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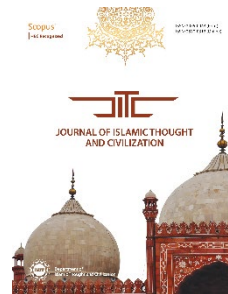
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## Imam Zarkasyi's Contribution to Indonesia's Modern *Waqf* Education System

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### Abstract

The current study aimed to explore Imam Zarkasyi's efforts to modernize *pesantren* institutions (Islamic boarding schools) through *waqf* organizations. The study drew on scholarly publications including books and academic papers as well as primary sources about Imam Zarkasyi by utilizing a qualitative, descriptive, and explanatory research methodology. The findings revealed that Zarkasyi's educational perspectives and personal experiences significantly influenced the modernization of the *waqf*-based educational system. Zarkasyi's proposals to enhance the *pondok* system's modernity were based on his thorough understanding of the country's educational culture. In response to the Dutch colonial administration, private educational institutions were established in 1926. These institutions offered students, educators, and community members the chance to acquire essential life skills and values in a unique educational setting. To ensure the continuity of these institutions, Zarkasyi transformed them into publicly owned enterprises through *waqf* establishment in 1958. As a waqif, he allocated a substantial portion of his fortune to be shared collectively among his three brothers. Zarkasyi aimed to ensure the sustainability of this approach by incorporating *waqf* principles which include attitudes, abilities, and praiseworthy characteristics. His initiatives continue to serve as a pedagogical model for private schools in Indonesia. This success motivates others to emulate the *waqf* concept, thereby contributing to the restoration and development of Islamic civilization.

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**Keywords:** financing private education, Imam Zarkasyi, Islamic endowment, sustainable development, *waqf*

**JEL classification:** B31; D64; I22; I25; Q01.

### Introduction

One of the notable private educational institutions that mostly adheres to a traditional system and imparts teachings on Islamic sciences and morals is known as a *pesantren*. This educational institution was initially founded in Indonesia, where a significant part of the population follows a boarding system known as *pondok*. In the Southeast Asian region, the term 'modern' was not associated with any specific institution until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. According to Zarkasyi (2020),<sup>1</sup> the establishment of Pondok Darussalam in Gontor village in 1926 was considered as an early example of a modern *pondok*. The designation of the term 'modern' has been bestowed on it by society due to its distinct nature and characteristics. The inherent nature of its values and system diverged from both the traditional *pesantren* and typical contemporary educational institutions.

The concept of modernization has been a topic of discussion since its establishment in 1926, introduced and deliberated upon by the Trimurti brothers, who are recognized as the founding figures of Pondok Gontor. In 1966, Lance Castles studied the modernism of this particular private organization. Several studies have characterized it as a contemporary *pesantren*, although they have neglected to thoroughly examine the fundamental underlying principles that have shaped its current evolution. The establishment of secondary level in 1936 is widely regarded as a significant milestone in Islamic education institution modernization. Moreover, this particular fact may have prompted certain scholars to particularly depict Zarkasyi's perspective on the modernization of *pesantren*.

Some studies have investigated Zarkasyi's thought on Islamic education modernization, which has resulted in a new *pondok* paradigm,<sup>2</sup> prioritizing educational<sup>3</sup> and institutional growth.<sup>4</sup> These studies stressed that Zarkasyi's work centered on the evolution of Islamic education, contributing to complete modernization of the *pesantren* system.<sup>5</sup> Other works have further examined Zarkasyi's particular thought on education system. For instance, studies have also examined Zarkasyi's idea of character in education within the context of modernization, specifically in relation to Ibn Miskawayh

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<sup>1</sup>Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Imam Zarkasyi's Modernization of Pesantren in Indonesia," *Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies (QIJIS)* 8, no. 1 (2020): 161-200. DOI: 10.21043/qijis.v8i1.5760.

<sup>2</sup>Medina Nur Asyifah Purnama, "Transformasi Pendidikan Islam Perspektif KH Imam Zarkasyi dalam Pengembangan Pesantren Modern Gontor," (Transformation of Islamic Education from KH Imam Zarkasyi's Perspective in the Development of the Gontor Modern Islamic Boarding School), (PhD diss., Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim, 2013).

<sup>3</sup>Ari Mulyasari, "Konsep pendidikan pondok modern dalam perspektif KH Imam Zarkasyi," (The Concept of Modern Boarding School Education from the Perspective of KH Imam Zarkasyi) (Bachelor's thesis, Jakarta: Fakultas Ilmu Tarbiyah Dan Keguruan UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2016).

<sup>4</sup>Umar Bukhori, "KH. Imam Zarkasyi dan Genre Baru Pondok Pesantren (KH. Imam Zarkasyi and the New Genre of Islamic Boarding Schools)," *Dirosat: Journal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2017): 259-272.

<sup>5</sup>Muhammad Iqbal Fasa, "Gontor as the Learning Contemporary Islamic Institution Transformation Toward the Modernity," *Hunafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 14, no. 1 (2017): 141-174.

(932-1030),<sup>6</sup> and al-Zarnuji (d. 1223AD).<sup>7</sup> These studies presented Zarkasyi's ideas of character development,<sup>8</sup> identifying the need for leadership style and the influence of character on education in Pondok Gontor.<sup>9</sup> Specifically, the modernization of educational, curricular, and institutional systems along with the role of *waqf* in the sustainability of Pondok Gontor were least addressed in validating the efficiency of converting an institutional education into a *waqf* institution,<sup>10</sup> in particular for achieving long-term sustainability.<sup>11</sup>

The existing studies have inadequately considered certain factors, for instance thoughts, ideas, and values, that underscore and motivate individuals and institutions to modernize the education system. Kanfer and Chen (2016)<sup>12</sup> explained motivation as a series of interconnected and mutually influencing emotional, behavioral, and cognitive processes that are structured around an individual's objectives. The *waqf* institution possesses a unique feature whereby its assets are considered as public property and are entrusted to the *nazhir*<sup>13</sup> for management and administration. The trustee is responsible to continuously uphold and enhance the *waqf* proprietorships in order to optimize their advantages for a broader range of beneficiaries within the society, taking into account the waqif's conditions and instructions.

In order to adequately address these concerns, there is a need to explore Zarkasyi's underlying thoughts and ideas in modernizing the *pesantren* by adopting *waqf* practices. The existing studies have been rather limited addressing this critical topic despite Zarkasyi's significant impact and outstanding contributions for pioneering *waqf*-based educational institutions. Therefore, the current study addressed this gap by highlighting Pondok Gontor as a *waqf* living legacy institution. Moreover, the study also aimed to address three specific objectives, that is, examining Zarkasyi's ideas and thoughts, analyzing his critical evaluation of *pesantren*, and identifying his practical contributions to the *waqf* institution.

The current study utilized descriptive and exploratory research methods, examining Zarkasyi's beliefs and practices in his attempts to modernize the *pesantren* system. Additionally, it also focused on several key elements pertaining to motivation, for instance, thoughts, ideas, and values. The data collection encompassed references from books, research projects, institutional brochures, and observations. Facts from these sources were firstly authenticated prior to the comprehensive analysis was conducted.

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<sup>6</sup>Najwaa Mu'minah, "Character Building Dalam Konsep Pendidikan Imam Zarkasyi Ditinjau Dari Filsafat Moral Ibnu Miskawaih," (Character Building in Imam Zarkasyi's Educational Concept Seen from Ibn Miskawaih's Moral Philosophy), *Jurnal Filsafat* 25, no. 1 (2015): 100-133.

<sup>7</sup>S. Pd I. Kadar Yuliaty, "Kaderisasi Kepemimpinan di Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo Jawa Timur (Leadership Cadre Formation at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor Ponorogo, East Java)" (Phd diss., Uin Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2015).

<sup>8</sup>M. Adib Fuadi Nuriz and Jaffary Awang, "Character Education: Study of Burhanuddin Al-Zarnuji and Imam Zarkasyi's Thought," *Jurnal Sultan Alauddin Sulaiman Shah* 4, no. 1 (2017): 46-59.

<sup>9</sup>M. Ihsan Dacholfany, "Leadership Style in Character Education at the Darussalam Gontor Islamic Boarding," *Al-Ulūm* 15, no. 2 (2015): 447-464.

<sup>10</sup>Imam Bahroni, "Streamlining Education Institution through Waqf Enlargement: An Experience of Gontor System," *At-Ta'dib* 7, no. 2 (2012): 12.

<sup>11</sup>Abdurrohman Kasdi, "Productive Waqf for The Modernization Pesantren," *Edukasia: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 14, no. 2 (2019): 245-266.

<sup>12</sup>Ruth Kanfer and Gilad Chen, "Motivation in organizational behavior: History, Advances and Prospects," *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 136 (2016): 6-19.

<sup>13</sup>Nazhir is the Waqf manager, and called the trustee.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 *Waqf* and Education

The historical connection between *waqf* and educational institutions may be traced back to the early prophetic period with the establishment of the Quba mosque, the foundation to understand the role of *waqf* in education. Mosques, as dual-purpose institutions, were integral to early education.<sup>14</sup> The use of *waqf* in education has expanded globally, with the establishment of higher education institutions through *waqf* practices, playing a vital role in the progressive development of future generations.

Distinct attributes of the *waqf* institution, supported by fundamental pillars according to Islamic jurists, such as Imam Malik, Hanbali, and Imam as-Shafi'i, include the concept of *waqf* property and the crucial management of *waqf* assets for sustainable benefits.<sup>15</sup> Ensuring a consistent and reliable funding source is essential for the operational and developmental sustainability of educational institutions.<sup>16</sup> Thus, optimizing the benefits of *waqf* in education is a key consideration for sustainable development. Historical examples, such as Jerusalem's educational institutions in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, demonstrate the financial support provided by *waqf* for education.<sup>17</sup> Such implementation of *waqf* in educational sectors has many advantages, for instance, scholarship for students and other benefits.<sup>18</sup>

Traditionally, the use of *waqf* for education focused on tangible assets, for instance, land and buildings. However, challenges arise with limited availability of land, leading to financial issues in sustaining educational institutions. Cash *waqf* is proposed as a solution, allowing for sustained growth and enduring earnings to fund educational institutions.<sup>19</sup> The inherent sustainability of *waqf* institution is beyond important, particularly the trustee is the key to preserve assets and legally distribute the income generated from *waqf*.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the applicability of *waqf* in supporting educational institutions needs a legal advocate for its practicability.<sup>21</sup>

<sup>14</sup>Fadhilah Abdullah Asuhaimi, Zurina Shafii, Nursilah Ahmad, and Mohammad Haji Alias, "A Study on the Willingness of State Islamic Religious Council to Support Waqf Development in Higher Education," *The Journal of Muamalat and Islamic Finance Research* (2017): 39-53.

<sup>15</sup>Dalhari Dipo, "Manajemen Wakaf (Waqf Management)," *At Tujjar* 10, no. 1 (2022): 1-17.

<sup>16</sup>Muhammad Usman and Asmak Ab Rahman, "Funding Higher Education through Waqf: a Lesson from Pakistan," *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management* 14, no. 2 (2021): 409-424.

<sup>17</sup>Noor Mohammad Osmani, and Muhammad Nazmul Hoque, "Mobilizing Funds for Higher Education Through Applying Musharakah in Waqf Properties," *International Journal of Islamic Banking and Finance Research* 2, no. 2 (2018): 39-50.

<sup>18</sup>Hazriah Hasan and Ismail Ahmad, "Determinants of Higher Education Islamic Endowment (Waqf) Attributes among Muslims in Malaysia," *Journal of Islamic* 3, no. 12 (2018): 1-9.

<sup>19</sup>M. Azizul Huq and Foyasal Khan, "The Role of Cash Waqf in the Development of Islamic Higher Education in Bangladesh," *Journal of Islamic Economics, Banking and Finance* 113, no. 6223 (2017): 1-21.

<sup>20</sup>Abdurrohman Kasdi, "The Empowerment of Productive Waqf in Egyptian al-Azhar for Education and its Relevance to be Implemented in Indonesia," *International Journal of Mechanical Engineering and Technology (IJMET)* 9, no. 11 (2018): 1839-1851.

<sup>21</sup>Mohd Firdaus Mohd Rusli, and Adewale Abideen Adeyemi, "A Waqf Concept Applied in Higher Education: An Exploratory Study on the Practice of the IIUM Endowment Fund," *Journal of Islamic Finance* 6, no. 2 (2017): 13-23.

## 2.2 Pondok Pesantren

Ki Hadjar Dewantara, the first Minister of Education in Indonesia, stated that the *pesantren* system is considered to be more suitable as the dominant educational framework in the country. *Pesantren* has been historically significant since the colonialism era to the modern times in Indonesia's development.<sup>22</sup> Scholars have classified *pesantrens* in Indonesia into three forms, that is, traditional, modern, and contemporary. Traditional *pesantrens* prioritize the examination of ancient Arabic literature, reviewed by the headmaster. Some *pesantrens* are undergoing modernization, incorporating aspects from both traditional and formal educational systems, falling into the contemporary category. This adaptability allows *pesantrens* to flourish in the present dynamic epoch, expanding societal influence beyond their student body.<sup>23</sup>

Adaptation and development are evident in *pesantrens*, integrating the formal and classical systems, developing foreign language skills, cultivating entrepreneurial capabilities, adopting new technologies, and acquiring modern competencies.<sup>24</sup> The presence and adaptability of *pesantrens* are attributed to a strong foundation built on a societal system characterized by governmental authority, widespread adherence to principles, and deeply embedded religious beliefs. The educational approach in pesantren emphasizes spiritual growth and the preservation of traditional values based on Islamic teachings.<sup>25</sup> It aims to establish a holy order by integrating authentic concepts such as religion, monotheistic belief, ethical principles, and the pursuit of scientific knowledge.<sup>26</sup> Students exhibit qualities, such as a modest dress code, competence in fundamental Islamic texts, adherence to rules, respect for elders, and sympathy towards peers.<sup>27</sup>

*Santri* (student) in *pesantrens* demonstrates prominent attitudes of solidarity, autonomy, reverence for instructors, and dedication to efficient learning methodologies. However, there is a noted shift among some students towards adopting unfavorable viewpoints influenced by globalization including embracing foreign popular culture, a limited understanding of religious scriptures, disrespect for norms, and participation in acts of bullying.

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<sup>22</sup>Fahmi Ali Hudaefi, and Neni Heryani, "The Practice of Local Economic Development and Maqāsid al-Sharī'ah: Evidence from a Pesantren in West Java, Indonesia," *International Journal of Islamic and Middle Eastern Finance and Management* 12, no. 5 (2019): 625-642.

<sup>23</sup>D. Zamakhsyari, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (Islamic Boarding School Traditions: A Study of Kyai's Views of Life) (Jakarta: LP3ES; Mastuhu, 1994); M.D. Nafi, ' *Praktis Pembelajaran Pesantren* (Practical Islamic Boarding School Learning) (Yogyakarta: Insite for Training and Development Amherst, MA Forum Pesantren dan Yayasan Selasih); Taufikin, *Pesantren as the Three Centers of Education Perspective of Ki Hadjar Dewantara* (2007).

<sup>24</sup>Nilna Azizatus Shofiyah, Haidir Ali, and Nurhayati Sastraatmadja, "Model Pondok Pesantren Di Era Milenial (Islamic Boarding School Model in the Millennial Era)," *Belajea: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 1 (2019): 1-18.

<sup>25</sup>Ahmad Shiddiq, "Tradisi Akademik Pesantren (Islamic Boarding School Academic Traditions)," *Tadris: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 2 (2015): 218-229.

<sup>26</sup>Muhammad Mushfi El Iq Bali, "Perguruan Tinggi Islam Berbasis Pondok Pesantren (Islamic Higher Education Based on Islamic Boarding Schools)," *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 2 (2017): 1-14.

<sup>27</sup>Akmal Mundi and Ira Nawiro, "Ortodoksi Dan Heterodoksi Nilai-Nilai Di Pesantren: Studi Kasus Pada Perubahan Perilaku Santri Di Era Teknologi Digital (Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy Values in Islamic Boarding Schools: A Case Study of Changes in Santri Behavior in the Era of Digital Technology)," *Jurnal Tatsqif* 17, no. 1 (2019): 1-18.

## 2.3 Imam Zarkasyi

### 2.3.1 Biographical and Religious Background

Imam Zarkasyi, born on March 21<sup>st</sup>, 1910, in Gontor, a small town in East Java, Indonesia, belonged to a genealogical lineage of Muslim preachers and educators on Java Island. His lineage traced back to the renowned *Tegalsari pesantren*, a significant Islamic educational establishment situated approximately 3 kilometers from his birthplace, with historical roots dating back to the 18th century.<sup>28</sup> The establishment of *Tegalsari pesantren* to Ageng Muhammad Besari, a descendant of the Majapahit Empire's royal family, had transformed it into a reputable institution favored by elite families in Java.<sup>29</sup>

Following his father's demise, Zarkasyi observed the declining state of the pondok and began contemplating strategies to rejuvenate the institution, considering its historical significance as ancestral heritage. Starting from his primary school, he focused on revitalizing the atmosphere within the educational institution, following familial customs and engaging in the study of traditional *pesantrens*, involving the reading of Islamic classical literature.<sup>30</sup> Zarkasyi completed his basic education and pursued three years of secondary study at Vervolkschool, where Dutch was the medium of instruction. *Pesantren* Josari, guided by a teacher-scholar in Tegalsari, became Zarkasyi's chosen institution to acquire knowledge about Islamic principles. Zarkasyi, after completing his secondary education, pursued further academic studies in Solo, Central Java, concurrently enrolling in three educational institutions. Table 1 explains the Islamic education background of Zarkasyi.

**Table 1.** Some *Pesantrens* where Zarkasyi Learned Islamic Studies

No	Name of <i>pesantren</i>	Timing	Learning activity
1	Arabiyyah Islamiyah	Morning	Learning directly and personally from Muhammad Oemar al-Hasyimi, a Muslim scholar and political figure from Tunisia, about many things, especially about the philosophy of life, Arabic language, and methods of Islamic education.
2	Manbaul Ulum	Afternoon	Experiencing modern classical system of education where expert teacher taught various subjects to students in front of the class with modern teaching methodologies.
3	Jamsaren	Night	Reading some books in the real traditional system of <i>pesantren</i> .

Source: Zarkasyi (2020).

### 2.3.2 Zarkasyi's Higher Education Experience

At the age of twenty, Imam Zarkasyi aimed to pursue higher education at al-Azhar University in Cairo, Egypt. However, due to unavoidable circumstances during the colonial era, he was unable to do so. Zarkasyi then enrolled himself in Sumatera Thawalib in Padang Panjang, West Sumatera

<sup>28</sup>Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Imam Zarkasyi's Modernization of Pesantren in Indonesia."

<sup>29</sup>H. Dasuki, *Sejarah Pondok Modern Gontor* (History of the Modern Pondok Gontor) (1<sup>st</sup> Ed.; Ponorogo: Gontor Press, 1960).

<sup>30</sup>Koentjaraningrat. *Ikhtisar Sejarah Pendidikan di Indonesia: Masalah-masalah Pendidikan di Indonesia* (Overview of the History of Education in Indonesia: Educational Problems in Indonesia) (Jakarta: Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan, dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial Jakarta, 1982).

province, based on the recommendation of his influential teacher, al-Hasyimi.<sup>31</sup> The instructors at Thawalib, who had earned degrees from prestigious institutions, such as al-Azhar and Darul Ulum University in Egypt, imparted knowledge in social and natural sciences, as well as English and Dutch during his two-year tenure.

After completing his studies at Thawalib in 1932, Zarkasyi continued his education at the renowned Normal Islamic School, led by Dr. Mahmud Yunus, a Darul Ulum alumnus and an authority on Islamic education. Despite facing various colonial challenges, Yunus extensively engaged with contemporary Islamic education literature, focusing on pedagogical approaches in Arabic and English language instruction. During this period, those institutions served as a university, exclusively admitting secondary school graduates, although Dutch colonial policies prevented the awarding of university degrees.

During the colonial era, Zarkasyi achieved notable success by completing his education within three-year duration. Recognized for his accomplishments, he was recommended to be posted as a headmaster at a newly established school in Padang Sidempuan, Tapanuli, in the northern region of Sumatera. After a year of effective administration, he resigned upon his brothers' request to develop a new Islamic educational institution. He made financial contributions to his siblings' education and established the Islamic Teacher Training School (KMI) within the *pondok*, inspired by his mentor's madrasah as he returned to Gontor in 1936.<sup>32</sup> In this period, Zarkasyi played a significant role during both colonial and post-independence eras, concurrently fulfilling responsibilities in government administration during his tenure as KMI's director at Gontor.<sup>33</sup> Table 2 provides an overview of the recognitions bestowed upon him during this period.

**Table 2.** Some Recognitions of Imam Zarkasyi Awarded by the Government and Public

No	Position	Institution	Year
1	Founder	The first Islamic higher education in Indonesia, Indonesian Islamic University (UII) Yogyakarta	1945
2	Head of department	Islamic Education Affairs at the Ministry of Religious Affairs	1946
3	Chairman	The Construction of Religious Education Curriculum at Elementary Schools, at the Ministry of Education	1951-1953
4	Founder and Director	School of KMI	1936-1985
5	Rector	Darussalam Institute of Education (IPD) Gontor	1963-1985

Source: Zarkasyi (2020)

### 3. Methodology

The current study was a descriptive and exploratory research in nature. Data was collected from various documents, for instance books, research articles, brochures, and participatory observations. Relevant studies were first reviewed to underscore the significance of Imam Zarkasyi's thoughts and critiques in modernizing the private educational institutions through the *waqf* institution. Furthermore, authentic recordings, family perspectives, opinions from reputable scholars, and direct observations were used to gain relevant information on the personage's characteristics of Zarkasyi.

<sup>31</sup>Panitia Penulis Riwayat Hidup Dan Perjuangan and KH Imam Zarkasyi, (Life History and Struggle of KH Imam Zarkasyi) "Biografi KH" (KH Biography) (1996).

<sup>32</sup>M. Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam* (History of Islamic Education) (Jakarta: Hidakarya Agung, 1985).

<sup>33</sup>Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Imam Zarkasyi's Modernization of Pesantren in Indonesia."



These approaches helped the authors in understanding the contribution of Zarkasyi to the *pesantren* development, his biographical backgrounds, and his personal activities. Additionally, the nature and characteristics of *pesantren* and the *waqf* institution were analyzed to understand Imam Zarkasyi's contribution to modernize *waqf*-based educational institutions. In this stage, document analysis was primarily performed.

#### 4. Discussion

##### 4.1 Zarkasyi's Thought on Modern *Waqf*-based *Pesantren*

Imam Zarkasyi's concept of modernization through the *waqf* institution is drawn from his experiences and impressions of old *pesantren* values and systems. The objective of this concept of modernization is to enhance the conventional system for the future, emphasizing the ongoing implementation of morality within the living environment. Morality in this context is concerned with social interactions and spiritual morality, encompassing the purification of soul, virtuous character, and ethical conduct.<sup>34</sup>

Zarkasyi instills morality through positive behavior, establishing a moral atmosphere, guidance and counseling, cultivating interest, and implementing disciplinary measures for educational purposes.<sup>35</sup> Meghan's curriculum concept, that is, generalization, modeling, explication, and reward-punishment, is considered significant in the *pesantren* context.<sup>36</sup> Zarkasyi's emphasis on 'learning by doing' was in line with UNESCO's learning society framework.<sup>37</sup> In particular, it emphasizes the need for tolerance in *pesantren*, given that students in a *pesantren* are from diverse backgrounds.<sup>38</sup>

There are key beliefs for modernizing Gontor.<sup>39</sup> Firstly, a *pesantren* needs to have substantial capital for financial autonomy. Secondly, it needs a resilient leadership structure. Thirdly, it needs to ensure sustainability and align with the third Trimurti's ideology, hence, Zarkasyi advocates adopting the form of *waqf*. Figure 1 visually explains Zarkasyi's thoughts in this matter.

<sup>34</sup>Fannani, and I. Zarkasyi, *Sendjata Pengandjoer dan Pemimpin Islam (Sendjata Pengandjoer and Islamic Leaders)* (Ponorogo: Trimurti Press).

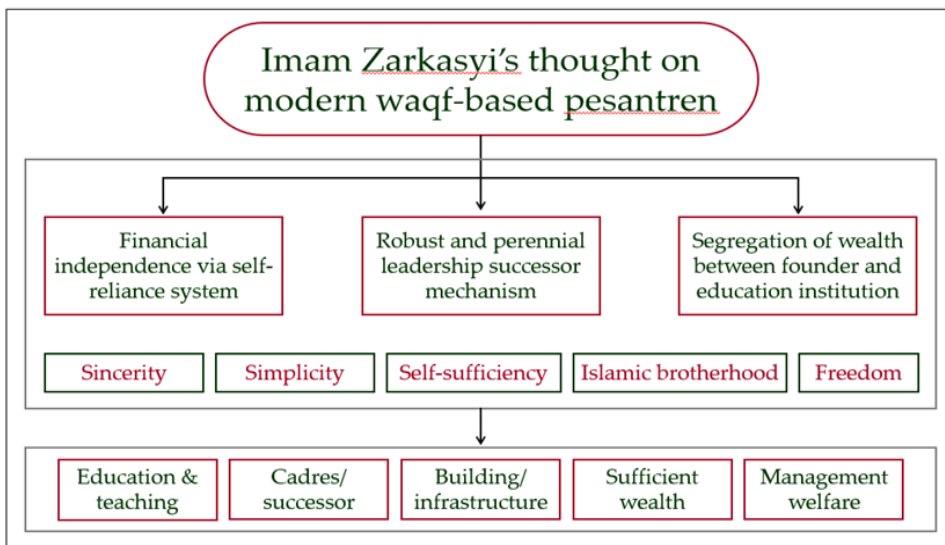
<sup>35</sup>Abdul Karneen, Hakim As-Shidqi, and Akrim Mariyat, "The Policy of Moral Education on KH Imam Zarkasyi's Thought at Gontor Modern Islamic Boarding School," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 3, no. 1 (2014): 163-182.

<sup>36</sup>Meghan, *A Sociology of Education* (London: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1981).

<sup>37</sup>Mardiyah Mardiyah, "Kepemimpinan Kiai dalam Memelihara Budaya Organisasi di Pondok Modern Gontor, Lirboyo Kediri, dan Pesantren Tebuireng Jombang," ((Kiai Leadership in Maintaining Organizational Culture at Pondok Modern Gontor), *Tsaqafah* 8, no. 1 (2012): 67-104.

<sup>38</sup>Fisher Zulkarnain, "The Thought of Kh Imam Zarkasyi on Multicultural Education at Modern Islamic Boarding School Gontor Ponorogo," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 2, no. 1 (2015): 67-87.

<sup>39</sup>Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, "Imam Zarkasyi's Modernization of Pesantren in Indonesia."



**Figure 1.** Imam Zarkasyi's Thought on Modern *Waqf*-based *Pesantren*. Source: Zarkasyi (2020).

Zarkasyi's ideas on modernization through the *waqf* institution have found successful implementation in al-Azhar University, Cairo, showcasing a notable case of private educational institution management. Al-Azhar University is a leading institution based on the *waqf* system and has been credited to its sustaining existence since 10 centuries along with providing scholarships to 500,000 international students.<sup>40</sup> This university serves as an exemplary model for the modernization of *pesantren* systems.

*Pesantrens*, guided by the ethos of self-reliance, gain autonomy to address challenges innovatively. The promotion of Islamic brotherhood is a crucial concept instilled in pupils, fostering effective interactions and tolerance for diversity.<sup>41</sup> Managing economic activities within a *waqf*-based institution benefits eligible students, enhancing their life skills, and serving as an educational practice. Allocation of *waqf* fund should prioritize long-term objectives, for instance, educational infrastructure development, cultivation of qualified individuals, construction of necessary infrastructure, establishment of financial instruments, and welfare of management personnel.

Leadership within *pesantrens* is based on role models and setting commendable precedents. An example of a unique remuneration system applied in Pondok Gontor is where leaders do not receive regular stipends to emphasize authenticity and discourage financial dependence on the institution. Zarkasyi has outlined five essential principles for *pesantrens*' growth and longevity, that is, simplicity, sincerity, self-reliance, Islamic brotherhood, and freedom. Adhering to these principles would facilitate the effective implementation of the *waqf* institution.

Researchers have examined Zarkasyi's modernization from various perspectives. For instance, instructional approach, teaching methods for non-native speakers in Arabic and English language,

<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Muhammad Masykur Baiquni, "Pancajiwa Pergerakan Reformasi Pendidikan KH Raden Imam Zarkasyi Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (Pancajiwa Movement for Educational Reform KH Raden Imam Zarkasyi Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor)," *Rahmatan Lil Alamin: Journal of Peace Education and Islamic Studies* 1, no. 1 (2018): 29-35.

educational strategy for different subjects, organization, and management of education.<sup>42</sup> Importantly, *pondok* modernization is critical for entrepreneurial integration of students and teachers through *waqf*-based business units with four key aspects. These aspects include education system and methods, curriculum material, institutional structure and management, and value instillation strategy for positive character development in students.<sup>43</sup>

#### 4.2 Zarkasyi's Critique on Traditional *Pesantren* System

Having acquired knowledge and firsthand experience in numerous traditional *pesantren* systems, which are typically privately controlled by individual figures, Zarkasyi developed a comprehensive understanding of their advantages and limitations. One of the criticisms he raised pertained to the inefficiency of a leadership succession system. He strongly criticized the notion of attaining financial independence primarily through the reliance on the founder, relatives, and sporadic acts of generosity. In particular, the notion of inherited money was also criticized that is left behind after one's demise.

Figure 2 explains Zarkasyi's criticisms and solutions for traditional *pesantren*. There are several critical issues within the traditional *pesantren* system which are as follows:

##### 4.2.1. Leadership Succession Challenges

- *Issue.* The conventional practice of designating family members as successors often led to unprepared and unqualified individuals assuming leadership roles, resulting in a decline in institutional vitality.
- *Emphasis.* The need for effective leadership succession planning, ensuring that successors possess necessary qualifications and preparedness to lead the institution successfully.

##### 4.2.2. Over-Reliance on Limited Funding Sources

- *Issue.* Traditional *pesantrens* heavily depended on funding from the founder, family, and community generosity. With growing student populations and expansion, the institution faced financial constraints and hindering development.
- *Emphasis.* The importance of financial independence and the need for diversified funding sources. This approach aimed to secure additional resources for the institution's development beyond the founder's and family's capacity.

##### 4.2.3. Dispute over Wealth Distribution

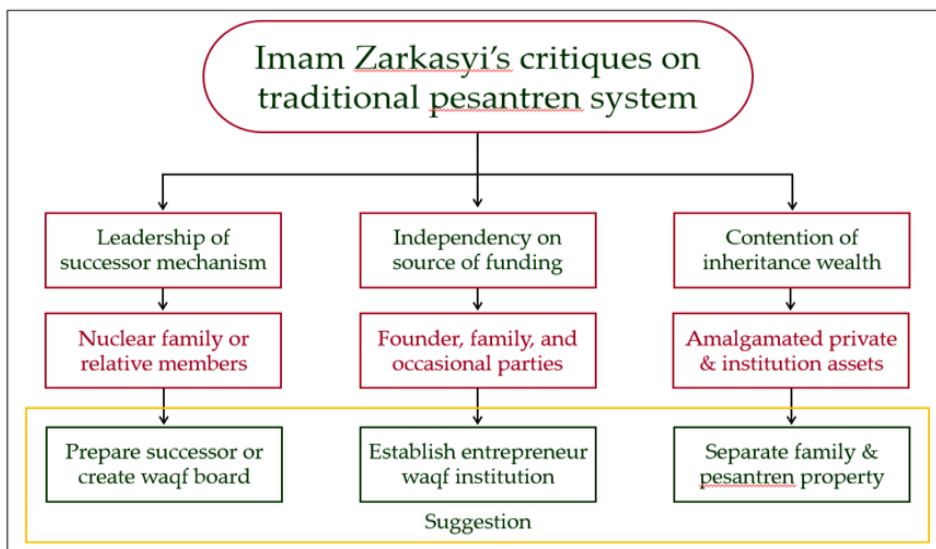
- *Issue.* Disputes often arose over wealth distribution and inheritance after the demise of the headmaster. Family members prioritized their material interests, leading to internal conflicts within the family.
- *Emphasis.* The inefficiency of procedures for separating *pesantren* assets and family properties. These challenges were sought to prevent internal disputes and ensure a smoother transition of institutional responsibilities.

<sup>42</sup>A.F. Zarkasyi, "Tajdid al-Fikri al-Tarbawi al-Islami inda al-Shaikh Imam Zarkasyi (Renewal of Islamic educational thought according to Sheikh Imam Zarkasyi)," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 5, no. 1 (2011): 153-172.

<sup>43</sup>S.M. Daryaman, "Modernisasi Pendidikan Pesantren di Indonesia (Studi Pemikiran KH Imam Zarkasyi) (Modernization of Islamic Boarding School Education in Indonesia (Study of KH Imam Zarkasyi's Thoughts))," *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 5, no. 2 (2017): 57-70.

#### 4.2.4. Integration of Essential Principles

- *Emphasis.* Valuable principles within the traditional *pesantren* environment needs to be integrated into contemporary *waqf*-based institutions, aiming to harmonize cultural and structural methodologies for improved management and long-term sustainability.



**Figure 2.** Imam Zarkasyi's Critique on the Traditional *Pesantren* System. Source: Zarkasyi (2020).

#### 4.5 Zarkasyi's Contribution to Modern *Waqf*-based *Pesantren*

Zarkasyi's efforts in transforming Gontor into a sustainable and modernized *pesantren* involved several key initiatives:

- *Leadership Transformation and Skill Development.* Gontor focused to transform leadership skills among students and teachers.<sup>44</sup> The institution played a crucial role in delivering good leaders to society. Moreover, it also emphasized qualities, such as direction, training, task assignment, habituation, supervision, providing role models, and a humane approach.<sup>45</sup>
- *Addressing the Issue of Stagnancy*
- *Ownership Transformation.* Zarkasyi addressed the issue of stagnancy and ineffective management in traditional *pesantrens* by transforming Gontor's ownership. The institution was

<sup>44</sup>Najwaa Mu'minah, "Character Building Dalam Konsep Pendidikan Imam Zarkasyi Ditinjau Dari Filsafat Moral Ibnu Miskawaih (Character Building in Imam Zarkasyi's Educational Concept Seen from Ibn Miskawaih's Moral Philosophy)," *Jurnal Filsafat* 25, no. 1 (2015): 100-133.

<sup>45</sup>Imroatul Fatimah, "Kepemimpinan KH. Imam Zarkasyi Di Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor (Leadership KH. Imam Zarkasyi at Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor)," *JIEM (Journal of Islamic Education Management)* 2, no. 2 (2018): 26-43.

officially declared a *Waqf* after 32 years of establishment, with the intention to benefit the Muslim ummah.<sup>46</sup>

- *Formal Declaration of Waqf Status through Waqf Charter.* The status of *waqf* was formally declared through a charter, stating that Gontor is a *waqf* for the Muslim ummah and is no longer the property of the headmaster. This initiative was aimed at preventing stagnancy and ineffective management associated with individual or family ownership.
- *Transfer of Wealth to Waqf Properties as Waqf Assets.* In 1958, the founders, known as Trimurtis, handed over substantial assets including land, buildings, a mosque, dormitories, and other facilities, to the *waqf* board.<sup>47</sup> This marked a significant departure from the traditional practice of individual or family ownership.
- *Establishment of Waqf Board.* A *waqf* board, comprising fifteen qualified individuals, was established as the highest body in institutional structure. This board played a crucial role in overseeing the management of *waqf* assets and ensuring sustainability.<sup>48</sup>
- *Leadership Authority Shift.* The establishment of *waqf* board brought about a shift in leadership authority. While it may have hindered family members from taking prominent roles, it ensured sustainability and effective management.
- *Education Management Modernization.* Zarkasyi's modernization efforts focused on education management, introducing a distinctive approach that differed from conventional management in traditional institutions.
- *Effective Succession Planning.* Following Zarkasyi's death in 1985, the *waqf* board played a crucial role in the succession of kyai, demonstrating the effectiveness of the reformative steps taken almost three decades earlier.
- *Ongoing Development and Sustainability.* Pondok Gontor continues to exist as a well-maintained institution with *waqf* assets being productively managed. The institution serves the ummah by providing quality education.

The progressive development of Gontor, particularly in terms of the number of students and teachers benefiting from the *waqf*, reflects the success and sustainability of Zarkasyi's modernization initiatives. Pondok Gontor manages more than 1.600 hectares *waqf* land productively and operates dozens of small business enterprises, striving to serve the shareholder's need inside the management. Moreover, at the same time, it also fulfills stakeholder's demand outside the *pesantren*. This foundation divides the utilization of *waqf* land into three functions which mainly focuses on productive sectors to achieve the spirit of self-reliance as mandated in the *waqf* declaration.<sup>49</sup> Table

<sup>46</sup>I. Zarkasyi, *Pidato pada Resepsi Kesyukuran Setengah Abad Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor dan Peresmian Masjid Jami' Gontor* (Speech at the Thanksgiving Reception for Half a Century of Pondok Modern Darussalam Gontor and the Inauguration of the Gontor Jami' Mosque). (Ponorogo: 1976).

<sup>47</sup>*Piagam Penyerahan Wakaf Pondok Modern Gontor* (Pondok Modern Gontor Waqf Handover Charter). (Gontor, Ponorogo, Indonesia, 1958)

<sup>48</sup>Umar Bukhori, "KH. Imam Zarkasyi dan Genre Baru Pondok Pesantren (KH. Imam Zarkasyi and the New Genre of Islamic Boarding Schools)," *Dirosat: Journal of Islamic Studies* 1, no. 2 (2017): 259-272.

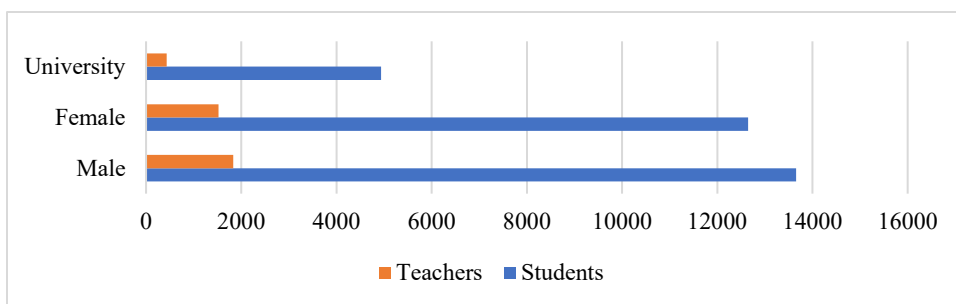
<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

3 presents the details of *waqf* land utilization, while Figure 3 depicts the latest data<sup>50</sup> for the recent development of Pondok Gontor's academia which is also the *waqf* beneficiaries.

**Table 3.** Utilization Sectors of Gontor *Waqf* Land

No	Utilization	m2	Hectare	Percentage
1	Education	5,001,554	500,16	30.76
2	Agriculture and farming	8,254,181	825,42	50.77
3	Economic activity	3,002,863	300,29	18.47
	Total	16,258,598	1,625.86	100.00

Source: Zarkasyi (2020).



**Figure 3.** Source: Zarkasyi (2020).

As an educational institution, Gontor has also 20 branches throughout the nation and its system had been imitated and tailored by its alumni in about 400 *pondoks*. The alumni of Gontor is known to be adjusted and conformed the institution's values and systems into their educational institution which is approximately 600 institutions. Furthermore, initiating from secondary level of education, currently Pondok Gontor is performing its duty to develop its higher educational institution, that is, Universitas Darussalam Gontor (UNIDA Gontor) as one of the bindings *waqf* missions. It currently provides 8 faculties from bachelors to doctoral degrees with about 5000 students (national and international) enrolled, employing hundreds of lecturers.<sup>51</sup>

### 5. Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Studies

This comprehensive study provided insights into Zarkasyi's perspectives and contributions in modernizing the traditional pondok system through the implementation of a *waqf*-based system. Moreover, the study also categorized Zarkasyi's concepts into three primary aspects, that is, financial independence, a strong and enduring leadership system, and the construction of a lasting organizational structure through *waqf*. These aspects, combined with the incorporation of five key principles observed in ancient pesantren settings, form the basis of Zarkasyi's approach to modernization.

Zarkasyi's critical insights address issues, such as blinded-inheritance leadership, scarcity of financial sources, and division between family and pondok assets. He emphasized the need to establish a clear separation between personal and institutional wealth in order to overcome stagnancy

<sup>50</sup>Wardun. *Wardun: Warta Dunia Pondok Modern Darussalam*, Tahun Ajaran 2020-2021 (2021) (Wardun: Pondok Modern Darussalam World News, 2020-2021 Academic Year 2021).

<sup>51</sup>Ibid.

and decline in traditional *pesantrens*. A significant contribution of Zarkasyi is the transformation of privately and family-owned assets into public holdings. The case of Gontor, which he and his siblings turned into a *waqf*-based institution, serves as a contemporary pondok embracing both traditional values and modern practices. Gontor is recognized as an exemplar of a private educational paradigm, integrating the *waqf* system to upgrade its educational structure.

Zarkasyi's contributions are not only limited to Gontor, however, also extend to the broader context of Indonesia. The current study also highlighted Zarkasyi's notable role during the colonial era, where he made significant contributions to the nation and spearheaded the establishment of the *waqf* system within educational institutions. Additionally, the study also suggested that Zarkasyi's works should be explored further by conducting more research, emphasizing the importance of promoting holistic principles that are increasingly neglected in contemporary society.

### Conflict of Interest

The authors of the manuscript have no financial or non-financial conflict of interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

### Data Availability Statement

The data associated with this study will be provided by the corresponding author upon request.

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