

The holistic Gontor curriculum model for national education reform toward Indonesia's golden generation 2045

Musthofa Ali Mahfud^{1*}, Aria Nur Kamal¹, Dicky Wahyudi²

¹Universitas Darussalam Gontor, Ponorogo, Indonesia

²International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan

*musthofaalimahfud@gmail.com

Abstract

This article aims to examine the evaluation of the curriculum within Indonesia's national education system throughout its implementation by integrating the holistic curriculum model of Gontor Islamic Boarding School to produce high-quality individuals in preparation for the Golden Generation of Indonesia 2045. The implementation of the national curriculum in Indonesia has rarely produced high-quality outcomes and has lacked consistency, often undergoing frequent changes that lead to even more serious problems. This research employs qualitative study with collecting the books about Gontor's educational curriculum, the national curriculum, and other relevant materials. The collected data are analyzed descriptively and analytically, specifically focusing on the current phenomena of the national curriculum through a philosophical approach. The results of this study reveal that Gontor's curriculum is holistic and consistent from its establishment to the present, without undergoing massive structural changes. It encompasses not only formal classroom learning but also a dynamic integration of intramural and extracurricular activities, implemented alongside Gontor's core educational values and philosophy embodied in the Panca Jiwa (Five Souls) and the motto of Pondok Modern Gontor. Therefore, it serves as a suitable reference for reforming the national curriculum to cultivate the Golden Generation of Indonesia 2045.

Keywords: Gontor; Golden Indonesia 2045; National Curriculum.

Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap evaluasi kurikulum dalam system pendidikan nasional yang terjadi selama penerapannya dengan mengintegrasikan kurikulum Pesantren Gontor yang holistic untuk menghasilkan pribadi yang berkualitas dalam rangka menuju generasi Indonesia Emas 2045. Pelaksanaan kurikulum nasional di Indonesia sangat jarang menghasilkan output yang berkualitas juga tidak bersifat konsisten sehingga sering mengalami pergantian dan menimbulkan permasalahan baru yang lebih serius lagi. Penelitian ini bermodelkan studi kualitatif dengan referensi pustaka untuk pengumpulan data yang berkenaan dengan kurikulum pendidikan gontor, kurikulum nasional atau yang berhubungan dengannya, setelah terkumpulnya data peneliti akan menguraikannya dengan metode deskriptif-analisis yang spesifik dengan

fenomena kurikulum nasional pada saat dengan pola pendekatan filsafat. Hasil dari penelitian ini mengungkap bahwa kurikulum Pesantren Gontor bersifat holistic dan konsisten sejak berdirinya hingga sekarang tanpa ada banyaknya perubahan yang masif dengan cangkupan kegiatan yang tidak hanya praktek belajar formal di kelas saja tetapi juga berupa dinamika kegiatan intrakurikuler dan ekstrakurikuler yang dilaksanakan dengan pengimplementasian nilai-nilai dan falsafah pendidikan Gontor berupa panca jiwa dan motto Pondok Modern Gontor sehingga cocok untuk menjadi acuan dalam pembaharuan kurikulum nasional untuk mencetak pribadi generasi Indonesia Emas 2045.

Kata kunci: Gontor; Indonesia Emas 2045; Kurikulum Nasional.

Introduction

The problems of national education in Indonesia resemble an issue with no clear endpoint, persisting continuously without a definitive resolution. Among the various challenges in the field of education, curriculum-related problems represent a particularly complex issue that encompasses both conceptual and implementation aspects. In terms of conceptual issues, Indonesia frequently undergoes curriculum changes within brief time spans, resulting in insufficient adjustment periods and consequently leading to the ineffectiveness of these rapid transitions. Meanwhile, the implementation problems are more closely related to the inadequacy of human resources, as many educators lack sufficient capacity and require relatively long periods to adapt to new systems (Setioyuliani & Andaryani, 2023). However, the most essential aspect of implementing equitable and standardized education across Indonesian society is the cultivation of character and ethical values, which in turn will shape good individuals (good people) and contribute to the realization of Indonesia's Golden Generation 2045, in commemoration of the nation's 100th year of independence (Suhafid & Prayuda, 2024).

Furthermore, the challenges do not end with the frequent and ineffective curriculum changes. They have continued with the introduction of the Merdeka Curriculum, implemented in March 2024 under the slogan of prioritizing the freedom of teachers and students to enhance competency quality. However, in practice, this has produced negative outcomes. This situation arises from the government's lack of in-depth analysis to evaluate and improve the existing curriculum, which instead introduces new challenges that fail to address the root problems and lead to a decline in students' academic performance.

This curriculum issue has yet to find a clear resolution, even though the curriculum itself plays a crucial role in the implementation of education as a benchmark and guideline for achieving educational objectives. Moreover, the curriculum serves multiple purposes, with its primary goal being to help

students prepare for their future both academically and non-academically so that they can apply their knowledge and skills within society as part of broader developmental efforts. However, in reality, numerous violations occur among students and teachers as well as in the academic field, where many secondary school students still struggle with literacy and numeracy skills (Fuad, Lailiyah, Wahyono, & Ahid, 2023; Sucipto, Sukri, Patras, & Novita, 2024).

It is important to understand that the National Education System in Indonesia is not limited to institutions directly under government supervision but also encompasses the significant role of pondok pesantren (Islamic boarding schools), which have long been one of the key pillars of education in the country. These institutions eventually gained formal recognition in 1989 and 2003 through legislation that acknowledged pesantren as an integral part of Indonesia's educational system. One pesantren that has developed its own curriculum and continues to thrive to this day is Pesantren Gontor, with its curriculum known as Kulliyatu al-Mu'allimin al-Islamiyyah, or more commonly referred to as the Mu'allimin Curriculum. In implementing and executing this curriculum, Gontor does not rely solely on classroom learning as practiced in the national curriculum established by the government, but also emphasizes extracurricular activities designed to instill Islamic values. These activities aim to cultivate disciplined, responsible, hardworking, and morally upright (*akhlaqul karimah*) individuals (Wahyudi, Spama Putra, Rifki, Riyadi, & Wahyudi et. al, 2024).

In addition to integrating Islamic values into the educational process, this curriculum also focuses on maintaining a balance between religious studies and general knowledge, in accordance with the demands of modern development. Its primary objective is to produce graduates who excel not only in moral and character aspects but also possess strong intellectual capacity and adequate academic competence. This pattern of curriculum implementation is precisely what the National Education System needs in the current era, particularly in producing high-quality graduates. The effectiveness of Gontor's curriculum has been demonstrated by the considerable influence of its alumni in Indonesia's governmental system and various other sectors of life. This serves as evidence that Gontor's curriculum is a holistic educational model that has been proven effective since its establishment and has only undergone improvements to align with the advancement of the times (Asroriah et. al, 2023). Therefore, the renewal of the national education curriculum holds a high level of urgency not merely as a response to changes in political leadership or shifting governmental interests but rather as a national necessity to cultivate individuals of excellence in spirituality, mentality, and intellectuality in pursuit of the vision of Indonesia Emas 2045 (Saripah, Herlambang, & Muhtar, 2025).

With the uniqueness found in the system and content of the *Mu'allimin* curriculum at Gontor, several previous researchers have been drawn to study its educational framework. Among them is Indah Pita Pratama (2023) explored the Gontor curriculum rooted in the fundamental ideas of K.H. Imam Zarkasyi, who emphasized the modernization of the pesantren education model through four main aspects: reforming the teaching system and methods, developing curriculum content, restructuring institutional management, and shaping a mindset based on the principle of freedom. Furthermore, Nurul Salis et al examined the unwritten aspects of Gontor's curriculum, emphasizing character formation among students through a 24-hour educational system. However, despite these numerous studies on Gontor's curriculum, none have yet proposed a breakthrough model for the National Education Curriculum that could serve as an innovative framework toward realizing the vision of Indonesia Emas 2045 (Fahrudin, Alamin, Suradika, & Bahri, 2022).

Based on the aforementioned description, this study aims to narrow down the focus to the issue of conceptual and practical inefficiencies within the current curriculum that could be addressed through an implementable model in Indonesia's education system. Therefore, this study will discuss "The Holistic Gontor Curriculum Model for National Education Reform Toward Indonesia's Golden Generation 2045." It will include an overview of Pesantren Gontor and its curriculum, as well as an exploration of how the *Mu'allimin* curriculum can be integrated into the national education curriculum to advance the educational progress of the nation.

Method

This research employs a qualitative methodology with a literature study approach to collect data related to Gontor's educational curriculum, the national curriculum, and other relevant materials. After gathering the necessary data, the researcher will present it through a descriptive-analytical method, specifically contextualized to the current phenomena of the national curriculum using a philosophical approach. The data collection process will be conducted through library research and documentation techniques, which involve tracing, examining, and recording various relevant references, then classifying them according to the research themes such as the development of the national curriculum, the concept of a holistic curriculum in pesantren, and the points of intersection between the two. The collected data will then be analyzed using a descriptive-analytical method to systematically interpret the contents of documents and literature, integrated with a philosophical perspective to examine the philosophical, epistemological, and axiological aspects of both curriculum

models. To ensure the validity of the study's findings, this research applies to a data source triangulation technique by comparing information obtained from official documents, academic literature, and the thoughts of prominent figures from Pesantren Gontor. This approach is intended to produce an analysis that is more objective, comprehensive, and academically accountable.

Results and Discussion

A. Profile of Gontor and its curriculum

The history of Gontor can be traced back to Gontor Village, which has maintained a pesantren tradition since the 18th century. In the 1780s, Kyai Santoso Anom Besari established the old Gontor pesantren. However, the institution experienced a decline during the 19th century. It was later revived in the early 20th century by three brothers K.H. Ahmad Sahal, K.H. Imam Zarkasyi, and K.H. Zainuddin Fananie who revitalized the pesantren tradition (Prastowo, 2023). Consequently, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor was founded in response to the need of the Muslim community for an educational institution that not only provided religious instruction but also imparted life skills, contemporary knowledge, and national insight (Musadad, 2022; Prastowo & Tri Mulyanto, 2021). Today, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (PMDG) is connected to various international educational institutions and operates numerous branches across Indonesia. Its alumni have made significant contributions in diverse fields, including academia, religious scholarship, politics, and diplomacy.

The curriculum at Pesantren Gontor began with *Tarbiyatul-Athfal* on September 20, 1926. *Tarbiyatul-Athfal* marked the initial stage of Gontor's revival through an educational program for the children of the local community. With modest facilities and limited resources, this program reignited the spirit of learning among both children and adults from Gontor and the surrounding villages. The students were personally taught by K.H. Ahmad Sahal (commonly known as Pak Sahal), with classes held outdoors under the trees during the day and illuminated by coconut shell lamps at night. Within three years, the number of students reached 300, all of whom studied free of charge, with many of their basic needs often provided by the pondok caretakers. The main objective of the program was to awaken religious awareness and encourage the practice of Islamic teachings. By the seventh year, the number of students had grown to 500. Due to limited facilities, lessons were conducted in the homes of nearby residents and in open spaces. To build proper classrooms, a community initiative called Anshar Gontor was established to raise funds, while the students themselves helped by making red bricks for construction purposes (Suharto, 2025).

Since December 19, 1936, the program evolved into Kulliyatul Mu'allimin al-Islamiyyah (KMI). The curriculum of KMI at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (PMDG) is designed to cultivate teachers who possess noble character, intellectual competence, strong leadership qualities, and a sincere commitment to serve society. Its intellectual focus is integrative religious sciences (*'ulum diniyyah*) are taught alongside general sciences; Arabic and English language proficiency is emphasized, and character formation is nurtured through a 24-hour boarding school environment. Grounded in the principle that education is more essential than mere instruction (*tarbiyah qabl at-ta'lim*), this educational model integrates all aspects of pondok life into a unified curriculum, encompassing classroom learning, dormitory life, student organizations, worship practices, and the language culture ethos.

Thus, Arabic and English become the daily languages of communication serving both as tools of thought and as mediums of learning used in teaching, discussions, public speaking, and dormitory life. In the classroom, an active learning approach is demonstrated through intensive written and oral assignments, grammar drills, and learning-by-doing activities such as *khath* (calligraphy) or science laboratory work. Outside the classroom, this active learning method is reinforced through structured activities such as language clubs, the OPPM student organization, afternoon and evening courses, and congregational worship, all of which are regarded as integral components of the curriculum. In academic literature, this model is often referred to as a "24-hour curriculum" because the educational process encompasses the students' entire daily schedule from waking up to going to bed thereby embedding character formation within the routines of time discipline, simplicity, and self-reliance.

The KMI evaluation system emphasizes a balanced mastery of subject matter, language proficiency, and teaching readiness. First, at the end of each semester or academic year, students undergo both written and oral examinations. In the oral exams, answers are delivered in Arabic or English before a panel of examiners, assessing the students' reasoning ability, fluency, and scholarly etiquette. Second, for final-year students, *Fath al-Kutub* (the reading and analysis of classical and contemporary texts) is conducted to evaluate their independence in studying reference materials, their methodological competence in *istinbāt* (deductive reasoning), and their overall academic literacy. Third, *'Amaliyyāt al-Tadrīs* (teaching practice) is regarded as the "final educational touch" for senior students. This component includes the preparation of a teaching manual (*i'dād*), micro-teaching sessions, full-class teaching practice, supervisory evaluations, and critical commentary on *Naqd* (teaching analysis). These components collectively help prospective teachers develop essential socio-pedagogical

competencies, such as effective communication, classroom leadership, and collaboration skills (K. P. K. R. dan Teknologi, 2024).

Observing these aspects, many people have wondered why Gontor established a teacher training institution, or *Kulliyatul Mu'allimīn al-Islamiyyah* (KMI), which has proven to be extraordinarily successful. The reason lies in the founders' *ijtihād* (intellectual effort) and their experience that graduates of KMI, who previously studied at Normal Islam, were able to become influential figures in various sectors of society. Nevertheless, Gontor offers an extensive range of activities, requiring students to be patient and dedicated in both their studies and participation in these diverse programs (Suharto, 2025). These activities are designed to help students feel at home and to cultivate their education holistically. Education at Gontor is holistic and comprehensive, encompassing all aspects of personal and intellectual development organizational, leadership, social, artistic, vocational, athletic, scouting, and many others all integrated within the pondok system. This comprehensive approach further reinforces why Gontor is known as a modern pesantren (Pondok Modern): an Ashriyah (modern) institution based on *Dirasah Islamiyyah* (Islamic studies) and employing the *Mu'allimin* educational model. The *Mu'allimin* curriculum pattern integrates religious and general knowledge in a comprehensive and unified manner, while also combining intracurricular, extracurricular, and cocurricular activities into a single, cohesive educational framework (Suharto, 2025).

Thus, it can be understood that the curriculum implemented at Gontor Islamic Boarding School (Pesantren Gontor) is holistic in nature. It plays a vital role in all areas of education experienced by both educators and students, encompassing every aspect of learning in a comprehensive and integrated manner. The curriculum harmoniously combines religious and general studies while simultaneously integrating intracurricular, extracurricular, and cocurricular activities into one cohesive educational system. Overall, the orientation and objectives of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor remain firmly grounded in its foundational principles: being community-oriented, fostering simplicity, maintaining independence by avoiding political affiliations, and emphasizing that the ultimate goal of education is worship through the pursuit of knowledge (*ṭalab al-'ilm*), rather than merely seeking employment. All these principles are framed within the concepts of Panca Jiwa (Five Spirits) and Panca Jangka (Five Educational Programs), ensuring that the implementation of education at Gontor aligns consistently with its overarching vision and mission.

B. The national education curriculum in Indonesia

In the new curriculum framework established by the Minister of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology under Decrees No. 032 (K. P. K. R. dan

Teknologi, 2024) and 56/262, (M. P. K. R. D. Teknologi, n.d.) the primary focus is on character formation through intracurricular learning alone, without implementing systematic evaluation mechanisms for its execution. The observable evaluation instead emerges from reports and analyses disseminated through various media platforms. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes mastery of essential subject matter, allowing students sufficient space to deeply understand core concepts while simultaneously developing their skills. Accordingly, the formulation of the Merdeka Curriculum is founded upon a structured and purposeful framework aimed at providing a clear curricular direction and a more organized learning system. Thus, the framework of the Merdeka Curriculum is constructed upon four key elements: (1) the objectives to be achieved, the principles underlying its development, (3) the distinctive characteristics of the learning process, and (4) the foundational philosophical basis. These four components serve as the cornerstone for every educational institution in designing the curriculum structure and implementing it through operational curricula at the institutional level (Hasibuan, Sunarno, & Susanti VH, 2025; Subakat, Nasution, Ali, & Harnedi, 2022).

The Merdeka Curriculum is designed to strengthen faith (*īmān*), piety (*taqwā*), and noble character, while simultaneously cultivating students' creativity, emotional sensitivity, and initiative so that they may grow into Pancasila Learners individuals committed to lifelong learning (Hoktaviandri et al., 2024; Mufidah, Maskuri, & Listiyo, 2025). The Profile of the Pancasila Learner represents the ideal vision of students who internalize the values of Pancasila throughout their lives. In formulating this profile, attention must be given to global dynamics, including transformations in the fields of labor, social relations, culture, and politics. Moreover, the profile is closely tied to national interests grounded in Indonesia's cultural heritage, spirit of nationalism, and the direction of national development as mandated by the 1945 Constitution and Pancasila. Substantively, the Profile of the Pancasila Learner encompasses six key dimensions: (1) faith in the Almighty God, piety, and noble character; (2) mutual cooperation (*gotong royong*); (3) critical thinking; (4) global diversity awareness; (5) independence; and (6) creativity.

The foundation upon which the Merdeka Curriculum is built derives from the evaluation of previous curricula, as well as the underlying principles and ongoing efforts toward curriculum development. To make it simpler and more comprehensible, the Merdeka Curriculum is formulated based on three core principles: (1) ensuring and promoting the development of students' competencies and character; (2) providing flexibility in implementation; and (3) focusing on essential learning content (Ihsan, Khafidzin, & Zuhri, 2024; Mufidah

et al., 2025; Rochmat, Yoranita, & Putri, 2022). The formulation of the Merdeka Curriculum involved collaboration among numerous institutions, including the Ministry of Religious Affairs, schools, universities, and various other educational organizations. Since late 2019, the process of designing this new curriculum began with a comprehensive reflection on the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum conducted by academics from teacher education institutions (LPTK) and universities. From this process emerged ideas for reform aimed at creating a curriculum that is more flexible, competency- and character-oriented, and adaptive to the increasingly rapid pace of global change.

The Merdeka Curriculum is designed by integrating several distinctive learning characteristics. First, assessment is conducted at the beginning, during, and at the end of the learning process to map students' learning needs and monitor their progress. Second, the learning process is adapted to students' conditions and needs based on an understanding of their learning positions. Third, the primary focus is on students' learning development rather than merely on content coverage or curriculum completion. Fourth, learning is also directed toward encouraging students' reflection on their own learning experiences. All four components of the Merdeka Curriculum emphasize the student as the central subject of learning, one who must understand their social, cultural, and economic diversity while fulfilling their individual learning needs. Assessment is regarded as a crucial component of the learning process, as it plays a vital role in helping teachers design classroom teaching strategies, particularly through diagnostic and formative assessments. Furthermore, reflective activities hold an equally important role, allowing both teachers and students to review the learning process and assessment outcomes to determine the extent to which learning has been conducted effectively and meaningfully (Rochmat & Angelica Silfana, 2024).

Therefore, the curriculum must be built upon a clear and solid foundation. This foundation should include historical, psychopedagogical, philosophical, sociological, and juridical bases. In designing a curriculum, the discourse of knowledge and the development of educational theories, particularly in the field of pedagogy, must also be considered. With such a firm and well-defined foundation, Indonesia's educational curriculum can be better understood in terms of its origins and objectives, making it more directed and capable of achieving significant progress in the nation's educational development (Rojik & Alim, 2024).

In 2025, the curriculum was refined into what is now known as the school-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Satuan Pendidikan). This curriculum is grounded in the provisions of the Regulation of the Minister of Education, Culture,

Research, and Technology (Permendikbudristek) No. 12 of 2024 concerning the Curriculum for Early Childhood, Primary, and Secondary Education, which was later revised through Permendikdasmen No. 13 of 2025 as an amendment to the previous regulation. Through this framework, each educational institution is granted the authority to determine its own methods and curriculum structure, allowing for adjustments that reflect the specific conditions and needs of each educational unit.

The school-Based Curriculum (Kurikulum Tingkat Satuan Pendidikan) is a dynamic document (living document) that functions as the primary instrument for educational institutions in realizing the implementation of quality education. This document is developed through a process of reflection, analysis, and data-based evaluation carried out systematically and structurally (Muhidin, Helmiati, & Karim, 2023). Its functions include the following: First, it provides space for school principals, teachers, and educational staff to enhance their capacities, enabling them to manage and design the learning process more effectively and efficiently in accordance with the context of each educational institution. Second, it grants school principals the opportunity to diversify their curricula based on regional potential, local characteristics, and students' needs, thereby strengthening the distinctive identity of each institution. Third, it fosters a sense of ownership and strengthens collaboration among various stakeholders in the implementation of the curriculum, to promote the sustainable improvement of educational quality.

Thus, it can be understood that Indonesia's national education curriculum has often undergone changes influenced by various group interests and has yet to achieve comprehensive implementation in education. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a consistent and universally acceptable curriculum that can be embraced by all levels of Indonesian society. This need is evidenced by the frequent revisions of educational laws and foundational regulations that form the basis of Indonesia's curriculum development in preparation for realizing Indonesia Emas 2045

C. Discussion

The curriculum in Indonesia has undergone approximately ten revisions since 1947 up to the present. However, despite these numerous changes, the efficiency and success rate of implementation remain minimal compared to the many challenges encountered (Almarisi, 2023). From this, it can be understood that the implementation of the curriculum in Indonesia is often treated merely as an object of experimentation, suffering from repeated policy shifts. The causes of failure mentioned earlier are largely the result of frequent curriculum changes without adequate monitoring and serious evaluation from the government,

giving the impression that new curricula are introduced hastily without properly assessing or improving the previous ones (Nisa, 2023). Such short-term changes often triggered by shifts in government leadership have led to instability in the learning process and continuous adaptation at the school level. Consequently, this instability has failed to guarantee the production of high-quality educational outcomes through the implementation of these curricula.

In the context of renewing the national curriculum, which serves as a reference for learning in both public and private educational institutions, it is essential to identify and understand the conceptual and practical elements that must be included in the curriculum structure to achieve the Vision of Golden Indonesia 2045. In the Gontor curriculum, teaching and learning activities are not confined solely to classroom instruction. To shape an ideal personality, both intellectually and morally, Gontor integrates intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities, all of which constitute components of a holistic curriculum. These components are designed to develop four key dimensions: intellectual, spiritual, physical, and emotional aspects (Rochmat & Angelica Silfana, 2024).

In the intracurricular activities at Gontor Islamic Boarding School, the integration of religious and general knowledge has been implemented with a balanced proportion 100 percent religious knowledge and 100 percent general knowledge. This integration does not stop there; to further maximize the conceptual integration, Gontor reinforces it using Arabic and English as languages of instruction, adapted to the content being taught. The active learning of these two foreign languages is not limited to the classroom but continues as students return to their dormitories, where language practice is maintained with strong discipline. Therefore, to enhance the competence and quality of students toward achieving the vision of Golden Indonesia 2045, mastery of foreign languages must also be emphasized encouraging students to become active speakers, not merely learners of grammatical rules.

According to Rahmat's explanation, the Gontor curriculum embodies a *wasathiyah* (moderate and balanced) character, as evidenced by its harmonious integration of religious and general sciences. The implemented curriculum encompasses a wide range of study areas, including faith and Islamic education, moral and character development, scientific knowledge advancement, citizenship and nationalism, arts and aesthetic skills, entrepreneurship, the art of preaching and social engagement, leadership and management, teacher education, women's education (specifically for female students), as well as physical education and health.

In addition to these intracurricular activities, Gontor also incorporates co-curricular programs that complement and perfect the curriculum in practice. These activities take place outside the mandatory class hours and include language development and reinforcement, dictionary exploration (*kasyfu mu'jam*), Hajj rituals practice (*manāsik al-ḥajj*), and “*amaliyyah al-tadrīs*” (teaching practice). Furthermore, students are responsible for practical worship activities, such as prayer, Qur’anic recitation, remembrance (dhikr), and supplication (*du’ā’*). All these activities are conducted directly by students under the supervision of teachers or senior students. This system serves to cultivate leadership skills and instill a sense of responsibility among senior students toward their juniors.

Extracurricular activities at Gontor hold the same status as intracurricular activities, meaning that all students are obligated to participate, and any absence without valid permission or justification results in disciplinary action. Among the extracurricular activities conducted at Gontor are Scouting (Pramuka), sports and arts clubs, public speaking training, organizational activities, and the *rihlah iqtishādiyyah* (economic study tour) (Mufidah et al., 2025). Through these extracurricular programs, the educational curriculum at Gontor becomes holistically complete in practice. The integration of the three core components intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular demonstrates that Gontor Islamic Boarding School does not merely emphasize cognitive development but also pays equal attention to the affective and psychomotor domains. This comprehensive approach aims to cultivate individuals who are intellectually mature and empirically experienced.

In the implementation of these three educational components, the content must first and foremost include spiritual formation, beginning with Qur’anic learning and the regulation of gadget use among students to nurture individuals of noble character (*akhlaq karimah*), strong faith (*‘aqīdah*), and devotion in worship (*‘ibādah*) (Fajri & Ahmad Faizuddin, 2022). This approach stands in contrast to the Merdeka Curriculum framework, which focuses primarily on intracurricular learning activities without giving sufficient attention to the practical quality of students’ behavior, nor to the depth of their worship and moral conduct.

Another spiritual aspect implemented at Gontor is the cultivation of the doctrine of *al-ghīrah al-dīniyyah* (religious zeal), which is integrated into all student activities. The more actively a student participates in the daily routines of the pesantren, the deeper their understanding of religion becomes. This spiritual framework is further reinforced by the values and spirit of the pesantren, embodied in the previously mentioned Five Souls (Panca Jiwa), which include:

First, The Soul of Sincerity (*Jiwa Keikhlasan*), which means expecting no personal gain and acting with purity and honesty of intention. Working with sincerity implies performing one's duties solely in pursuit of Allah Almighty's pleasure, without seeking any form of reward or benefit from the outcomes of one's work.

Second, The Soul of Simplicity (*Jiwa Kesederhanaan*), which is not merely defined as accepting one's circumstances or being synonymous with poverty, but rather reflects the values of strength, perseverance, diligence, and independence necessary to face life's challenges. In daily practice, students are encouraged to cultivate an attitude of simplicity by avoiding excess in matters such as food, housing, and clothing.

Third, The Soul of Independence (*Jiwa Kemandirian*) is not interpreted as doing everything alone or rejecting the help of others, but rather as the ability to stand on one's own feet without relying on others for sustenance. In practice, students are accustomed to taking responsibility for their personal needs, such as managing their own beds and sleeping areas, organizing extracurricular activities of interest, maintaining the cleanliness of their living spaces, arranging their clothing, and managing their monthly expenses. Through this habituation, students are trained not to be dependent or constantly expect assistance from others, making this value of independence a vital foundation for their future lives.

Fourth, The Spirit of Islamic Brotherhood (*Jiwa Ukhuwwah Islamiyyah*) is reflected in the atmosphere of the pesantren, which is filled with a powerful sense of fraternity, even though the students share no blood relations. They are accustomed to sharing both joy and hardship within the framework of brotherhood and religious values. Differences in background whether political views, social status, or other factors do not hinder the formation of unity and togetherness. This spirit of brotherhood is not only maintained during their time at the pesantren but also continues after the students return to society.

Fifth, The Spirit of Freedom (*Jiwa Kebebasan*) is understood as the students' freedom to think, act, plan for their future, and determine the direction of their own lives, while remaining free from negative environmental influences. However, this freedom does not imply absolute liberty; rather, it is a form of freedom that is guided by discipline and accompanied by a powerful sense of responsibility both toward society and toward the life of the pesantren.

The cultivation of the five aforementioned *jiwa pesantren* (spirits of the pesantren) is consistently instilled in each student through five stages: exemplary conduct, training, environmental formation, discipline and supervision, as well as habituation (Dzofir & M. Nur, 2024). This implementation method must be

carried out consistently to ensure the quality assurance of the students' outcomes, with a general standardization of output reflected in the motto of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor, which includes the following:

First, Noble Character (*Berbudi Tinggi*) encompasses various virtues such as sincerity, integrity, cleanliness, a strong work ethic, and confidence both in oneself and in others. The cultivation of these values is not limited to theoretical instruction through guidance or classroom learning but is also implemented through direct evaluation. This approach fosters a deep awareness of the importance of noble character and ensures that it becomes an integral and continuous part of the students' daily lives.

Second, Healthy Body (*Berbadan Sehat*) possessing a healthy body is an essential element in education, as it enables students to perform their duties and perform acts of worship in the best possible manner. To promote physical well-being, students are given opportunities to maintain their health through regular exercise, including participation in various sports clubs provided as part of the extracurricular activities at Gontor Islamic Boarding School.

Third, Broad Knowledge (*Berpengetahuan Luas*) In the educational process at Gontor Islamic Boarding School, students are not only provided with foundational knowledge but are also taught effective learning techniques through well-designed classroom teaching methods. The ability to speak fluently in two foreign languages, Arabic and English, is considered essential for gaining broader knowledge beyond what is taught within the pesantren environment.

Fourth, Free Thinking (*Berpikiran Bebas*) In understanding this concept, it is important to note that "freedom" here does not imply absolute liberty leading to liberalism but rather symbolizes intellectual maturity and wisdom qualities cultivated through the learning process at Gontor. In Gontor's educational framework, the content of instruction is free from the influence of any particular group or school of thought (*madhhab*), allowing students to develop a flexible mindset and apply their knowledge independently and wisely when they later engage with society (H. F. Zarkasyi, Mas'ud, Hidayatullah, & Khakim, 2023).

The integration of all activities encompassed within Gontor's curriculum and its underlying educational philosophy forms a holistic unity aimed at shaping well-rounded individuals in both academic and non-academic domains. In this context, the frequent changes in the national curriculum serve as a point of evaluation, particularly when such changes occur without proper monitoring and supervision by government authorities. Consequently, the rapid and recurrent alteration of curricula has had detrimental effects on the quality and stability of Indonesia's national education system.

According to Abdullah Syukri Zarkasyi, the holistic nature of Gontor's curriculum is rooted in its ultimate goal, which reflects the founding vision of the pesantren—to produce “intellectual ulama, not merely intellectuals who know religion.” (A. S. Zarkasyi, 2005). From this vision, the researcher contends that Gontor places greater emphasis on spiritual aspects through the cultivation of values and the philosophical foundations of the pesantren, aiming primarily to shape individuals of noble character (*akhlāq karīmah*). This emphasis is particularly relevant in the current era, where moral and mental crises among students, especially in secondary education, have become open secret.

At the same time, Gontor's inclusion of general sciences such as biology, physics, and mathematics within its curriculum demonstrates its integrative worldview: that all branches of knowledge are inherently part of Islam and cannot be separated from it. The strong focus on character development through co-curricular and extracurricular activities serves a vital role, as contemporary students are not only in need of intellectual enrichment but also suffer from a kind of “spiritual dehydration” that leads to moral degradation due to the absence of deeply internalized and practiced spiritual values. Therefore, the researcher argues that Gontor's well-established curriculum represents an innovative and pioneering model for Indonesia's national education system, offering a transformative approach to nurturing the Golden Generation of Indonesia 2045.

Conclusion

Education in Indonesia has not yet become a solution to the nation's broader social challenges; rather, it has emerged as a problem due to the inconsistency and instability of the national curriculum. This lack of continuity has led to various issues, including the decline in students' academic performance and the increasing number of disciplinary violations in secondary schools. As one of Indonesia's distinctive educational institutions, the pesantren plays a strategic role in advancing the nation's intellectual and moral development, despite often being underestimated. Among these institutions, Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor holds a prominent position for maintaining a consistent curriculum since its establishment and for its proven success in producing high-quality graduates. The curriculum at Gontor is holistic, encompassing intracurricular, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities designed to nurture the affective, cognitive, and psychomotor domains of the students. Moreover, these three dimensions of educational activities are integrated with the internalization of the pesantren's core values and philosophy, which are continuously instilled in students throughout their learning journey. The goal is to cultivate scholars (ulama) who

are intellectually refined and intellectuals who possess profound religious understanding individuals who are physically healthy, broadly knowledgeable, independently minded, and morally upright.

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