zuhur prayers as recurring activities"* (S1–S5, September 27, 2026). Overall, the findings indicate that KBC planning was realized through curriculum adjustment, *Panca Cinta* mapping, instructional resources, responsibility distribution, scheduling, and teacher mentoring, while organization was reflected in cross-role coordination and the integration of these arrangements into students' daily routines.

3.2. Implementation of the Love-Based Curriculum in Strengthening Students' Religious Character

The implementation of KBC at MI Assalam 1 Wado, Blora, was reflected in four interconnected practices: the integration of love values into learning, teacher role modeling, religious habituation, and the development of a madrasah culture that supports religious and socially responsible behavior. The PAI teacher explained that *"love for Allah and His Messenger was implemented through Qur'anic learning, worship practices, and the habituation of students' religious attitudes"* (GPAI, September 15, 2026). Love-based implementation was also visible in teacher–student interactions. Teachers were described as role models who demonstrated politeness, care, patience, and respect. A classroom teacher explained that *"the implementation of KBC is related to how teachers treat children in their everyday interactions, so the value of love needs to be visible in teachers' communication and actions"* (GK, September 15, 2026). This finding indicates that the values embedded in KBC were expressed not only through learning content but also through everyday pedagogical relationships.

Religious habituation was conducted through repeated activities before and during learning. Students reported greeting and shaking hands with teachers, *murojaah*, collective prayer, *Asmaul Husna*, and *tadarus*, followed by congregational *Dhuha* and *Zuhur* prayers. One student described *"murojaah and collective prayer before entering the classroom, while another identified collective prayer, Asmaul Husna, tadarus, and murojaah as regular activities*" (S1–S2, September 27, 2026). Another student confirmed that *"congregational Dhuha and Zuhur prayers were also part of the routine"* (S3, September 27, 2026). These accounts show that religious practices were incorporated into students' daily schedules rather than being conducted only as occasional activities. The implementation of KBC also connected religious character with social behavior. Students were expected to maintain cleanliness, respect teachers, help peers, maintain order, and take responsibility for assigned tasks. Activities such as *Jumat Bersih* provided opportunities to practice these values through collective activities. The PAI teacher explained that "*maintaining cleanliness and not disturbing friends were forms of applying the value of love in students' daily lives*" (GPAI, September 15, 2026). Thus, religious character in the

context of KBC was reflected not only in worship practices but also in social behaviors associated with responsibility, care, and proper conduct.

Taken together, the findings show that KBC implementation provided students with repeated opportunities to encounter and practice the values incorporated into the curriculum. However, because this study employed a qualitative case study design, these findings describe observed practices and participants' experiences rather than establish a causal effect of KBC on students' religious character.

3.3. Evaluation, Supporting Factors, and Challenges in Love-Based Curriculum Management

Evaluation of KBC implementation was conducted through monitoring, review, coordination, and follow-up involving the head of the madrasah, vice principal for curriculum affairs, and teachers. The head of the madrasah monitored instructional resources and classroom activities, while coordination with teachers was used to identify implementation challenges. The head explained that *"KBC implementation needed to be continuously monitored to ensure that the values planned in instructional resources were reflected in educational practice"* (KS, September 15, 2026).

Evaluation also involved reviewing teaching modules and providing teacher mentoring. The vice principal for curriculum affairs was involved in ensuring that love values were incorporated into teaching modules and learning activities. When teachers experienced difficulties, coordination and mentoring were conducted, including through KKG activities. The Islamic education teacher explained that *"teachers initially needed guidance to understand how love values could be translated into the learning process*" (GPAI, September 15, 2026). Thus, evaluation functioned not only as a review mechanism but also as a basis for follow-up and teacher support. Several conditions supported implementation. The leadership of the head of the madrasah provided direction and mentoring, while shared instructional resources and teacher collaboration helped establish a common implementation framework. The vice principal explained that *"structural support provided teachers with clear direction and shared resources*" (WK, September 15, 2026). The KKG also served as a forum for teachers to discuss instructional resources and consult about difficulties encountered during implementation.

At the same time, the implementation faced several challenges. These included administrative demands, the need to adapt instructional resources, limited instructional time, and differences in teachers' understanding of KBC. The dense learning schedule required habituation activities to be carefully scheduled so that they did not interfere with core learning. Differences in teachers' understanding also meant that mentoring remained necessary, particularly during the early stages of implementation. These findings indicate that the consistency of KBC implementation depended not only on the availability of a curriculum framework but also on teacher capacity, coordination, time allocation, and continued institutional support.

3.4. Synthesis of Findings

The findings can be synthesized into four interconnected management processes: planning, organization, implementation, and evaluation. Planning establishes the values, curriculum structure, resources, and schedules; organization distributes responsibilities and coordinates actors; implementation translates the planned values into learning, role modeling, habituation, and madrasah culture; and evaluation provides monitoring, feedback, mentoring, and follow-up. Supporting conditions and challenges influence the consistency of this process.

Table 2. Synthesis of Findings on KBC Management and Students' Religious Character

Management Aspect	Empirical Findings	Relation to Religious Character
Planning	Curriculum adjustment, *Panca Cinta* mapping, instructional resources, scheduling, and mentoring	Provides a structured basis for integrating religious and social values into learning.
Organization	Distribution of teacher responsibilities and cross-role coordination	Establishes shared responsibility for religious and character-related activities.
Implementation	Value-based learning, teacher role modeling, religious habituation, and madrasah culture	Provides repeated experiences of worship, discipline, responsibility, care, and positive behavior.
Evaluation	Monitoring, review of instructional resources, coordination, mentoring, and follow-up	Supports consistency and adjustment of implementation.
Supporting Conditions	Leadership, teacher collaboration, shared resources, and KKG mentoring	Supports continuity of KBC practices.

Management Aspect	Empirical Findings	Relation to Religious Character
Challenges	Administrative demands, limited instructional time, and differences in teacher understanding	May affect consistency and require continued mentoring and coordination.

The synthesis shows that KBC management at MI Assalam 1 Wado, Blora, operated as an interconnected process rather than as separate managerial activities. Planning established the curricular direction and learning arrangements, organization distributed responsibilities among madrasah actors, implementation translated the values of *Panca Cinta* into learning and daily practices, and evaluation provided monitoring, mentoring, and follow-up. Within this process, religious character was reflected in students' repeated practices of worship, discipline, responsibility, care, and positive social behavior. The findings also show that leadership, teacher collaboration, and shared resources supported implementation, while administrative demands, limited instructional time, and differences in teacher understanding required continued coordination and mentoring.

Overall, the findings indicate that KBC at MI Assalam 1 Wado operates as an integrated curriculum management process rather than merely as the addition of love-related values to curriculum documents. The process connects curriculum planning, organizational responsibility, classroom implementation, habituation, and evaluation. The central pattern identified in this study is the translation of *Panca Cinta* values into concrete educational practices through curriculum mapping, instructional resources, teacher responsibilities, scheduled activities, and teacher mentoring. This pattern is consistent with previous research emphasizing curriculum integration, teacher engagement, school environment, and value-based approaches as important elements in character education, while Muzakkir et al. [21] similarly highlight the importance of integrated character curricula and teacher role modeling. The present findings extend these perspectives by showing how the values of KBC are operationalized through a management sequence within a primary madrasah, rather than being positioned only as general character-education principles [22].

The organizational dimension further demonstrates that the implementation of KBC depends on collective responsibility. The distribution of responsibilities among the head of the madrasah, vice principal for curriculum affairs, PAI teacher, and classroom teachers connects policy direction with daily educational practices. This finding corresponds with previous studies emphasizing the importance of clear governance, policy, and program design in developing a supportive educational culture [23]. However, the present study shows a more specific pattern in which responsibility for character-related activities is distributed through formal assignments, coordination, scheduling, and shared instructional resources. The contribution of the present study therefore lies in identifying how curriculum values become organizational practices rather than remaining abstract institutional commitments.

At the implementation level, the findings indicate a close relationship between KBC management and the strengthening of students' religious character. Planning establishes which values are integrated into learning; organization determines who is responsible for translating them into activities; implementation provides students with repeated opportunities to experience those values; and evaluation supports consistency through monitoring and follow-up. Religious practices such as collective prayer, *Asmaul Husna*, *tadarus*, *murojaah*, and congregational *Dhuha* and *Zuhur* prayers are therefore connected to the broader management process rather than functioning as isolated religious activities. This pattern is consistent with research showing that character formation is supported by habituation, structured activities, role modeling, and a supportive school environment [24]. Studies of religious character education in madrasahs likewise emphasize habituation and teacher role modeling as important elements in character formation. Rao et al. [25] further emphasize the strategic role of teachers in students' moral development through interaction and modeling.

The findings also reinforce the importance of teacher behavior and madrasah culture. The classroom teacher's account that love should be visible in teachers' communication and actions demonstrates that KBC is implemented not only through formal curriculum content but also through everyday interactions. This is consistent with Lickona's [26] view of teachers as caregivers, models, and mentors and with research emphasizing the importance of teacher involvement, habituation, and continuous guidance in religious character education. The present study contributes to this discussion by showing that teacher role modeling is embedded within a broader curriculum management structure. In other words, role modeling, habituation, and madrasah culture are not treated as separate character programs but as implementation mechanisms connected to planning and organization [27].

A further contribution concerns the operationalization of *Panca Cinta*. The findings show that the values were mapped across subjects and activities, including love for Allah and His Messenger, love for knowledge, love for oneself and others, love for the environment, and love for the homeland. These values were subsequently connected to learning content, teacher responsibilities, religious routines, and collective activities. This pattern supports the argument that character education becomes more meaningful when values are integrated into the wider educational experience rather than taught as isolated content [28]. The present study

adds an empirical explanation of how such integration can be managed at the madrasah level: through a combination of curriculum mapping, responsibility distribution, instructional resources, habituation, and evaluation.

The habituation findings are also comparable with studies showing that repeated religious activities can support discipline, social concern, and spiritual awareness, as well as studies emphasizing the combination of teacher role modeling and structured habituation [29]. The difference lies in the analytical position of the present study. Rather than examining habituation as an independent religious-character program, this study situates habituation within the complete management cycle of KBC. This provides a more integrated explanation of how curriculum design, teacher behavior, daily routines, and institutional support are connected in practice.

At the same time, the findings reveal that implementation is not free from constraints. Administrative demands, limited instructional time, and differences in teachers' understanding create a gap between the intended curriculum design and its implementation capacity. This finding is comparable with previous research identifying teacher capacity, training, and evaluation as challenges in implementing character-oriented educational programs [30]. The present study therefore suggests that the existence of a value-based curriculum alone is insufficient to ensure consistent practice. Continued mentoring, collaboration, shared instructional resources, and evaluation are needed to maintain alignment between curriculum intentions and everyday educational practices [31]. Based on these findings, the empirical contributions of the research can be stated as follows:

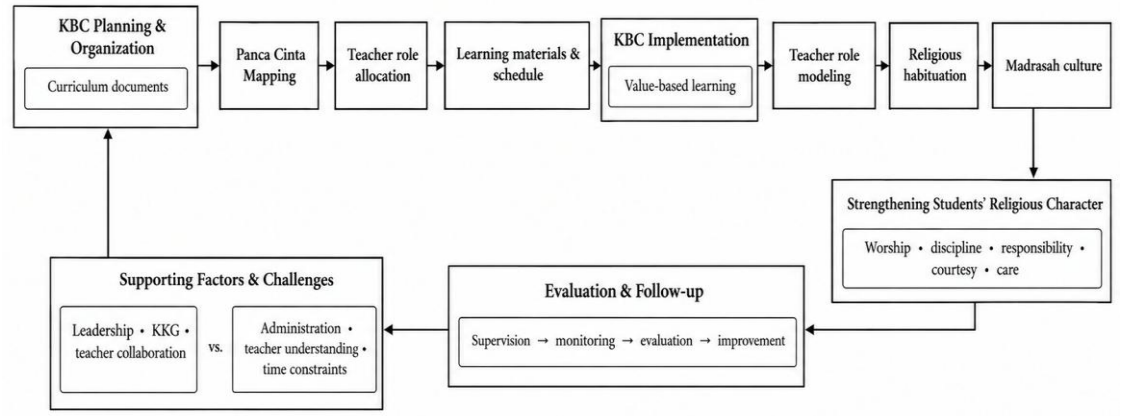


Figure 1. Empirical Framework of Love-Based Curriculum (KBC) Management in Supporting Students' Religious Character

The framework should be read as an empirical synthesis rather than a causal model. It illustrates how the management processes identified in the study are interconnected with the educational practices and student experiences found at the research site. The framework therefore represents the contribution of this case study in explaining how KBC values move from curriculum planning into organizational arrangements, everyday educational practices, and evaluation.

The findings have practical implications for madrasah management. KBC implementation requires more than curriculum-document adjustment; it requires the alignment of curriculum planning, teacher responsibilities, instructional resources, activity schedules, and evaluation. Madrasah leaders can therefore strengthen implementation by providing shared resources, distributing responsibilities clearly, facilitating teacher collaboration, and using evaluation as a basis for mentoring and improvement. For teachers, the findings emphasize that the values of KBC need to be visible not only in teaching materials but also in teacher–student interactions and daily classroom practices [32]. This study was conducted as a qualitative case study in one madrasah and involved nine informants during a relatively limited research period. The findings therefore describe practices, experiences, and implementation patterns within the research setting and cannot be generalized to all madrasahs. In addition, the study did not employ quantitative or longitudinal measures to determine changes in students' religious character over time. Accordingly, the findings should not be interpreted as evidence of a causal effect of KBC. Future research could examine KBC implementation across multiple madrasahs and use longitudinal or mixed-method designs to investigate changes in students' religious character more systematically.

4. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the management of the Love-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta/KBC) at MI Assalam 1 Wado, Blora, is implemented through an interconnected process of planning,

organization, implementation, and evaluation that supports the strengthening of students' religious character. Planning is reflected in curriculum adjustment, *Panca Cinta* mapping, instructional resources, and activity scheduling; organization is realized through the distribution of responsibilities and teacher collaboration; implementation is reflected in value-based learning, teacher role modeling, religious habituation, and madrasah culture; while evaluation involves monitoring, mentoring, and follow-up. Together, these processes provide a structured context in which religious practices and values are repeatedly experienced in students' daily madrasah life, including prayer, *Asmaul Husna*, *tadarus*, *murojaah*, congregational *Dhuha* and *Zuhur* prayers, discipline, responsibility, cleanliness, and concern for others. Findings indicate that the contribution of KBC at MI Assalam 1 Wado lies in integrating *Panca Cinta* values into the madrasah's curriculum management and everyday educational practices rather than treating them as a separate religious program. The implementation is supported by the leadership of the head of the madrasah, teacher collaboration, KKG mentoring, and continued evaluation, although administrative demands, limited instructional time, and differences in teacher understanding remain challenges. As a qualitative case study conducted in one madrasah with nine informants over 23 days, this study describes implementation practices and participant experiences within the specific context of MI Assalam 1 Wado and does not establish a causal effect or generalizable outcome of KBC. Future research could compare KBC implementation across madrasahs with different organizational, geographical, and sociocultural contexts to examine similarities and variations in management practices. Longitudinal studies could also investigate how sustained KBC implementation relates to changes in students' religious character over a longer period and provide evidence beyond the implementation patterns identified in this case.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors would like to express sincere gratitude to Universitas Islam Negeri (UIN) Walisongo Semarang for providing institutional support and an academic environment that facilitated the completion of this research. The authors also extend their sincere appreciation to the leadership, teachers, staff, and students of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Assalam 1 Wado, Blora, for their valuable participation, cooperation, and support throughout the research process. Appreciation is also extended to all individuals who contributed to the data collection, academic discussions, and preparation of this study. This research received no specific external financial support from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

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