

### Navigating Paradigm Resistance: Human Resource Readiness for the 'Curriculum of Love' in Madrasah

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#### ABSTRACT

This study is motivated by a central issue: the high level of resistance among madrasah educators to the implementation of the "Curriculum of Love." This resistance stems from a lack of cognitive and emotional readiness to deconstruct rigid teaching paradigms, as well as a sense of being overwhelmed by conflicting administrative demands. Therefore, this study specifically aims to explore the forms of human resource resistance in Madrasah while formulating a resolute navigation framework to facilitate a more organic acceptance of the curriculum. This research employs a *library research* method with a qualitative approach, utilizing content analysis and thematic analysis to comprehensively dissect primary and secondary literature. The findings indicate that a persistent *top-down* technocratic management approach has consistently failed to mitigate resistance. Conversely, resistance was successfully mitigated by transforming a *fixed mindset* into a *compassionate mindset* through the integration of the theological value of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* and the creation of a psychologically safe space. As a concrete recommendation, educational authorities such as the Ministry of Religious Affairs should cease crash administrative training and shift to long-term *mentoring-based* support programs centered on teachers' psychological well-being.

**Keywords:** Curriculum of Love, Paradigm Resistance, Human Resource Readiness, Madrasah.



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#### INTRODUCTION

Character education and humanistic values are currently at the epicenter of global educational transformation, and this is no exception in the context of Islamic education in Madrasah. Facing an era of disruption that is prone to moral degradation, educational institutions are required not only to transfer cognitive knowledge but also to instill empathy and compassion. This phenomenon is driving a paradigm shift from a mechanistic instructional approach toward a pedagogical approach that is more human-centered (Wulandari, 2024). Madrasah, as educational institutions rooted in Islam, ontologically possess a strong foundation for integrating the values of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* into every aspect of their learning. This transformation requires systemic adaptation that touches upon levels ranging

from the philosophical to the practical in the classroom to align with the challenges of the times.

In line with these transformative needs, discussions regarding the implementation of the “Curriculum of Love” or *compassionate education* have begun to emerge as a holistic solution to be implemented in Madrasah. This curriculum is not viewed merely as an academic syllabus document, but rather as an ecosystem of practices that makes love, empathy, and compassion both the method and the primary goal of education (Farihin et al., 2025). In the madrasah environment, the “Curriculum of Love” initiative aims to synergize students’ spiritual, emotional, and intellectual intelligence to address identity crises and reduce bullying rates. Several model Islamic educational institutions have sought to internalize this principle to improve students’ psychological *well-being*. This initiative holds great expectations and hopes for the creation of an outstanding generation with a solid character foundation.

*However*, the implementation of this ideal concept clashes with the empirical reality on the ground, which reveals a significant *gap*. Conceptually, the idea of a “Curriculum of Love” is met with policy enthusiasm, but at the practical level, the transition toward this ecosystem is proceeding very slowly and is fraught with friction (Syah et al., 2025). Teachers and educational staff often remain trapped in the comfort zone of administrative routines and a rigid, hierarchical, *teacher-centered* approach. Many educators in Madrasah feel overburdened by the demands of the new curriculum, so that the values of compassion—which should be at the core—are neglected in the pursuit of meeting content mastery targets (Fakhrudin & Andriyanti, 2020). This lack of preparedness creates a structural anomaly, in which a curriculum intended to provide psychological liberation is instead perceived as a new burden that stifles educators’ creativity.

This disparity ultimately leads to the central research question: the high level of resistance to new paradigms among madrasah staff in responding to curriculum innovations. This resistance is not merely a technical rejection of new teaching methods, but rather a form of cognitive and emotional unpreparedness among educators to deconstruct their belief *systems* regarding the essence of teaching. Some teachers question the effectiveness and measurable indicators of the “Curriculum of Love” because it is considered too abstract and less prestigious compared to traditional cognitive achievement metrics. This issue is further exacerbated by the lack of intensive psychological support programs for teachers to facilitate a paradigm shift. Consequently, the essence of the new curriculum’s is often merely adopted artificially in lesson plan documents without ever truly addressing the pedagogical substance in the classroom. A review of the prior literature (State of the Art) reveals a critical *research gap* in the literature on curriculum transformation management within madrasah institutions. The majority of previous studies discussing curriculum change such as research by (Wahidmurni et al., 2024; Wicaksono et al., 2025), most evaluations focus on structural aspects, policy management, funding, or the readiness of school facilities and infrastructure. Very few studies have specifically and comprehensively investigated psychological aspects, particularly regarding the ideological barriers faced by the primary actors in education—namely teachers—in accepting an empathy-based curriculum. The academic literature on how to

mitigate and manage internal resistance (*paradigm resistance*) in the context of compassion-based education in Indonesia remains very limited and has not been thoroughly explored.

Building on this *research gap*, this study offers a *novel* approach by proposing a specific “Paradigm Resistance Navigation” analytical model to evaluate human resource readiness for the “Curriculum of Love.” Unlike the technocratic approaches that have dominated previous research on Islamic educational management, this study positions teachers not as passive objects of policy implementation, but as dynamic psychological subjects requiring humanistic transformative interventions. The novelty of this study lies in its ability to identify the root causes of paradigm resistance while formulating mitigation strategies grounded in Islamic spiritual values to transition from a *fixed mindset* to a *compassionate mindset*. Such a resolute approach has never been specifically formulated within the framework of contemporary madrasah curriculum policy literature.

Therefore, research on the readiness of human resources is of the utmost *urgency* and must be conducted immediately in order to preserve the essence of madrasah educational transformation. Without appropriate strategic interventions to diagnose and address this paradigm resistance, no matter how brilliant the conceptual design of the “Curriculum of Love” formulated by policymakers may be, the program is certain to hit a dead-end during implementation at the grassroots level. Laying the mental foundation and shifting the human resource paradigm are fundamental prerequisites (*sine qua non* conditions) before implementing any pedagogical interventions. Failure to navigate this resistance not only risks wasting state funds, but also has the potential to trigger mass demotivation among educators, which will directly result in stagnation in the quality of students’ character.

In response to the complexity of the phenomenon, the gaps in the literature, the issues, and the urgency that have been comprehensively outlined, this study aims to explore forms of resistance to the human resources paradigm in Madrasah and to formulate a precise framework for addressing them. This study will focus in depth on mapping the level of psychological readiness among educators, analyzing the demographic and cultural factors that trigger resistance, and designing integrative solutions to facilitate the organic adoption of the curriculum. Through a rigorous analytical approach, the findings of this study are expected to make a significant theoretical contribution to the literature on *change management*, while also offering practical insights to serve as a foundation for the Ministry of Religious Affairs and madrasah principals in designing more adaptive professional development programs for teachers.

## METHOD

This study employs a literature *review* design with a qualitative approach to examine the phenomenon of human resource readiness and barriers to educational innovation within the context of navigating teachers’ paradigmatic resistance to the “Curriculum of Love” in Madrasah. The primary focus of data collection relies on tracking, cataloging, and critically evaluating various primary and secondary academic literature, including reputable national and international journal articles, conference proceedings, educational management

textbooks, and regulatory documents. The literature search was conducted systematically through searches in digital academic databases (such as Google Scholar, DOAJ, ERIC, and SINTA) using intersecting keywords related to pedagogical change management, teacher paradigm resistance, *compassionate education*, and human resource development in the madrasah environment.

The data analysis in this literature review comprehensively employs *content analysis* and thematic analysis techniques to conduct an in-depth examination of the curated literature. The analysis stages include the reduction of irrelevant information, the coding of key ideas focused on the roots of educators' conceptual resistance and adaptation, and the synthesis of various prior theoretical findings into a coherent argumentative model. To ensure the validity and reliability of the constructed theoretical arguments, the researcher performed data source triangulation by critically comparing various perspectives from experts in Islamic pedagogy and change management. The final outcome of this literature synthesis is formulated to construct a strategic resolution framework for preparing the mindset and capacity of madrasah human resources to optimally embrace the implementation of the "Curriculum of Love."

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Roots of Paradigm Resistance: Mapping the Psychological and Cultural Barriers Faced by Madrasah Educators

From the perspective of deconstructing *belief systems*, the findings of a thematic analysis of various literature reveal a sharp cognitive dissonance among madrasah teachers when faced with the obligation to implement the "Curriculum of Love" (Fatiroh & Sukhoiri, 2025). Interpretatively, this phenomenon represents educators' cognitive unpreparedness; they experience a role shock due to the necessity of dismantling their pedagogical belief systems, which for years have been dominated by mechanical and *teacher-centered* approaches. Theoretical support regarding *the Paradigm Shift* affirms that fundamental deconstruction of professional *belief systems* will always trigger initial resistance as a form of psychological defense mechanism on the part of educational actors in maintaining the status quo.

Regarding belief systems, a literature review reveals that many educators experience structural anxiety regarding the potential loss of their hierarchical authority when asked to adopt more egalitarian and human-centered approaches in the classroom (Aisyah, 2025). Interpretation of this data indicates acute emotional unpreparedness, wherein teachers perceive the "Curriculum of Love" intervention not as student empowerment, but as a direct threat to their traditional authority. Theoretical support from the concept of *the Emotional Geographies of Teaching* validates that educational reforms aiming to shift power dynamics in the classroom inevitably trigger emotional turmoil, which, if unmanaged, will transform into apathy. Within the same framework, findings from a review of academic documents reveal that the concept of discipline in some madrasah settings is still strongly represented through rigid, punitive, and instructional approaches. The resistance that emerges is not merely a rejection of new teaching methods, but rather a cultural and theological friction, where a compassionate approach is often misinterpreted as a trigger for declining student compliance.

This aligns with the support of Contemporary Islamic Critical Pedagogy theory, which states that the transition toward *compassionate education* requires cultural engineering to dismantle the myth that compliance can only be fostered through absolute strictness (Lumbard, 2025).

Turning to the issue of administrative workload, the literature review highlights the high level of complaints and resistance among teachers due to the mounting administrative burden, as they are required to adopt a humanistic curriculum while still being pressured to fully meet cognitive content mastery targets (Bimenyimana & Hesbon, 2024). Interpretatively, the structural anomalies of this policy create a perception among grassroots communities that the “Curriculum of Love” is merely an overlapping bureaucratic burden that stifles creativity, rather than serving as an instrument of pedagogical liberation. Support from the *Curriculum Overload* theory demonstrates that the radical addition of affective content without a proportional reduction in the cognitive curriculum load will directly lead to professional *burnout* among educators (Lagawid, 2024).

Regarding the evaluation of learning, the study’s findings indicate that the majority of teachers consider the success indicators of the “Curriculum of Love” to be highly abstract, biased, and less prestigious than cognitive achievement scores on standardized tests (Rindawan et al., 2025). The interpretation of these findings is that the educational ecosystem remains heavily constrained by a positivist paradigm that idolizes numbers, thereby marginalizing affective values such as empathy from the school’s primary assessment priorities. Support for Holistic Education evaluation reinforces this argument with the postulate that the lack of clarity in operational indicators (*unquantifiable metrics*) within the affective curriculum is the primary cause of the failure to internalize values at the practical level. Moving into the aspects of the comfort zone and the void in mentoring, findings from the analysis of the literature reveal a massive return of teachers to the comfort zone of traditional approaches due to the lack of psychological guidance following the curriculum’s launch. This situation stems from the fact that the absence of intensive mentoring causes educators to feel alienated and lacking adequate *coping* mechanisms to navigate the transition to an empathy-based pedagogy. Theoretical support from *Organizational Change Management* reinforces that radical innovations not accompanied by structured psychological *mentoring* programs will result in high levels of latent resistance and adoption failure (Pandey et al., 2025).

In the context of manifestations of resistance, the findings of this exploratory study indicate that the implementation of the “Curriculum of Love” often occurs only superficially— that is, limited to adjusting the vocabulary in Lesson Plan (RPP) documents. Interpretatively, this phenomenon is classified as *performative* compliance, in which teachers manipulate administrative documents to avoid institutional sanctions, yet refuse to alter the substance of pedagogical interactions in the classroom. Supported by the *Curriculum Fidelity* theory, this type of passive bureaucratic resistance is explained as a natural reaction by educators to protect their zone of autonomy from external interventions deemed irrelevant. As a comprehensive finding from the literature synthesis concludes, the obstacles to the madrasah human resources paradigm are highly multidimensional; they weave together ideological

reluctance, structural chaos, and a deficit in managerial support. In interpretation, unraveling this tangled web of resistance cannot be resolved mechanically through *top-down* bureaucratic directives from the central office, but rather requires a roadmap that addresses the deepest roots of educators' psychology. The support of Transformational Leadership theory in education reinforces this essence, requiring that the resolution of pedagogical obstacles necessitates a holistic intervention that integrates mental readiness, regulatory alignment, and continuous, human-centered mentoring.

### **The Resolute Navigation Framework: Transforming a Fixed Mindset into a Spiritually Grounded Compassionate Mindset**

From the perspective of ontological integration, the findings of a thematic analysis of various primary sources indicate that teachers' resistance to the "Curriculum of Love" decreased significantly when the innovation was reframed using a theological narrative rooted in Islamic values (Qamariah, Z., 2025). Interpretatively, this data demonstrates that paradigm resistance actually stems from a dichotomous separation in educators' minds, who view the new curriculum merely as a secular administrative tool rather than part of a religious mission. The integration of Islamic education reinforces this by positing that grounding pedagogical innovation in Islamic ontological foundations will transform educators' cognitive burden into voluntary and organic acceptance. Therefore, the success of paradigm reconstruction from *a fixed mindset* toward *a compassionate mindset* absolutely requires a spiritual anchor as its primary basis of legitimacy. Without this deconstruction at the theological level, any effort to renew the affective curriculum will merely collide with the wall of educators' ideological resistance. It is this synchronization of transcendental values that ultimately serves as the key to unlocking teachers' mental readiness to fully adopt the new curriculum structure.

Regarding the concept of "rahmatan lil 'alamin," a literature review found that the internalization of the philosophy of universal compassion successfully transformed teachers' perceptions of their teaching duties, shifting them from a mere routine of fulfilling work hours to a form of worship or a noble spiritual calling (Aisyah, 2025). The interpretation of these findings is that spirituality acts as a psychological catalyst; teachers who interpret their work transcendently possess significantly higher emotional resilience when faced with disruptions in teaching methods. Support from *Spiritual Leadership in Education* validates this phenomenon, affirming that a spiritual calling effectively mitigates professional burnout and fosters a compassionate mindset sustainably (Li et al., 2023). Consequently, the aspect of spirituality can no longer be dismissed as a mere moral supplement but must be recognized as the primary driving force behind teachers' psychological resilience. Once this dimension of *spiritual calling* is activated, technical challenges in the field will no longer be perceived as a burden but as a space for self-actualization. Thus, the structural instillation of the value of "rahmatan lil 'alamin" becomes a crucial foundation for fostering a learning ecosystem that is both empathetic and sustainable.

Turning to the effectiveness of managerial interventions, a synthesis of the literature reveals that technocratic management approaches and top-down bureaucratic directives have

consistently failed to facilitate the adoption of a compassion-based curriculum in various Madrasah (Malik et al., 2025). Interpretatively, this instructional failure indicates that structural coercion will never touch the educators' belief system; it will only produce performative compliance without any meaningful paradigm shift. Holistic Change Management explains that innovations with an affective dimension absolutely reject mechanical engineering, as their success depends entirely on the internal acceptance of frontline implementers (Muhajir et al., 2024). This fact serves as a sharp critique of policymakers who tend to rely on bureaucratic power to force through an agenda of change that is emotionally sensitive. Administrative coercion has proven ineffective in shifting rigid mindsets and, in fact, carries a high risk of triggering destructive underground resistance. True change will only materialize if institutional management is willing to shift from a mechanistic control model toward a humanistic approach that touches the internal consciousness of teachers.

Turning to the aspect of humanistic transformative intervention, the findings of the literature review show that teachers respond positively to change when madrasah management provides space for collegial dialogue and positions them as dynamic agents whose concerns are acknowledged. An interpretation of this situation underscores that before teachers are expected to humanize students through the "Curriculum of Love," they themselves demand to be treated as human beings and to have their grievances heard by the school's hierarchical system. Humanistic Psychology in Educational Administration supports this argument with the principle that emotional validation of subordinates' fears is the first and most crucial step toward loosening a rigid fixed mindset (Ahmad Suryadi et al., 2026). Through the clarity of this relationship, the space for collegial dialogue functions as a psychological bridge that reduces the emotional tension resulting from the demands of the curriculum transition. Validating teachers' anxieties has proven effective in softening the rigidity of attitude that has long stifled their potential for adaptation. Educational institutions will never succeed in fostering empathy in the classroom if they themselves fail to practice empathy in their internal managerial relationships.

Still within the realm of psychological approaches, the findings of the document analysis reveal that the creation of psychological safety for teachers in the teachers' lounge is linearly correlated with their ability to convey empathy in the classroom. Educators will not have sufficient emotional reserves to distribute affection to students if their own psychological well-being is threatened or neglected by institutional demands. This concept aligns with the theory of Emotional Contagion, which demonstrates that the emotional climate set by leadership flows to teachers and, in turn, dictates the emotional climate experienced by students at school (Paganin et al., 2023). This underscores that the quality of the emotional atmosphere in the teachers' lounge is a direct reflection of what will occur in the classrooms. It is impossible to expect students to develop *a compassionate mindset* if their teachers operate within a toxic and intimidating work environment. Therefore, investing in educators' psychological well-being is an absolute, non-negotiable prerequisite for the implementation of an authentic Curriculum of Love.

In terms of training evaluation, critical findings regarding existing regulatory documents indicate that current professional development programs for madrasah teachers are dominated by design flaws; these flaws actually undermine the essence of the new curriculum, as educational authorities unconsciously continue to reproduce an outdated paradigm that reduces the grandeur of pedagogy to mere clerical skills. *The Professional Development Framework* strongly criticizes this phenomenon, asserting that technical training without a fundamental shift in mindset will only exacerbate confusion and cognitive fatigue among teachers (Beer & Mulder, 2020). This extraordinarily lopsided dominance of administrative aspects demonstrates a structural blindness to teachers' essential needs during a transitional period. Training with a clerical focus has proven ineffective in addressing the substance of changing mindsets and instead needlessly drains educators' productive energy. This reduction of pedagogical value must be stopped immediately to preserve the core essence of the Curriculum of Love and prevent it from becoming trapped in the formalities of a document.

In response to this gap, findings from the latest pedagogical literature demonstrate that in-service training models focusing on psychological well-being and a mindset shift have proven to be twice as effective (Malikah & Wulandari, 2025). Interpretation of these findings leads to the conclusion that an ideal professional development design must function as a paradigm rehabilitation clinic; a place where teachers are trained to manage their own emotional regulation before managing students' emotions. Mezirow's *Transformative Learning* confirms that adult learning (for teachers) will only be transformative if it involves critical reflection on assumptions that have become fossilized in their minds. Therefore, the orientation of future teacher training must shift from merely transferring technical knowledge toward a space for deep critical reflection. Teachers' emotional balance and psychological maturity must be positioned as primary targets in every professional development module. It is this radical transformation of the professional framework that will ensure the emergence of change agents with high mental resilience.

As a conclusive recommendation, the holistic findings of this study formulate practical recommendations for policymakers, particularly the Ministry of Religious Affairs, to replace the rapid curriculum dissemination scheme with a long-term mentoring-based support program. Interpretatively, the shift from mere "training" to "sustained mentoring" is a strategic key to ensuring that the "Curriculum of Love" does not remain a dead document but instead manifests as an organic culture within Madrasah. Support from the Ecological Systems Theory of Policy reinforces that the sustainability of a radical innovation is not determined by its grand launch, but by the sustainable support structures that guide grassroots efforts during the transition phase. This recommendation also serves as a conclusion emphasizing that school cultural change cannot be achieved through flash projects that are merely ceremonial in nature. Consistent political and budgetary commitment is needed to provide a robust support framework for frontline teachers. It is through this continuous ecological strategy that the vision of transforming *a fixed mindset* into *a compassionate mindset* rooted in spirituality can take deep root and endure over time.

## CONCLUSION

Overall, this literature review concludes that the transformation from a *fixed mindset* to a *compassionate mindset* in the implementation of the “Curriculum of Love” in Madrasah will not succeed through a technocratic managerial approach, *top-down* instructions, or merely ceremonial clerical administrative training. The successful adoption of this affective curriculum absolutely requires the prioritization of a spirituality anchored in the value of “*rahmatan lil ‘alamin*” to deconstruct educators’ ideological resistance, as well as the creation of a humanistic *psychological safety* space within the institutional environment. Therefore, educational authorities such as the Ministry of Religious Affairs are strongly recommended to radically shift their policy orientation; from one that previously relied on rapid dissemination to a long-term, continuous *mentoring-based* support program to guide the organic paradigm shift of teachers at the grassroots level. Only through policy restructuring oriented toward educators’ psychological well-being and spiritual maturity can the true essence of this vision of compassionate pedagogy be authentically internalized. Failure to address these transformative aspects will only repeat the cycle of failure of previous curricula, which were trapped in the formalities of documents on paper. Thus, the future sustainability of the Curriculum of Love ultimately depends on the systemic courage to humanize teachers first before demanding that they humanize their students.

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