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Humanistic Educational Ecosystem: Implementation Of The Love-Based Curriculum To Build Harmony At MAN 1 Halmahera Utara

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Abstract

This study describes how the Love-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta, KBC) is implemented at MAN 1 Halmahera Utara, analyzes how this implementation contributes to a humanistic educational ecosystem, and identifies the factors that support and inhibit it. A qualitative case study design was used. Data were collected through interviews with eleven informants (the head of the madrasah, two teachers, six Grade XI students, and two parents) and analyzed thematically through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings show that the values of Panca Cinta (the Five Loves) are integrated into learning and everyday interaction as an approach rather than a replacement for the existing curriculum, visible in teachers' warmth and role modelling, attention to students, and space to ask questions and express opinions. Informants generally described a safe, comfortable, and respectful learning environment in which disagreements are settled through dialogue, apology, and deliberation. Supporting factors include leadership concern, teacher role modelling, cooperation among students, open communication, and parental involvement, whereas inhibiting factors include teasing, spreading untrue stories, individualistic attitudes, selective friendship, and the influence of the social environment and social media. Because the data come

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from interviews only, the findings reflect informants' reported experiences and are not evidence of causal effects. Strengthening the consistency of madrasah culture and cooperation with families and the community is needed to sustain these values.

Keywords: Love-Based Curriculum; Humanistic Education; Educational Ecosystem; Harmony; Madrasah.

INTRODUCTION

Education in the twenty-first century faces increasingly complex challenges. It is no longer expected merely to transfer knowledge, raise academic competence, and develop technological mastery; it is also expected to shape people who are emotionally, socially, morally, and spiritually mature. Digitalization, globalization, and social change have altered how students obtain information and build relationships, and these changes require educational institutions to strengthen the human dimension of schooling(UNESCO, 2021).

Intolerance, bullying, verbal violence, discrimination, and weak social concern remain persistent problems in educational settings. Such relational problems indicate that educational success cannot be judged by academic achievement alone; it must also be seen in students' ability to respect others, develop empathy, cooperate, and settle differences peacefully (Biesta, 2020). The problem is compounded by digital culture, in which physical and virtual spaces allow information to circulate quickly but also give rise to misunderstanding, disrespectful speech, and social conflict. Schools therefore function not only as places of academic learning but also as social environments that shape how students understand themselves, treat others, and respond to difference(Zembylas, 2022).

Humanistic education is one relevant response. It regards students as whole persons with dignity, potential, needs, and diverse experiences, and it stresses respect for human dignity, healthy teacher student relationships, dialogue, empathy, and safe and inclusive learning environments. This view is consistent with Freire's (2020) understanding of education as a process of humanization in which people are active subjects of learning. In Islamic education, humanistic orientations find strong support in the values of compassion, justice, brotherhood, and care for others. The principle of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* grounds an education that develops religious knowledge while encouraging students to bring benefit to their social surroundings (Fahri & Zainuri, 2019).

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Within this frame, the Love-Based Curriculum (*Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta*, KBC) places love, compassion, care, respect for difference, and harmonious relationships at the center of the educational process. In this study KBC is understood not merely as a curriculum document but as an approach that should be visible in classroom practice, teacher student relations, interaction among students, and madrasah culture(Adam et al., 2026). This orientation is close to Noddings'(2013) ethic of care, which emphasizes attention, relationship, and caring in education. In its application, KBC is associated with *Panca Cinta* (the Five Loves): love of God and the Messenger, love of knowledge, love of the environment, love of fellow human beings and oneself, and love of the nation and homeland(Kementerian Agama R.I,2025 ;Iswar et al., 2026).

Existing studies have approached these themes from several directions.Agustinova (2020)discusses the contribution of humanistic education to twenty-first-century learning; Cahyati et al., (2025) relate KBC to interfaith harmony and religious moderation;Mohtarom, (2026) examine its normative foundation in the prophetic tradition; (Ifendi, 2025) develops love-based education as a paradigm for madrasah; and Junaedi & Suwardi(2026) compare curriculum management under the 2013 Curriculum and KBC. These works provide conceptual, normative, and managerial foundations. What remains to be shown at the level of a single school is how love-based values are translated into everyday teaching and social relations, how they are experienced by different members of the school community, and what supports or hinders them. The contribution claimed here lies in this empirical focus and local context, not in the assumption that no related research exists(Aksan et al., 2025).

This study therefore examines the implementation of KBC at MAN 1 Halmahera Utara through three questions: (1) how is KBC implemented at the madrasah; (2) how does this implementation contribute to a humanistic educational ecosystem, including relations between teachers and students, interaction among students, a sense of safety, and respect for difference; and (3) which factors support and inhibit its implementation? The article proceeds with a theoretical framework, the research method, the results, a discussion, and a conclusion that also outlines directions for future research.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Humanistic education

Humanistic education places the human being at the center of the educational process and attends to the intellectual, emotional, social, moral, and spiritual development of students.

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Students are not merely recipients of knowledge but individuals whose potential, experience, needs, and dignity must be respected, so success is measured not only by academic achievement but also by personal development, social relationships, and responsibility in shared life (Rogers, 1969). The approach draws on humanistic psychology. Maslow (1970) describes a hierarchy of needs oriented toward the fulfilment of potential, which in education implies environments that support students' needs so that they can develop optimally. Rogers (1969) stresses meaningful learning experiences, active participation, and interpersonal relationships grounded in empathy, acceptance, and sincerity, with teachers acting as facilitators rather than mere transmitters of content.

Freire, (2020)extends this thinking through his critique of "banking education," in which students passively receive information, and proposes education as humanization that builds critical awareness and engagement in social life. For madrasah, this implies learning that leaves room for dialogue, respect for opinion, and student involvement in solving the problems they face. In Islamic education, such principles can be related to *rahmah* (compassion), *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), *ta'awun* (mutual help), and *ihsan* (doing good), which provide a basis for education that forms behavior respectful of human dignity and supportive of harmonious social life.

The Love-Based Curriculum and Panca Cinta

KBC is an educational approach that treats love, compassion, respect for human dignity, care, and responsibility as its orientation. In Islamic education it emphasizes the unity of knowledge, internalization of values, and practice in daily life (Ifendi, 2025). Conceptually, KBC here is an orientation of values and a pedagogical approach that animates lesson planning, instruction, and madrasah culture. It is therefore judged not by the presence of documents or the use of the word "love," but by how values are translated into policy, teacher role modelling, instructional interaction, and the conduct of the school community. The normative grounding in *rahmah*, *ukhuwah*, *ta'awun*, and *ihsan* guides teachers and students toward relationships that respect difference and settle disagreement peacefully(Im et al., 2026)

Panca Cinta serves as the reference for identifying how KBC is understood and applied: love of God and the Messenger, love of knowledge, love of the environment, love of fellow human beings and oneself, and love of the nation and homeland(Manaf et al., 2026). The analysis does not stop at naming these five dimensions but looks at their enactment in lesson planning,

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teacher–student interaction, and social habits. Implementation also implies a changed teacher role: giving role models, communicating respectfully, allowing questions and opinions, and handling differences educatively, which is consistent with Noddings' (2013) emphasis on caring relations between educators and students(Latif. & Adam, 2026).

Humanistic educational ecosystem and harmony

An educational ecosystem refers to the interconnection of elements that jointly shape educational experience. Learning is influenced by students' relationships with teachers, peers, family, school leadership, and the wider social environment. Bronfenbrenner (1979) ecological theory explains that individual development is shaped by interrelated systems, from the immediate environment to broader social and cultural systems. In this study, a humanistic educational ecosystem is defined as an arrangement of relationships, learning environments, participation, and institutional support that takes respect for human dignity, compassion, empathy, and dialogue as the basis of madrasah life. It is analyzed through four aspects: social relations, the learning environment (psychological safety, comfort, and inclusiveness), student participation, and institutional support. These aspects are interrelated, but the relationship is not treated as automatic causation.

Harmony in education is understood as a condition of social relations marked by mutual respect, acceptance of difference, care, cooperation, and peaceful settlement of disputes. Galtung,(1969) distinguishes negative peace, the absence of open conflict, from positive peace, relations that are more just, cooperative, and mutually supportive, which suggests that harmony in a madrasah cannot be judged only by the absence of quarrels. (Allport's et al. (1954) contact theory holds that intergroup interaction can reduce prejudice under conditions such as equal status, common goals, cooperation, and institutional support, while Putnam (2000) points to networks, norms of reciprocity, and trust as social capital that enables cooperation. In this study harmony is examined through three dimensions: tolerance, social solidarity, and peaceful conflict resolution, together with behaviors that may disturb it, such as teasing, spreading untrue stories, exclusive friendship choices, or disrespect for others' opinions.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a qualitative approach with a case study design. A qualitative approach was chosen because the aim was to understand in depth how KBC is implemented, how school

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members experience it, and how a humanistic educational ecosystem takes shape in the madrasah (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The case study design was used because the inquiry concentrates on one educational unit, MAN 1 Halmahera Utara, as the context in which practices, social interaction, madrasah culture, and supporting and inhibiting factors are examined(Yin, 2018). The site was selected purposively because of its relevance to the focus of the research.

Informants were selected through purposive sampling, that is, deliberate selection based on knowledge, experience, and involvement with the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2015). Eleven informants took part: one head of the madrasah, two teachers (a Fiqh teacher and an Aqidah Akhlak teacher), six Grade XI students, and two parents. Each group provided a different vantage point, as summarized in Table 1. The number of informants reflects the interview data available; the study does not claim to have reached data saturation.

Table 1. Informants and the focus of information

Informant group	n	Focus of information
Head of the madrasah	1	Policy and evaluation of KBC; views on humanistic and inclusive education
Teachers (Fiqh; Aqidah Akhlak)	2	Learning practices, role modelling, communication with students, integration of Panca Cinta
Grade XI students	6	Learning experience, comfort and safety, relationships with teachers and peers, handling of differences
Parents	2	Family support, children's behavior, cooperation between family and madrasah
Total	**11**	

Interviews were the only data collection technique whose data are used for the findings. They were guided by interview protocols covering the implementation of KBC in learning and madrasah culture; teacher student and student–student relationships; experiences of safety, comfort, and respect for difference; cooperation and conflict resolution; and the factors that support or inhibit the application of love-based values. Questions were adapted to each informant's role. Observation and documentation were not treated as sources of findings because no observation records or documents were available for analysis. Consequently, the findings describe what informants reported, not independently verified practice.

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Data were analyzed with the interactive model of Miles et al.(2014), comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. In condensation, responses were selected, focused, and grouped under the three research questions: implementation of KBC (policy, learning practice, role modelling, madrasah culture), the humanistic ecosystem (social relations, safety and comfort, respect for difference, participation), and supporting and inhibiting factors (leadership, teachers, parents, cooperation, and social problems). Data were displayed in narrative form and compared across informant groups to identify agreement, difference, and variation in experience. Trustworthiness was supported by comparing statements across the head of the madrasah, teachers, students, and parents, and by rechecking responses so that summaries and interpretations did not alter the meaning of what informants said; member checking and peer debriefing are not claimed. To protect confidentiality, informants are identified only by role. Quotations were originally given in Indonesian and were translated into English by the authors.

RESULTS

Implementation of KBC at MAN 1 Halmahera Utara

Madrasah policy. The head of the madrasah explained that KBC is implemented by making the values of Panca Cinta an approach within the application of the Ministry of Religious Affairs decree on KBC (KMA 1503 of 2025). The head stated:

> *"[It is] making the values of Panca Cinta an approach in implementing KMA 1503 of 2025. It is not a replacement for the curriculum, but perfects learning by creating a madrasah climate that is child-friendly and environmentally friendly."*

The head also described the purpose of the approach: "KBC is applied so that the classroom feels safe, enjoyable, and humanizing; teachers are present not merely to transfer knowledge but with love." Both statements indicate that KBC is seen as an approach for building a safe and enjoyable learning atmosphere oriented toward respect for students.

Love-based learning practices. The Fiqh teacher described KBC as beginning with friendly interaction: "Greeting students warmly, above all asking how they are, and giving motivation before starting the material." The teacher also linked material to students' circumstances to build concern and mutual help, and gave students "space to ask questions without fear or being blamed." The Aqidah Akhlak teacher explained Panca Cinta as love of Allah and the Messenger expressed through daily acts of worship, love of oneself expressed through self-development,

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love of the environment through awareness of ecological responsibility, and love of the homeland. The teacher named "Compassionate Teaching" as the method, one that touches "feelings of affection, attention, and role modelling—so that they feel safe," and described building communication "without building walls between teachers and students." Together, the two teachers describe KBC through friendly communication, motivation, openness to questions, role modelling, and integration of Panca Cinta into lessons.

Evaluation. According to the head of the madrasah, evaluation of KBC does not rely on written examinations: "Evaluation of KBC does not use written exams but uses an evaluation of three domains, namely feelings, safety, and behavior and culture." This places feelings, safety, behavior, and culture among the aspects to be considered. However, the interviews did not explain the instruments or procedures used to measure these aspects.

Formation of a humanistic educational ecosystem

Teacher–student relationships. The head defined humanistic and inclusive education as follows: "Humanist means humanizing; inclusive means embracing everyone and respecting differences, where no one is elevated above others." Students' accounts were broadly consistent with the teachers'. One Grade XI student said:

> *"Yes, I feel safe and comfortable following lessons because the teacher guides us well and gives students the chance to ask questions and express opinions. I also feel valued when the teacher listens to our answers and does not treat students differently."*

Another student felt comfortable because "the teacher gives every student the chance to participate" and felt valued when teachers and friends listened to their opinions. Experiences were not entirely uniform, however. One student felt "fairly safe and comfortable" and able to ask questions when something was unclear, but added: "sometimes I still feel shy when I have to speak in front of the class."

Care and respect for difference. Students gave examples of habits of compassion and care. One said that teachers taught them "to love one another, help friends who are having difficulties, and respect differences," for example by reminding them not to mock friends, to share with those in need, and to respect others' opinions in class discussion. Another mentioned being asked to visit or support sick friends and not to turn differences in learning ability into a reason for teasing. A student also reported trying to be friends with everyone and not to choose friends "based on

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intelligence or family circumstances." Parents offered complementary views. One regarded the application of tolerance in the madrasah as "a positive step to strengthen the bonds of brotherhood," and another observed that "children begin to understand that differences of opinion need not trigger conflict and can be resolved through discussion." These parental statements are observations, not systematic measurements of behavioral change.

Harmony and conflict resolution. The head said that "a child in conflict is not a bad child but a child who is being guided with love," and the Fiqh teacher described handling conflict by "resolving problems without judging, and considering students' points of view." Students reported that disputes arise from differences of opinion, misunderstanding, or the division of group tasks. One explained that problems are usually resolved by talking, apologizing, and forgiving, and that teachers help mediate when needed so that both sides can reconcile and become friends again. Another described a misunderstanding during play that ended with explanation, apology, and renewed friendship, and a third said that in disagreements they try not to interrupt or force their own opinion so that the reasons behind each view can be understood. From parents came references to agreements on harmony, "written and unwritten," and to regular meetings among the madrasah, parents, and community leaders to discuss the religious and moral education program. The interviews do not show how often these practices occur or how successful they are overall.

Supporting and inhibiting factors

Supporting and inhibiting factors identified by informants are summarized in Table 2. On the supporting side, the Aqidah Akhlak teacher emphasized leadership concern, noting that it is needed for KBC to progress, through "adequate facilities" and "the best teachers in their fields of knowledge." Students pointed to mutual respect, mutual help, teachers' concern, cooperation, the habit of apologizing, *gotong royong* activities, and group study. A parent highlighted "synergy between the policies of the head of the madrasah, teachers' role modelling, and active parental participation."

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Table 2. Supporting and inhibiting factors as described by informants

Level	Supporting factors	Inhibiting factors
Leadership and institution	Concern of leadership; need for adequate facilities and competent teachers	Teachers, students, environment, facilities, and system (named without detail)
Teachers	Role modelling; compassionate, open communication	—
Students	Mutual respect and help, cooperation, gotong royong, group study, habit of apologizing	Teasing, unwillingness to give way, selective friendship, untrue stories, selfishness, lack of communication, blaming others, disrespect for opinions
Parents and family	Synergy of policy, role modelling, and parental participation; regular meetings; agreements on harmony	Some students not yet responding as hoped to madrasah habituation
Social environment	—	Influence of the environment and social media (teacher's perception)

On the inhibiting side, the Fiqh teacher cited "the influence of the environment/social media," which sometimes carries "values that are less productive, which are not taught at school." Students named teasing, unwillingness to give way, choosing friends selectively, spreading untrue stories, and disrespect for others' opinions, as well as selfishness, lack of communication, and the habit of blaming others. A parent noted that some students have not yet responded as hoped to the habituation of madrasah culture. The head mentioned teachers, students, environment, facilities, and system as inhibiting factors without elaborating on each.

DISCUSSION

The findings show that KBC at MAN 1 Halmahera Utara is understood as a learning approach that integrates compassion, attention, role modelling, and care. The head's insistence that KBC is not a replacement for the curriculum but a way of perfecting learning positions it as an orientation of values and pedagogy rather than a separate program. This matches the view of KBC adopted in this study, in which the substance lies in practice and not in documents or

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slogans(Ifendi, 2025). The teachers' practices of greeting students, asking after their well-being, giving motivation, and opening space for questions reflect the humanistic emphasis on the whole person and on a facilitative, relational role for the teacher (Rogers, 1969), and the Aqidah Akhlak teacher's account of "compassionate teaching" and communication without walls resonates with Noddings' (2013) ethic of care. The integration of Panca Cinta shows that love is understood not only interpersonally but also spiritually, ecologically, and nationally, which supports the reading of KBC in Islamic education as linking character formation with religious, social, and ecological dimensions.

The head's emphasis on feelings, safety, behavior, and culture in evaluation indicates attention to the affective and social dimensions of learning. Nonetheless, an orientation toward evaluation must be distinguished from a measured evaluation practice. Since the interviews did not explain instruments, indicators, or recording procedures, what can be asserted is that the head regards these aspects as important, not that they have been assessed systematically. Likewise, the data do not allow the conclusion that all five loves are applied evenly across subjects and classes.

Regarding the ecosystem, the agreement between teachers' accounts and students' experiences suggests that open teacher–student relations are perceived positively by both groups. From a humanistic and Freirean perspective, such relations matter because respect for students supports courage to participate and two-way communication, so that students are treated as people with opinions and experiences worth hearing (Freire, 2020). The student who still feels shy about speaking in front of the class, however, shows that a safe atmosphere does not remove every personal barrier to participation. Humanistic practice therefore has to attend to differences in confidence and need, keeping participation open while supporting students who are not yet accustomed to speaking before others(Biesta, 2020).

Students' examples of helping friends, supporting sick classmates, avoiding teasing, and not choosing friends by ability or family background show behavior tied to respect for the dignity of others. In a love-based framework, care is not mere sympathy but should show in action. At the same time, the reported teasing, untrue stories, exclusive friendship choices, and disrespect for opinions show that building a humanistic environment is a process that meets resistance, and that conveying values does not automatically lead every student to apply them.

Harmony is evident less in the absence of disagreement than in how disagreement is handled: talking things through, apologizing and forgiving, teacher mediation, and efforts to hear

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the reasons behind opposing views. Read through Galtung,(1969) distinction, these practices point beyond negative peace toward the cooperative and mutually supportive relations of positive peace, although the persistence of teasing and rumor shows that the madrasah has not yet fully reached it. Group study and *gotong royong* resemble the conditions Allport (1954) identifies for beneficial contact, namely cooperation toward shared goals under institutional norms, while mutual help, trust in teachers, and habits of apology reflect the reciprocity and trust that Putnam (2000) describes as social capital. The head's view of a conflicting child as one "being guided with love" and the teacher's effort to resolve problems without judging indicate an educative approach to discipline. The data, however, cannot show how consistently this approach is applied across cases.

The supporting and inhibiting factors confirm the ecological point that implementation does not occur in isolation from institutional and social conditions (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Leadership provides direction, teachers translate values into interaction, students sustain or erode them in peer relations, and parents reinforce or weaken them at home. The parents' call for synergy among policy, role modelling, and parental participation, and their reports of regular meetings with the madrasah and community leaders, support the idea that moral and religious education requires shared responsibility. The teacher's call for adequate facilities and competent teachers points to resource needs, although no detail was given about which facilities or competencies are lacking. Social media was likewise a teacher's perception of an environmental challenge, with no information on content, exposure, or direct links to behavior, and parents' remark that some students respond less than hoped cannot explain why. The factors also cannot be ranked by influence because no data permit that kind of measurement.

Compared with existing work, which largely establishes conceptual, normative, and managerial foundations for KBC (Cahyati et al., 2025;Ifendi, 2025;Mohtarom, 2026;Junaedi & Suwardi, 2026), this study adds a school-level picture of how love-based values are described by those who live them, including the frictions that remain. Its central caution is that the data show consistency between reported practices and the principles of humanistic education, not that KBC directly caused a humanistic ecosystem or an even change in behavior.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes, first, that KBC at MAN 1 Halmahera Utara is implemented by integrating the values of Panca Cinta into learning and daily interaction. It is reflected in friendly

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teachers, attention to students, role modelling, motivation, respect for difference, and space for students to ask questions and give opinions without fear, and it is understood as an approach that makes learning more humanistic, safe, and comfortable rather than as a replacement for the prevailing curriculum. Second, informants' accounts indicate that this implementation is associated with a humanistic educational ecosystem in which students generally feel safe, noticed, and valued, and in which care, mutual help, polite communication, and settlement of disputes through dialogue and deliberation form part of harmonious relations. This ecosystem still faces teasing, untrue stories, selective friendship, and disrespect for others' opinions. Third, supporting factors include teacher role modelling, leadership concern, care among students, cooperation and *gotong royong*, open communication, and parental involvement; inhibiting factors include teasing, rumor, individualistic attitudes, selective friendship, and the influence of the social environment and social media.

Practically, the findings suggest that the sustainability of KBC depends on consistent madrasah culture and on cooperation among the madrasah, families, and the community, and not only on teachers in the classroom. Madrasah leaders may strengthen policy and coordination, teachers may continue to give equal opportunity to participate while supporting less confident students, and parents may reinforce the same values at home. Because the data derive solely from interviews, these conclusions concern informants' reported experiences and perceptions and should not be read as proof of causal effects or of uniform behavioral change.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Several limitations point to directions for future work. The study draws on eleven informants in one madrasah, and its findings are not intended for statistical generalization. Future research could involve more informants and additional sites, and could combine interviews with direct classroom and school observation and analysis of policy and instructional documents so that reported practices can be triangulated. Studies that document the instruments and procedures used to evaluate feelings, safety, behavior, and culture would clarify how KBC is assessed. Longitudinal designs could examine whether and how the application of Panca Cinta shapes students' behavior and social interaction over time, and further work could examine the role of social media and of school–family collaboration in more detail.

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