



## Integration of Mahabbah Jalaluddin Rumi Values and Humanistic Education in the Formation of Student Morals at SMK Al-Munawaroh Tasikmalaya

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** The phenomenon of moral decline and increasing intolerance among students shows the existence of a spiritual crisis in modern educational practices that tend to be cognitive and instrumental. This study aims to analyze the implementation of the value of mahabbah (divine love) in education at SMK Al-Munawaroh Tasikmalaya as a strategy for the formation of social and spiritual character of students. **Method:** The research uses a qualitative-descriptive approach with a case study method, through in-depth interviews, participatory observations, and analysis of school policy documents. **Results:** The results of the study show that the value of mahabbah is implemented integratively through religious habituation, social activities, and learning based on religious moderation. This approach not only fosters empathy, tolerance, and social responsibility, but also strengthens students' spiritual awareness. These findings strengthen Carl Rogers' humanistic educational theory and extend it with Jalaluddin Rumi's sufistic dimension which places love as a force of self-and social transformation. The implementation of mahabbah has proven to be in line with national policies such as Strengthening Character Education (Perpres No. 87 Tahun 2017) and Religious Moderation (KMA No. 183 Tahun 2019). **Novelty:** This study concludes that mahabbah-based education can be an integrative model of humanistic Islamic education that is relevant to the context of Indonesia's pluralistic society. The implications of the study confirm the need to develop similar models in other educational units through a longitudinal approach to measure the long-term impact on the formation of students' character.

## INTRODUCTION

The rapidly growing digital era has had a significant impact on student behavior patterns, especially at the Vocational High School (SMK) level. The rapid flow of information on the one hand opens up wide access to science, but on the other hand poses a variety of serious moral challenges (Nurdianah et al., 2022). The phenomenon of moral crisis among teenagers is increasingly real, marked by an increase in cases of bullying, both in person and online (cyberbullying) (Jungert et al., 2021). The UNICEF report notes that 41% of 15-year-olds in Indonesia have experienced bullying, while a U-Report survey found that 45% of young people have been victims of online violence (UNICEF, 2017). In fact, the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) reported that Indonesia occupies the highest number with 84% of students admitting to having experienced bullying in various forms. In addition, the symptoms of brawls between students, drug abuse, and deviations in sexual behavior are a clear reflection that education is currently dealing with a complex character crisis (ICRW & Plan International, 2015). Social inequality factors (related to ethnicity, gender, and economy) and low tolerance further aggravate these conditions, making the world of education lose its central role as a moral and spiritual fortress of the nation.

In this context, the modern education system faces great challenges in instilling the spiritual character of students. Educational focuses that emphasize more cognitive aspects (especially in the realm of productivity and job readiness) often neglect the development of moral and emotional values (Ramadhani & Febriani, 2023). The government's efforts through Peraturan Presiden Nomor 87 Tahun 2017 tentang Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter (PPK) actually aims to form the "golden generation of Indonesia 2045" with the spirit of Pancasila and strong character (Indonesia, 2017). However, the implementation of the policy still encounters various obstacles. The lack of parental involvement due to age and digital literacy factors, as well as the difficulty of teachers in determining measurable character assessment indicators, are the main obstacles (Jhon et al., 2021). As a result, there is a gap between policy idealism and the reality of educational practices on the ground, which results in spiritual values often becoming mere jargon without deep appreciation (Sakban & Sundawa, 2023).

This condition shows the need for an educational approach that not only emphasizes the mastery of knowledge, but also fosters a spiritual soul that animates human values (Chi-Kin Lee, 2020). In this regard, Jalaluddin Rumi's thinking offers relevant philosophical and practical inspiration to answer the moral crisis of students in the modern era. The concept of mahabbah (divine love) according to Rumi is the essence of all soul education processes, where love acts as a transformative force that is able to soften the heart, erase the ego, and foster empathy. Rumi affirms that "through love, bitter becomes sweet, copper becomes gold," indicating that true education must be based on love that purifies intentions and behaviors (Taufiqurrahman et al., 2024). With love, man can transcend lust and ego, so as to be able to manifest the universal goodness which is the ultimate goal of spiritual education. The principle of mortality (the disappearance of the ego) in true love is a symbol of the union of the human will with the will of God, which in the context of education can be interpreted as an effort to free students from a materialistic orientation towards a moral and spiritual orientation (Delgado et al., 2019; Elias, 2019).

The application of mahabbah values in the context of Islamic-based schools has high urgency to form people with noble character and Pancasila character. This transformative and universal concept of love is in line with the values of religious moderation as emphasized in Keputusan Menteri Agama (KMA) Nomor 183 Tahun 2019, who demand Islamic education to foster a tolerant, fair, and compassionate attitude (Indonesia, 2019). Mahabbah values can be integrated into the education system through two main approaches: (1) explicit aspects, through teaching materials, curricula, and learning activities that instill non-violence and respect for diversity; and (2) implicit aspects, through the example of teachers and school culture that reflects compassion, justice, and peace. By making mahabbah the soul of education, Islamic schools can become centers for the formation of human beings who are not only intellectually intelligent, but also gentle, empathetic, and have spiritual depth.

Furthermore, the concept of mahabbah-based education has a strong wedge with the modern humanistic education paradigm. Carl R. Rogers, a Western humanist figure, posits that every individual has a natural drive toward self-actualization, self-maintenance, and self-enhancement (Rogers, 1995). This principle is actually parallel to Rumi's idea of mahabbah as an inner force that pushes humans towards spiritual perfection. If humanism places human potential at the center of the educational process, then Rumi complements it with a divine direction that leads man not only to be "good to

himself," but also "meaningful to others and God." Therefore, mahabbah-based education can be a bridge between Islamic spiritual idealism and the modern humanistic approach to forming a whole human being – knowledgeable, moral, and loving (Merican, 2020).

Various previous studies have focused on the development of character education through humanistic approaches and social values, such as research Kurdi (2018) which shows the effectiveness of humanistic approaches in fostering student self-awareness, as well as research Widodo et al. (2025) which emphasizes the importance of humanist classroom management in creating a welcoming and fair learning atmosphere. Research Karliani & Triyani (2021) also shows the success of integrating Huma Betang's local cultural values in forming a peace-loving attitude, while Dalmeri & Gea (2015) highlighting the need for character education that humanizes humans to overcome violence in the world of education. The Kaztaevna et al. (2015) emphasizing tolerance education in vocational education as an indicator of morality and quality of education. However, the five studies show the same pattern, namely anthropocentric orientation and focus on the social dimension and external behavior, but have not touched the theocentric dimension based on transcendental spirituality. Thus, there are conceptual, contextual, and methodological gaps, because there has been no research that integrates the sufistic values of Jalaluddin Rumi's mahabbah (divine love) in character education, especially in the context of vocational education such as vocational schools. Therefore, this research has a novelty by offering a model of implementation of mahabbah-based education that emphasizes spiritual transformation and moral formation holistically, connecting the humanistic dimension with the divine values that are at the core of Islamic education.

This research departs from the need to find an educational model that not only cultivates intellectual intelligence, but also develops students' spiritual and moral awareness in depth. In the context of modern education that tends to focus on cognitive and productivity aspects, sufistic values are often overlooked. Therefore, this study is designed to answer two main problem formulations, namely how the Jalaluddin Rumi-based education implementation model is applied at SMK Al-Munawaroh Tasikmalaya, and how it affects the formation of students' morals. In line with that, the purpose of this research is to describe and analyze the process of implementing the mahabbah-based education model, as well as identify its contribution in forming noble morals, a spirit of love, and having spiritual awareness. By examining this model of divine love-based education, the research is expected to display an Islamic education paradigm that balances cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects as a whole.

The strongest theoretical implication of this study lies in the expansion of humanistic education through the inclusion of a transcendental dimension of mahabbah. While classical humanistic education, as formulated by Carl Rogers, emphasizes empathy, acceptance, and personal growth within a psychological framework, mahabbah introduces a theocentric orientation that transcends purely anthropocentric perspectives. Divine love in Rumi's sufistic thought unifies love for God, fellow human beings, and the social environment, thereby presenting a more holistic educational foundation that integrates spiritual depth with humanistic values.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive case study with a phenomenological approach, aiming to capture the lived experiences, meanings, and subjective

interpretations arising from the implementation of Jalaluddin Rumi's mahabbah-based education in the school context. The phenomenological approach is considered appropriate because the values of divine love, compassion, and spiritual awareness cannot be adequately measured through quantitative indicators, but must be understood through direct engagement with participants' experiences and reflections (Wilson, 2015; Yaniawati & Indrawan, 2024). The research was conducted at SMK Al-Munawaroh, Sukahening, Tasikmalaya, selected purposively as a case study due to its explicit integration of religious moderation and humanistic principles within learning activities and character education programs. Fieldwork was carried out from June 27 to 30, 2025, during which the researcher was directly involved in observing learning dynamics, social interactions, and moral formation practices embedded in students' daily school life.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving several key informants, namely the Principal, Waka Curriculum, and student representatives from the Student Council, Rohis, and Scouts. Observations were used to identify students' educational practices and daily behaviors that reflected the values of mahabbah, while interviews were directed to explore the perceptions, experiences, and interpretations of informants regarding the application of the value of divine love in educational activities. Documentation in the form of photographs, activity notes, and school archives is used to strengthen and verify the data from interviews and observations. The secondary data is obtained from academic literature, scientific journals, and theoretical sources such as Matsnawi by Jalaluddin Rumi and A Way of Being by Carl Ransom Rogers, which are the philosophical and conceptual foundations in understanding the spiritual and humanistic dimensions of education (Rogers, 1995; Rumi, 2018).

Data analysis was conducted interactively and continuously using the Miles & Huberman (1994) model, which consists of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction involved selecting, simplifying, and focusing raw data on themes relevant to the implementation of mahabbah values in shaping students' moral and spiritual character. Data display was carried out through thematic narratives that organized findings into categories of religious habituation, pedagogical relationships, and social moderation practices. Conclusions were drawn through source and technique triangulation to ensure data validity and consistency across perspectives, enabling a comprehensive understanding of how Rumi's concept of divine love is pedagogically contextualized within vocational Islamic education.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Results*

#### **Formation of Mahabbah-Based School Culture**

Vocational education is one of the important pillars in preparing students to go directly into the world of work and society, so that the formation of moral and ethical character is an urgent need. SMK Al-Munawaroh Tasikmalaya, which is located in the midst of a pluralistic society, presents a character education approach based on the value of mahabbah (affection) as the main foundation. This approach emphasizes the formation of an inclusive, moderate, and contextual Islamic character through intracurricular, cocurricular, and extracurricular activities. The Principal, Mr. Usep Wahyudin, S.E.,



explained that the value of faith is not only taught in the subject, but also internalized in the daily lives of students through spiritual habituation. He emphasized,

*"We accustom children to pray in congregation, read the Qur'an before lessons, and participate in religious activities such as cults and lectures every Friday. It's not just a routine, it's an effort to form a solid faith."*

The quote shows that the practice of mahabbah-based education at SMK Al-Munawaroh is culturally carried out through consistent rituals and habits, where love for Allah and neighbor is instilled through regular spiritual experiences. The value of mahabbah is also reflected in the interaction between school residents. Ai Kurnia Santi, President of the Student Council, revealed,

*"We are taught to respect each other, both to teachers and friends. If there is a friend who is fighting, the teacher mediates in a gentle way, so that we can learn from it."*

The statement shows that teachers play an active role in instilling compassion through a persuasive, not authoritative, approach. Thus, mahabbah-based character education in this school is not only in the form of theoretical value transfer, but is manifested in real actions that shape the social habitus of students. A culture of gentleness in conflict resolution, respect for differences, and shared worship activities are tangible manifestations of cultural mahabbah that is, an educational process that fosters love and care through a vibrant school culture.

Furthermore, the role of teachers in the implementation of mahabbah is not limited to the classroom, but is part of a humanistic pedagogical relationship. PAI and Ethics Teacher, Mrs. Yeni Nuraini, S.Pd., said,

*"In every PAI and Ethics subject matter, I always insert the importance of living in harmony, respecting the opinions of others, and how Islam teaches its people not to easily blame others. I use the group discussion method and case studies, so that the children can get used to the differences around them."*

From the quote, it can be seen that teachers are not just transmitters of knowledge, but act as murabbi – spiritual and emotional guides who instill the values of compassion, tolerance, and respect for diversity. This concept is in line with the value of educational mahabbah, where love is used as the core of the pedagogical relationship between teachers and students. Mrs. Yeni also added that the preparation of moderation-based programs is now carried out openly and across organizations:

*"In the past, if Rohis or religious activities were only for internal purposes, now it is cross-organizational and open to all students. There is even training on peaceful debate and interfaith dialogue which is very beneficial for children."*

This shows the expansion of the mahabbah space from the intrapersonal to the intercommunal realm, where love is manifested through acceptance and dialogue across differences. Through these activities, students not only understand the value of tolerance as knowledge, but experience it directly in real social interactions. In line with that, Mr. Usep Wahyudin emphasized that the religious moderation program is part of the strategy of character formation in schools:

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*"We don't want children to only understand about worship, but also understand how to be fair and tolerant in a diverse environment. Therefore, our moderation material must be in religious lessons."*

From these various data, it can be concluded that the formation of school culture at SMK Al-Munawaroh is based on the spirit of mahabbah which emphasizes love, appreciation, and acceptance of others. These values are simultaneously internalized through teacher examples, spiritual activities, and social practices that are integrated into the school culture. Thus, mahabbah not only becomes a spiritual ideal in Jalaluddin Rumi's concept, but also translates into a concrete, contextual, and oriented educational practice oriented towards the formation of students' noble morals in the vocational education environment. Strengthening the Value of Mahabbah through Social Morality and Religious Moderation

SMK Al-Munawaroh Tasikmalaya places religious moderation as the core of character education policy based on the value of mahabbah or affection. This approach is not only directed at strengthening students' religious knowledge, but also at fostering social sensitivity and the ability to live harmoniously in a pluralistic environment. The Principal, Mr. Usep Wahyudin, S.E., emphasized that the value of religious moderation is an inseparable part of the religious learning process in schools. He said,

*"We don't want children to only understand about worship, but also understand how to be fair and tolerant in a diverse environment. Therefore, our moderation material must be in religious lessons."*

The statement emphasizes that mahabbah-based education is translated in the form of social mahabbah that is, love for Allah manifested in concern for others. Through moderation education, students are trained to see differences as wealth, not threats. In this context, schools function as a space for learning social values that instill universal compassion in the midst of the development of the digital era which is full of potential intolerance and hate speech. Mr. Usep added,

*"We want this school to be a comfortable place for all, without any discrimination. Therefore, our religious programs are directed towards moderation, interfaith dialogue, and social activities that can unite students from various backgrounds."*

The quote shows that school policy does not stop at the level of discourse, but is implemented concretely in the form of cross-organizational social activities. The cooperation program between the Student Council, Rohis, and Scouts is a forum for the actualization of the value of compassion in social action. Siti Maesaroh, Chairman of Rohis, revealed,

*"At Rohis, we learned that decisions are not determined by one person alone. We discussed it together, and it taught us the meaning of responsibility and mutual respect."*

This statement reflects that the value of mahabbah shapes students' collective awareness of the importance of justice, participation, and respect for the opinions of others. Similarly, social activities are a means of learning empathy and cooperation between students. Ai Kurnia Santi, Student Council President, said,

*"Children now care more about their surroundings. If there are residents who need help or the school environment is dirty, everyone immediately participates. We often work together*

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*for compensation or community service, regardless of whom, the important thing is to help."*

The statement shows that the value of mahabbah has been transformed into real social behavior, fostering solidarity and the spirit of mutual cooperation among students. In the context of Islamic character learning, this form of social service is a concrete manifestation of the virtue of ihsan loving others on the basis of love for God. In addition to social activities, the value of mahabbah is also integrated in scouting activities. Zahra Najiamadhani, Head of Scouts, explained,

*"In scouting, we are taught to work as a team regardless of who our friends are. What is important is cooperation and mutual respect."*

This expression shows the internalization of the value of compassion in a multicultural context. The habit of working together regardless of background affirms that mahabbah is not only a spiritual value, but also a social principle that fosters tolerance and universal brotherhood. This is strengthened by the statement of the Deputy Principal for Student Affairs, Mr. Jamaludin Nur, S.Pd.,

*"We encourage students to be actively involved in social activities, such as caring for the environment, humanitarian fundraising, and social service activities. This social concern is part of concrete Islamic morality."*

From these various quotes, it can be concluded that SMK Al-Munawaroh has succeeded in implementing the value of mahabbah in two main dimensions: first, social mahabbah that fosters concern and empathy for the community; Second, educational mahabbah that fosters a moderate and fair attitude in the association between students. Thus, mahabbah-based education in this school does not stop at the level of sufistic spirituality alone, but transforms into a social-educational movement that forms a tolerant, caring, and noble character.

## **Discussion**

### **Mahabbah-Based Education as a Spiritual Transformation**

In the dynamics of modern educational development, secularization has often resulted in a dichotomy between intellectual advancement and spiritual depth. Educational processes tend to prioritize cognitive achievement while neglecting inner dimensions such as love, compassion, and spiritual awareness (Ihsan et al., 2022). In contrast, Abraham Maslow emphasized that self-actualization the highest level of human needs can only be achieved when the spiritual dimension is also nurtured (Maslow, 1987). Within this context, Jalaluddin Rumi's concept of mahabbah offers an alternative educational paradigm that integrates knowledge with divine love as a transformative force. Mahabbah does not merely function as an emotional attachment, but as a spiritual energy capable of dissolving ego (*fana'*) and guiding individuals toward ethical awareness, empathy, and transcendental meaning. This perspective positions education not only as a cognitive endeavor, but as a holistic process of spiritual and moral transformation.

Rumi affirms that love is the power that leads humans to the highest spiritual consciousness. He declared, *"Love is the wings that God gives to the soul so that it can fly to His heavens"* (Matsnawi, Volume I). This statement shows that love is not merely an emotion, but a means to mortality' – the fusion of the ego in the Divine presence. In the

context of education, mahabbah removes the dichotomy between teacher and student, between intellect and spirituality, so that the relationship of learning becomes a humane relationship of love. At SMK Al-Munawaroh Tasikmalaya, this principle is manifested through various activities such as the habit of reading the Qur'an, daily cults, and teacher-student interactions that foster empathy and sincerity. Through this practice, students are not only invited to know God theologically, but also to experience the values of compassion in daily social relationships (Jiang et al., 2022).

In Rumi's sufistic framework, mahabbah demands a mortal process, which is the disappearance of ego and self-arrogance in order to find unity with the Divine. He wrote, *"Die before you die, for only by death will you live."* The death in question is not biological, but the death of the ego that closes the path to truth (Zaprulkhan et al., 2025). This mortal phenomenon is seen in the school culture at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School which fosters humility, openness, and a willingness to learn from others. For example, through debate, deliberation, and problem solving activities, the boundaries between teachers and students are reduced, fostering parallel dialogical relationships. This approach reflects the principle of education of love, where the teacher is not only a teacher, but also a spiritual guide.

The crisis of spiritual identity that has hit the young generation today is also an important context for the birth of a mahabbah-based education model. Many students experience a void of meaning due to mechanistic learning routines that do not touch the inner dimension (Martin & Levy, 2022). The implementation of mahabbah at SMK Al-Munawaroh is present as an antithesis to this phenomenon, by presenting meaningful, reflective, and contextual learning activities. The principal emphasized that the main goal of education in this school is not only to produce students with academic achievements, but also human beings who are loving, open, and moderate. In practice, students are trained to understand that every learning activity (both academic and social) is a path to union with divine values (Uyuni & Adnan, 2024).

Rumi wrote, *"Through love, bitter becomes sweet, copper becomes golden, murky becomes clear, death becomes life."* This phrase describes the transformative power of love in changing human nature from harsh to gentle, from selfish to caring (Seymour & Connelly, 2023). The realization of this idea is evident in the change in organizational culture at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School. Rohis' activities, which were once exclusive, have now become more open and collaborative, involving the Student Council and Scouts in joint social activities. This shows that mahabbah does not stop at the vertical relationship between humans and God, but is also manifested in the form of social mahabbah love for fellow humans and the environment.

To clarify the transformation of these values, the following table maps the connection between the concept of Rumi mahabbah and its implementation at SMK Al-Munawaroh: The Concept of Mahabbah Rumi Implementation at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School

**Table 1.** Integration of Mahabbah at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School

The Concept of Mahabbah Rumi	Implementation at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School
Love as the Path to God	Intracurricular – Qur'an recitation before lessons, Friday Kultum
Love Erases the Ego (Mortal')	Extracurricular – Collaboration between student organizations (Student Council, Rohis, Scouts)
Love is Universal	Extracurricular – Debate activities, interfaith discussions, student deliberations



The Concept of Mahabbah Rumi	Implementation at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School
Love and Beauty	Extracurricular & Co-Curricular – Social service, community compensation
Love as a Tool of Transformation	Intracurricular – Integration of <i>mahabbah</i> values and religious moderation in learning
Love as a Source of Creativity	Intracurricular & Co-Curricular – A Teacher-Student Collaboration Based on Holidays

The table 1 shows that all aspects of education at SMK Al-Munawaroh have tried to foster a dimension of love in students, both spiritually, socially, and intellectually. The results appear in the character of students who are more empathetic, tolerant, and collaborative. Thus, mahabbah-based education is not just an abstract sufistic theory, but a model of spiritual-humanistic praxis that is relevant to contemporary Islamic education. Mahabbah becomes an energy that transforms the learning process into a living spiritual experience in line with Rumi's goal to make love the axis of all life movements.

### Conformity with Humanistic Education (Carl Rogers)

Humanistic education is rooted in the view that humans have the innate potential to develop optimally if they are in an environment that supports acceptance, empathy, and self-respect. Abraham Maslow through the theory of Hierarchy of Needs explained that humans are motivated to fulfill needs towards the peak of self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). This idea was later enriched by Carl Ransom Rogers through the concept of A Way of Being, which affirmed that true education can only occur in an atmosphere of emotional warmth and openness between individuals. Rogers states, "To be with another in this [empathic] way means that for the time being, you lay aside your own views and values in order to enter another's world without prejudice. In some sense it means that you lay aside your self." (Rogers, 1995). This statement affirms that true empathy demands the suspension of the ego—a principle that has a strong resonance with the teachings of Mahabbah Jalaluddin Rumi about mortality.

In the context of education at SMK Al-Munawaroh Tasikmalaya, the values developed are in line with Rogers' humanistic principles. The learning environment is built by emphasizing acceptance and appreciation for students as unique individuals. The principal said that every teacher is encouraged to create a "warm and open" classroom atmosphere, so that students have the courage to express their opinions without fear of being wrong. This approach makes the learning process student-centered, where students become active subjects who build meaning through direct experience. For example, debates, deliberations, and collaboration activities between student organizations (Student Council, Rohis, and Scouts) allow them to learn to listen, understand differences, and solve problems empathically a form of embodied empathy in educational practice.

Furthermore, this approach also shows a harmonious integration between Rumi's mahabbah and Rogers' humanism. If mahabbah is rooted in divine love that fosters love and sincerity, then humanistic education emphasizes love in the context of actual, reflective humanity. Both are based on self-awareness as the starting point of moral and spiritual change. Teachers at SMK Al-Munawaroh not only act as teachers, but also facilitators of growth as Rogers intended encouraging students to discover their potential through unconditional positive regard. This approach fosters internal morality that is not forced from the outside, but grows from awareness and empathy in students (Wamsler, 2020).

The implementation of this concept can be seen in the various activities developed at SMK Al-Munawaroh as shown in the following table: Rogers Humanistic Psychology Implementation at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School

**Table 2.** Humanistic Education at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School

Rogers Humanistic Psychology	Implementation at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School
<b>Self-actualization</b>	Intracurricular – Habit of reading the Qur'an before Friday Kultum lessons and activities
<b>Self-Maintenance</b>	Co-curricular – Social activities such as environmental service and community compensation
<b>Self-Enhancement</b>	Extracurricular – Student organization activities based on collaboration and reflection

Table 2 shows that Rogers' humanistic values have been integrated in the entire educational ecosystem at Al-Munawaroh Vocational School. An empathetic and collaborative learning environment creates a safe space for students to grow spiritually, emotionally, and socially. Thus, mahabbah-based education is not only theological, but also psychopedagogical, bridging the gap between sufistic spirituality and modern humanism. This reinforces the finding that both Rumi's mahabbah and Rogers' humanism are rooted in love and self-awareness as the core of a liberating and humanizing educational process.

### **The Relevance of Mahabbah-Based Education to National Policies and Religious Moderation**

The implementation of mahabbah-based education at SMK Al-Munawaroh Tasikmalaya not only has spiritual and pedagogical value, but also has strong relevance to the direction of Indonesia's national education policy. In Indonesia's plural and pluralistic social context, education plays a strategic role in strengthening national identity while preventing the emergence of intolerance among the younger generation. The government through Peraturan Presiden Nomor 87 Tahun 2017 about Penguatan Pendidikan Karakter (PPK) emphasizing that education must integrate religious, nationalist, independent, mutual cooperation, and integrity values into all learning activities (Indonesia, 2017). In this case, the value of mahabbah which is rooted in love, affection, and respect for others is an important basis in realizing an inclusive and civilized religious character.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Religious Affairs through Keputusan Menteri Agama (KMA) Nomor 183 Tahun 2019 about Pedoman Implementasi Moderasi Beragama emphasizing the importance of building a moderate, tolerant, and anti-violent religious attitude in educational institutions (Indonesia, 2019). This principle is in line with the educational practice at SMK Al-Munawaroh which places mahabbah as the spirit of the formation of school culture. The principal, Mr. Usep Wahyudin, S.E., stated: *"We want this school to be a comfortable place for all, without any discrimination. Therefore, our religious programs are directed towards moderation, interfaith dialogue, and social activities that can unite students from various backgrounds."* The statement shows that the value of compassion is implemented concretely in school policies and programs, so that every spiritual, social, and academic activity is directed to foster mutual respect and collaboration between school residents (Badri & Malik, 2024).

Philosophically, the mahabbah in Jalaluddin Rumi's teachings contains a universal message: love for God must be manifested in love for fellow human beings and all of His creation. This value is in line with the vision of moderate Islamic education in Indonesia that rejects extremism and prioritizes a balance between personal piety (*hablun minallah*) and social piety (*hablun minannas*) (Malik, 2024). Through activities such as social compensation, community service, and cross-organizational collaboration, students at SMK Al-Munawaroh learn that loving others without discrimination is a tangible manifestation of love for God. Thus, mahabbah does not stop as an abstract spiritual concept, but becomes a praxis foundation that strengthens the moral, social, and national resilience of students in the modern era.

Within the framework of national policy, this mahabbah-based education model has the potential to be an alternative approach in the implementation of PPK and Religious Moderation. He combines Sufistic values with the needs of contemporary education that demand character strengthening through real experience, not just cognitive teaching. By placing love and empathy at the center of education, schools not only produce academically competent graduates, but also peaceful, inclusive, and committed to humanity in accordance with the ideals of Indonesia's national education as stated in the Undang-Undang Dasar 1945 (Imad, 2024).

The findings of this study show consistency as well as an expansion of various previous studies that focused on strengthening character education based on humanistic values. Research results Kurdi (2018) shows that humanistic approaches are effective in fostering students' self-awareness, while research Widodo et al. (2025) emphasizing the importance of humanist classroom management to create a fair and friendly learning atmosphere. Conceptually, the results of this study strengthen both findings, but at the same time expand them through the sufistic perspective of Mahabbah Jalaluddin Rumi, which places divine love as the center of students' spiritual and social transformation. Thus, if the previous humanistic approach focused on the development of self-actualization within a psychological framework, then this research adds a transcendental dimension that is, a spiritual consciousness that removes the ego (mortal') and fosters universal empathy.

Furthermore, these findings are also in line with research Karliani & Triyani (2021) about the integration of Huma Betang's local cultural values that foster an attitude of peace-loving, as well as with the idea aof Dalmeri & Gea (2015) about character education that "humanizes humans" to overcome violence in schools. However, this study makes a new contribution by showing that the value of mahabbah not only functions as a social ethics, but also as an epistemological framework of education oriented towards spiritual awareness and religious moderation. In the context of national policies—especially Presidential Decree No. 87 of 2017 concerning the Strengthening of Character Education and KMA No. 183 of 2019 concerning Religious Moderation—this study emphasizes that mahabbah is able to be a conceptual bridge between sufistic values and the vision of moderate Islamic education. Thus, this research not only strengthens the results of previous research, but also offers a new synthesis that mahabbah-based education can be an integrative model for the formation of religious, empathetic, and inclusive student character in vocational education institutions.

## CONCLUSION

**Fundamental Finding :** This study concludes that the implementation of mahabbah (divine love) at SMK Al-Munawaroh Tasikmalaya serves as a fundamental foundation for shaping students' spiritual and social character. Mahabbah is realized through school policies emphasizing religious moderation, affection-based intracurricular and extracurricular habituation, and humanistic educational relationships between teachers and students. These findings affirm that mahabbah-based education functions as a medium of spiritual and social transformation, fostering self-awareness, tolerance, and moral responsibility within a pluralistic educational environment. **Implication :** The results reinforce previous studies on humanistic education (Kurdi, 2018; Widodo et al., 2025) by confirming the effectiveness of empathy-based learning in character formation. However, this study extends existing scholarship by introducing a transcendental dimension—mahabbah as a sufistic spiritual force—thus offering a synthesis between theocentric spirituality and humanistic pedagogy. From a policy perspective, the findings align with the objectives of Strengthening Character Education (Perpres No. 87/2017) and Religious Moderation (KMA No. 183/2019), demonstrating that sufistic values can be pedagogically contextualized in vocational education. **Limitation :** This research is limited by its focus on a single educational institution and a relatively short observation period. Future studies may employ longitudinal designs across multiple educational settings or mixed-method approaches to examine the long-term impact of mahabbah-based education on students' prosocial behavior. Theoretically, this study contributes to Islamic education and humanistic psychology by offering an integrative model that bridges Rumi's sufistic values and Rogers' humanistic framework, while practically providing an empirical foundation for moderate, compassionate, and character-based Islamic education in Indonesia. **Future Research :** Theoretically, this research contributes to enriching the treasures of Islamic education and humanistic psychology by offering an integrative model that combines Rumi's sufistic values and Rogers' humanistic approach. His practical contribution lies in empirical proof that mahabbah can be used as a paradigm of character education that not only shapes individual morality, but also fosters spiritual and social awareness that is contextual with a pluralistic Indonesian society.

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