

IMPLEMENTING A LOVE-BASED CURRICULUM IN ARABIC LANGUAGE EDUCATION: INSIGHTS FROM KI HAJAR DEWANTARA'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract

This study examines the conceptual integration of the "curriculum of love" into Arabic language learning through the lens of Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational philosophy. In the Indonesian context, Arabic serves not only as a linguistic medium but also as a means of internalizing Islamic values and character education. Nevertheless, Arabic instruction has largely emphasized cognitive and technical aspects, often overlooking learners' emotional and spiritual development. Employing a literature review method, this study analyzes national and international scholarly works published between 2010 and 2025 concerning affective pedagogy, character-based Arabic education, and Dewantara's educational principles—*ing ngarso sung tulodo, ing madyo manguro karso, and tut wuri handayani*. The findings propose a conceptual model of Arabic learning that integrates linguistic competence with affective-spiritual growth, positioning teachers as empathetic facilitators. This model promotes reflective, contextual, and student-centered learning, offering a culturally grounded and humanistic contribution to Arabic language pedagogy.

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Keywords:

Curriculum of Love; Arabic Learning; Ki Hajar Dewantara; Character Education.

ملخص

تتناول هذه الدراسة دمج مفهوم «منهج المحبة» في تعليم اللغة العربية في ضوء الفلسفة التربوية لكي هاجر ديوانتارا. ففي السياق الإندونيسي، لا تقتصر اللغة العربية على كونها أداة لغوية، بل تؤدي دورًا محوريًا في ترسيخ القيم الإسلامية وبناء الشخصية. غير أن الممارسات التعليمية السائدة في تعليم العربية ما تزال تهمين عليها المقاربات المعرفية والتقنية، مع ضعف الاهتمام بالأبعاد الوجدانية والروحية للمتعلمين. واعتمدت الدراسة منهج المراجعة الأدبية بتحليل دراسات علمية وطنية ودولية نشرت خلال الفترة من ٢٠١٠ إلى ٢٠٢٥، تناولت التربية الوجدانية، وتعليم اللغة العربية القائم على القيم، ومبادئ ديوانتارا التربوية، المتمثلة في: أن يكون القائد قدوة في المقدمة، ومحفز في الوسط، ومساندا وداعما من الخلف. وتقدم الدراسة نموذجًا تصوريًا لتعليم اللغة العربية يزاوج بين الكفاية اللغوية والنمو الوجداني والروحي، ويعيد تعريف دور المعلم بوصفه موجّهًا داعمًا لا سلطة أمره. ويسهم هذا النموذج في تعزيز التعلم التأملي والسياقي المتمركز حول المتعلم، ويقدم إسهامًا علميًا ذا بعد إنساني وثقافي في مجال تعليم اللغة العربية.

كلمات أساسية: منهج المحبة؛ تعليم اللغة العربية؛ كي هجر ديوانتارا؛ التربية الأخلاقية.

Introduction

Arabic language education in Indonesia plays a dual role: serving as a medium of scholarly communication and as a vehicle for the internalization of Islamic values. In the context of character education, Arabic is expected not only to cultivate linguistic competence but also to instill values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility.¹ However, current pedagogical approaches are predominantly focused on the cognitive and technical aspects of language—such as grammar and vocabulary acquisition—which often leaves affective and spiritual dimensions largely unexplored.²

An overly technical approach often neglects the emotional relationship between teacher and student. Yet, effective education is not merely the transmission of knowledge, but the shaping of attitudes and emotional understanding.³ Arabic, as a medium of Islamic education, therefore, should serve as fertile ground for nurturing love, empathy, and mutual respect.⁴ Without an approach that touches the hearts of students, learning becomes mechanical, fragmented, and devoid of soul and deeper meaning.⁵

The moral and social crises faced by today's Indonesian youth necessitate a more humanistic approach to education. The concept of a "love-based curriculum" presents a paradigm that centers on love as the foundation of the educational process. Here, love does not imply romantic affection, but rather embodies empathy, compassion, recognition of students' potential, and respect for their inherent human dignity as growing individuals.⁶

Ki Hajar Dewantara emphasized that education is a process of guidance, not coercion. His renowned educational philosophy—*ing ngarso sung tulodo, ing*

¹ Ubadah Ubadah and Titin Fatimah, "Integration of Character Education Values in Language Learning at an Islamic Junior High School," *HUNafa Jurnal Studia Islamika* 20, no. 2 (2023), <https://jurnalhunafa.org/index.php/jsi/article/view/709>.

² Mohammad Misbahul Munir et al., "Design of Arabic Curriculum Development Based on Character Education," *Advances In Social Humanities Research* 1, no. 4 (2023): 166–75, <https://doi.org/10.46799/adv.v1i4.19>; Haoting Li, "Perceived Teacher-Student Relationship and Growth Mindset as Predictors of Student Engagement in Foreign Student Engagement in Foreign Language Learning: The Mediating Role of Foreign Language Enjoyment," *Frontiers in Psychology* 14 (May 2023): 1177223, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1177223>.

³ You Su and Haizhen Guo, "Unpacking EFL Learners' Emotions and Emotion-Regulation Strategies in Digital Collaborative Academic Reading Projects: An Integrated Approach of Vignette Methodology and Interview Analysis," *Journal of English for Academic Purposes* 71 (September 2024): 101404, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jeap.2024.101404>.

⁴ Said Alwi et al., "Internalization of Character Education Values in Arabic Language Learning at Islamic Boarding School in Indonesia," *Al-Ta'rib : Jurnal Ilmiah Program Studi Pendidikan Bahasa Arab IAIN Palangka Raya* 12, no. 1 (2024): 89–102, <https://doi.org/10.23971/altarib.v12i1.7882>.

⁵ Nashid Nigar and Alex Kostogriz, "Navigating Affective and Sensory Fluidity in Plurilingual and Intercultural Pedagogies in English Language and Literacy Classrooms," *The Australian Journal of Language and Literacy* 47, no. 3 (2024): 379–401, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44020-024-00068-4>.

⁶ Syukran Syukran et al., "Internalization of Character Education Values in Arabic Language Learning for Tsanawiyah Students Dayah Al Muslimun Lhoksukon North Aceh," *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter* 1, no. 1 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.21831/jpka.v1i1.63035>.

madyo mangun karso, tut wuri handayani—highlights the importance of the teacher’s presence as a role model, motivator, and wise companion. A love-based pedagogy aligns closely with this philosophy, in which teachers actively create a learning environment that is joyful, inclusive, and empathetic.⁷

Dewantara asserted that education aims to liberate the individual both physically and spiritually. In Arabic language instruction, this principle can be realized through non-repressive, dialogical, and reflective approaches. Teachers are not merely instructors tasked with memorization, but facilitators who guide students to understand meaning, experience the beauty of language, and internalize the values embedded in Arabic texts and verses.⁸

In many educational institutions, including madrasahs and pesantren, the implementation of Arabic language teaching often remains misaligned with humanistic principles. Teachers often occupy an authoritarian role, while students are relegated to passive recipients. Classroom atmospheres tend to be rigid, formalistic, and lack the warmth of a love-centered environment. Such conditions are at odds with Dewantara’s philosophy and the principles of a love-based curriculum, which stress the teacher’s role as a learning companion.⁹

An Arabic language pedagogy that integrates linguistic competence with the value of love can bridge academic needs and character formation. A love-based curriculum can be realized through the formulation of clear affective goals, interactive and contextual approaches, and assessments that emphasize not only outcomes but also the quality of students’ social and emotional interactions within the classroom.

Given the significance of affective approaches in education, the development of an Arabic language learning model based on a love-centered curriculum is urgently needed. Such a model would not only increase students’ motivation to learn but also foster empathetic, spiritual, and morally upright character—reflecting the national educational mandate and Ki Hajar Dewantara’s vision of humanizing education.

Recent international studies emphasize that effective language learning should integrate affective dimensions and humanistic values. Mercer and Dörnyei demonstrate that empathetic teacher–student relationships play a crucial role in enhancing learner engagement and the meaningfulness of language learning.¹⁰ In

⁷ Ahmad Fadhel Syakir Hidayat et al., “The Integration of Character Education in Arabic Learning at Muhammadiyah Elementary School 4 Samarinda,” *Borneo International Journal of Islamic Studies* 4, no. 2 (2022), <https://journal.uinsi.ac.id/index.php/bijis/article/view/5483>.

⁸ Fitri Ariati et al., “Arabic Language Learning Based on Character Education,” *Albariq: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Arab* 5, no. 1 (2024): 17–31, <https://doi.org/10.24239/albariq.v5i1.69>.

⁹ Amrina Rosyada et al., “Social Values in Arabic Language Learning for Students at The Boarding School,” *Insyirah: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa Arab Dan Studi Islam* 7, no. 1 (2024): 55–69, <https://doi.org/10.26555/insyirah.v7i1.10486>.

¹⁰ Sarah Mercer and Zoltán Dörnyei, *Engaging Language Learners in Contemporary Classrooms* (Cambridge University Press, 2020).

line with this, Oxford highlights that positive emotions, empathy, and pedagogical care significantly contribute to learners' motivation and success in language learning.¹¹ From a character education perspective, Hiver and Al-Hoorie underscore the importance of humanistic pedagogy that positions teachers as supportive facilitators to strengthen learners' agency and reflectivity.¹² Meanwhile, Zembylas stresses the urgency of a pedagogy of care grounded in love, empathy, and relational ethics in educational practice.¹³ Despite the growing emphasis on affective and character-based approaches in language education, the explicit integration of a curriculum of love into Arabic language learning through the lens of Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational philosophy remains underexplored, highlighting the relevance of the present study.

This study has three main objectives: First, to analyze the concept of a love-based curriculum and its relevance to Arabic language learning as an approach that emphasizes affective development, emotional engagement, and interpersonal relationships. Second, to explore the educational principles of Ki Hajar Dewantara that support the development of a love-based curriculum in Arabic learning, particularly within the context of liberatory, holistic, and humanistic education. Third, to formulate a conceptual model of a love-based curriculum in Arabic language education grounded in the values of Ki Hajar Dewantara's philosophy, aimed at strengthening learners' character, spirituality, and empathy.

This research offers substantive novelty in Arabic language education by systematically integrating the concept of a love-based curriculum with Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational philosophy. The novelty lies in several key aspects: an integrative, interdisciplinary approach to affectivity and linguistics. Rather than focusing solely on the technical aspects of Arabic instruction—such as grammar and language skills—this study reinforces the affective dimension of learning by positioning love as the guiding philosophical and pedagogical principle of the curriculum. This marks a departure from the dominant cognitive-mechanistic models that have long shaped Arabic language instruction.

Second, the application and contextual re-reading of Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational thought within the context of Arabic language learning. Although Dewantara's philosophy has been widely studied in the context of general education, very few (if any) studies have explicitly connected his educational philosophy with a love-based approach in Arabic language teaching. This research

¹¹ Yanli Zhao, "The Impact of EFL Teachers' Emotioncy Level on Their Motivation and Academic Engagement," *Learning and Motivation* 87 (August 2024): 101990, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lmot.2024.101990>.

¹² Lina Sun, "Pedagogies of Discomfort and Empathy in Foreign Language Education: Fostering EFL Learners' Critical Global Thinking through Literature and Art," *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 50 (December 2023): 101411, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tsc.2023.101411>.

¹³ Songcun Zhang and Xing Liu, "Learner Emotions in AI-Assisted English as a Second/Foreign Language Learning: A Systematic Review of Empirical Studies," *Frontiers in Psychology* 16 (October 2025): 1652806, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2025.1652806>.

adopts Dewantara's principles—particularly *tut wuri handayani* and the idea of emancipatory education—as the core framework for developing a love-centered learning model.

Third, the formulation of a contextualized conceptual model rooted in local values. This study proposes a love-based curriculum model for Arabic language education that is not only grounded in global educational theory but also contextualized in Indonesian local values, as pioneered by a national figure. Such an approach enriches culturally embedded character education and addresses the growing challenge of educational models that tend to adopt foreign paradigms without appropriate local contextualization.

Method

This study adopts a systematic literature review approach to examine in depth the concept of a love-based curriculum in Arabic language learning from the educational perspective of Ki Hajar Dewantara. A literature review was selected as it enables the systematic identification, evaluation, and synthesis of scholarly knowledge to construct a coherent and comprehensive conceptual framework.¹⁴ This methodological choice is particularly appropriate for conceptual and philosophical inquiries that seek to integrate theoretical insights across disciplines and formulate new pedagogical models.

Data were collected through extensive searches of international and national academic databases, including Scopus, Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, and other reputable indexed journal platforms. The literature search focused on four main thematic areas: (1) love-based curricula and affective-oriented education in language and character learning; (2) Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational philosophy, particularly his principles of *ing ngarso sung tulodo, ing madyo mangun karso*, and *tut wuri handayani*; (3) the integration of character and spiritual values in Arabic language education in Indonesia; and (4) humanistic, empathetic, and affective approaches in language pedagogy.

The selected sources met the following criteria: (a) direct relevance to the research themes; (b) scholarly credibility, with priority given to Scopus-indexed and internationally recognized publications; (c) publication between 2010 and 2025 to ensure contextual relevance; and (d) provision of conceptual, empirical, or analytical insights that contribute to the formulation of a pedagogical model.¹⁵

Data analysis employed qualitative content analysis, conducted through three stages: initial coding to identify key concepts, categorization to organize codes into

¹⁴ Hannah Snyder, "Literature Review as a Research Methodology: An Overview and Guidelines," *Journal of Business Research* 104 (November 2019): 333–39, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2019.07.039>.

¹⁵ John W. Creswell and Cheryl N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches* (SAGE Publications, 2017).

major themes (such as affective values, Dewantara’s humanism, educational relationships, and curriculum design), and abstraction to derive theoretical patterns and relationships relevant to Arabic language learning.¹⁶ The findings were then critically synthesized to formulate a conceptual model of a love-based Arabic language curriculum grounded in Ki Hajar Dewantara’s philosophy. To ensure validity and reliability, the study prioritized authoritative sources and applied literature triangulation by comparing findings across multiple studies to confirm consistency and analytical depth.¹⁷

Result and Discussion

The Concept of a Love-Based Curriculum in Arabic Language Learning

The concept of a love-based curriculum emphasizes the affective dimension—compassion, empathy, and personal relationships—as the foundational basis of learning. In the context of Arabic language education, language functions not merely as a communicative and cognitive tool but also as a medium for spiritual and humanistic values. Alrabai highlights that affective strategies in Arabic language learning—such as collaborative interaction, emotional scaffolding, and supportive classroom organization—not only enhance linguistic understanding but also strengthen students’ emotional engagement in the learning process. This demonstrates that a curriculum centered on affection can foster a learning interaction infused with care, thereby enriching both meaning and student motivation.¹⁸

This concept aligns with affective pedagogical approaches found in modern language education—particularly the loving pedagogy model. Zhao and Li argue that positive emotions, including love and care, have a significant impact on student engagement and learning success in foreign language classrooms.¹⁹ The philosophy of a love-based curriculum resonates with this view by promoting a supportive and compassionate classroom atmosphere in which students feel valued and are more open to self-development.

Alamer emphasizes the importance of learner-centered approaches—particularly through reflective and contextual learning—to ensure the relevance of content to students’ experiences. The love-based curriculum, as a derivative of this philosophy, requires pedagogical methods that activate students’ affective and

¹⁶ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, *Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide* (SAGE, 2021).

¹⁷ David L. Morgan, “Qualitative Content Analysis: A Guide to Paths Not Taken,” *Qualitative Health Research* 3, no. 1 (1993): 112–21, <https://doi.org/10.1177/104973239300300107>.

¹⁸ Nada A. Alqarni, “Predictors of Foreign Language Proficiency: Emotion Regulation, Foreign Language Enjoyment, or Academic Stress?,” *System* 126 (November 2024): 103462, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2024.103462>.

¹⁹ Shengxue Zhao and Manman Li, “Reflection on Loving Pedagogy and Students’ Engagement in EFL/ESL Classrooms,” *Frontiers in Psychology* 12 (September 2021): 757697, <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.757697>.

social potential through empathetic reflective dialogue, translating Arabic learning materials into real-life contexts and human values.²⁰

Philosophically, the love-based curriculum emphasizes an immanent educational relationship: the teacher is no longer a mere authority figure but a caring, humanizing, and emancipating presence. This approach shifts the instructional paradigm from rote memorization of rules toward dialogic, student-centered learning, in which learners feel heard and respected—aligning with the essence of a love-based curriculum.

Compassion in education not only alleviates learning anxiety and affective barriers but also enhances students' intrinsic motivation and character development. When students feel loved and appreciated, their emotional openness increases, making them more receptive to internalizing values such as honesty, discipline, and responsibility. Thus, the love-based curriculum also functions as a catalyst for reinforcing spiritual and character values through the medium of Arabic language instruction.

Ki Hajar Dewantara's Educational Thought in the Development of a Love-Based Curriculum

Ki Hajar Dewantara developed the Sistem Among, an educational model rooted in local culture while thoughtfully integrating universal values. According to Zembylas, in this system, the teacher is not merely a transmitter of knowledge but a provider of "love" through liberating and humanizing guidance, attentive mentorship, and deep respect for each student's potential.²¹

Three core principles—ing ngarso sung tulodo (in front, setting an example), ing madyo mangun karso (in the middle, inspiring initiative), and tut wuri handayani (behind, giving support)—form a humanistic educational framework. Derakhshan emphasizes that the teacher serves as a loving role model, motivator, and emancipating supporter, thereby cultivating a learning environment that embodies the essence of a love-based curriculum through warm and inspiring interaction.²²

Dewantara believed that education must address the physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral dimensions of the learner. In line with this, Cantor analysis underscores Dewantara's focus on the importance of environment and culture in

²⁰ Abdullah Alamer and Jihyun Lee, "A Motivational Process Model Explaining L2 Saudi Students' Achievement of English," *System* 87 (December 2019): 102133, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.102133>.

²¹ Michalinos Zembylas, "Engaging Emotional Fundamentalism in the University Classroom: Pedagogical and Ethical Dilemmas," *British Journal of Educational Studies* 72, no. 4 (2024): 483–500, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00071005.2024.2324067>.

²² Ana Ruiz-Alonso-Bartol et al., "Transitioning to Emergency Online Teaching: The Experience of Spanish Language Learners in a US University," *System* 104 (February 2022): 102684, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102684>.

shaping character, suggesting that a love-based curriculum must be designed holistically and contextually in lived cultural realities.²³

Dewantara's perspective on religious education aligns with the principles of moderation and freedom in learning. Kurniawan found that Dewantara advocated for religious education that is moderate, contextual, and humanistic—reflecting the spirit of a love-based curriculum that honors diverse values and cultural identities without imposing a singular doctrinal approach.²⁴

Seligman reveals that Dewantara's philosophy is in harmony with the Kurikulum Merdeka (Freedom Curriculum), which places student well-being at the center. This well-being is achieved through a balanced integration of academic development, character building, and emotional growth—core components of a curriculum grounded in love.²⁵

Education that aims at humanization, liberation, and transcendental awareness must be understood as a holistic process that nurtures learners' moral, emotional, and spiritual development. From this perspective, love operates as a transformative pedagogical force that enables moral growth and human flourishing through humane and value-oriented educational relationships. This view is consistent with Kristjánsson's argument that the ultimate aim of education is flourishing, in which character formation is inseparable from emotional engagement and ethical purpose.²⁶

In addition, the social-cognitive approach to moral character proposed by Lapsley and Narvaez emphasizes that moral understanding must be accompanied by affective internalization and the enactment of values in lived experience.²⁷ Within this framework, love functions as the emotional and motivational catalyst that animates core virtues such as empathy, responsibility, and honesty, thereby strengthening spiritual and moral transformation within a love-based curriculum.

A Conceptual Model of the Love-Based Curriculum from the Perspective of Ki Hajar Dewantara

Ki Hajar Dewantara emphasized that education must reflect both the natural disposition (kodrat alam) of the child and the changing nature of the times (kodrat zaman). A love-based curriculum should be built on the awareness that each child

²³ Pamela Cantor et al., "Malleability, Plasticity, and Individuality: How Children Learn and Develop in Context 1," in *The Science of Learning and Development* (Routledge, 2021).

²⁴ Sigit Widiyanto and Budi Purnomo, "Freedom to Learn in Ki Hajar Dewantara's Perspective: Historical Studies and Their Relevance to Character Education," *International Journal of Business, Law, and Education* 4, no. 2 (2023): 837–44, <https://doi.org/10.56442/ijble.v4i2.185>.

²⁵ Martin E. P. Seligman et al., "Positive Education: Positive Psychology and Classroom Interventions," *Oxford Review of Education* 35, no. 3 (2009): 293–311, <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054980902934563>.

²⁶ Kristján Kristjánsson, *Flourishing as the Aim of Education: A Neo-Aristotelian View*, 1st ed. (Routledge, 2019), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429464898>.

²⁷ Daniel K. Lapsley and Darcia Narvaez, "A Social-Cognitive Approach to the Moral Personality," in *Moral Development, Self, and Identity* (Psychology Press, 2004).

possesses a unique natural potential that must be respected, while simultaenuously adapting to technological and societal developments. This principle is reinforced in the Kurikulum Merdeka, which emphasizes the differentiated learning and contextual relevance of learning styles tailored to students' diverse backgrounds.²⁸

The Sistem Among portrays the teacher as a compassionate and nurturing companion, not as a dominant authority. In a love-based curriculum, the teacher's role goes beyond delivering Arabic language material—they must be affectively present by listening, mentoring, and encouraging learners. This foundation underscores the role of empathy and care in educational relationships.²⁹

The conceptual model must integrate three dimensions of educational leadership: being an exemplary role model (ing ngarso sung tulodo), igniting enthusiasm from within (ing madyo mangun karso), and empowering learners from behind (tut wuri handayani). These represent the practical embodiment of love as a pedagogical stance, positioning teachers as motivational figures who guide independence rather than impose compliance.³⁰

A Dewantaran-inspired love-based curriculum model must prioritize holistic character development—physical, intellectual, emotional, and moral—while remaining culturally contextualized. This aligns with studies on character education in national curricula, which stress the importance of grounding educational values in local cultural wisdom.

The principle of freedom in learning—learning with love for knowledge and freedom in method and style—is a direct manifestation of love in education. Both the teacher and curriculum should provide space for learners to explore learning styles that reflect their individual dispositions and inner potential.³¹

From Dewantara's perspective, a love-based curriculum places student well-being at the center: emotional security, a sense of safety, and intrinsic motivation. Studies on humanistic education confirm that emotional nurturing by teachers

²⁸ Matthew L. Bernacki et al., "Mobile Technology, Learning, and Achievement: Advances in Understanding and Measuring the Role of Mobile Technology in Education," *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 60 (January 2020): 101827, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.101827>.

²⁹ Lihong Ma et al., "Unraveling the Dynamics of Teacher-Student Relationships, Emotions, and Socioeconomic Status in Shaping Subjective Well-Being among FL Learners," *International Journal of Educational Research* 131 (2025): 102581, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2025.102581>.

³⁰ Johnmarshall Reeve and Sung Hyeon Cheon, "Autonomy-Supportive Teaching: Its Malleability, Benefits, and Potential to Improve Educational Practice," *Educational Psychologist* 56, no. 1 (2021): 54–77, <https://doi.org/10.1080/00461520.2020.1862657>.

³¹ Erika A. Patall et al., "The Effectiveness and Relative Importance of Choice in the Classroom.," *Journal of Educational Psychology* 102, no. 4 (2010): 896–915, <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019545>; Richard M. Ryan and Edward L. Deci, "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation from a Self-Determination Theory Perspective: Definitions, Theory, Practices, and Future Directions," *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 61 (April 2020): 101860, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2020.101860>.

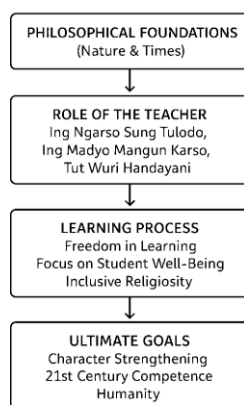
within well-designed learning models fosters creativity and psychological safety in the classroom.³²

The curriculum's religious dimension—including values such as tolerance, responsibility, and spiritual awareness—reinforces the role of love in education. This conceptual model promotes inclusive and humane religiosity, where teachers serve as moral exemplars and connect Arabic language learning to Islamic spirituality in a non-coercive, inspirational way.³³

Dewantara's educational philosophy remains highly relevant for the 21st-century competencies such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration—all grounded in empathy and mutual respect. An effective love-based curriculum should integrate project-based learning, discussions, and collaborative methods in Arabic instruction to foster both character and competence.³⁴

In sum, the ideal conceptual model comprises: the philosophical foundations of Dewantara (natural disposition and historical context), the Among system, the trilogy of educational leadership, contextualized and holistic curriculum orientation, freedom and democratic learning, a humanistic focus on student well-being, inclusive religiosity, and 21st-century skills. This model places love at the heart of Arabic language education, fostering a classroom climate that is not only academically effective but also rich in values and spiritual depth.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of Love-Based Curriculum (Dewantara Model)



The Dewantara Model of a Love-Based Curriculum is grounded in philosophical foundations that respect learners' natural potential and developmental timing, viewing education as a humane, contextual, and culturally

³² Qiong Liu and Wei Zhou, "The Impact of Teachers' Emotional Support on EFL Learners' Online Learning Engagement: The Role of Enjoyment and Boredom," *Acta Psychologica* 250 (October 2024): 104504, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.actpsy.2024.104504>.

³³ James Arthur et al., *Teaching Character and Virtue in Schools* (Routledge, 2016).

³⁴ Pengyue Guo et al., "A Review of Project-Based Learning in Higher Education: Student Outcomes and Measures," *International Journal of Educational Research* 102 (2020): 101586, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2020.101586>.

situated process. Within this framework, teachers assume the role of moral guides and facilitators—Ing Ngarso Sung Tulodo, Ing Madyo Mangun Karso, Tut Wuri Handayani—who lead by example, inspire from within, and empower students with care and respect. The learning process emphasizes freedom in learning, prioritizes students' emotional well-being, and promotes inclusive religiosity as part of holistic development. Ultimately, this model aims to strengthen character, cultivate 21st-century competencies, and nurture humanity, ensuring that education fosters not only intellectual growth but also ethical and emotional maturity.

Conclusion

The love-based curriculum approach in Arabic language education holds deep philosophical significance, particularly in shaping an educational process that is humanistic, transformative, and emancipatory. Arabic, as both a language of religion and knowledge, should not be taught merely through technical approaches, but with a touch of affection and spirituality, positioning it as a medium for holistic character formation rather than solely linguistic mastery.

The educational philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantara serves as a fundamental foundation in conceptualizing the love-based curriculum approach. Through the principles of *ing ngarso sung tulodo* (to lead by example), *ing madyo mangun karso* (to inspire in the midst), and *tut wuri handayani* (to support from behind), education is understood as a process of guiding with love, not coercion. This perspective affirms that love is not merely an emotion, but a pedagogical ethic that dignifies learners, recognizes their potential, and safeguards their freedom within the teacher–student relationship.

The love-based curriculum is grounded in the anthropology of education, which views human beings as holistic beings—developing physically, intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. In this sense, the curriculum not only addresses the cognitive domain but also reaches into the deepest layers of human existence, recognizing learners as beings who need care, recognition, and direction in life.

This approach shifts the paradigm of Arabic language education from being a mere academic tool to becoming a medium for the development of personality and humanity. Teachers are no longer mere transmitters of knowledge, but mentors (*pamong*) who bring emotional warmth, foster dialogical spaces, and nurture spiritual freedom—values that align with Dewantara's pedagogical ethics and are highly relevant in addressing the moral crisis among today's youth.

Thus, the love-based curriculum represents a synthesized educational paradigm—integrating Dewantara's local philosophical heritage, Islamic spiritual values, and contemporary affective pedagogy. It becomes an ideal model to revive the spirit of Arabic language education as a vehicle for cultivating intelligent, ethical, and compassionate individuals.

Author Contribution Statement

MS was responsible for conceptualizing the research idea, developing the conceptual framework, analyzing the literature, and writing the initial draft. AM contributed to the in-depth examination of Ki Hajar Dewantara's philosophy of education and critically reviewing the article's substance. ST played a role in analyzing the pedagogical implications of a love-based curriculum in Arabic language learning and drafting the discussion. FF conducted methodological alignment, academic language editing, and finalization of the manuscript. All authors have read and approved the final version of the article.

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that there are no financial, commercial, or personal relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest in the research, authorship, and publication of this article, and that the study was conducted independently in accordance with principles of academic objectivity.

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