

PEDAGOGICAL RELATIONSHIPS LINKING KURIKULUM BERBASIS CINTA TO DEEP LEARNING IN MADRASAH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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Abstract

This study investigates how pedagogical relationships operationalize the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta in madrasah religious education and how these relational practices are associated with deep learning at MAS Miftahussalam Medan. A qualitative single-case design was employed, with fieldwork conducted from December 2025 to January 2026. Data were generated through semi-structured interviews with one vice principal for curriculum, three religious education teachers, and six students from Grades X, XI, and XII, supported by classroom observations and document analysis. Data analysis involved condensation, deductive and inductive coding, cross-source thematic comparison, and iterative verification. The findings show that Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta functioned as a value orientation embedded in institutional policy, instructional planning, madrasah culture, and classroom interaction. Teachers enacted their values through empathic communication, dialogic guidance, role modeling, respect for student dignity, and educative discipline. These relational practices were associated with emotional safety, which enabled students to ask questions, reconsider inaccurate answers, exchange viewpoints, reflect on religious values, and connect lesson content with everyday experiences. Leadership commitment, institutional culture, and teacher-student trust supported implementation, whereas limited instructional time, differences in students' reflective abilities, and uneven teacher readiness constrained its depth and consistency. The study proposes a relational framework in which pedagogical relationships serve as an operational pathway connecting the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta with reflective, contextual, and meaningful learning in madrasah religious education.

Keywords

Deep Learning, Emotional Safety, Islamic Religious Education, Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta, Pedagogical Relationships.



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INTRODUCTION

Madrasah religious education requires learning conditions that enable students not only to understand religious concepts but also to interpret their moral significance, examine underlying reasons, and connect Islamic teachings with everyday conduct. Recent studies indicate that contextual and interpretive approaches can strengthen applicable and meaningful understanding in Islamic education (Parhan et al., 2024; Supriyadi et al., 2025), while supportive teacher–student relationships are associated with participation, perceived support, and learning exploration (Lisio et al., 2025; Liu, 2024). Studies of the Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta have emphasized curriculum management, value integration, Islamic character formation, and humanistic learning practices (Burhanudin, 2025; Musolin & Sudarmaji, 2025). However, these strands of scholarship remain insufficiently connected. Research on Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta rarely explains how institutional values are translated into everyday teacher–student interaction, whereas research on deep learning tends to foreground instructional design and cognitive activity while giving less attention to the relational conditions that allow students to express uncertainty, reconsider answers, reflect on values, and construct contextual meaning. This unresolved intersection provides the point of departure for examining pedagogical relationships as the operational pathway through which Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta may support deep learning in madrasah religious education.

At MAS Miftahussalam Medan, Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta is implemented not as a separate curriculum that replaces the national framework, but as a value orientation embedded in madrasah policy, instructional planning, institutional culture, and classroom interaction. This institutional orientation is consistent with the national guideline for Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta established through the Decision of the Director General of Islamic Education Number 6077 of 2025 (Directorate General of Islamic Education, 2025). Evidence from the madrasah vision and mission, the Madrasah Operational Curriculum, instructional materials, character-development programs, religious activities, and disciplinary regulations shows that compassion, empathy, respect for human dignity, honesty, responsibility, and social concern are positioned alongside academic competence. These values are reinforced through daily 5S practices, religious habituation, and dialogic procedures for addressing student problems.

Interviews with one vice principal for curriculum, three religious education teachers, and six students from Grades X, XI, and XII showed that teachers enacted the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta through attention to students' emotional conditions, non-humiliating responses to mistakes,

opportunities to ask questions, personal guidance, role modeling, and dialogic discipline. Across Qur'an-Hadith, Aqidah-Akhlaq, Fiqh, and Islamic Cultural History, implementation was most visible in how teachers communicated, guided, corrected, and exercised authority.

In this study, deep learning refers to students' efforts to connect religious concepts with prior knowledge and everyday experience, examine underlying reasons, reflect on moral implications, and explain understanding in their own words. Observations showed that guiding questions, open discussion, respectful feedback, and non-humiliating correction encouraged students to express uncertainty, respond to peers, reconsider answers, and relate religious values to actual situations. Student accounts similarly linked contextual examples with a clearer understanding. These patterns suggest that pedagogical relationships informed by Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta support deep learning through emotional safety, which allows students to test and revise interpretations without embarrassment. This is interpreted as a processual pattern rather than a statistically tested causal mechanism.

The broader contribution of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta lies in integrating religious knowledge with moral, spiritual, and social formation. Teacher exemplarity, dialogic guidance, educative discipline, and contextual discussion enabled students to encounter Islamic values as both lesson content and pedagogical practice. Implementation, nevertheless, varied. Limited instructional time, differences in students' reflective abilities, and uneven teacher readiness constrained discussion and reflection, whereas leadership commitment, madrasah culture, and teacher-student trust supported them. The study, therefore, examines pedagogical relationships as the operational pathway through which the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta enter religious learning, with emotional safety as an intermediate condition supporting participation, reflection, contextual meaning-making, and deeper understanding.

Burhanudin (2025) found that Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta integrates intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development through compassion, *adab*, dialogue, and affective evaluation; however, the study did not empirically examine how these values are enacted in teacher-student interactions. Basori et al. (2025) showed that Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta implementation involved collaborative planning, persuasive communication, teacher exemplarity, and participatory learning, but its focus on curriculum management at the elementary level left relational practices in senior secondary religious education unexplored. Budiman et al. (2025) reported that interactive lectures, discussions, and social projects enhanced students' motivation and participation, yet the study did not explain

how teachers' responses to mistakes and disciplinary issues support deeper reflection. Nst and Al-Husna (2025) found that role modeling and dialogic communication promoted empathy, responsibility, discipline, and a humanistic classroom atmosphere; nevertheless, their focus on Aqidah-Akhlak did not clarify the role of emotional safety in deep learning. Maulida and Darnoto (2025) demonstrated that integrating Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta with contextual dialogue, spiritual reflection, and social action strengthened meaningful religious learning, although the relational mechanism connecting the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta with students' learning experiences remained insufficiently addressed. Accordingly, the present study advances existing research by positioning pedagogical relationships as the operational pathway through which the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta enter classroom practice and emotional safety as a relational condition that supports questioning, reflection, contextual interpretation, and deeper understanding in madrasah religious education.

The analytical framework integrates classical Islamic educational ethics, the ethics of care, dialogic pedagogy, experiential learning, and the deep approach to learning. Al-Ghazali (2005) frames education as a moral and spiritual responsibility in which teachers are expected to demonstrate compassion, sincerity, exemplary conduct, and sensitivity to learners' capacities. He maintains that knowledge should refine character and lead to virtuous action rather than remain at the level of verbal mastery. This Islamic educational foundation corresponds with Noddings's (2013) ethics of care, which places attentiveness, receptivity, and responsiveness at the center of pedagogical relationships. Freire (2018) conceptualizes dialogue as the basis of problem-posing education, through which teachers and students examine knowledge and lived reality rather than reproduce information through one-directional instruction. Dewey (1938) explains that meaningful learning develops through the continuity and reflective reconstruction of experience, while Biggs and Tang (2011) describe a deep approach to learning as seeking meaning, relating ideas, examining underlying principles, and applying knowledge across contexts. Taken together, these perspectives frame pedagogical relationships informed by Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta as compassionate, ethically guided, dialogic, and experience-based interactions that respect students' capacities, create emotional safety, and support reflective and contextual meaning-making in madrasah religious education.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine how pedagogical relationships enact the values of

Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta within madrasah religious education at MAS Miftahussalam Medan, how these relational practices are associated with emotional safety, student participation, value reflection, and contextual meaning-making, and what contextual factors enable or constrain their implementation. The study is theoretically significant because it advances a relational explanation of the implementation of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta by positioning teacher–student interaction as an operational pathway connecting institutional values with students’ learning experiences and by conceptualizing emotional safety as an intermediate relational condition that supports deep learning. Practically, the findings may assist madrasah leaders and teachers in strengthening institutional support, empathic communication, dialogic guidance, reflective learning, and dignity-preserving discipline, while also informing teacher professional development and the implementation of value-based curricula in comparable madrasah contexts.

METHOD

Using a qualitative single-case design, this research explored the relational enactment of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta in religious learning at MAS Miftahussalam Medan. A single-case design was considered appropriate because it enabled the phenomenon to be examined intensively within its real-life institutional context and through evidence obtained from multiple sources (Yin, 2018). Fieldwork took place between December 2025 and January 2026. The site was purposively chosen because its curriculum direction and classroom practices reflected compassion, empathy, moral formation, and reflective learning. Focusing on one institutional setting allowed the researchers to examine how madrasah policy, teacher practice, and student experience interacted in the implementation of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta.

Participants were recruited purposively according to their roles and direct involvement in madrasah religious learning. The participant group comprised ten people: one vice principal responsible for curriculum, three teachers, and six students. Student perspectives were represented by two participants from each of Grades X, XI, and XII. The vice principal discussed institutional policy and the place of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta within madrasah culture. Teachers provided accounts of lesson planning, classroom communication, value internalization, reflection, discipline, and implementation challenges. Students described their experiences of interaction, participation, and the connection between religious lessons and everyday situations. For confidentiality, the vice principal was identified as WK, teachers as G1–G3, and students as X1–X2, XI1–XI2, and XII1–XII2.

Evidence was obtained from three sources: semi-structured interviews, classroom observation with limited researcher participation, and document review. Open-ended interview prompts invited participants to describe how Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta was interpreted and practiced. Classroom observation recorded lesson openings, teacher responses, error correction, dialogue, guidance, disciplinary interaction, and links between religious content and everyday experience. Documentary evidence covered the madrasah vision and mission, the Madrasah Operational Curriculum, teaching materials, character-development programs, religious activities, and disciplinary regulations.

Data analysis proceeded concurrently with data collection by adapting the interactive processes of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification described by Miles et al. (2014). The researchers condensed interview transcripts, classroom observations, and documentary evidence by selecting data relevant to Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta, pedagogical relationships, emotional safety, and deep learning. Deductive and inductive codes were then applied and grouped into broader categories, with the former guided by the analytical framework and the latter capturing emerging patterns and contextual conditions. These categories were organized into thematic matrices and cross-source displays to identify convergences, variations, and relationships. Interpretations were refined through iterative conclusion drawing and verification, while credibility was enhanced through triangulation across participants, data sources, and methods, supported by member checking to resolve inconsistencies. Figure 1 summarises the research sequence, evidence base, analytical stages, and resulting themes.

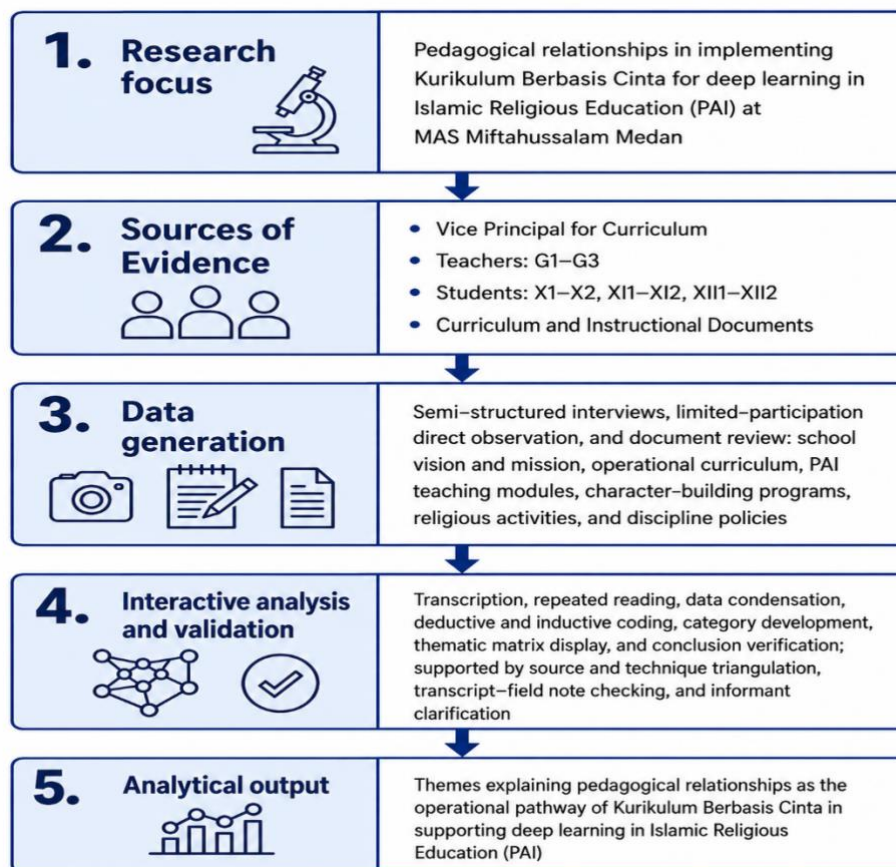


Figure 1. Overview of the Research Procedure and Analytical Flow

Source: Constructed by the researchers based on the research design

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

Cross-source analysis yielded four related themes: the value basis of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta, humanistic pedagogical relationships, emotional safety, and contextual conditions of implementation. Together, the themes show how curriculum values entered classroom interaction and were associated with reflective learning in madrasah religious subjects.

Table 1. Pedagogical Relationships Linking Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta to Deep Learning in Religious Education at MAS Miftahussalam Medan

No	Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta as a Value Foundation	Humanistic Relational Practices	Emotional Safety	Contextual Factors
1	Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta is integrated into madrasah policy, instructional planning, institutional culture, and religious learning	Teachers attend to students' emotional readiness, greet them respectfully, listen to their concerns, and adjust guidance to their	Students feel accepted and are less afraid of making mistakes or expressing learning difficulties.	Leadership commitment gives teachers flexibility to adapt instructional approaches to classroom conditions.

	rather than circumstances. implemented as a separate curriculum.			
2	Compassion, empathy, respect for human dignity, honesty, responsibility, and social concern are positioned alongside academic achievement.	Teachers use guiding questions, open discussion, respectful feedback, and non-humiliating correction when students provide inaccurate answers.	Students become more willing to ask questions, express uncertainty, respond to peers, and reconsider their answers.	Madrasah culture, including the 5S practices, religious activities, and dialogic problem-solving, reinforces the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta inside and outside the classroom.
3	Students are regarded as developing individuals whose intellectual, emotional, social, moral, and spiritual growth requires sustained guidance.	Religious values are contextualized through students' experiences involving family relationships, peer interaction, responsibility, respect for differences, and daily moral choices.	Students can connect religious concepts with lived experience, reflect on value implications, and explain understanding in their own words.	Teacher-student trust supports open communication, personal guidance, classroom dialogue, and effective classroom management.
4	Teacher authority is directed toward awareness, responsibility, and moral development rather than punitive compliance.	Teachers enact values through role modeling, personal guidance, dialogic discipline, and dignity-preserving correction.	Emotional safety provides relational space for participation, value reflection, contextual meaning-making, and deeper understanding.	Limited instructional time, differences in students' reflective abilities, and uneven teacher readiness constrain the depth and consistency of implementation

Source: Research data, processed by the researchers, 2026

Table 1 presents the four themes as an interconnected configuration. Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta provides the ethical foundation for humanistic relational practices, which are associated with emotional safety and opportunities for participation, reflection, and contextual meaning-making. Institutional and classroom conditions shape the depth and consistency of this process.

Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta as the Value Basis of Pedagogical Relationships

Evidence from interviews, observations, and documents showed that Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta functioned as an ethical reference rather than an additional curriculum. Compassion, empathy, respect for human dignity, and spiritual responsibility informed how the madrasah viewed student development. Students were treated as developing persons requiring intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual guidance, while discipline was directed toward awareness and responsible conduct rather than punitive compliance.

Document review supported this interpretation. The madrasah's vision and mission, Madrasah Operational Curriculum, character-strengthening programs, and instructional materials

placed moral and religious formation alongside academic competence. The vice principal noted that teachers could adjust methods to students' circumstances while maintaining moral development and educative interaction as priorities (WK). The same orientation appeared in 5S practices, religious activities, and dialogic procedures for addressing student problems.

Table 2. Matrix of Value Foundations in Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta in Pedagogical Relationships

No.	Dimension	Empirical Evidence	Relational Meaning
1.	Position of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta	Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta is integrated into the national curriculum and madrasah policies.	It provides a value-based direction for teacher–student relationships.
2.	Perceptions of students	Students are viewed as a trust and developing individuals.	It encourages patient guidance that respects students' needs.
3.	Educational orientation	Moral development is pursued alongside academic achievement.	It broadens learning goals beyond content mastery toward personal development.
4.	Religious education planning	Learning objectives include knowledge, attitudes, and behavior.	It positions attitudinal change as an integral learning outcome.
5.	Exercise of teacher authority	Discipline is implemented through guidance and dialogue.	It preserves authority without undermining students' dignity.
6.	Support from the madrasah culture	The 5S practices, religious activities, and pedagogical flexibility are institutionalized.	They strengthen the consistent application of the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta in daily interactions.

Source: Research data, processed by the researchers, 2026.

Taken together, the evidence positions Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta as a normative reference connecting madrasah policy with pedagogical action. Its values became visible in how teachers interpreted students' needs, designed learning, exercised authority, and managed classroom interaction.

Humanistic Relational Practices in Madrasah Religious Learning

Classroom observations and student accounts identified several humanistic relational practices. Teachers greeted students, attended to their conditions, and used follow-up questions rather than public blame when answers were inaccurate. Students associated this treatment with greater confidence to ask questions and express opinions (X1; X2; XI1; XII2). Teachers also invited discussion, listened to students, and responded openly to differing views.

Humanistic practice also appeared in value formation and discipline. Teachers connected religious content with familiar social situations and modeled values through speech, attitudes, and conduct (G1–G3). Misconduct was first explored through personal dialogue before correction, with reprimands directed toward awareness and responsibility rather than deterrence alone (G1). Students reported that rules remained firm without degrading treatment, allowing relational

closeness to coexist with dignity-preserving authority.

Table 3. Matrix of Humanistic Relational Practices in Religious Education

No.	Finding Dimension	Empirical Form	Function in Learning Interaction
1.	Attention to students' conditions	Teachers greet students and identify their emotional readiness at the beginning of the lesson.	Builds rapport and prepares students to participate in learning.
2.	Responses to mistakes	Teachers use guiding questions and avoid humiliating students.	Protects students' self-esteem and willingness to attempt answers.
3.	Dialogic communication	Students are given opportunities to ask questions, express opinions, and respond to different views.	Creates open and participatory classroom interaction.
4.	Contextual value internalization	Religious lesson content is connected with students' everyday social experiences.	Helps students understand the practical meaning of Islamic teachings.
5.	Teacher role modeling	Values are taught through teachers' speech, attitudes, and ways of interacting.	Provides concrete examples of value enactment.
6.	Humanistic discipline	Misconduct is addressed through dialogue, personal advice, and guidance.	Fosters awareness without undermining students' dignity.

Source: Research data, processed by the researchers, 2026.

These findings show that humanistic relationships involve more than interpersonal warmth. Empathy, respectful responses to mistakes, teacher exemplarity, and educative discipline created relational conditions for participation, value internalization, and personal development.

Emotional Safety as a Relational Condition for Deep Learning

Interview and observation data associated emotional safety with acceptance during uncertainty and error. Teachers treated inaccurate responses as starting points for reconsideration, while students described calm, non-humiliating responses as reducing embarrassment and making learning difficulties easier to express (X1; XI1; XII1). This atmosphere accompanied more open participation without removing teachers' instructional direction.

Relational openness was also linked with reflective engagement. Teachers connected religious content with personal experience and social issues, prompting students to interpret concepts, justify views, and consider implications for conduct. Students reported a clearer understanding when religious ideas were discussed through actual situations (X2; XI2; XII2), and teachers used these responses to distinguish conceptual understanding from memorized recall.

Table 4. Matrix of Emotional Safety in Deep Learning within Islamic Religious Education

No.	Finding Dimension	Empirical Indicator	Contribution to the Learning Process
1.	Acceptance of mistakes	Teachers do not humiliate students and guide them to reconsider their answers.	Reduces students' fear of attempting an answer.
2.	Willingness to ask questions	Students are more open in expressing questions and learning difficulties.	Helps teachers identify students' learning needs.
3.	Participation in discussion	Students express opinions, respond to peers, and raise follow-up questions.	Encourages active information processing.
4.	Reflection on experience	Lesson content is connected with personal experiences and social situations.	Deepens students' understanding of religious values.
5.	Contextual meaning-making	Students explain the relevance of Islamic teachings to everyday behavior.	Connects knowledge with practical application.
6.	Explanation in students' own words	Students do not merely repeat definitions provided by teachers or textbooks.	Indicates the development of a more independent understanding.

Source: Research data, processed by the researchers, 2026.

Emotional safety, therefore, referred to a relational condition in which students could reveal uncertainty, test interpretations, and connect religious concepts with lived experience without humiliation. Within this case, it functioned as an intermediary condition between humanistic teacher practices and reflective engagement, not as a final outcome or statistically established causal mechanism.

Contextual Factors Shaping the Implementation of Pedagogical Relationships

Institutional evidence showed that pedagogical relationships informed by Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta were embedded in madrasah policy and culture. Leadership flexibility, 5S routines, religious activities, and dialogic problem-solving reinforced this orientation. Teacher–student trust also supported open communication and guidance, indicating that relational practice depended on the institutional environment as well as individual teacher disposition.

Implementation depth nevertheless varied. Limited instructional time sometimes shortened discussion and reflection (G2; G3), while students differed in their ability to connect religious concepts with personal experience. Interviews with WK and the teachers also indicated uneven readiness to facilitate dialogue, reflection, and contextual interpretation. These variations underscore the need for clearer operational guidance and sustained pedagogical support (WK; G1).

Table 5. Matrix of Contextual Factors Shaping the Implementation of Pedagogical Relationships

No.	Position	Finding Aspect	Empirical Condition	Influence on Implementation
1.	Enabling factor	Leadership commitment	Teachers are given flexibility to adapt instructional approaches.	Enables humanistic relationships to be implemented according to classroom conditions.
2.	Enabling factor	Madrasah culture	The 5S practices, religious activities, and dialogic problem-solving are routinely implemented.	Maintains the continuity of the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta inside and outside the classroom
3.	Enabling factor	Teacher–student trust	Teachers understand students’ conditions, while students feel comfortable interacting openly.	Facilitates guidance, dialogue, and classroom management.
4.	Constraining factor	Instructional time	Discussions and reflections are sometimes shortened to meet learning targets.	Reduces the depth of guidance and meaning-making.
5.	Constraining factor	Students’ reflective abilities	Students differ in the speed and depth with which they process their experiences.	Requires more varied instructional strategies and forms of assistance.
6.	Constraining factor	Teachers’ pedagogical readiness	Teachers demonstrate varying levels of understanding and competence in implementing Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta.	Contributes to differences in the depth and consistency of implementation.

Source: Research data, processed by the researchers, 2026.

Taken together, the four themes form an interconnected configuration of pedagogical relationships informed by Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta. Empathic communication, dialogic guidance, teacher exemplarity, and educative discipline were associated with emotional safety, participation, reflection, and contextual meaning-making. Their depth and consistency depended on leadership, madrasah culture, teacher–student trust, instructional time, teacher readiness, and students’ reflective abilities. Sustained implementation, therefore, requires institutional and pedagogical support, as summarised in Figure 2.

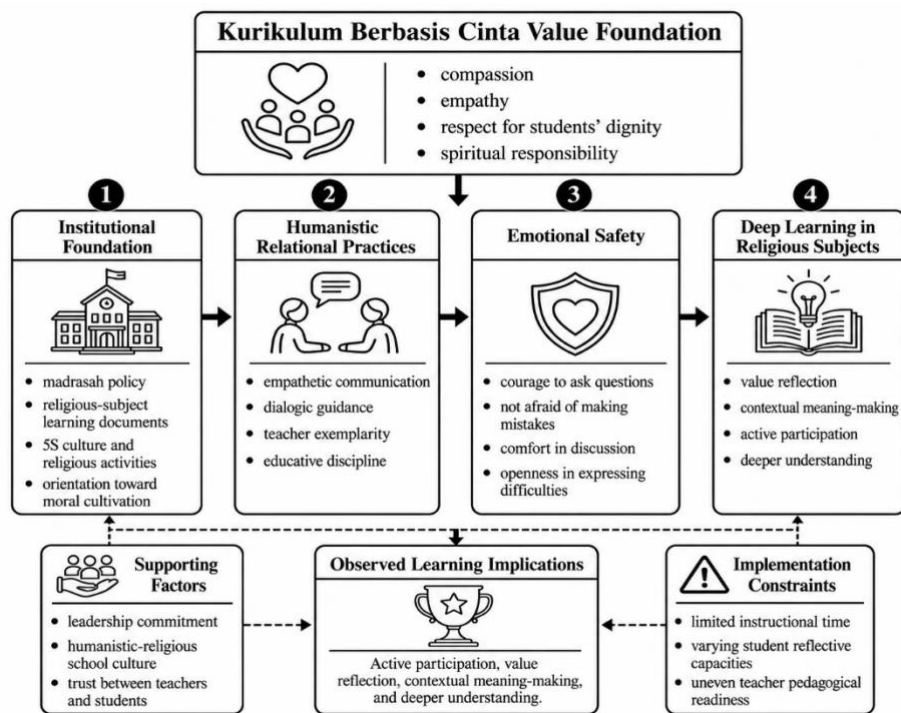


Figure 2. The Pedagogical Relationship Framework of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta for Deep Learning in Madrasah Religious Subjects

Source: Developed by the researchers based on thematic data analysis, 2026.

Figure 2 summarises the relational configuration derived from the four themes. The values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta entered religious learning through institutional enactment and humanistic teacher practices, with emotional safety accompanying participation, reflection, contextual interpretation, and increasingly independent understanding. Supporting and constraining factors shaped the depth and consistency of this configuration. The framework is an interpretive proposition from one qualitative case, not a tested causal model.

Discussion

The Relational Framework of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta in Madrasah Religious Learning

The first theme indicates that Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta gained practical significance by shaping the ethical interpretation of the existing curriculum, rather than replacing the national framework. At MAS Miftahussalam Medan, compassion, respect for dignity, and spiritual responsibility informed educational aims, lesson planning, teacher authority, and student development. This interpretation resonates with Burhanudin (2025), who presents Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta as a humanistic and inclusive orientation in Islamic education. It also corresponds with Susilo et al. (2026), whose analysis connects Islamic character formation with recognition of

human dignity. The present case adds that these values became visible through routine teacher–student encounters, not solely through formal policy statements.

Syah et al. (2025) documented empathy, respect, self-confidence, and character development within the implementation of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta at an Islamic elementary school. Their study foregrounded the outcomes associated with implementation. The current findings contribute a process-oriented explanation by tracing how institutional values entered students’ learning experiences. Madrasah policies and instructional documents informed how teachers interpreted student needs, responded to difficulties, and exercised classroom authority. Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta should therefore be examined through interactional practice alongside its formal curricular formulation.

Broader relational scholarship reinforces this interpretation. Lisio et al. (2025) describe supportive, trusting, and emotionally attentive relationships as a secure basis for students’ participation and learning exploration. Liu (2024) likewise relates relational quality to perceived support and academic involvement. Within madrasah religious learning, however, teacher–student relationships also carry explicit ethical meaning. Teachers communicate religious values through both instructional content and interpersonal conduct. Patience, respectful correction, dialogue, and guidance consequently become part of students’ moral experience of religious education.

This synthesis positions pedagogical relationships as the operational medium through which Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta moves from institutional ideals into lived learning experiences. Teachers enact the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta through communication, guidance, discipline, and responses to students’ circumstances. Pedagogical relationships, therefore, do more than provide a supportive classroom atmosphere. They constitute the relational arena in which students encounter, interpret, and experience the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta.

Humanistic Relational Practices in Madrasah Religious Learning

The findings show that humanistic relational practices in madrasah religious learning were enacted through empathic communication, dialogic guidance, teacher role modeling, and educative discipline. Teachers did more than create a friendly classroom atmosphere; they attended to students’ conditions, encouraged questions, and guided inaccurate responses without humiliation. This pattern aligns with Afandi and Ningsih (2023), who found that humanistic PAI instruction respects students’ opinions, supports their development, connects lesson content with real-life contexts, and avoids repressive punishment. Hasibuan and Al-Farabi (2024) similarly showed that

student-centered approaches, discussions, and presentations supported communication skills in PAI learning. Karasova and Nehyba (2023) Further identified student-centered communication responses as important for reducing behavioral problems, increasing student engagement, fostering responsibility, and developing a positive interpersonal classroom climate. The present study extends these findings by showing how empathic communication, guiding questions, respectful correction, and dignity-preserving discipline translate the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta into everyday classroom interaction.

The importance of these practices is supported by broader relational and dialogic research. Tao et al. (2022) found through meta-analysis that perceived teacher support was positively associated with academic achievement and that behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement partially mediated this relationship. In the Indonesian school context, Nurwanto et al. (2024) showed that dialogic pedagogy provides an educational alternative to predominantly punitive approaches in responding to violations of school rules. Their findings emphasize the importance of dialogue in understanding students' circumstances and guiding behavioral improvement without relying solely on punishment. Ratmanida et al. (2024) further reported that classroom interaction provided opportunities for collaboration, strengthened students' confidence, and contributed to motivation, engagement, and positive attitudes towards learning. In the present study, teachers similarly treated mistakes and disciplinary problems as opportunities for guidance and further thinking. They used personal dialogue, guiding questions, and respectful correction rather than embarrassment or negative labeling, thereby enabling students to reconsider their responses and remain involved in classroom interaction.

Teacher role modeling and educative discipline also shaped students' moral experiences. Teachers communicated values through speech, behavior, habituation, and personal example. This finding supports Hidayat et al. (2022), who emphasized value internalization through integration, habituation, and exemplary conduct. Bakar et al. (2025) Similarly, found in a madrasah aliyah context, that transformative Islamic religious education was enacted through teacher role modeling, patience, sincerity, creativity, emotional management, and spaces for dialogue. Teacher-student relationship quality may also influence classroom and peer norms concerning respect and acceptance (Endedijk et al., 2022). Indonesian research similarly identifies consistent teacher guidance as relevant to discipline, responsibility, honesty, and social concern (Pangalila & Sakura, 2025). At MAS Miftahussalam, teachers continued to enforce rules; however, they used dialogue,

courteous language, and proportionate correction. Authority was therefore exercised without humiliation or fear-based compliance.

Based on this synthesis, the identified practices constitute humanistic pedagogical authority. This concept refers to teacher authority exercised through empathy, dialogue, role modeling, and dignity-preserving guidance. It differs from a repressive authority based on pressure and fear. It also differs from permissive relationships that neglect boundaries and responsibilities. In madrasah religious learning, humanistic pedagogical authority enables teachers to maintain instructional direction while enacting religious values through interpersonal conduct. The concept explains how the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta move beyond formal lesson content and become visible in teachers' everyday treatment of students.

Emotional Safety as a Relational Condition for Deep Learning

The findings show that emotional safety extended beyond classroom comfort. It appeared when students could express uncertainty without humiliation. Teachers responded to inaccurate answers through guidance and further questions. These responses allowed students to reconsider their understanding openly. Students also became more willing to ask questions and explain difficulties. Emotional safety, therefore, connected teacher–student interaction with cognitive and reflective engagement.

This pattern supports Afandi and Ningsih (2023), who identified respect, openness, and non-repressive guidance within humanistic PAI learning. The present findings extend that interpretation beyond classroom enjoyment because emotional safety also involved students' willingness to risk inaccurate answers and revise ideas without losing personal dignity. Tao et al. (2022) reported that perceived teacher support was positively associated with academic achievement, while behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement partially mediated this relationship. Zhou et al. (2023) similarly found positive associations among teacher–student relationship quality, students' subjective well-being, and academic achievement. Although the present qualitative study does not statistically test these outcomes, its findings clarify the relational process through which supportive teacher responses may contribute to students' emotional safety. Emotional safety is therefore positioned as an intermediate condition associated with students' willingness to express uncertainty, reconsider their answers, and remain engaged in reflective learning.

Emotional safety also supported dialogue related to deep learning. Tao and Chen (2024) found positive associations between dialogic teacher talk and learning outcomes, particularly

through invitations and follow-up questions. Supriyadi et al. (2025) identified interpretive and exploratory stages in religious learning, while Riswadi et al. (2025) showed that deep learning in Islamic Religious Education moves beyond memorization through reflective, contextual, and dialogical meaning-making, with teachers acting as facilitators of inquiry and reflection. Such practices require students to communicate uncertainty and emerging understanding. The present findings clarify the relational conditions supporting these activities: dialogic methods may remain superficial when students fear embarrassment, whereas emotional safety enables them to question, explain, and revise their understanding.

Based on this synthesis, emotional safety represents a relational gateway to deep learning. It is not the final learning outcome. It serves as an intermediary condition within classroom interaction. Humanistic pedagogical relationships were associated with emotional safety. This condition created opportunities for participation, value reflection, and contextual meaning-making. Learning depth, therefore, involved relational and emotional experiences. It did not depend only on content or instructional methods. This interpretation remains processual, not causal. The study identifies an empirical pattern within one madrasah context.

Contextual Factors Shaping Pedagogical Relationships Informed by Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta

The findings show that pedagogical relationships informed by Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta were context-dependent. Leadership commitment gave teachers flexibility in managing classroom interaction. Madrasah culture supported the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta through daily educational practices. The 5S practices and religious activities reinforced relational consistency. Teacher–student trust also supported dialogue and guidance. However, limited instructional time restricted extended discussion and reflection. Students also differed in their reflective abilities. Teachers showed varying readiness for dialogic and contextual learning.

These findings align with Prenger et al. (2022), whose systematic review identified school-organizational, innovation-related, individual, and contextual characteristics as interconnected factors influencing the sustainability of educational innovations. McChesney and Cross (2023) similarly emphasise that school culture, leadership, and professional relationships shape teachers' classroom implementation. Reinius et al. (2024) further demonstrate that teachers' opportunities to contribute to school-culture transformation are associated with organizational support, professional collaboration, prior experiences, and teachers' beliefs about their role in school development. The present findings extend these insights to the madrasah context by showing that pedagogical

relationships informed by Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta were supported by leadership commitment, institutional culture, teacher–student trust, and teachers’ readiness to facilitate dialogic and reflective learning. The implementation of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta, therefore, involved more than individual teacher commitment; it depended on institutional arrangements that enabled the values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta to become part of routine religious learning.

Teacher readiness and instructional time also shaped implementation depth. Hariyati et al. (2023) relate teacher readiness to organizational responsiveness, while Ehlert et al. (2025) identify time, resources, and institutional support as important conditions for implementing educational innovations. Teacher readiness in the present study also involved emotional and relational competence. Calandri et al. (2025) identify emotional intelligence, emotional awareness, empathy, and emotion regulation as interrelated dimensions associated with classroom management, teacher–student relationships, classroom climate, student engagement, and motivation. Evidence from an Indonesian madrasah context also supports the relevance of this dimension. Gumelar et al. (2024) found a positive and significant association between teachers’ emotional intelligence and the learning engagement of Grade X and XI students at a madrasah aliyah. Although their correlational design does not establish causality, the findings indicate that teachers’ emotional competence is relevant to students’ behavioral, cognitive, and emotional involvement in learning. Thus, the implementation of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta requires curricular knowledge as well as emotional-regulation and relational skills. Limited time and uneven teacher readiness constrained dialogue, reflection, and contextual guidance.

These contextual factors form an interconnected implementation configuration. The configuration includes leadership, culture, readiness, time, and student abilities. No single factor independently explains implementation quality. Their interaction shaped the consistency of pedagogical relationships. Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta, therefore, requires institutional support and pedagogical capacity. Without such support, implementation may depend on individual teacher initiative. The values of Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta must appear in daily religious learning experiences.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta at MAS Miftahussalam Medan operated as a value orientation embedded in policy, instructional documents, institutional culture, and teacher–

student interactions. Its values were enacted through empathic communication, dialogic guidance, teacher role modeling, and educative discipline. These practices were associated with emotional safety and opportunities for questioning, reflection, contextual meaning-making, and deeper understanding. The findings, therefore, position pedagogical relationships as an operational pathway linking a value-based curriculum with students' learning experiences in madrasah religious education.

The depth and consistency of this pathway were shaped by leadership commitment, madrasah culture, teacher–student trust, teacher readiness, instructional time, and students' reflective abilities. The study is limited to one madrasah and ten informants, so its findings are contextual and do not establish causal relationships. Future research should test the proposed framework across multiple madrasahs, subjects, and educational levels, including longitudinal work on the development of pedagogical relationships and emotional safety.

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