



Ecological Model of Global Citizenship Education Curriculum in Pesantren-Based Universities

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Abstract

Global Citizenship Education (GCE) has emerged as an important tool to prepare students for addressing the challenges of globalized world. However, Islamic higher education institutions are still struggling in implementing GCE. This study examines the design and implementation of GCE curricula at pesantren-based universities in Indonesia. Utilizing Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems Theory as a framework, the study focuses on how GCE is integrated into the formal, informal, and hidden curricula within pesantren's unique ecological systems. This research which employs case study design with interactive analysis model finds that both universities participated in this research develop students' global competencies such as critical thinking, cultural adaptability, and social responsibility. UNIDA employs an integrative approach, embedding GCE across its curriculum, whereas UDN adopts a cross-curricular strategy. Despite strengths in informal and hidden curricula within both universities, challenges remain in transitioning from teacher-centered to student-centered pedagogy in formal learning. This study underscores the moral and humanistic orientation of GCE in pesantren-based universities and sets the groundwork for future research to develop a comprehensive GCE model tailored to residential higher education institutions.

Introduction

Globalization can contribute to the rise of multicultural societies across the world. In addressing the challenges of multicultural societies, many scholars believe that democratic citizenship education is one of the solutions (Henderson & Tudball, 2016; Law, 2013; Naval et al., 2002; Neoh & Saifulloh, 2020; Waghid & Smeyers, 2014). However, the recent developments of globalization together with technological advancements require citizens who have global skills to survive (Franch, 2020). In this context, Global Citizenship Education (GCE) could be the remedy. The objective of GCE is to equip learners with the knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes necessary to contribute to the creation of more equitable, peaceful, tolerant, and sustainable societies at both local and global levels (UNESCO, 2015). In line with that, many studies find that GCE fosters critical thinking skill, cross-cultural communication skills, and empathy among students, thereby enhancing their ability to celebrate diversities (Bosio, 2021; Chen & Hsu, 2017; Reynolds et al., n.d.; Yemini, 2017). Pivotal global competencies such as cross-cultural understanding, social responsibility, and environmental awareness are needed for success in the 21st century (Anggono et al., 2018; Franch, 2020; Reynolds et al., n.d.). Moreover, UNESCO underscores that GCE plays a crucial role in advancing peace and security, fostering sustainable development, and building inclusive and resilient societies (UNESCO, 2015). Referring to these significances, the integration of GCE into educational systems is essential.

In the context of higher education, several studies have identified determinant factors of GCE's successful implementation at universities. Alazmi (2022) contends that an integrative curriculum, the incorporation of experiential learning, and the development of students' critical thinking skills are pivotal to effective implementation of GCE. Regarding this critical thinking, Dower & Williams (2002) believe that GCE implementation needs transformative learning and students' active engagement. The active engagement is not only required from students, but also from various stakeholders including university leadership, academic and administrative staff, student organization leaders, and the broader community (Andreotti, 2011).

Regarding the objectives of GCE within higher education contexts, some studies have been conducted to investigate them. Producing graduates who have global competencies that enable them to address the challenges of globalized world is one of most identified objectives of GCE in many universities across the world (Jelinek & Fomerand, 2023). Massaro (2022) highlights the creation of graduates who have awareness of global issues through international mobility, coursework, and other university programs as the goals of GCE. Consequently, GCE must fulfill its transformative role as an agent of change by being effectively integrated into higher education curricula (Grad & van der Zande, 2022). However, the distinct objectives of GCE within Islamic higher education institutions, especially which employ full boarding system, remain unclear. This is due to lack of research on that topic.

While many scholars agree that GCE should be integrated into higher education, the design curriculum for GCE and its delivery are still contested. The comprehensive model of citizenship curriculum proposed by Lee (2008) and further elaborated by Print (2012) underscores the importance of integrating formal, informal, and hidden curricula in fostering global citizenship. This curriculum model highlights that learning extends beyond structured classroom activities to include extracurricular programs and campus life dynamics. However, challenges remain in implementing student-centered pedagogical approaches in the formal curriculum, as highlighted by Print (2012). In addition, significant barriers to implementing GCE in higher education persist. Research by Bousquet (2010) identifies institutional resistance and a predominant focus on market-driven educational practices as major obstacles that can overshadow the importance of GCE. Furthermore, a study by Tsegay (2016) finds that many undergraduate students are unfamiliar with the concept of global citizenship, indicating a critical gap in awareness that educational initiatives must address to foster understanding and engagement. Interdisciplinary approaches play a vital role in enriching academic knowledge related to GCE. As noted by Beine et al. (2014), promoting interdisciplinary projects and international collaborations not only enhances academic skills but also prepares students to engage effectively with pressing global issues.

In boarding system or residential education institutions context, the implementation of GCE presents distinctive characteristics. This is largely due to the fact that most educational activities aimed at developing students' personal and social skills in residential settings occur outside the classroom (Brown et al., 2020; Hamid et al., 2019; Saifulloh & Neoh, 2022). As a result, measuring the effectiveness of GCE implementation in such environments poses significant challenges (Martin et al., 2014; Nielsen et al., 2016). Nevertheless, holistic education in residential institutions provides opportunities for students to collectively cultivate a sense of global responsibility (Brown et al., 2020).

Despite the breadth of research focusing on GCE in higher education, no consensus has yet been reached regarding an ideal GCE curriculum model for universities. Such challenges remain an enigma to be addressed, particularly for Islamic boarding system-based universities (universities with a pesantren system) in Indonesia, an area that has received minimal scholarly

attention. Therefore, this study aimed to explore the practice of GCE in pesantren-based universities in Indonesia focusing on answering two key questions: (1) How is the GCE curriculum designed in universities adopting the pesantren system? (2) How is this curriculum implemented through pesantren ecological systems?

Methods

This study was designed to understand the curriculum design of GCE and its implementation within pesantren-based university. Therefore, GCE curriculum and pesantren-based university are the unit of analysis in this study. Since the pesantren system operates within the wider societal context (Hefner, 2021), this research is positioned within Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). The Bronfenbrenner's (1979) EST which comprises the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem sees that ecological factors contribute to the development of individual differently. The use of this theory is favorable in understanding the process of education among students who study at pesantren-based university. The EST then evolved to bioecological paradigm that recognizes the regular two-directional interaction between developing individuals and their immediate environment where they live with their biopsychological characteristics. This is what Bronfenbrenner called as the proximal process (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, 1995).

The multiple components of pesantren-based university that include rector, academic staff, administrative staff, boarding masters, student union, dormitory, extracurricular activities, community service programs and similar items are proximal processes (Bronfenbrenner, 1995) which directly contribute to students' global citizenship competencies development. EST also offers a framework that is useful. It is able to analyze all of the curriculum at a pesantren-based university, including its unique integration of a formal, informal, and hidden curriculum. As previously outlined, the curricula structure in the pesantren education system implies Bronfenbrenner's (1979) EST's five levels. Consequently, one can better understand the design along with implementation of a pesantren-based model of GCE if one considers its specific environmental context.

This study used a case study method with a qualitative paradigm (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2014). Several academics believe that case studies are ideal for critically analyzing and obtaining a thorough understanding of a phenomenon through close engagement with research participants (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 2005; Yin, 2014). The case study approach was utilized to understand how is the design of GCE curriculum at pesantren-based universities and how is the delivery of that curriculum. The case studies were conducted at Universitas Darussalam (UNIDA) Gontor Indonesia, which has been recognized in various studies for producing graduates with global competitiveness (Hady et al., 2012; Mardiyah, 2012; Saifulloh, 2018, 2021), and Universitas Darunnajah (UDN) Jakarta Indonesia, a recently established pesantren-based university with a strong commitment to internationalization.

The methods of collecting data used in this research are interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and document analysis. These methods were chosen to explore the intricate design of GCE curricula and implementation within pesantren-based universities. Interviews provided individual perspectives from university leaderships, lecturers and students, focus group discussions captured collective views and dynamics, observations allowed the researchers to directly examine classroom practices and campus life, and document analysis offered insights into institutional policies and curricular frameworks. The trustworthiness of the qualitative data was ensured by following four key criteria: (1) credibility (internal validity) which was achieved through prolonged engagement in the field, triangulation of data sources, and member-checking to validate participants' responses; (2) transferability (external validity)

ensured by providing thick descriptions of the research context, participants, and processes; (3) dependability (reliability) maintained through an audit trail that documented the research design, data collection, and analysis procedures in detail, allowing the study to be replicated or evaluated by other researchers; and (4) confirmability (objectivity) upheld by reflexive journaling, peer debriefing, and systematic triangulation to minimize researcher bias and ensure that findings emerged from the data rather than personal assumptions (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Miles et al., 2014). Those data were analyzed using interactive analysis model (Miles et al., 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The research procedures carried out in this study comprised of literature reviews, fieldwork for data collection at UNIDA Gontor and UDN Jakarta, data analysis and interpretation. A review of literatures focused on the conceptions of GCE, GCE curriculum development, GCE for higher education, the pesantren system, and the profile of two pesantren-based universities participated in this research. The fieldwork for data collection was conducted for three months (June to August 2024) using interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), observations, and document analysis. To start with, university management comprising rector, vice rectors, and deans were interviewed to obtain the data about universities' policies and initiatives on cultivating global citizenship competencies. Subsequently, relevant documents were examined, including syllabi, textbooks, lesson plans, standard operating procedures (SOPs) for extracurricular activities, reports on international activities, and other related materials. In addition to interviewing top and middle management, faculty members who taught GCE-related courses, faculty staff in charge of student activities, and student organization management were also interviewed. These interviews were aimed at collecting data about the implementation of GCE curriculum. To enrich the data, observations and FGDs involving vice rectors, deans, and lecturers were conducted. These methods were also used for data triangulation.

During data collection process, data analysis actually has started inductively using the interactive analysis model (Miles et al., 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The analysis focused on understanding the design of GCE curriculum and its implementation in pesantren-based universities. The procedures of data analysis consisted of preparing the data, critically reading the data, writing memos and coding, describing the data, classifying and interpreting the data, and visualizing the findings in the form of narrative, table, or diagram. The final output of this stage was the visualization of the design of GCE curriculum implemented in pesantren-based universities.

Results and Discussion

GCE Curriculum at UNIDA and UDN: An Ecological Systems Perspective

Several key findings were found based on data collected through fieldwork at UNIDA Gontor and UDN Jakarta. Among them is that the curriculum for GCE at pesantren-based universities aimed for creating global citizens who have global competencies. The global competencies inculcated at both universities include cross-cultural understanding, empathy towards others, adaptability, social responsibility, collaboration, critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and foreign languages skills (Arabic and English). However, the GCE curriculum at both universities still maintains their unique pesantren identity. The pesantren identity comprises of internalization of an Islamic worldview and Islamic values in campus life, sincerity in every activity, simplicity in daily life, fostering brotherhood with others, self-reliance, and freedom in making life choices.

To deepen the understanding of how curriculum for GCE is designed, it can be framed within Bronfenbrenner's EST (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1995; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994). The EST offers a comprehensive lens to analyze the complex interactions between developing individuals and their environments. The GCE curriculum at both UNIDA and UDN unfolds within multiple layers of ecological systems that collectively shape the students' development as global citizens. The students' immediate environments, such as their interactions with lecturers at classrooms, peers and boarding masters within the pesantren campus, play a crucial role in nurturing their sense of responsibility, empathy, and collaboration. These interactions are embedded within a broader network, where the relationships between students' family life, the university, and the pesantren further reinforce values such as social responsibility, simplicity, and sincerity.

At the same time, non-immediate environments such as university policies, governmental educational frameworks, and global events, contribute to shaping students' exposure to global issues, cultural awareness, and adaptability. The cultural and societal norms of the larger context influence how students see the globalized world. At UNIDA and UDN, the integration of Islamic values and worldview into global education ensures that students remain rooted in their identity while engaging with the world. Additionally, the historical and temporal context, including changes in society, technology, and global dynamics, continuously shapes the curriculum and its emphasis on critical thinking, problem-solving, and global competencies.

By applying the ecological systems framework, the GCE curriculum at these pesantren-based universities emerges as a dynamic and interconnected process where various systems interact to develop students who are not only equipped with global competencies but also grounded in their Islamic identity. This multi-layered approach ensures that students grow holistically within their unique social, cultural, and educational contexts. To understand more concretely the practice of GCE at UNIDA and UDN, below is a figure of the GCE curriculum design at universities applying the pesantren system.

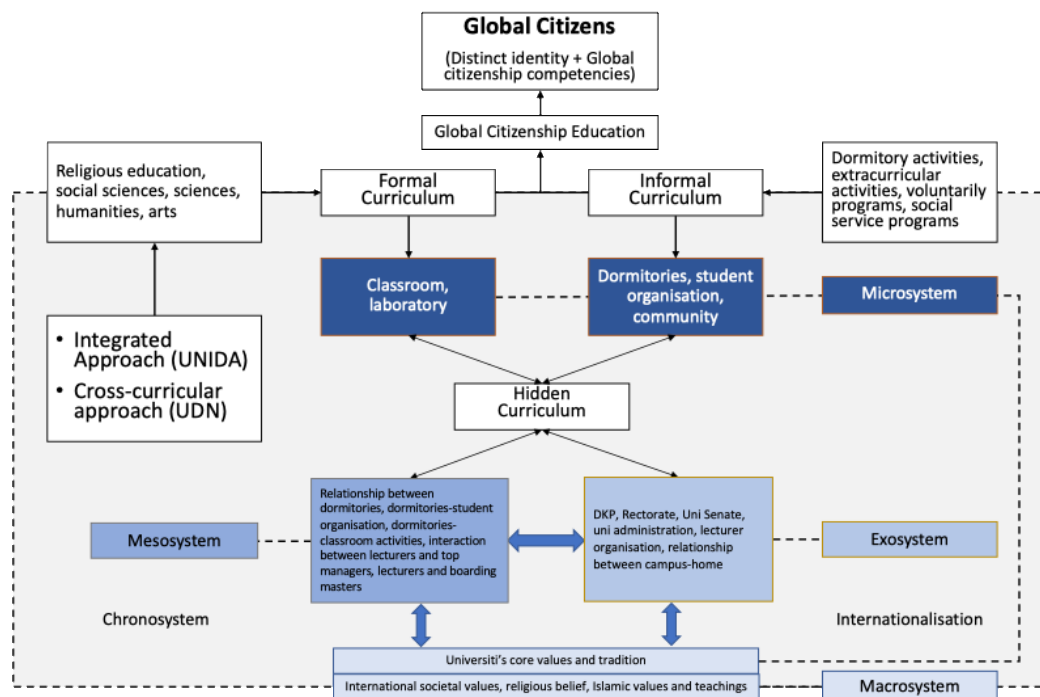


Figure 1. Curriculum design for GCE at Indonesian pesantren-based higher education.

The figure 1 above illustrates several similarities and differences in the design of the GCE curriculum at both universities. One of the key similarities is the use of the pesantren system, which integrates formal, informal, and hidden curricula in cultivating global competencies among students. The formal curriculum consists of a collection of courses studied by students through classroom and laboratory-based learning activities. The informal curriculum encompasses students' learning experiences through activities in the dormitories, extracurricular programs, volunteer initiatives, and community service or social engagement programs managed by student organizations and the broader community. The hidden curriculum refers to the dynamic campus life at the pesantren, imbued with Islamic values and the spirit of pesantren (sincerity, simplicity, self-reliance, Islamic brotherhood, and freedom), which students are immersed in. According to the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs at both universities, these three types of curricula are supported by campus internationalization programs designed to prepare students to thrive in the global arena. These internationalization programs include strengthening Arabic and English language proficiency, intensifying international student mobility programs, and engaging in various other international collaborations.

However, when it comes to the design of the formal curriculum, there are notable differences between the two universities. UNIDA, which has been accredited as an excellent institution, appears to employ an integrative approach in designing its GCE curriculum. This is evident in the way global citizenship competencies are embedded across the entire curriculum, with these competencies being reflected in the learning outcomes of each course (results of interview with Dean of Faculty of Education and Faculty of Humanities at UNIDA). In contrast, UDN adopts a cross-curricular approach to its GCE curriculum design (results of interview with Dean of Faculty of Islamic Studies and Faculty of Science and Technology). This means that global citizenship competencies at UDN are cultivated within specific academic clusters such as social sciences, religious studies, and the humanities. Furthermore, the classroom teaching model at UNIDA is more internationally oriented, as reflected in the policy of using Arabic and English as the primary languages of instruction for many courses (FGD with Vice Rector for Academic Affairs and lecturers of Faculty of Humanity, UNIDA). In contrast, there was a minimal use of Arabic and English language in classroom activities at UDN (results of classroom observation). However, the policy of intensifying Arabic and English language within academic activities at UDN has been passed but it has not been fully implemented.

The Implementation of GCE Curriculum

In implementing the GCE curriculum, both UNIDA and UDN maximize the unique ecological system inherent in the pesantren. This ecological system, as theorized by Bronfenbrenner, consists of the microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. The diagram below illustrates how the distinctive pesantren ecological system is maximized to support the GCE curriculum.

Based on figure 2 global citizenship competencies and the pesantren identity are instilled through various campus ecological systems. The most prevalent of these is through the dynamics of programs and activities within the microsystem. In Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory, the microsystem refers to the environment in which students directly interact with their peers or professors and actively engage in the dynamics of activities within it. In the case of pesantren-based higher education institutions (HEIs), the number of microsystems is abundant because students live together on an integrated campus. Among the microsystems present at UNIDA and UDN are classrooms, laboratories, dormitories, mosques, communal kitchens, canteens, and student organizations with various sub-organizations in the form of

student activity units (UKM), which are numerous (results of observation at UNIDA and UDN). Each of these microsystems offers activities and programs that can directly develop students' global citizenship competencies, such as cross-cultural understanding, empathy toward others, adaptability, social responsibility, and foreign language proficiency (Arabic and English). Furthermore, the pesantren identity is also cultivated within these microsystems to assist students in the process of internalizing the Islamic worldview and Islamic values in campus life, fostering sincerity in the educational process, cultivating simplicity in daily life, maintaining brotherhood with others, promoting self-reliance, and instilling the value of freedom. In short, it is within the microsystem that the formal, informal, and hidden curricula are implemented.

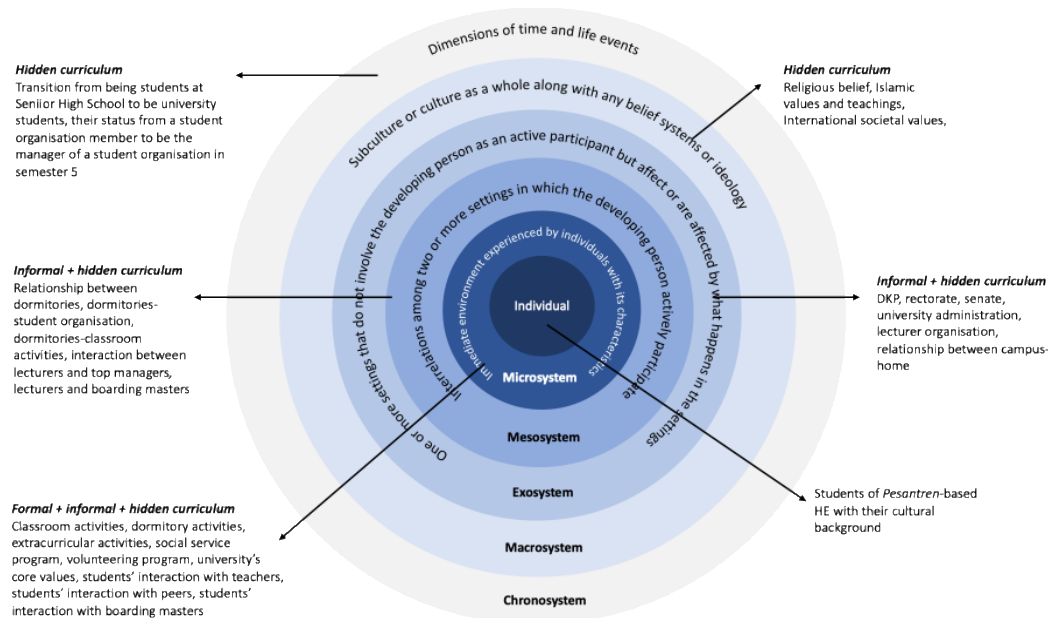


Figure 2. The pesantren ecological system (adopted from Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1995; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994)) in which GCE is implemented.

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The inculcation of global citizenship competencies and pesantren identity also occurs across other layers of the ecological system, including the mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem. Within the mesosystem, informal and hidden curricula are applied. Based on field studies conducted, the relationship patterns between activities in the dormitory and student organizations play a role in developing students' global competencies. For instance, a student entrusted with the role of dormitory head and serving on the soccer club board has significant opportunities to develop leadership skill, communication skill, and appreciation for diversity. This is because the student is shaped by an environment with all its dynamics, where they interact directly. The dynamic relationship between this student's life in the dormitory and the soccer club contributes to the development of their competencies. Similar dynamics occur within the exosystem, even though the student may not interact directly with this system. For example, the interaction between the Director of Pesantren Affairs and the dormitory mentors also influences the shaping of students' characteristics. This can be seen in the sincere and harmonious relationship between the Director and their assistants, which also helps cultivate the students' sincere character. Meanwhile, within the macrosystem and chronosystem, the hidden curriculum plays a significant role in instilling the pesantren identity. This was observed by researchers during the fieldwork at both universities.

The Distinctiveness of the GCE Curriculum in Pesantren-Based Universities

As illustrated in figure 1.1, UNIDA and UDN view GCE as a tool to produce graduates with global competencies who can contribute to transnational and cross-cultural communities. This reinforces previous research findings that position GCE as a means of developing the knowledge and skills necessary for students to compete in the global era (Jelinek & Fomerand, 2023; Mahpudz, 2023; Wang & Print, 2024). However, GCE at both pesantren-based universities differs from the neoliberal approach to GCE (Gaudelli, 2009; Schattle, 2008), which focuses primarily on economic orientation. In contrast, the GCE curriculum in these pesantren universities adopts a moral framework and personal perspective to equip students with the ability to compete globally while maintaining their local identity (pesantren identity). This finding aligns with Oxley and Morris's thesis on the moral global citizenship model (Oxley & Morris, 2013) and can be classified as a more humanistic form of GCE, as proposed by Bosio (2022).

Furthermore, the uniqueness of the GCE curriculum at pesantren-based universities can be seen in the integration of formal, informal, and hidden curricula. This approach is consistent with the comprehensive model of citizenship curriculum described by Print (2012), who argues that students learn citizenship knowledge, attitudes, and skills both through classroom activities and extracurricular programs. This strengthens the thesis that the curriculum, as an organized structure of learning, encompasses planned learning and learning experiences across the three curricula outlined above (Lee, 2008; Print, 2014). At both pesantren universities, the formal GCE curriculum is knowledge-centered, while the informal and hidden curricula place greater emphasis on strengthening the attitudes and skills necessary for global citizenship.

The GCE curriculum at pesantren-based universities like UNIDA and UDN is organized through formal, informal, and hidden curricula and implemented within the pesantren's ecological system. Ecological factors, as proposed by Bronfenbrenner in his Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1986), represent layered environments in which individuals develop and grow. This ecological system strongly supports the implementation of the GCE curriculum in pesantren campuses. Consequently, GCE at the two pesantren-based universities in this study is implemented by employing an integrative approach that combines the formal, informal, and hidden curricula. This aligns with Print's thesis on the comprehensive

approach to citizenship education, which emphasizes the integration of these three types of curricula (Print, 2012). According to Print, in such approach, both internal and external campus factors have a significant influence on program implementation (Print, 2009). Furthermore, holistic education at pesantren-based universities is considered capable of providing opportunities for students to collectively develop a sense of global responsibility (Brown et al., 2020). However, to verify this thesis, quantitative research to measure the global competencies of pesantren-based university students is necessary. The results of such measurements could serve as a foundation for developing a more effective GCE model at pesantren-based universities.

Based on data obtained from both universities, it was found that the implementation of the formal curriculum tends to remain predominantly lecturer-centered in certain classroom activities, although an increasing number of courses have adopted student-centered approaches. Lecturer-centered teaching model is characterized by the absence of active student participation, a lack of critical thinking exercises, and excessive reliance on textbooks. Such practices can undermine efforts to enhance student engagement in the learning process, develop communication skills, and train students to think critically (Print, 2012). This was found in some classroom activities for religious studies at both universities. This aspect of formal curriculum delivery represents a weakness in the implementation of GCE at pesantren-based universities, highlighting the need for the development of a student-centered learning model.

Nevertheless, this limitation is mitigated by the implementation of the informal curriculum, which necessitates active student participation at both universities. Unlike other educational institutions that generally focus on formal curriculum implementation in citizenship education (Hoon, 2013; Logli, 2015), the two pesantren-based universities in this study demonstrate excellence in their delivery of informal and hidden curricula, as well as supporting internationalization programs. This provides students with opportunities to develop their potentials and enhance their global competencies through various extracurricular activities. In such dynamic environments, students actively exchange ideas, broaden their horizons, develop positive attitudes, and strengthen their citizenship competencies (Kahne et al., 2013).

Conclusion

The findings of this study show an in-depth understanding and analysis of the curriculum design for GCE pesantren-based universities and insights into its implementation. The study finds that pesantren-based universities have a unique GCE curriculum design that combines formal, informal, and hidden curricula with a moral framework and a personal point of view. This means that both universities that took part in this research use a model of global citizenship that is based on humanistic morals and not on wealth.

Regarding the delivery of GCE curriculum, UNIDA Gontor and UDN Jakarta employ the pesantren's ecological system and adopt a comprehensive approach. This involves the integration of formal, informal, and hidden curricula, which are then implemented across all levels of the pesantren's ecological systems. Those systems comprise of microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem which are easily found in various forms at full boarding system campus.

Moving forward, the findings of this research contribute to some implications. First, it is necessary for other researchers to examine the level of students' global competencies of pesantren-based universities to provide empirical data on the effectiveness of pesantren-based GCE. In addition, further research is needed to develop more sophisticated GCE model tailored for higher education institutions with residential systems regardless their religious

standpoint. Second, higher education institutions that still preserve their local or traditional identity, need to maintain the balance between their global initiatives and local wisdom preservation. This is because, based on the current research findings, inculcating global competencies does not mean eliminating the distinct local identity.

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