

**INTEGRATING THE CURRICULUM OF LOVE IN ENGLISH AS A
FOREIGN LANGUAGE (EFL) CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY OF
TEACHERS' STRATEGIES AT MADRASAH ALIYAH IN PEKALONGAN**

A THESIS

**Submitted to Fulfil One of The Requirements for the *Sarjana Pendidikan*
Degree at The English Education Department**



By:

AURA MAULIA
SN.20522044

ENGLISH EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

FACULTY OF EDUCATION AND TEACHER TRAINING

UIN K.H. ABDURRAHMAN WAHID PEKALONGAN

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Assalamu'alaikum, Wr. Wb.

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STRATEGIES AT MADRASAH ALIYAH IN
PEKALONGAN

Saya menilai bahwa naskah skripsi tersebut sudah dapat diajukan kepada Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan untuk diujikan dalam sidang *munaqasyah*/ujian tugas akhir.

Demikian nota pembimbing ini dibuat untuk digunakan sebagaimana mestinya. Atas perhatiannya, disampaikan terima kasih.

Wassalamu'alaikum, Wr. Wb.

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STUDY OF TEACHERS' STRATEGIES AT MADRASAH
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MOTTO AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

1. MOTTO

“Sebab tuhan tlah berjanji. Setelah sempit ada kemudahan”

Raim Laode

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I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Allah SWT for His endless mercy, blessings, and guidance. Without His grace, I would not have been able to complete this thesis. Every step of this journey has been possible because of His help and strength. I also realize that this thesis could not have been completed without the support, prayers, and kindness of many people around me. Therefore, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to:

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ABSTRAK

Aura Maulia (2026). Integrating the Curriculum of Love in the EFL Classroom at Madrasah Aliyah in Pekalongan. *Skripsi. Program Studi Tadris Bahasa Inggris*. FTIK UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan.

Pembimbing: Rayinda Eva Rahmah, M.Pd.

Kata kunci: strategi guru, tantangan, kurikulum cinta

Kurikulum cinta merupakan hal yang relatif baru dalam dunia pendidikan. Sebagai konsep yang baru diperkenalkan dalam pendidikan, penerapannya masih memerlukan kajian yang lebih mendalam, terutama terkait cara menerapkannya di dalam kelas bahasa Inggris sebagai bahasa asing (EFL). Oleh karena itu, diperlukan penelitian mengenai strategi dan tantangan guru dalam mengintegrasikan Kurikulum Cinta di kelas EFL. Penelitian ini berfokus pada bagaimana guru bahasa Inggris mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai seperti empati, rasa hormat, kesadaran lingkungan, dan cinta tanah air ke dalam pengajaran bahasa Inggris, serta kesulitan yang mereka hadapi selama proses tersebut. Desain penelitian kualitatif digunakan, dengan melakukan observasi kelas dan wawancara semi-terstruktur terhadap dua guru bahasa Inggris di salah satu madrasah Aliyah negeri di Kota Pekalongan. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa guru menggunakan beberapa strategi, termasuk instruksi langsung, diskusi kelas, kerja kelompok kecil, dan aktivitas pemecahan masalah. Strategi-strategi ini tidak hanya digunakan untuk mengembangkan keterampilan bahasa Inggris siswa, tetapi juga untuk mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai moral dan agama ke dalam pembelajaran di kelas. Namun, penelitian ini juga mengidentifikasi beberapa tantangan, seperti pemahaman yang terbatas terhadap referensi agama, keterbatasan waktu, masalah teknologi, dan pemikiran kritis siswa selama diskusi. Meskipun menghadapi tantangan tersebut, para guru terus berupaya mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai melalui penjelasan, refleksi, dan kegiatan pembelajaran kolaboratif.

ABSTRACT

Aura Maulia (2026). Integrating the Curriculum of Love in EFL Classroom at Madrasah Aliyah in Pekalongan. Undergraduate Thesis. English Education Department. FTIK UIN K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan.

Supervisor: Rayinda Eva Rahmah, M.Pd.

Keywords: teachers' strategies, challenges, curriculum of love

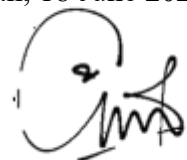
The curriculum of love is relatively new in education. As a newly introduced concept in education, its integration still requires deeper exploration, particularly in how it is translated into English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms. Therefore, there is a need to investigate teachers' strategies and challenges in integrating the Curriculum of Love in EFL classrooms. The study focuses on how English teachers incorporate values such as empathy, respect, environmental awareness, and love for the homeland into English language teaching, as well as the difficulties they encounter during the process. A qualitative research design was employed, using classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with two English teachers at one of the public madrasah Aliyah in Pekalongan city. The findings reveal that the teachers used several strategies, including direct instruction, whole-class discussion, small-group work, and problem-solving activities. These strategies were used not only to develop students' English skills but also to integrate moral and religious values into classroom learning. However, the study also identified several challenges, such as limited understanding of religious references, time constraints, technological issues, and students' critical thinking during discussions. Despite these challenges, teachers continuously attempted to integrate values through explanations, reflections, and collaborative learning activities.

PREFACE

All praise and gratitude are devoted to Allah SWT for His mercy, blessings, and guidance, so that the researcher can complete this thesis entitled **“Integrating the Curriculum of Love in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Classroom: A Case Study of Teachers’ Strategies at Madrasah Aliyah in Pekalongan.”** This thesis is submitted as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for obtaining a Bachelor’s Degree in English Education. This thesis could not have been completed without the support, guidance, prayers, and encouragement from many parties. Therefore, the researcher would like to express deepest gratitude to:

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2. The head of the English Education Department, Mr. Ahmad Burhannudin, M.A., and the secretary, Mrs. Eros Meilina Sofa, M.Pd.
3. Mrs. Rayinda Eva Rahmah, M.Pd., my supervisor, who has given valuable guidance, advice, and support throughout the completion of this thesis.
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Pekalongan, 18 June 2026

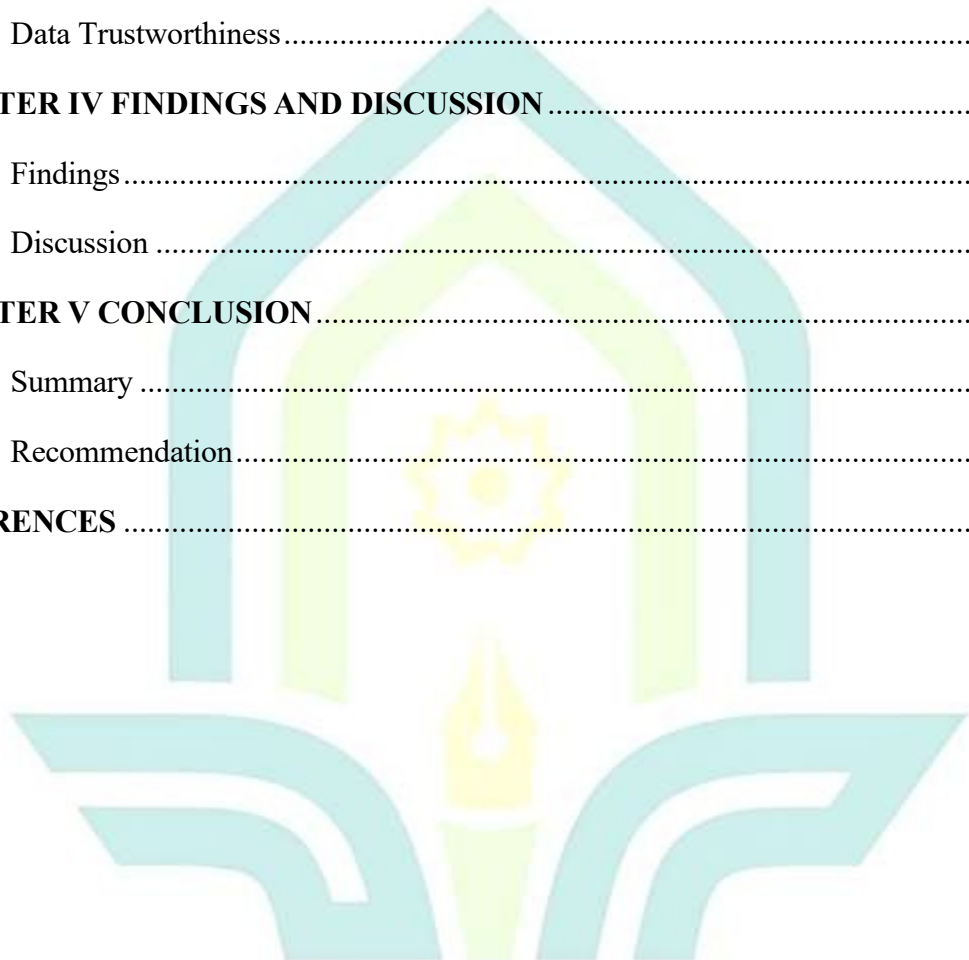


Aura Maulia

TABLES OF CONTENT

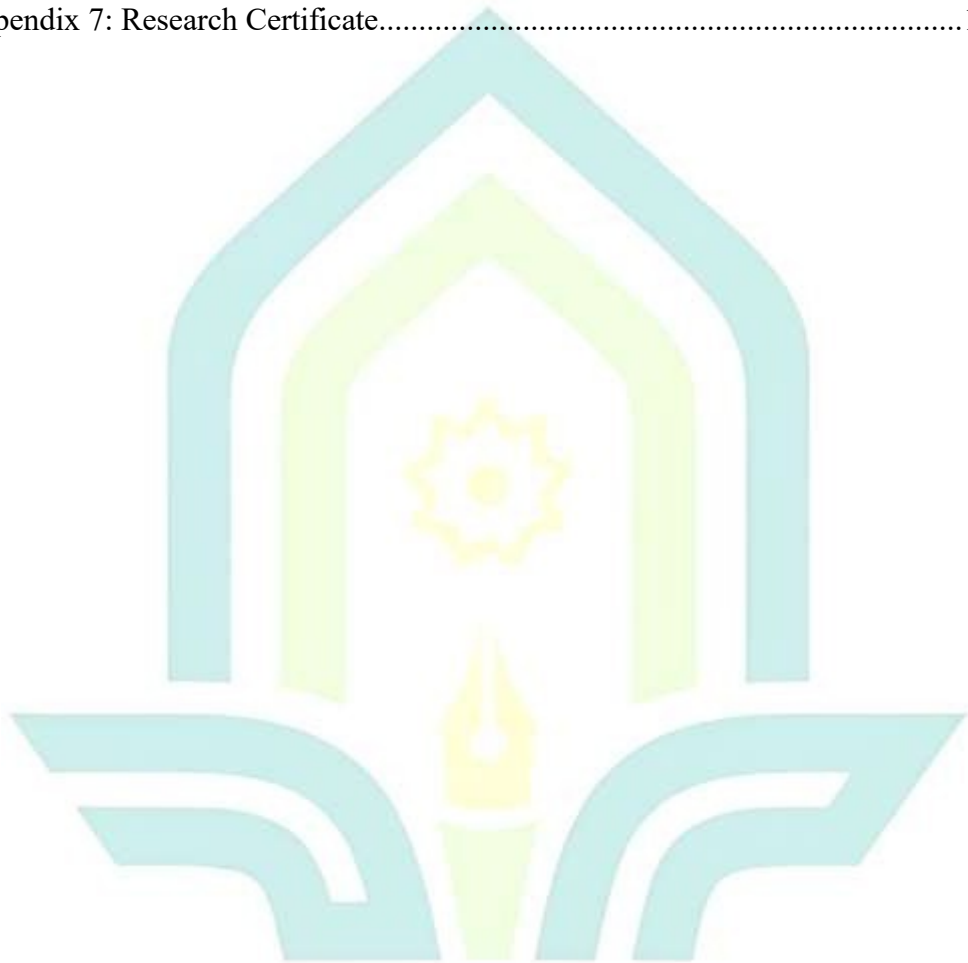
COVER.....	i
SURAT PERNYATAAN KEASLIAN SKRIPSI DAN PENGGUNAAN BANTUAN KECERDASAN ARTIFISIAL	i
NOTA PEMBIMBING	iii
APPROVAL SHEET	iv
MOTTO AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
<i>ABSTRAK</i>	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
PREFACE	viii
TABLES OF CONTENT.....	ix
LIST OF APPENDICES.....	xi
CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the Study.....	1
1.2 Identification of the Problems	5
1.3 Limitations of the Problems	5
1.4 Formulation of the Problems.....	6
1.5 Aims of the Study.....	6
1.6 Operational Definitions	7
1.7 Significances of the Research.....	8
CHAPTER II LITERATURE REVIEW	11
2.1 Theoretical Framework	11
2.2 Previous Studies	22
2.3 Conceptual Framework	26
CHAPTER III RESEARCH PROCEDURE.....	27

3.1 Research Design.....	27
3.2 Research Focus.....	28
3.3 Data and Data Sources	28
3.4 Data Collection.....	29
3.5 Data Analysis.....	30
3.6 Data Trustworthiness.....	31
CHAPTER IV FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	33
4.1 Findings.....	33
4.2 Discussion	52
CHAPTER V CONCLUSION	60
5.1 Summary	60
5.2 Recommendation.....	61
REFERENCES	63



LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Research Documentation.....	72
Appendix 2: Observations Guide	73
Appendix 3: Observations Results	75
Appendix 4: Observations Results	82
Appendix 5: Transcription of the Interview	85
Appendix 6: Research Permit.....	136
Appendix 7: Research Certificate.....	137



CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

A curriculum is defined as planned learning experiences that guide teaching and learning processes (Pinar, 2004). It includes learning goals, materials, and teaching methods. In Indonesia, the curriculum has changed over time to follow the needs of students and society. One of the recent curricula is the Merdeka Curriculum, which focuses on student-centred learning and character development. It also gives teachers more flexibility to choose teaching methods that suit students' needs (Fauzan et al., 2023). However, as education continues to develop, there is a growing need to focus more on morals and values in the learning process.

Value-based education has been recognized as an effective approach to strengthening students' moral awareness and social responsibility (Nucci et al., 2024). In response to this need, the Curriculum of Love in 2025 was introduced by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia as a value-based educational initiative. This curriculum emphasizes integrating love, empathy, respect, and care into the learning process to foster harmonious relationships within educational environments (Syakhrani, 2025). Therefore, this curriculum of love is a positive step towards restoring the essence of education as a place of growth filled with that is love, meaning, and soothing to the soul.

In Islamic educational institutions such as Madrasah Aliyah, moral and religious values have long been part of daily teaching practices. Recently, the selected Madrasah for this study has officially adopted the Curriculum of Love as part of its institutional policy. However, based on preliminary observations, the implementation of the Curriculum of Love brings a fresh perspective to the madrasah, as its values encourage students to love themselves, love the Prophet, love Allah, care for others, care for the environment, and love their country. However, in its implementation, teachers are still in the process of adapting to the transition from the Merdeka Curriculum to the Curriculum of Love.

This situation becomes even more interesting when considered in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teaching. English classrooms are spaces where students not only learn vocabulary and grammar, but also interact, communicate, and work together (Dhami & Neupane, 2025). The use of appropriate teaching strategies is important in English language learning because it helps teachers deliver the material effectively and encourages students to participate actively in the classroom. Teaching strategies also support students in understanding the lesson more easily and improving their language skills. According to Hayati (2021) teachers need to apply suitable strategies to create an engaging and meaningful learning environment in EFL classrooms. Therefore, these strategies provide opportunities for teachers to integrate values such as empathy, respect, and cooperation into language learning activities.

However, the success of curriculum integration depends greatly on teachers. Teachers are the main actors who translate curriculum goals into classroom practices (Hadisaputra et al., 2024). Fullan (2007) explains that educational change will not be effective unless teachers understand and apply it in their daily teaching. Therefore, teachers' strategies play an important role in integrating the Curriculum of Love into EFL classrooms. The way teachers design activities, manage discussions, give feedback, and respond to students can reflect how the values of love are practiced in real situations. In its integration, EFL teachers certainly also face many challenges, given that it has only recently been implemented in madrasahs. Teachers said that they are still adapting, even though the values of the Love Curriculum are already applied in the madrasah.

Based on the explanation above, it is important to explore the strategies and challenges of EFL teachers in integrating the curriculum of love to improve student learning outcomes. When teachers encounter challenges in implementing the curriculum, students may not fully achieve the expected learning outcomes, as ineffective implementation and teacher-related limitations can hinder the success of the learning process (Nafisah et al., 2025). Therefore, examining teachers' difficulties and the strategies they use is important to identify obstacles in effective curriculum implementation and to find appropriate solutions. Furthermore, research on teachers' challenges can provide valuable insights for policy and decision-making at the school, district, and national levels. By understanding the factors that block successful

curriculum implementation, policymakers and educational leaders can design better support systems for teachers and improve overall educational outcomes.

Although many studies have discussed character education and value-based learning, there is still limited research that specifically examines how EFL teachers integrate a Curriculum of Love in their teaching strategies, especially in the context of Madrasah Aliyah. Most studies focus on general policies or character programmers, rather than exploring how values are applied in specific subjects such as English. Therefore, it is important to investigate how English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers understand and implement the Curriculum of Love in their classrooms.

Based on this background, the present study aims to examine an in-depth investigation on integrating the Curriculum of Love in the EFL classroom at Madrasah Aliyah. This research highlights what strategies are used and what challenges are faced by teachers in integrating the curriculum of love at the madrasah aliyah. It is expected that this research will provide a clearer understanding of how value-based education in terms of curriculum of love can be applied in practice in English language teaching. This study uses a case study methodology that incorporates classroom observations and teacher interviews in order to offer useful insights and tactics that may be used to improve the integration curriculum of love in EFL classrooms.

1.2 Identification of the Problems

Based on the background of the study, the problems identified in this research are as follows:

1. English teachers are expected to integrate the values of the Curriculum of Love into their teaching while ensuring that students achieve the learning objectives. This requires teachers to not only focus on language skills but also incorporate moral, spiritual, and social values during the learning process.
2. Since the Curriculum of Love is a newly introduced curriculum, there is still limited understanding of how its values are implemented in EFL classrooms. Therefore, it is necessary to explore the strategies used by teachers to integrate these values into English language teaching.
3. The implementation of the Curriculum of Love may present various challenges for teachers. It may affect the integration process. It is important to investigate these challenges in order to gain a clearer understanding of how the curriculum is implemented in real classroom settings.

1.3 Limitations of the Problems

This study focuses on the integration of the Curriculum of Love in EFL classrooms. The aims are to explore the strategies used by English teachers to integrate the values of the Curriculum of Love into their teaching and to identify the challenges they encounter during the process. The teaching

strategies examined in this study are based on Killen's (2022) teaching strategies framework. They are analyzed in relation to the implementation of the Curriculum of Love values in classroom activities.

The study was conducted with two English teachers at a Madrasah Aliyah who have implemented the Curriculum of Love in their classrooms. Data was collected through classroom observations and semi-structured interviews to understand the teachers' experiences and perspectives. This research does not focus on students' perceptions or on measuring the effectiveness of the curriculum in improving learning outcomes. Instead, it seeks to provide a detailed description of how the Curriculum of Love is integrated into EFL teaching and the challenges faced in implementing it.

1.4 Formulation of the Problems

Based on the background of the study, the research problems are formulated as:

1. What are the strategies used by teachers in integrating the Curriculum of Love in EFL classroom at the Madrasah Aliyah?
2. What are the challenges faced by teachers in integrating the Curriculum of Love in EFL classroom at the Madrasah Aliyah?

1.5 Aims of the Study

In line with the research questions, the aims of the study are:

1. To analyse the strategies used by teachers in integrating the Curriculum of Love in EFL classroom at the madrasah aliyah.

2. To explore the challenges faced by teachers in integrating the Curriculum of Love in EFL classroom at the madrasah aliyah.

1.6 Operational Definitions

In order to prevent misunderstanding about the terms of this study, the researcher offers the following definitions:

1. EFL Teachers : EFL teachers are language educators who not only teach English skills but also interpret and implement the curriculum in their classroom practices. They adapt curriculum goals to students' needs and classroom realities, and play an important role in ensuring the successful implementation of a new curriculum. In this context, EFL teachers function as curriculum interpreters and agents of change (Stenhouse, 1975; Fullan, 2016).
2. Teaching strategy : A teaching strategy is a carefully planned series of actions that teachers use to help students achieve their learning objectives. This includes decisions about methods, classroom activities, and learning materials that are tailored to students' needs and curriculum goals (Gerlach & Ely, 1980).

3. Curriculum of love : Curriculum of love is a value-based educational approach that emphasizes the social, emotional, and moral development of students. Its focus on the integration of love, compassion, empathy, tolerance, respect, and mutual care into the teaching and learning process (the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2025).

1.7 Significances of the Research

The researcher anticipates that this study will contribute several advantages:

1. Theoretical significance : This study contributes to the discussion on integrating value-based education, especially the Curriculum of Love into EFL teaching. It helps connect character education and English language instruction in the context of Madrasah Aliyah, where moral values and academic learning are equally important. This study also expands the perspective that language learning can support students'

character development as well as their language competence.

2. Empirical significance : The research provides concrete evidence of how EFL teachers integrate the Curriculum of Love in their classrooms. It demonstrates how the values of empathy, respect and care are reflected in teaching strategies and interactions within the classroom. These findings could be used as a reference point for future studies on the implementation of curricula in Madrasah Aliyah.

3. Practical significance : The study provides valuable insights for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers and school leaders in Madrasah Aliyah. The findings may help teachers to implement the Curriculum of Love more effectively, creating a more supportive and meaningful environment in which to learn English. Furthermore, they may encourage teachers to consciously

integrate positive values into their daily teaching practices.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

The findings of this study showed that the teachers used several strategies in integrating the Curriculum of Love in the EFL classroom, namely direct instruction, whole-class discussion, small-group work, and problem-solving activities. Through these strategies, the teachers not only helped students develop English skills but also integrated values such as respect, empathy, cooperation, environmental awareness, and love for the homeland. The teachers inserted these values through explanations, discussions, collaborative activities, role play, and issue-based learning. In addition, the findings revealed that discussion and collaborative learning activities encouraged students to become more active, confident, and critical during the learning process.

Besides the strategies, the study also found several challenges faced by the teachers in integrating the Curriculum of Love in the classroom. The challenges included limited understanding of religious references, limited classroom time, technological problems, and students' critical thinking. The teachers sometimes felt unsure when explaining religious values because they were afraid of giving inaccurate interpretations. In addition, integrating values and discussions into the lesson required more classroom time, while technical problems sometimes interrupted the learning process. The students' active and critical responses

during discussions also became a challenge because teachers needed to prepare the material carefully and provide deeper explanations. Despite these challenges, the teachers still tried to integrate the values of the Curriculum of Love through classroom interaction, reflection, and meaningful learning activities.

5.2 Recommendation

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations are proposed for teachers, students, and future researchers. For teachers, it is recommended to continue developing creative and interactive learning strategies in integrating the Curriculum of Love in the EFL classroom. Teachers are also encouraged to improve their understanding of religious and moral values through collaboration with religion teachers or other reliable sources to support the learning process. In addition, teachers should prepare classroom activities carefully so that the integration of values can still be carried out effectively despite limited classroom time and technical challenges.

For students, it is recommended to participate actively in classroom discussions and collaborative activities in order to improve not only their English skills but also positive values such as respect, empathy, cooperation, and environmental awareness. Through meaningful learning activities, students are expected to apply the values of the Curriculum of Love in their daily lives.

For future researchers, this study can be used as a reference for conducting further research related to the implementation of the Curriculum of Love in different educational contexts or subjects. Future studies are also suggested to involve more participants and longer observation periods to gain deeper and more comprehensive findings regarding the integration of values in the teaching and learning process.



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