



The Relevance and Contribution of Education in The Golden Age of Islam to The SDGs 2030 in Quality Education

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the history of education during the Islamic Golden Age and examine its relevance in supporting the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Quality Education. This study uses a literature review method through the analysis of various relevant scientific sources. The results of the study indicate that the educational system during the Islamic Golden Age was not only oriented toward intellectual development but also emphasized the integration of knowledge, spiritual values, and character building. The scholarly tradition that flourished through educational institutions, translation activities, and cross-cultural interactions established Islamic civilization as a global hub for scientific advancement. Majid 'Irsan al-Kilani's perspective underscores that this progress was rooted in an education system grounded in the principle of tauhid, the integration of knowledge, and social responsibility within society. The findings of this study indicate that the educational values of Islam during the Golden Age have strong relevance to the concept of quality education that emphasizes inclusivity, justice, and sustainability. Therefore, the history of Islamic education can serve as a strategic source of inspiration in designing a modern educational system that is humanistic, adaptive, and responsive to contemporary global challenges.

Keywords: Islamic Education, The Golden Age, SDGs 2030, Quality Education.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis sejarah pendidikan selama Zaman Keemasan Islam dan mengkaji relevansinya dalam mendukung pencapaian Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (SDGs) 2030, Pendidikan Berkualitas. Penelitian ini menggunakan tinjauan pustaka melalui analisis berbagai sumber ilmiah yang relevan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sistem pendidikan pada masa Keemasan Islam tidak hanya berorientasi pada pengembangan intelektual tetapi juga menekankan integrasi pengetahuan, nilai-nilai spiritual, dan pembentukan karakter. Tradisi ilmiah yang berkembang melalui lembaga pendidikan, kegiatan penerjemahan, dan interaksi lintas budaya menjadikan peradaban Islam sebagai pusat global untuk kemajuan ilmu pengetahuan. Perspektif Majid 'Irsan al-Kilani menggarisbawahi bahwa kemajuan ini berakar pada sistem pendidikan yang didasarkan pada prinsip tauhid, integrasi pengetahuan, dan tanggung jawab sosial dalam masyarakat. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa nilai-nilai pendidikan Islam selama Zaman Keemasan memiliki relevansi yang kuat dengan konsep pendidikan berkualitas yang menekankan inklusivitas, keadilan, dan keberlanjutan. Oleh karena itu, sejarah pendidikan Islam dapat menjadi sumber inspirasi strategis dalam merancang sistem pendidikan modern yang humanistik, adaptif, dan responsif terhadap tantangan global kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Islam, Masa Keemasan, SDGs 2030, Pendidikan Berkualitas.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Education has a strategic role in shaping the quality of human resources and determining the direction of the development of a civilization. In the context of Islam, education functions not only as a process of knowledge transfer, but also as a means of character formation, spirituality, and social responsibility. This shows that Islamic education has a holistic and integrative approach, which combines cognitive, affective, and moral aspects in one complete system (Mindani et al., 2025). This approach is an important foundation in building a knowledgeable and moral society, so that education plays a role as the main foundation in the progress of civilization.

History records that the development of Islamic education reached its peak in the classical period which is often referred to as the golden age. During this period, various educational institutions such as madrasas, libraries, and research centers developed rapidly and became centers of scientific activities. The tradition of translation and cross-cultural interaction has enriched the treasures of science and encouraged progress in various fields of science. This shows that openness to other sciences and cultures is one of the important factors in the advancement of Islamic education (Tarigan et al., 2024).

The study of the golden age of Islam is still often understood narrowly as the political and intellectual glory of the Abbasid Dynasty . This approach has not fully highlighted that such success is rooted in a system of education that is built in a sustainable and value-based manner. The rise of Islamic civilization is essentially the result of an educational process that is able to form a balance between intellectual intelligence and moral strength (Al-Kilani, 2005). Therefore, a more comprehensive study is needed to understand the role of education as the main factor in the progress of Islamic civilization.

Modern education today faces various challenges, such as inequality of access to education, low quality of learning, and lack of integration between science and character building. The development of globalization and information technology also affects the orientation of education which tends to emphasize the cognitive aspect alone. This condition shows the need to develop a more holistic and sustainable education system, which not only produces intelligent individuals, but also ethical and socially responsible individuals (Sahin, 2013).

Education is an important part of the sustainable development agenda formulated in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030, especially in the goal of Quality Education. This concept emphasizes the importance of inclusive, equitable, and quality education and encourages lifelong learning. These values are in accordance with the principles of Islamic education which emphasizes the integration of knowledge, character building, and social responsibility as part of the educational goals

(Fahmiyudin et al., 2025).

Based on this description, this study aims to analyze the history of education in the golden age of Islam and examine its relevance in supporting the achievement of Quality Education in the 2030 SDGs. This research is expected to contribute to the development of Islamic education studies while offering a new perspective in designing a holistic, inclusive, and sustainable education system in the modern era.

B. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative approach with *Intellectual History* design and *Qualitative Content Analysis of Historical Sources techniques* (Prasad, 2019). This approach was chosen because the focus of the research lies in the conceptual and ideological analysis of the Islamic education system in the golden era (750–1258 AD), as well as its relevance to the principles of quality education in the 2030 SDGs. The design of Intellectual History allows researchers to trace the development of ideas, values, and educational institutions in classical Islamic civilization, as well as evaluate their contribution to today's global educational discourse. This approach is particularly suitable for examining the cross-temporal relationship between classical and modern education, as well as providing a deep understanding of the transformation of values and ideas from historical texts to contemporary contexts.

The research steps begin with the structure of the literature selection process involving the search and selection of relevant sources in the period 2015–2025, focusing on two main areas of study: the concept of education in the Islamic golden era (especially from the Middle East and classical Islamic regions) and studies related to the implementation of the SDGs in the context of Indonesian education. The literature is collected from various trusted academic repositories such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect. The inclusion criteria include academic documents that explicitly discuss the principles of classical Islamic education and the SDGs indicator point 4 (Quality Education). The data was collected and classified by thematic coding method, then analyzed using qualitative content analysis techniques to identify the suitability, contribution, and relevance of Islamic education values to the SDGs targets.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. History of Education in the Golden Era of Islam with SDGs 2030 Quality Education

History is a record of various past events that can be a lesson and reflection for the next generation. The study of history serves not only as a documentation of past experiences, but also as a means to understand the development of human civilization. In the context of Islamic civilization, the study of history has an important role in explaining how educational traditions developed and contributed to the intellectual advancement of society. The development of education in Islamic history is inseparable from the role of religion, science, and social institutions that shaped the intellectual character of Muslim society in various historical periods (Armstrong, 2002).

The history of Islam is divided into three periods; classic, mid-range, and modern. According to (Shafwan, 2019) in detail it is divided into five eras; The era of the Prophet Rasulullah (571-632 M), the era of caliphs such as Abu Bakr, Umar bin Khattab, Uthman bin Affan, and Ali bin Abi Talib (632-661 M), then continued the era of the Umayyad Dynasty in Damascus (661-750 M), The era of the Abbasid dynasty in Baghdad (750-1258 M), as well as the era from the decline of the caliph in Baghdad to the present. According to some observers, the phase of the development of Islamic education began to soar rapidly during the reign of the Abbasid Dynasty (Ifendi, 2021), This era of the Abbasid Dynasty is called the Golden Age of Islam. The Golden Age of Islam was the heyday of science and culture in the Islamic world, which lasted from the 8th to the 14th centuries. History mentions that the golden age of Baghdad occurred during the time of Caliph Harun al Rashid (786-809) and his son al Makmun (813/833). Although it is less than half a century old, Baghdad at the time emerged as a world center with a remarkable level of prosperity and international role (Mustofa, 2018).

The development of Islamic education continued during the time of the Khulafaur Rashidin of the Umayyad Dynasty until it reached its peak during the Abbasid Dynasty. During this period, educational institutions developed rapidly and became an important part of the intellectual infrastructure of Islamic civilization. This classical period is often considered to be a period of significant development of scientific activity, in which various disciplines flourished and gave birth to many great scientists who contributed to world civilization (Hitti, 2002). The curriculum and pattern of scientific development had an impact on the classical period and the golden age which influenced the transformation and contribution of Islamic intellectuals to the Western world (Harun, 2020).

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Principles such as justice, diversity, and science that can make a generation intelligent, unique, and contributing. The historical example that existed in the

golden era of Islam has been an inspiration to build a contemporary education system that guarantees everyone's right to quality education. Fair access and opportunity are the keys to success in the golden age of Islam. This era is an inspiration to realize the 2030 SDGs for quality education. The culture of science in the golden age of Islam not only provided formal education, but also encouraged research, innovation, and scientific development. Education became one of the main pillars of the Abbasid civilization, with prominent centers of learning such as Bait al-Hikmah (House of Wisdom) playing an important role in the development of science, especially in the fields of religious science and philosophy. During this period, many prominent Muslim scholars, both in the fields of religion and education, have made important contributions to Islamic thought and science that shaped a prosperous and influential civilization (Fikriyan, 2023).

The understanding of the golden age of Islam cannot be limited to the glory of the Abbasid Dynasty. The rise of Islamic civilization is the result of the process of education and development of the ummah that has been going on systematically since the early days of Islam. Education plays a role in shaping a generation that has moral integrity, spiritual depth, and high intellectual capacity (Al-Kilani, 2005). Thus, scientific progress in the classical period is a manifestation of an education system based on the values of monotheism and social responsibility.

In the study of contemporary Islamic education, the development of education in the golden age of Islam is understood as a structured and value-based system. (Sismidarti et al., 2025) explained that institutions such as madrassas and scientific centers function as a space for transmission as well as scientific development, thus giving birth to a sustainable intellectual tradition. This shows that Islamic education not only plays a role as a means of learning, but also as a foundation in building an advanced civilization.

Openness to science from various civilizations is an important factor in the advancement of Islamic education. The process of translating Greek, Persian, and Indian works encouraged extensive intellectual interaction, thus enriching the treasures of Islamic scholarship (Harahap et al., 2022). In this context, Islamic education in the golden age was not exclusive, but adaptive and inclusive of the development of science, which ultimately gave birth to innovations in various fields.

The relevance of this concept is still seen in modern education, especially in the framework of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the aspect of Quality Education. Quality education must be able to integrate cognitive, affective, and moral aspects in one complete learning system (Budiarto & Salsabila, 2022). In this case, the principles of Islamic education in the golden age are in line with the goals of global education that emphasize inclusivity, justice, and sustainability.

The history of education in the golden age of Islam has not only historical value, but also practical relevance in the development of modern education. As explained by (Lestari & Arbi, 2024) The contribution of Islamic civilization in the

field of science shows the importance of integration between science, values, and culture. Therefore, the Islamic education system can be used as an inspirational model in designing a more holistic and sustainable education in the current global era.

2. Relevance and Contribution between the Islamic Golden Age and the 2030 SDGs of Quality Education

The main findings of this study show that the education system in the Islamic Golden Age has characteristics that are substantially in line with the principles of quality education as stated in the fourth goal of the SDGs 2030. Currently, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are an important topic often discussed. Not a few people assume that the SDGs are only a form of responsibility of business actors whose business activities damage nature. Education during the Islamic Golden Age of the Abbasid Dynasty displays the foundation of an education system that is highly relevant to the ideals of quality education in the 2030 SDGs. (Alisjahbana & Murniningtyas, 2018) Institutions such as *Baitul Hikmah* have become intellectual centers that reflect the state's support for the development of science, in line with the modern spirit to strengthen national education policies and governance. The activities of translating books from various languages into Arabic, as well as the growing tradition of research and scientific discussion, demonstrate the importance of open access to knowledge and intercultural collaboration, which is at the core of today's inclusive and technology-based approach to education. The emergence of great scientists such as Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, and Al-Khawarizmi affirms the importance of the role of teachers and intellectuals in creating sustainable quality learning.

Educational institutions such as mosques, madrasas, hospitals, and libraries provide broad access to education for all groups, regardless of age, status, or social background. This shows the spirit of lifelong learning and equality in access to education, as targeted in the SDGs. (Arum et al., 2023) Education is not only provided to children, but also to adults, with a wide selection of learning paths, both formal and non-formal. Mosques as the initial center of basic education, madrasas as formal institutions, and hospitals as centers of scientific practice reflect integrative principles in the development of knowledge and life skills in real life.

Education in the Abbasid era was not only oriented to intellectual achievements, but also formed individuals who were moral, faithful, and concerned about the welfare of the people. Islamic values such as tolerance, openness, justice, and respect for knowledge from various cultures are the spirit of a comprehensive education system. This is in line with the SDGs version of the quality education goal which emphasizes the importance of education as a way to form competitive, ethical, and able individuals to contribute to global development in a fair and inclusive manner. (Hoelman et al., 2015) Thus, the Abbasid era can be used as a historical mirror and strategic inspiration in designing today's

sustainable and humane education system.

One of the crucial issues that emerged from this study is the discontinuity between the legacy of classical Islamic education and the implementation of education in most Muslim countries today, including Indonesia. Although the golden age showed a progressive and scientific educational model, many contemporary education systems in the Islamic world have experienced stagnation, commercialization of education, and quality gaps. This raises a critical question: why are the noble values of classical Islamic education not continuously internalized in the current education system? This issue is important because it hinders the maximum contribution of Islamic education to the achievement of the 2030 SDGs. (Mellyana, 2022) These findings show that the revitalization of educational values in the golden era is not only a romantic discourse of history, but a strategic need.

The historical-critical approach used in this study has proven effective in uncovering the roots of quality education in the Islamic tradition through the analysis of classical and contemporary literature. However, limitations remain, such as limited access to primary manuscripts and dominance of secondary sources that can affect the depth of interpretation and pose the risk of anachronism, namely the tendency to interpret the past through the lens of the present disproportionately. Reflection on this shows the importance of combining historical studies with future field approaches to produce a more comprehensive understanding. Academically, this research contributes to strengthening the thesis that the values of classical Islamic education, such as the integration of religious knowledge and rationality, inclusive and holistic education, and oriented towards the development of the whole human being, are in line with the spirit of the 2030 SDGs. This research also offers a new perspective in looking at the history of Islamic education not just as a memory of the past, but as a source of value and contextual transformative strategies to answer the challenges of today's global education.

The findings of this study encourage education policy makers in the Islamic world to reform the curriculum based on classical Islamic educational values, such as the integration between religious science and science, strengthening character (*adab*), and empowering students as active seekers of knowledge. This is important so that the Islamic education system is able to respond to global and local challenges while making a real contribution to the achievement of the 2030 SDGs. The social implication is that education that emulates the principles of the golden age can create a well-informed, just, and civilized society the great ideal of sustainable development.

Based on the limitations of this research, it is suggested that follow-up research adopt a qualitative field approach or *action research* to test the implementation of classical Islamic education values in the context of today's formal education. A comparative study of the education systems in Muslim

countries that are successful and lagging behind in achieving the SDGs is also worth doing. In addition, it is necessary to explore the figures of Islamic education that have not been widely studied, so that the intellectual heritage of Islam does not stop at the big names only, but reflects a wider spectrum of Islamic scientific civilization

D. CONCLUSION

The history of education in the golden age of Islam shows that the progress of civilization is not solely determined by political or economic factors, but depends heavily on the strength of an education system that is integrated between intellectual development, character formation, and spiritual values. The scientific tradition that develops through educational institutions, translation activities, and cross-cultural interactions makes Islamic civilization a globally influential center of science. The perspective of Majid 'Irsan al-Kilani emphasizes that the rise of Islamic civilization is rooted in a monotheistic education system, the integration of knowledge, and the moral development of society, so that the golden age is not only understood as the glory of a certain dynasty, but as the result of a comprehensive educational process.

The relevance and contribution of Islamic education in this golden era is very important to be applied in this modern era, especially in supporting the achievement of the 2030 SDGs regarding quality education. The principles of equitable access to education, the integration of science, and the formation of holistic character can be an inspiration in designing an inclusive, fair, and sustainable education system. Therefore, the history of Islamic education is not only a study of the past, but also a source of strategic inspiration in answering the challenges of contemporary global education.

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