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RECONSTRUCTING MAHABBAH EDUCATION: IBN QAYYIM AL-JAWZIYYAH'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY FOR A CONTEMPORARY COMPASSIONATE CURRICULUM

Ridwan Wirabumi Asri[1]
Doktor Pendidikan Agama Islam, Universitas Ibn Khaldun Bogor, Indonesia
(ridwanwirabumi@uika-bogor.ac.id)

Hasbi Indra
Doktor Pendidikan Agama Islam, Universitas Ibn Khaldun Bogor, Indonesia
(hasbiindra@uika-bogor.ac.id)

Adian Husaini
Doktor Pendidikan Agama Islam, Universitas Ibn Khaldun Bogor, Indonesia
(adianhusaini@uika-bogor.ac.id)

Budi Handrianto
Doktor Pendidikan Agama Islam, Universitas Ibn Khaldun Bogor, Indonesia
(budihandrianto@uika-bogor.ac.id)

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk merekonstruksi konsep mahabbah (cinta) menurut Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah sebagai suatu filsafat pendidikan yang komprehensif serta mengeksplorasi kontribusinya terhadap pengembangan kurikulum berbasis cinta (compassionate curriculum) kontemporer. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kepustakaan (library research). Data dianalisis melalui analisis isi (content analysis) dan interpretasi filosofis terhadap karya-karya utama Ibn Qayyim, yaitu Rawḍat al-Muḥibbin wa Nuzhat al-Mushtaqin, Madarij al-Salikin, Ṭariq al-Hijratayn, dan Ighathat al-Lahfan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Pendidikan Mahabbah berlandaskan Mahabbatullah (cinta kepada Allah) sebagai inti ontologis dan etis dalam pembentukan manusia. Kerangka pendidikan ini mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai tauhid, keimanan, ibadah, Tazkiyat al-Nafs (penyucian jiwa), pembinaan akhlak, kecintaan kepada Rasulullah saw., serta hubungan sosial yang dilandasi kasih sayang ke dalam suatu proses pengembangan manusia yang holistik. Berbeda dengan pendekatan pendidikan berbasis kasih sayang kontemporer yang umumnya berorientasi pada perspektif humanistik dan sosial-emosional, filsafat pendidikan Ibn Qayyim menawarkan model teosentris, di mana kasih sayang berakar pada kesadaran spiritual dan penghambaan kepada Allah. Penelitian ini mengusulkan Pendidikan Mahabbah sebagai suatu kerangka konseptual-teosentris yang bersifat teoretis (belum diuji secara empiris) dan memperluas diskursus pendidikan berbasis kasih sayang melalui integrasi

[1] Correspondence Author

antara dimensi transendensi spiritual, pembentukan karakter, tanggung jawab etis, dan kepedulian sosial. Temuan penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap pengembangan filsafat pendidikan dengan menunjukkan relevansi pemikiran klasik Islam dalam menjawab tantangan pendidikan kontemporer sekaligus memperkaya wacana global mengenai pendidikan holistik dan berbasis nilai.

Keywords:

Mahabbah Education; Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah; Compassionate Curriculum; Islamic Educational Philosophy; Character Education

ABSTRACTS

This study aims to reconstruct Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's concept of mahabbah (love) as a comprehensive educational philosophy and explores its contribution to contemporary compassionate curriculum. Employing a qualitative library research design, the study analyzes Ibn Qayyim's principal works, including Rawḍat al-Muḥibbin wa Nuzhat al-Mushtaqin, Madarij al-Salikin, Ṭariq al-Hijratayn, and Ighathat al-Lahfan, using content analysis and philosophical interpretation. The findings demonstrate that Mahabbah Education is founded upon Mahabbatullah (love of God), which functions as the ontological and ethical core of educational formation. This framework integrates tawḥid, faith, worship, Tazkiyat al-Nafs (self-purification), moral discipline, prophetic love, and compassionate social relationships into a coherent process of holistic human development. Unlike contemporary compassion-based approaches that predominantly adopt humanistic and socio-emotional perspectives, Ibn Qayyim's philosophy offers a theocentric model in which compassion emerges from spiritual consciousness and devotion to God. This study proposes Mahabbah Education as a conceptual theocentric framework for strengthening contemporary compassionate curriculum discourse, extending it by reconnecting spiritual transcendence with character formation, ethical responsibility, and social compassion. As a conceptual and theoretical contribution rather than an empirically tested model, the findings contribute to educational philosophy by demonstrating the continuing relevance of classical Islamic thought in addressing contemporary educational challenges and enriching global discussions on holistic and values-based education.

A. INTRODUCTION

Education has long been recognized as a key driver of human development, social cohesion, and sustainable progress (Nwachukwu 2024). However, despite significant advances in educational access, digital technology, and scientific innovation, educational systems worldwide continue to face persistent challenges in fostering moral integrity, empathy, and ethical responsibility among learners. Rising concerns over bullying (Francis, Wang, and Perpetua 2022), violence (Mcmahon et al. 2024), intolerance (Ikhrom et al. 2023), mental health issues (En, Goh, and Fern 2023) and declining civic values suggest that an excessive emphasis on academic achievement and cognitive performance has often come at the expense of learners' character and spiritual development. In response, international organizations such as UNESCO (2021) and OECD (2023) have called for more holistic educational approaches that integrate social-emotional learning, ethical values, and human well-being into curriculum design. Consequently, compasionate curriculum has emerged as an influential paradigm that promotes empathy, care, and prosocial behavior as essential educational outcomes.

The Compassionate Curriculum (*Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta/KBC*), introduced by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, represents a transformative educational initiative that seeks to strengthen character formation by placing love, compassion, and human dignity at the center of the learning process. In this article, "Compassionate Curriculum" refers specifically to Indonesia's Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta as formulated in Ministry of Religious Affairs policy documents, which is distinguished here from the broader international literature on compassionate education more generally[2]. Rather than emphasizing academic achievement alone, the curriculum promotes holistic education through nurturing empathy, mutual respect, inclusivity, and ethical responsibility among students, teachers, and the broader school community (Afryansyah and Sirozi 2025); (Syah et al. 2025). Grounded in Indonesia's educational and religious values, the Compassionate Curriculum encourages educators to create learning environments characterized by care, dialogue, and positive relationships while fostering students' intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual development (Syah et al. 2025).

By integrating values of compassion into teaching practices, school culture, and educational leadership, the curriculum aims to cultivate learners who are not only academically competent but also morally responsible, socially sensitive, and capable of contributing to peaceful, harmonious, and sustainable societies (Aisyah and Zainal 2026). Nevertheless, existing compassionate education models remain largely grounded in humanistic and socio-emotional perspectives, paying relatively limited attention to the spiritual and transcendental foundations of compassion. This limitation highlights the need for alternative educational philosophies capable of integrating spiritual consciousness, moral formation, and compassionate action within a coherent framework for holistic human development.

This reconstruction has theoretical implications beyond positioning love as an additional educational value. By conceptualizing *Mahabbatullah* as the ontological foundation of education, it reorients the underlying logic of character formation: moral conduct and compassion are understood not merely as social-emotional competencies or externally prescribed values, but as expressions of a spiritually grounded

[2] Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia. (2025, February 26). *Apa Kurikulum Cinta? Ini pengertian dan strategi implementasinya*. Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia

transformation of the self. In this sense, Ibn Qayyim's framework potentially extends existing compassionate and values-based educational theories by linking spiritual orientation, moral formation, and compassionate action within a unified theocentric framework.

Previous literature relevant to this study can be categorized into five strands. Several studies have demonstrated the positive role of compassion in fostering students' well-being, empathy, and prosocial behavior, while research on values-based education has highlighted the importance of ethical and moral development within educational settings (Chan et al. 2021); (Tendhar and Mesquita 2020); (Kirby et al. 2023), but pays limited attention to spiritual and transcendental foundations. The second strand focuses on values-based and character education, emphasizing ethical and moral development, yet rarely conceptualizing divine love as the foundation of moral formation. The third strand comprises Islamic education, particularly *tarbiyah*, moral education, and character formation, but with limited integration of *Mahabbatullah* as an organizing philosophical principle. Studies on Islamic education have extensively discussed moral education, tarbiyah, and character formation from normative and pedagogical perspectives (Al Hamdani 2014); (Alhamuddin 2025); (Abdalla 2026). The fourth strands have largely explored *mahabbah* within the contexts of spirituality, Sufism, ethics, and theological discourse, emphasizing its significance in strengthening the relationship between human beings and God (Riska, Kaharu, and Santalia 2024); (Zakiyah and Saepudin 2025); (Anggraini et al. 2024); (Tasman and Hadi 2024), while its educational and curricular implications remain underdeveloped. However, these discussions rarely extend to the educational implications of *Mahabbatullah* (love of God) as the ontological foundation of human formation, moral cultivation, and compassionate social engagement.

The fifth strand explores Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's educational thought, including *Tazkiyat al-Nafs* and moral education. Existing scholars have also made significant contributions to understanding Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's educational thought from various perspectives, including *Tazkiyat al-Nafs* as an approach to addressing students' behavioral problems (Maududin, Tamam, and Supraha 2021) to moral education (Azhari et al. 2026), but largely through descriptive, normative, or historical approaches. Other studies have primarily examined Ibn Qayyim's intellectual biography, theological thought, contributions to Islamic scholarship, and broader educational ideas (Halim et al. 2021); (Shodiq, Tamyiz, and Khoir 2026). Although these studies have enriched the understanding of Ibn Qayyim's intellectual legacy, they generally investigate individual aspects of his thought in isolation and predominantly adopt descriptive, normative, or historical approaches. Consequently, limited attention has been given to reconstructing *mahabbah* (*Mahabbatullah*) as the ontological foundation of Ibn Qayyim's educational philosophy and as a comprehensive theoretical framework for curriculum development.

At the intersection of these five strands, an important gap remains. Existing studies have not sufficiently integrated compassion, moral formation, Islamic education, *Mahabbatullah*, and Ibn Qayyim's educational philosophy into a coherent framework in which divine love serves as the ontological foundation of compassionate human development. This study addresses this gap by reconstructing Ibn Qayyim's philosophy of *Mahabbah Education* and examining its convergence with Indonesia's

Compassionate Curriculum (*Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta*) to develop a theocentric framework for holistic character and spiritual education.

Consequently, the potential of Ibn Qayyim's educational philosophy to inform curriculum theory remains largely underexplored, particularly within contemporary debates on compassionate and values-based education. This gap is especially significant given the growing international demand for educational paradigms that integrate cognitive, moral, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of learning. Addressing this gap, the present study aims to reconstruct Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's philosophy of Mahabbah Education as a comprehensive educational framework and to examine its contribution to the development of a contemporary compassionate curriculum. Specifically, the study seeks to: (1) reconstruct the philosophical foundations, educational principles, and core components of Mahabbah Education from Ibn Qayyim's major works; and (2) analyze the convergence between these principles and the values underpinning Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta) in order to propose a theocentric framework for holistic character and spiritual education.

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative conceptual research design using systematic qualitative document analysis (SQDA) to reconstruct Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's philosophy of *Mahabbah Education* and examine its contribution to the development of a contemporary compassionate curriculum. Rather than seeking empirical generalization, this study aimed to generate a conceptual framework through an in-depth interpretation of classical Islamic texts and contemporary educational literature. The analysis combined content analysis with philosophical interpretation, allowing both the explicit educational concepts and their underlying ontological, epistemological, and ethical assumptions to be systematically examined. Such an approach is appropriate for studies that seek to develop educational theory from classical intellectual traditions and reinterpret it within contemporary educational contexts.

The literature collection followed a systematic procedure to ensure transparency and analytical rigor. Primary sources consisted of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's principal works that explicitly discuss *mahabbah*, human development, moral education, and spiritual formation, namely *Rawḍat al-Muḥibbin wa Nuzhat al-Mushtaqin*, *Madarij al-Salikin*, *Ṭariq al-Hijratayn*, and *Ighathat al-Lahfan*. Secondary sources were identified through searches in Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, Dimensions, and DOAJ using combinations of keywords including "*Ibn Qayyim*", "*mahabbah*", "*Islamic educational philosophy*", "*compassionate education*", "*character education*", "*values-based education*", "*spiritual pedagogy*", and "*compassionate curriculum*". The inclusion criteria comprised (1) peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and official policy documents; (2) publications addressing educational philosophy, Islamic education, compassion, character education, or curriculum theory; and (3) publications written in English, Arabic, or Indonesian. Sources were excluded if they were opinion pieces, lacked scholarly review, duplicated previous publications, or discussed *mahabbah* solely from legal, linguistic, or devotional perspectives without educational relevance.

The unit of analysis comprised textual passages containing educational concepts, philosophical propositions, pedagogical principles, and value systems related to

mahabbah. Data were analyzed through an iterative coding process (Tanjung & Devi, 2013); (Creswell 2009) involving open coding to identify key concepts (e.g., *Mahabbatullah*, *tawḥid*, *Tazkiyat al-Nafs*, *adab*, moral cultivation, and compassion), axial coding to organize these concepts into broader categories, and selective coding to synthesize them into overarching themes representing the philosophical framework of Mahabbah Education. Coding was performed manually by the author team: passages were first read and annotated independently, after which coding decisions were discussed and reconciled among the authors to reduce individual interpretive bias, and each selective theme was checked against multiple, independently coded passages before being retained. Throughout this process, the authors distinguished between what Ibn Qayyim explicitly states in the primary texts, what the authors infer from those statements, and what the authors propose as a contemporary educational application; this distinction is maintained in the presentation of the results in the following section. To ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings, the reconstructed themes were continuously refined through repeated reading, constant comparison between Ibn Qayyim's writings and the core principles of Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum (*Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta*), and philosophical interpretation. This systematic analytical process established a transparent audit trail linking textual evidence, coding, thematic development, and conceptual interpretation (Carcary 2020), thereby supporting the reconstruction of Mahabbah Education as a theocentric framework for a contemporary compassionate curriculum.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Reconstruction of Mahabbah Education in Ibn Qayyim's Educational Philosophy

The systematic qualitative document analysis identified a coherent philosophical structure of Mahabbah Education through iterative coding of Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's principal works (*Rawḍat al-Muḥibbin*, *Madarij al-Salikin*, and *Ighathat al-Lahfan*) (Al-Jawziyyah, 1998; Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; and Al-Jawziyyah, 2019). The analysis began with open coding of textual passages describing the nature of love (*mahabbah*), educational purpose, human development, and moral formation. Similar concepts were subsequently grouped through axial coding into broader philosophical categories before being synthesized into five overarching themes representing the architecture of Mahabbah Education. Rather than functioning as isolated concepts, these themes form an integrated educational philosophy in which *Mahabbatullah* (love of God) becomes the ontological foundation from which spiritual consciousness, character formation, and compassionate social engagement emerge.

Table 1. Coding Process and Theme Development

Open Codes	**Axial Categories**	**Selective Themes**
Mahabbatullah, *ma'rifatullah*, worship, sincerity (*Rawḍat al-Muḥibbin, pages: 1, 52, 164, 280. Ighathat al-Lahfan min Masayid al-Shaytan, pages: 44, 113, 114, 325 Madarij al-Salikin, pages: 219, 528-530, 51)*	Spiritual foundation	Theme 1. *Mahabbatullah* as the Ontological Foundation of Education
Tawḥid, *i*man, submission, servitude (*Rawḍat al-Muḥibbin, pages: 61, 63, 268. Ighathat al-Lahfan min Masayid al-Shaytan, pages: 95, 100-101, 288. Madarij al-Salikin, pages: 565, 568, 51)*	Educational worldview	Theme 2. *Tawhid* as the Epistemological and Ethical Orientation
Tazkiyat al-Nafs, self-discipline, repentance, self-control (*Rawḍat al-Muḥibbin, pages: 250, 400, 103. Ighathat al-Lahfan min Masayid al-Shaytan, pages: : 118, 120, 121, 139, 145, 146, 148. Madarij al-Salikin, pages: 62, 67-68, 83)*	Personal transformation	Theme 3. Spiritual and Moral Transformation through *Tazkiyat al-Nafs*
Prophetic love, akhlaq, adab, patience, justice, humility (*Rawḍat al-Muḥibbin, pages: 194, 195, 262, 6, 7. Ighathat al-Lahfan min Masayid al-Shaytan, pages 34, 159. Madarij al-Salikin, pages: 337, 334, 253, 255)*	Character formation	Theme 4. Character Formation through Prophetic Ethics
Compassion, iḥsan, social responsibility, brotherhood, empathy (*Rawḍat al-Muḥibbin, pages: 280. Madarij al-Salikin, pages: 387, 303, 306, 305, 344)*	Social engagement	Theme 5. Compassionate Social Responsibility as the Educational Outcome

Source: Developed by the authors based on qualitative coding of selected textual passages from Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's principal works

As shown in Table 1, the coding process revealed five interconnected themes rather than isolated educational concepts. *Mahabbatullah* emerged as the ontological

foundation of education, followed by tawḥid as the epistemological orientation, *Tazkiyat al-Nafs* as the transformative process, Prophetic ethics as the basis of character formation, and compassionate social responsibility as the ultimate educational outcome. Together these themes constitute the reconstructed philosophy of Mahabbah Education.

- *Mahabbatullah* as the Ontological Foundation of Education

The analysis consistently revealed that *Mahabbatullah* occupies the central position from which all other educational dimensions derive. Love of God is presented not merely as an emotional disposition but as the ultimate purpose of education, the source of moral discipline, and the driving force behind ethical conduct and social compassion.

This finding is reflected in Ibn Qayyim's explanation that the primary objective of education (*tarbiyah*) is to preserve the purity of human *fiṭrah* (innate nature), protect it from all forms of deviation, and cultivate complete servitude (*al-ʿubudiyyah*) to Allah. This objective is rooted in the belief that human beings were created solely to worship and obey their Creator. Therefore, the ultimate purpose of education is not merely the acquisition of knowledge or the development of intellectual competence, but the formation of individuals whose entire existence is directed toward sincere devotion to Allah (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998; Al-Jawziyyah, 2019). As stated in the Qur'an:

"*And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me*." *(Qur'an 51:56)*

According to Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, *mahabbah* (love) constitutes the foundational principle of Islamic education, governing the relationship between human beings, Allah, and society.

Raudlah al-Muhibbin, p. 61: "*The perfection of love lies in servitude, submission, humility, and obedience to the beloved ... The purpose of creation is the worship of Allah alone, which simultaneously represents the perfection of love, submission, and humility*."

Genuine love is not merely an emotional inclination but must be guided by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, which determine the proper object, manner, and limits of love. At the theological level, *Mahabbatullah* (love of God) represents the essence of tawḥid, as sincere love for Allah necessarily entails complete devotion, obedience, and the rejection of all forms of associating partners with Him. Consequently, worship (*ʿibadah*) is understood as the integration of perfect love, humility, and submission, transforming religious practice from mere ritual observance into an expression of profound spiritual attachment to the Creator (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998).

Building upon this theological foundation, Ibn Qayyim conceptualizes mahabbah as the driving force behind moral formation, spiritual purification, and educational development.

Rawḍat al-Muḥibbīn, p. 20: "*The soul may be divided into three types: (1) the elevated, heavenly soul. The things it loves are matters related to knowledge, the pursuit of virtue, and the attainment of perfection ... (2) the wild, predatory, and temperamental soul. Its objects of love are acts inclined toward coercion, tyranny, self-glorification in this world, arrogance, and attaining status through false or illegitimate means ... (3) the animalistic soul, driven by desire and lust. Its pleasures lie in things inclined toward food, drink, and sexual intercourse ... Love in this world revolves among these three types of souls*."

Love of Allah purifies the heart from destructive traits such as arrogance, envy, ostentation, excessive worldly attachment, and uncontrolled desires, while simultaneously nurturing virtuous character, compassion, sincerity, and social responsibility. Because the human heart is naturally created to love, the direction of one's love ultimately determines the quality of one's character and ethical conduct. Accordingly, Mahabbah Education requires continuous spiritual discipline through worship, remembrance of God (*dhikr*), self-purification (*Tazkiyat al-Nafs*), and habitual righteous practice, enabling love for Allah to become the dominant orientation shaping both personal and social life (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997).

- Tawḥid as the Epistemological and Ethical Orientation

Furthermore, the analysis demonstrates that Tawḥid functions as the philosophical worldview shaping learners' understanding of knowledge, worship, and human existence. The texts consistently associate authentic love of God with sincere worship, moral responsibility, and the rejection of all forms of spiritual deviation, indicating that educational development begins with a transformed relationship between human beings and their Creator. From Ibn Qayyim's theological perspective, *Mahabbatullah* embodies the core of tawḥid, since authentic love for Allah necessarily manifests in total obedience, sincere devotion, and exclusive worship free from any form of polytheism. Accordingly, worship is not confined to external religious practices but represents an integrated expression of love, humility, and submission that nurtures an intimate spiritual bond with Allah (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998).

Rather than viewing knowledge as an autonomous intellectual pursuit, Ibn Qayyim argues that all forms of learning originate from divine revelation and ultimately lead learners toward maʿrifatullah (knowledge of God) (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998). Accordingly, the Qur'an and the Sunnah serve as the primary sources of educational knowledge, while human reason (*ʿaql*) functions as an instrument for understanding and reflecting upon revealed truth rather than operating independently from it. Within this worldview, knowledge is valuable only insofar as it strengthens faith, deepens awareness of Allah, and directs human life toward sincere worship and moral responsibility (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998).

Ibn Qayyim further explains that genuine love of Allah develops through the integration of revelation, reason, and reflective contemplation. Maʿrifatullah is cultivated by tadabbur al-Qur'an, through which believers contemplate Allah's guidance, and tadabbur al-kawn, by reflecting upon the signs of Allah manifested throughout creation. He also emphasizes that sound reason enables individuals to distinguish between enduring and temporary forms of love, regulate emotional desires, and evaluate actions according to divine guidance rather than personal inclination. Consequently, epistemology in Mahabbah Education is not limited to cognitive acquisition but constitutes a transformative process in which knowledge, reflection, and rational inquiry collectively nurture tawḥid, strengthen *Mahabbatullah*, and provide the ethical orientation governing both personal conduct and social responsibility (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998).

- Spiritual and Moral Transformation through *Tazkiyat al-Nafs*

The third theme highlights *Tazkiyat al-Nafs* as the principal pedagogical process through which learners undergo continuous spiritual purification. Rather than emphasizing cognitive acquisition alone, Ibn Qayyim understands education as the

cultivation of the heart through repentance, self-control, purification from destructive desires, and the internalization of divine virtues. This process enables learners to attain emotional stability, sincerity, and spiritual maturity before translating these qualities into ethical behaviour.

This finding is reflected in Ibn Qayyim's explanation that, education encompasses two inseparable dimensions: the continuous intellectual and spiritual development of the educator (*murabbi*) and the transmission of knowledge to others. A *murabbi* is responsible not only for deepening and refining personal knowledge but also for patiently guiding learners to understand and internalize it progressively. Ibn Qayyim emphasizes that teaching is the most effective means of preserving and enriching knowledge, as knowledge that is concealed or left unused is liable to disappear, much like wealth that is hoarded without being invested for the benefit of others. Conversely, knowledge that is shared remains alive, continues to grow, and generates enduring benefits for both the educator and the wider community (Al-Jawziyyah, 1998); (Shodiq, Tamyiz, and Khoir 2026).

Furthermore, Ibn Qayyim emphasizes that authentic mahabbah must be cultivated through the harmonious integration of knowledge (*ʿilm*), reason (*ʿaql*), and spiritual training. Knowledge enables individuals to attain *maʿrifatullah* (knowledge of God), from which genuine love naturally emerges, while reason functions to distinguish higher and lower forms of love, directing human affection toward eternal rather than temporary goods. Guided by revelation, reason regulates emotional impulses and moral judgment, ensuring that love remains aligned with divine guidance rather than personal desire. Consequently, Mahabbah Education represents a comprehensive educational philosophy in which revelation, intellect, moral cultivation, and spiritual practice operate as an integrated framework for developing individuals who embody devotion to God, ethical excellence, and compassionate engagement with others (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998).

Beyond cognitive and spiritual formation, Ibn Qayyim proposes that *mahabbah* is nurtured through continuous spiritual practice and a supportive educational environment. Regular performance of obligatory and voluntary acts of worship, sincere supplication (*duʿa'*), remembrance of God (*dhikr*), and habitual righteous actions gradually strengthen one's attachment to Allah and purify the heart. He also highlights the importance of a morally conducive environment, heartfelt admonition (*mawʿiẓah*), encouragement and warning (*targhib* and *tarhib*), and inspirational narratives of the prophets and righteous believers as pedagogical strategies for shaping character and sustaining spiritual motivation. Collectively, these methods represent an integrated educational approach that combines cognitive understanding, spiritual discipline, moral habituation, and social influence to cultivate individuals whose love for Allah is reflected in ethical conduct, compassion, and holistic human development (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998).

Ibn Qayyim conceptualizes education as a continuous process of purifying the heart from spiritual diseases and disciplining the soul so that love for Allah becomes its dominant orientation. The analysed texts consistently associate spiritual growth with the removal of destructive qualities such as arrogance, envy, ostentation, excessive attachment to worldly pleasures, and uncontrolled desires, replacing them with sincerity, humility, patience, and devotion. In this sense, education is fundamentally a process of inner transformation in which moral excellence emerges from a purified heart

rather than from external behavioural regulation alone (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998).

Ibn Qayyim further explains that this process of purification is cultivated through continuous spiritual discipline. Regular performance of obligatory and voluntary acts of worship, remembrance of Allah (dhikr), sincere supplication (duʿa'), repentance (tawbah), and habitual righteous practice gradually strengthen the believer's attachment to Allah while weakening the influence of worldly desires and the lower self (nafs). These practices are not isolated devotional acts but educational strategies that train the soul to internalize divine values through repetition and self-control. Consequently, the reconstructed framework conceptualizes Mahabbah Education as developing through sustained spiritual exercise (*riyaḍah*) and moral habituation (*taʿwid*), enabling learners to attain emotional stability, spiritual maturity, and authentic devotion that ultimately become reflected in ethical behaviour and compassionate interaction with others (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998).

- Character Formation through Prophetic Ethics

The fourth theme identifies Prophetic ethics as the educational manifestation of spiritual transformation. The coding process indicates that genuine *Mahabbatullah* inevitably leads to mahabbat al-Rasul (love of the Prophet), because sincere devotion to Allah is expressed through obedience to and imitation of the Prophet Muhammad as the perfect educational model. For Ibn Qayyim, the Prophet is not merely a religious messenger but the supreme murabbi whose character provides the practical embodiment of Islamic education. Consequently, Mahabbah Education extends beyond cultivating spiritual awareness to nurturing learners who internalize Prophetic values in their daily conduct through conscious emulation of his example (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998).

This finding is reflected in Ibn Qayyim's explanation that, character (*akhlaq*) is not formed primarily through external instruction or behavioural regulation but through a heart transformed by love of Allah and manifested in following the Sunnah of His Messenger. The analysed texts consistently associate Prophetic ethics with virtues such as honesty (*ṣidq*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), justice (*ʿadl*), humility (*tawaḍuʿ*), patience (*ṣabr*), sincerity (*ikhlaṣ*), and compassion (*raḥmah*). These virtues represent the observable expression of inner spiritual refinement, demonstrating that authentic education is measured not only by intellectual achievement but also by moral conduct. Thus, Ibn Qayyim positions Prophetic ethics as the essential bridge through which spiritual devotion is translated into ethical character, making the Prophet's exemplary life the normative model for the cultivation of righteous individuals within Mahabbah Education (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998; Nasril et al., 2025; Maududin et al., 2021).

- Compassionate Social Responsibility as the Educational Outcome

Finally, the fifth theme demonstrates that Mahabbah Education culminates in compassionate social engagement. The coded passages consistently describe love of God as generating love for humanity, social solidarity, justice, empathy, neighbourliness, and *iḥsan*. Consequently, compassion is understood not simply as an interpersonal competence but as the social expression of spiritual consciousness. The educational

process therefore extends beyond individual piety toward the cultivation of harmonious communities characterized by mercy, cooperation, and ethical responsibility.

Therefore, based on the above coding findings and discussions, the Framework of Mahabbah Education which is derived from Ibn Qayyim's philosophy can be seen through figure 1 below:

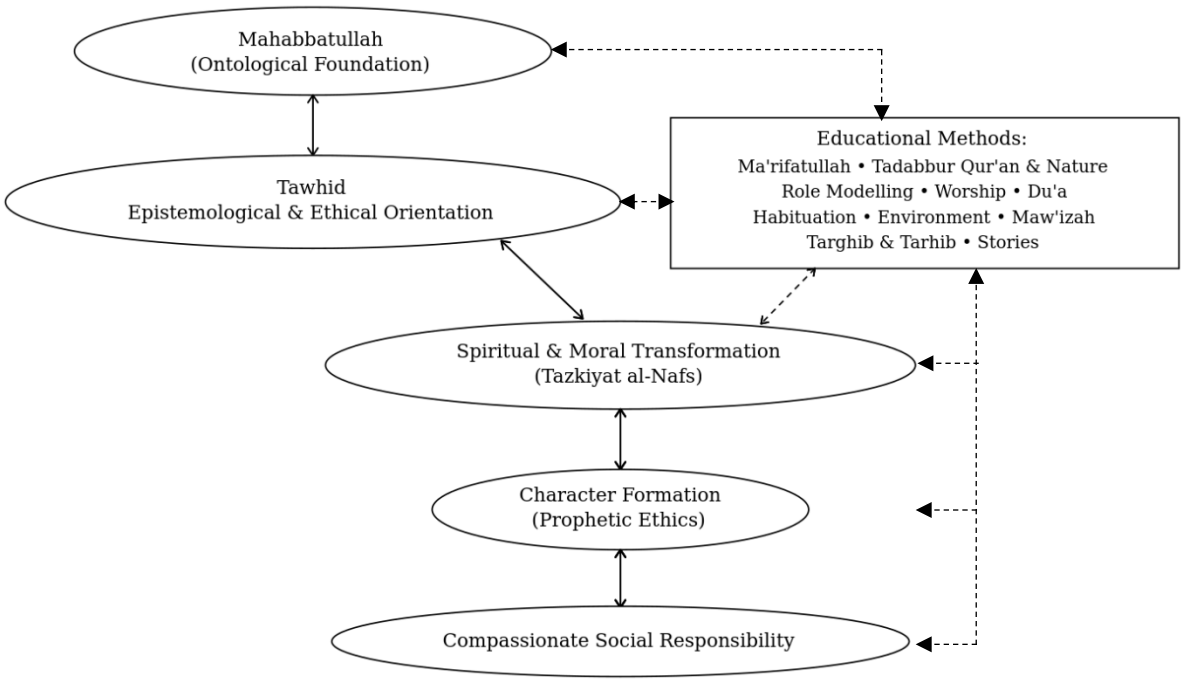


Figure 1. Mahabbah Education Framework in Ibn Qayyim's Educational Philosophy

Figure 1 is not reproduced directly from Ibn Qayyim's writings but is a conceptual reconstruction derived from the coding and thematic synthesis conducted in this study. The conceptual framework illustrates that Mahabbah Education in Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's philosophy is structured as a hierarchical and integrated educational system centered on *Mahabbatullah* (love of God), which serves as the ontological foundation of all educational activities. From this foundation emerges tawḥid, functioning as the epistemological and ethical orientation that shapes learners' understanding of knowledge, worship, and human existence. Guided by this worldview, the educational process aims to achieve spiritual and moral transformation (*Tazkiyat al-Nafs*), whereby learners purify their hearts, regulate their desires, and cultivate sincere devotion to Allah. This transformation subsequently produces character formation grounded in Prophetic ethics, manifested through virtues such as honesty, humility, justice, patience, and compassion.

The framework further demonstrates that this developmental process is facilitated by a set of interconnected educational methods, including *maʿrifatullah* (knowledge of God), reflection on the Qur'an and creation (*tadabbur*), exemplary role modelling, worship, supplication (*duʿaʾ*), habituation, supportive educational environments, moral exhortation (*mawʿiẓah*), encouragement and warning (*targhib wa tarhib*), and inspirational narratives. Rather than functioning independently, these pedagogical methods collectively nurture learners' spiritual growth and reinforce the

process of *Tazkiyat al-Nafs*. Ultimately, the educational journey culminates in compassionate social responsibility, where love for Allah is translated into ethical conduct, empathy, social justice, and compassionate engagement with others, positioning Mahabbah Education as a comprehensive theocentric framework for holistic human development and a philosophical foundation for contemporary compassionate curriculum.

2. Convergence between Ibn Qayyim's Mahabbah Education and Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum

Since the first finding above reconstructed Ibn Qayyim's philosophy of Mahabbah education, the second finding of this paper evaluates the extent to which Ibn Qayyim's philosophy of Mahabbah education converges with Indonesia's compassionate curriculum (*Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta*/KBC).

The comparative coding presented in Table 2 was developed through a systematic qualitative analysis of two complementary sources of data. The first dataset comprised the reconstructed concepts of Mahabbah Education derived from Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's principal works, namely Rawḍat al-Muḥibb*i*n, Madarij al-Salik*i*n, Ṭar*i*q al-Hijratayn, and Ighathat al-Lahfan (Al-Jawziyyah, 2006; Al-Jawziyyah, 2003b; Al-Jawziyyah, 2004; Al-Jawziyyah, 2003a), which generated the five philosophical themes identified in the first stage of analysis. The second dataset consisted of official policy documents and conceptual publications related to Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta), including the National Education System Law (Law No. 20 of 2003), curriculum policy documents issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs "Decree of the Director General of Islamic Education No. 6077 of 2025 on the Guidelines for the Compassionate Curriculum (Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta)" (Kementerian Agama 2025) and supporting documents describing the philosophical foundations, educational objectives, and pedagogical orientation of the Compassionate Curriculum. Using a constant comparative approach, concepts extracted from both datasets were coded independently before being compared, grouped into shared axial categories, and synthesized into broader convergence themes.

Table 2. Comparative Coding Process of Mahabbah Education and Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum

Ibn Qayyim's Mahabbah Education	Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum (KBC)	Axial Categories	Convergence Themes
Mahabbatullah; tawḥ*i*d; al-'ubudiyyah; worship as life's purpose	Faith in God (iman dan takwa); love for God as the foundation of education; spiritual development	Theocentric educational purpose	**Theme 1. Convergence of Educational Objectives**
Akhlaq; Prophetic character; compassion (raḥmah); justice;	Character education; empathy; respect; tolerance; responsibility;	Holistic character formation	**Theme 1. Convergence of Educational Objectives**

Ibn Qayyim's Mahabbah Education	Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum (KBC)	Axial Categories	Convergence Themes
honesty; humility; social responsibility	humanity; peaceful coexistence		
Ma'rifatullah; Qur'an and Sunnah; tadabbur al-Qur'an; tadabbur al-kawn; reason ('aql); knowledge integrated with revelation	Love of knowledge; learner-centred learning; meaningful learning; integration of spiritual and intellectual development	Knowledge for holistic human development	**Theme 2. Convergence of Pedagogical Principles**
Tazkiyat al-Nafs; worship; dhikr; tawbah; habituation; self-discipline; spiritual exercise (riyaḍah)	Humanistic learning; affective learning; emotional development; reflective learning; internalization of values	Transformative educational process	**Theme 2. Convergence of Pedagogical Principles**
Prophet as murabbi; exemplary role model (uswah); maw'iẓah; targh*i*b wa tarh*i*b; nurturing educational environment	Teacher as facilitator, mentor, and role model; compassionate classroom; dialogic and supportive learning environment	Compassion-centred pedagogy	**Theme 2. Convergence of Pedagogical Principles**
Compassion (iḥsan); brotherhood; justice; mercy; care for others; stewardship (amanah)	Social responsibility; environmental care; democratic citizenship; respect for diversity; community engagement	Compassionate citizenship	**Theme 3. Convergence of Holistic Educational Outcomes**

The comparative analysis (table 2) reveals a substantial convergence between Ibn Qayyim's philosophy of Mahabbah Education and the values underpinning Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum (*Kurikulum Berbasis Cinta*). Although they originate from different historical and institutional contexts, both educational models share a common commitment to holistic human development by integrating spiritual formation, moral character, intellectual growth, and compassionate social engagement. This convergence

can be understood through three interrelated dimensions: educational objectives, pedagogical principles, and holistic educational outcomes.

1. Convergence of Educational Objectives

The strongest convergence lies in their educational objectives. Ibn Qayyim conceptualizes education as a means of cultivating *Mahabbatullah* through tawḥid, spiritual purification (*Tazkiyat al-Nafs*), and Prophetic character, ultimately producing individuals whose devotion to Allah is manifested through compassion, justice, and social responsibility (Al-Jawziyyah, 2006; Al-Jawziyyah, 2004). Likewise, Indonesia's National Education System (Law No. 20 of 2003) defines education as the development of learners who are faithful to God, morally upright, knowledgeable, creative, independent, democratic, and socially responsible. Building upon these national objectives, the Compassionate Curriculum further emphasizes nurturing love for God, fellow human beings, the environment, the nation, and knowledge as the foundation of educational practice (Kementerian Agama 2025). Therefore, both frameworks reject purely academic conceptions of education and instead promote the balanced development of spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions of the learner.

2. Convergence of Pedagogical Principles

The second area of convergence concerns pedagogical principles. In Ibn Qayyim's educational philosophy, the cultivation of mahabbah is achieved through an integrated pedagogical process consisting of *ma'rifatullah*, reflection upon revelation and creation (*tadabbur al-Qur'an* and *tadabbur al-kawn*), worship, dhikr, repentance, moral habituation, exemplary role modelling, and continuous purification of the soul (Al-Jawziyyah, 2006; Al-Jawziyyah, 2004). Education is fundamentally relational and transformative, aiming to reform the heart before shaping outward behaviour. Similarly, the Compassionate Curriculum advocates learner-centred, humanistic, and value-based education in which teachers serve not only as instructors but also as moral exemplars who cultivate empathy, respect, dialogue, and emotional well-being (Kementerian Agama 2025). Both frameworks therefore view education as extending beyond knowledge transmission to encompass spiritual guidance, character formation, and the creation of a supportive educational environment grounded in compassion and ethical relationships.

3. Convergence of Holistic Educational Outcomes

A third convergence appears in the expected educational outcomes. Ibn Qayyim argues that authentic love of Allah naturally produces Prophetic ethics and compassionate engagement with others through honesty, justice, humility, patience, mercy, and social responsibility (Al-Jawziyyah, 1997; Al-Jawziyyah, 1998). Likewise, the Compassionate Curriculum seeks to develop learners who demonstrate empathy, tolerance, mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, environmental stewardship, and responsible citizenship (Kementerian Agama 2025). In both perspectives, education culminates not merely in intellectual competence but in the formation of morally responsible individuals whose inner spiritual consciousness is reflected in ethical conduct and constructive participation in society. Compassion is therefore understood not simply as an emotional disposition but as the practical expression of spiritual and moral maturity.

4. Synthesis

This convergence should nonetheless be read as a partial and functional alignment rather than a claim of philosophical equivalence: sharing objectives such as compassion, character, and holistic development does not by itself mean that the two frameworks rest on the same epistemological foundation, since KBC's contemporary, policy-oriented framing remains distinct from Ibn Qayyim's explicitly revelation-centred epistemology. Overall, the findings indicate that Mahabbah Education provides a robust theological and philosophical foundation that can inform and enrich, rather than simply duplicate, Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum. While the Compassionate Curriculum articulates compassion as a contemporary educational paradigm for addressing moral and social challenges, Ibn Qayyim offers a systematic theocentric framework explaining how compassion develops through tawḥid, *ma'rifatullah*, *Tazkiyat al-Nafs*, and the internalization of Prophetic ethics. Consequently, Mahabbah Education not only converges with the objectives and pedagogical orientation of the Compassionate Curriculum but also enriches it by providing a coherent epistemological, spiritual, and pedagogical foundation that strengthens its implementation as a holistic model of character and spiritual education.

CONCLUSION

This study pursued two main objectives. First, the reconstruction demonstrates that Mahabbah Education in Ibn Qayyim's educational philosophy is hierarchically structured upon five interconnected dimensions: Mahabbatullah as the ontological foundation, tawḥid as the epistemological and ethical orientation, Tazkiyat al-Nafs as the transformative pedagogical process, Prophetic ethics as the basis of character formation, and compassionate social responsibility as the ultimate educational outcome. Together, these dimensions position Mahabbah Education as a comprehensive philosophy that integrates spiritual, intellectual, moral, and social development, thereby providing a systematic conceptual foundation for contemporary Islamic character and holistic education.

Second, the comparative analysis demonstrates a strong philosophical and pedagogical convergence between Ibn Qayyim's Mahabbah Education and Indonesia's Compassionate Curriculum. Both frameworks share a holistic educational vision that integrates spiritual devotion, moral character, intellectual development, and compassionate social responsibility as inseparable dimensions of human development. While the Compassionate Curriculum provides a contemporary policy framework for cultivating love, empathy, and ethical citizenship within Indonesian education, Ibn Qayyim's philosophy offers a coherent theocentric foundation that explains how these educational ideals are cultivated through tawḥid, maʿrifatullah, Tazkiyat al-Nafs, and Prophetic ethics. This convergence is substantial at the level of pedagogical principles and educational outcomes, yet it also reveals a significant philosophical distinction: KBC provides a contemporary policy framework for compassion, whereas Ibn Qayyim supplies a more explicitly theological foundation for explaining why compassion should emerge from spiritual transformation. Accordingly, this study contributes theoretically by reconstructing Mahabbah Education as a theocentric educational framework in which Mahabbatullah serves as the ontological foundation connecting tawḥid, Tazkiyat

al-Nafs, Prophetic ethics, and compassionate social responsibility, thereby offering an explicitly Islamic philosophical account of the spiritual foundations underlying compassion and character formation. As this framework has not been empirically tested, it is presented here as a conceptual and theoretical contribution rather than a validated educational model.

This study is limited by its reliance on qualitative document analysis of Ibn Qayyim's classical works and Indonesian policy documents, without empirical investigation of how the proposed framework is implemented in educational settings. Consequently, the identified convergence remains conceptual rather than practice-based. Future research should empirically validate the Mahabbah Education framework through case studies, curriculum implementation, teacher and student perspectives, or intervention-based research across Islamic educational institutions. Comparative studies involving other Islamic educational philosophers or compassionate education models in different cultural contexts would also enrich the theoretical development and practical applicability of Mahabbah Education as a framework for holistic character and spiritual education.

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