



Educational Values in Islamic History: A Historical Review of the Book *History of the Arabs*

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Abstract

This research aims to examine the role of education in shaping essential values throughout the history of Arab civilization, using Philip Khuri Hitti's *History of the Arabs* as the main reference. A qualitative approach was used through literature review and content analysis to explore the cultural, social, political, religious and intellectual dimensions of Arab history. The findings reveal that education not only served as a means of knowledge transmission but also as an important foundation in the formation of the collective identity and social structure of Arab societies. In addition, education played an important role in maintaining the continuity cultural and religious values that remain relevant today, even influencing the process of social transformation in the modern era. So there are five forms of the value of Islamic history education itself, namely: Islamic history education that has an impact on the value of knowledge and intellectuals, the value of social education of civilization that continues to grow, the development of the value of Islamic history education in the form of religious spirituality, the political value of government in the form of Islamic history education, and the value of Islamic culture in the perspective of Islamic history education. Therefore, understanding the role of education Arab history is an important basis for designing an education system that is adaptive to socio-cultural dynamics, historically contextual, and rooted in the values that have shaped the character of society. This research provides a conceptual contribution to the development of a holistic and sustainable education system.

Keywords: Islamic History, History of The Arabs, Islamic Culture, Islamic History Education Values, Educational Role

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji peran pendidikan dalam membentuk nilai-nilai esensial sepanjang sejarah peradaban Arab, dengan menggunakan buku History of the Arabs karya Philip Khuri Hitti sebagai referensi utama. Pendekatan kualitatif digunakan melalui tinjauan literatur dan analisis isi untuk mengeksplorasi dimensi budaya, sosial, politik, agama, dan intelektual dari sejarah Arab. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa pendidikan tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai sarana transmisi pengetahuan, tetapi juga sebagai fondasi penting dalam pembentukan identitas kolektif dan struktur sosial masyarakat Arab. Selain itu, pendidikan berperan penting dalam menjaga kesinambungan nilai-nilai budaya dan agama yang tetap relevan hingga saat ini, bahkan mempengaruhi proses transformasi sosial di era modern. Jadi, ada lima bentuk nilai dari pendidikan sejarah Islam itu sendiri, yaitu: Pendidikan sejarah Islam yang berdampak pada nilai pengetahuan dan intelektual, nilai pendidikan sosial peradaban yang terus berkembang, pengembangan nilai pendidikan sejarah Islam dalam bentuk spiritualitas keagamaan, nilai politik pemerintahan dalam bentuk pendidikan sejarah Islam, dan nilai kebudayaan Islam dalam perspektif pendidikan sejarah Islam. Oleh karena itu, pemahaman terhadap peran pendidikan sejarah Islam menjadi dasar penting untuk mendesain sebuah sistem pendidikan yang adaptif terhadap dinamika sosio-kultural, kontekstual secara historis, dan berakar pada nilai-nilai yang telah membentuk karakter masyarakat. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi konseptual bagi pengembangan sistem pendidikan yang holistik dan berkelanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Sejarah Islam, Sejarah Bangsa Arab, Kebudayaan Islam, Nilai Pendidikan Sejarah Islam, Peran Pendidikan

INTRODUCTION

Education in Islam should be based on the values of civilization and spirituality in order to achieve goals that align with the principles and values of education (Bahri et al., 2024). In addition, in Islamic education, it is said that the prophet gave freedom to his people to improvise as long as they still follow the rules of sharia (Arifuddin & Karim, 2021). Education in Islam can be understood as a process that aims to prepare the next generation to fulfill its role, as well as to transfer knowledge and Islamic values that align with the purpose of human life namely, to do good in this world and achieve success in the hereafter (Awwalliyah & Baharun, 2018).

In its development, Islamic education is imbued with various values that shape social and governmental structures. The political value in Islamic education can be seen from how the leadership system based on science and ethics was applied in classical Islamic governments. This reflects an effort to advance civilization and ensure governmental stability (Darmawati, 2013). The value of Islamic culture is reflected in the spread of Islamic art, literature, and architecture, which also developed through education creating a harmonious relationship between religion and culture. This strong cultural tradition, especially in language and literature, becomes a great potential that is then transformed by Islam within the educational space into just and civilized cultural values (Tarigan et al., 2022).

The intellectual value of education plays a role in creating an environment that supports religious tolerance and cooperation between communities, which in turn produces significant contributions in the fields of philosophy, science, and art. This has

led to the emergence of knowledgeable and critical generations, as exemplified by great Islamic figures such as Ibn Sina, Al-Farabi, and Al-Ghazali (Daulay et al., 2020). The social value of civilization emphasizes the importance of education in building a just and prosperous society. By fusing the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith with indigenous culture, a sophisticated civilization has been established, inspiring Muslims to further their education and improve their social lives (Anang, 2019). The foundation of Islamic education, on the other hand, is the spiritual value of religion. It teaches people how to balance their lives here on Earth and in the hereafter, molds the character of devout people, and makes the Arab world especially Mecca with its sacred structures and the Hijaz region the most significant religious hub in North Arab (Hitti, 2002).

A number of studies have examined various aspects of Islamic education. Some sources explore how Islamic history contributed to building an education system based on Islamic values (Kadir, 2016). The history of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula also highlights how social, cultural, and political influences have shaped the development of Islamic education (Aissa & Lobo, 2022), as well as how Islamic history cannot be separated from Arabic culture, which has influenced the education system since classical times (Saryadi & Kerwanto, 2023). However, these studies are still limited in discussing how Islamic educational values can remain relevant amid modern challenges such as globalization, digitalization, and rapid social change.

Based on the discussion above, this research aims to explore how the values of political governance, Islamic culture, intellectual education, social civilization, and religious spirituality can be integrated into the modern Islamic education system. By understanding the relationship between the history of Islamic education and contemporary challenges, this research is expected to contribute scientifically to the design of an educational model that can produce a generation that is knowledgeable, moral, and competitive in global civilization without losing its Islamic identity.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a library research method, namely by tracing and reviewing various sources of literature such as books, journals, laws and regulations, and others that are relevant as a basis for discussing the subject matter under study (Jaya, 2021). Data were collected through documentation techniques by reviewing the main books relevant to the research theme, as well as other supporting sources such as research reports, books, scientific articles related to educational values in Islamic History. Data analysis is carried out using content analysis techniques where this technique takes various materials related to the problem studied, analyzed, and synthesized to produce a conclusion (Suparman, 2020).

The approach used is a qualitative approach by analyzing books, journals, articles, previous studies and also written sources in the form of print or other electronic sources. The technique used in collecting data in this study uses literature study techniques where data is collected in the form of words, phrases, and sentences which contain statements and discussions on the topic to be researched.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

History is a scientific discipline that studies in an organized manner the entire development, change, or dynamics of community life along with all aspects that accompany it in the past (Madjid & Wahyudhi, 2014). History is an empirical science (experience) because it is basically related to important events that occurred in the past

(Martha et al., 2023). In the Islamic view, history is not only about moments that are recorded, but it also contains educational values that shape the character, way of thinking, and social and intellectual progress of mankind. Islamic history provides information about the changes that took place in Muslim civilization, from pre-Islamic times to the heyday and modern era, with education as the main component that influenced the civilization.

The purpose of education in Islam is to improve the knowledge, ethics, and spiritual aspects of individuals. In another source, it is mentioned that the purpose of education is to form an ideal personality. So, education examines and integrates these values into human life and builds them into one's personality (Jalaluddin & Idi, 2009). The concept of education in Islam encompasses many facets, such as the dissemination of knowledge through educational institutions, experiential learning, and ethical principles taught in daily life. Since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, education in Islam has progressed significantly, from halaqahs in mosques to the establishment of madrasas and universities in the caliphate era.

As such, history and education in Islam are complementary, with education serving as a tool to understand, internalize, and pass on historical values to future generations. A deeper knowledge of the history of Islamic education will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of Islam in the development of science and global civilization.

The history of Islam and the history of the Arab nation cannot be built alone without going through the historical events themselves in which history has its own branch of science. In addition, the history of Islam is also inseparable from the role of Islam, because Islam itself also contains theories of explanations about history, including the following: The theory of religion and Islam discusses how Islam as a religion not only covers spiritual aspects, but also shapes social, political and educational order. In the religious theory section, it can be said that religion is a belief in the power of god supported by the existence of regulations from god and encourages humans to achieve a happy life both in the world and the hereafter (Syukur, 2010). In historical records, Islam is believed to be a religion revealed to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH to be spread to all mankind. (Syafaq et al., 2021). Education is part of a religious obligation that aims to build individuals with morals and knowledge. The concept of Islamic education is based on the values of tawhid, worship, and morals, which are the basis for the formation of the education system from time to time.

Value Theory in Islamic history highlights how values such as intellectual, political, social, spiritual, and cultural play a role in shaping Islamic civilization. On the other hand, this discussion of value, if it is related to education, can be said to be an important knowledge that can be used as a guide for everyone to survive (Fatmaira, 2022). Values reflect an individual's beliefs derived from his or her personal value system, which determines what is considered worthy or unworthy of doing regarding things of value and worthlessness (Juhaya, 2013). If value or price is associated with a person's traits, behaviors, or abstract beliefs, then its meaning becomes broad and unlimited (Alfan, 2013).

Education theory includes how education as a step in preparing humans in solving life problems in the present and in the future (Djumali et al., 2014). Education is vital to every Muslim communities in accordance with instructions of the Prophet education an obligation for all Muslims (Hidayat & Fasa, 2020). Educational goals, as classified by Hasbullah, have several essential functions. First, educational goals become the initial basis for achieving other educational goals. Second, this goal provides value justification

for educational efforts undertaken. Third, the purpose of education acts as a direction in the organization of education. Fourth, educational goals become the final benchmark in determining the expected results of the educational process (Hasbullah, 2009).

Islam covers how the education system developed from informal methods such as halaqah in mosques, to formal institutions such as madrasas and Islamic universities. Education in Islam not only focuses on religious sciences, but also general sciences such as mathematics, medicine, and philosophy which flourished during the golden age of Islam. The purpose of education in Islam is to optimize the development of human nature, in line with the objectives of national education. (Samsulbassar & Suhartini, 2020).

The theory of history, which includes one of them, is the definition of history itself, which can be interpreted as a matter of what humans have done and thought in the past (Haif, 2016). History is a structured description of everything that has been thought and done in a historical development in the past or that has already happened (Munir Amin, 2015). In history there are other sciences needed in understanding history which are divided into two: basic history and auxiliary sciences of history (Affandi & HMA, 1993). Structuralist theory sees history as part of a wider system, while functionalist theory highlights how history shapes a sustainable society. The constructivist approach in Islamic history emphasizes that history is not only a series of events, but is also understood based on the experiences and interactions of Muslims with their environment.

Islamic history theory discusses how the development of Islam as a religion and civilization occurred in the context of global history. Islamic history means events related to the religion of Islam, both those that occurred before (background) and those that continue (what is happening) and the implications that may occur (the future) (Kadir, 2016). In Islamic history also includes the scope of the study of Islamic history which includes all efforts made by humans in a certain time and space dimension (Wilaela, 2016). Islamic history includes not only religious but also political, economic, and cultural aspects, which contributed to the formation of an advanced Islamic civilization. Through this theory, the development of Islamic education can also be analyzed in relation to the social and political changes that occurred in Islamic history.

The Value of Education in Islamic History from the perspective of the book *History of the Arabs* by Philip Khuri Hitti and its Relationship with Education.

In the long journey of Islamic history, educational values have been a solid foundation in shaping civilization and culture. Intellectual intelligence, scientific values, moral values and religious values are intertwined and enriched in various important periods, from Pre-Islamic Arabia to the Ottoman Empire and the era of independence. Each of these historical phases brought significant contributions to the advancement of science, ethics and spirituality, reflecting Muslims' commitment to the quest for knowledge and the wise practice of the teachings.

As explained in the previous chapter, education cannot be done without values, especially values such as the quality of intelligence, scientific values, moral values, and religious values (Jalaluddin & Idi, 2009). Of the several educational values, Islamic history is one of the goals of the educational value link. Islamic history arguably also has its own values, which in the values contained will be combined with the value of education. Each discussion in the *History of the Arabs* book certainly has a relationship with the educational value that has been described above. The following is a classification of the value of Islamic history education contained in the book *History of The Arabs* by Philip Khuri Hitti against the value of education.

a. Intellectual Value of Education

The intellectual value of education within Islamic history is rooted in a dynamic evolution from oral traditions to structured academic systems. In the pre-Islamic era, knowledge was primarily preserved and transmitted orally through poetic compositions, tribal folklore, and storytelling, which served both entertainment and didactic purposes. With the emergence of Islam, this oral tradition was transformed by a strong emphasis on literacy and textual preservation, especially of the Qur'an. Mosques became central to educational life, functioning as community hubs for the dissemination of religious and secular knowledge. The establishment of Kuttabs (elementary schools) and later Madrasahs during the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties institutionalized learning, incorporating disciplines such as mathematics, medicine, astronomy, philosophy, and jurisprudence. Notable centers of learning, such as Al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco and the House of Wisdom in Baghdad, played a pivotal role in preserving Greek philosophical texts and advancing scientific inquiry, laying the intellectual groundwork for both the Islamic Golden Age and the European Renaissance.

b. Political Value of Government

The political dimensions of education in Islamic civilizations were instrumental in shaping governance based on knowledge and ethical leadership. During the Khulafā' al-Rāshidūn (Rightly Guided Caliphs), the political structure emphasized *shūrā* (consultation) and *‘adl* (justice), reflecting the integration of Islamic principles into administrative affairs. Education was not only a tool for personal refinement but also a means to cultivate competent leaders and civil servants. The Umayyad and Abbasid administrations institutionalized meritocratic systems wherein individuals were appointed to governmental positions based on their educational qualifications and administrative skills rather than lineage or tribal affiliation. This merit-based governance promoted accountability and encouraged scholarly advancement. In the Ottoman Empire, there was a strategic incorporation of Western educational methodologies through the Tanzimat reforms to modernize the bureaucracy, maintain political stability, and ensure effective governance. Thus, education served as both a political instrument and a mechanism for statecraft grounded in Islamic values.

c. Social Value of Civilization

The transformative power of Islamic education significantly contributed to the reshaping of social structures, fostering inclusivity and equity. Pre-Islamic Arabian society was largely tribal and hierarchical, where social identity and status were determined by kinship and clan loyalty. The Islamic message, however, revolutionized these norms by emphasizing the intrinsic equality of all human beings, the dignity of labor, and the moral imperative to care for the marginalized including the poor, orphans, and women. Education became a powerful social equalizer, as access to religious learning was extended beyond elite classes. During the Abbasid period, multiculturalism and religious tolerance were not only encouraged but institutionalized in educational and social contexts, with scholars of various backgrounds Muslim, Christian, Jewish, and Zoroastrian collaborating in shared intellectual pursuits. This fostered a vibrant, pluralistic civilization characterized by social mobility, scholarly exchange, and intercultural dialogue.

d. Spiritual Value

Spiritual values lie at the heart of Islamic education, where the pursuit of knowledge is viewed as a form of *ibādah* (worship). Islam considers the acquisition of knowledge not merely an intellectual endeavor, but a sacred duty that nurtures both the soul and the mind. The Qur'an and Hadith are replete with injunctions encouraging believers to seek knowledge as a pathway to strengthen faith and ethical conduct. Educational institutions throughout Islamic history integrated religious sciences such as *Tawhīd* (monotheism), *Fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), and *Akhlaq* (ethics) into their core curricula. These teachings aimed to cultivate holistic individuals who embody piety, moral integrity, and social responsibility. Spiritual education was designed to align a person's intellectual growth with divine principles, ensuring that learning served both worldly and eschatological purposes. This dual emphasis on intellect and faith contributed to the emergence of a balanced educational paradigm unique to the Islamic tradition.

e. Islamic Cultural Values

Islamic education has played a central role in the preservation and propagation of cultural values across the Muslim world. Muslims have been able to achieve a golden age and glory, where the West was still in the dark age (Lanye et al., 2023). Before Islam, Arab culture was heavily oral, with poetry and storytelling forming the backbone of artistic expression. The advent of Islam brought a literary renaissance, as the Qur'an, a linguistic masterpiece, inspired a new era of literary, artistic, and architectural achievements. During the Abbasid era, Islamic education embraced and expanded cultural production, resulting in the flourishing of calligraphy, geometric art, architecture, and literature. These forms of cultural expression were deeply intertwined with religious identity and pedagogical practice. Islamic educational institutions were not only places for acquiring knowledge but also centers for artistic and cultural development. Moreover, as Islam spread across Asia, Africa, and Europe, it assimilated local customs into a broader Islamic cultural framework, giving rise to a richly diverse yet unified civilization. Education thus served as a medium for cultural synthesis and transmission, ensuring the resilience and adaptability of Islamic culture through centuries.

Table 1 Classification Of Education Value For Each Period

	Pre-Islamic Arabia	Birth of Islam - Caliphates	Umayyads and Abbasids	Arabs in Europe	Last Muslim State	Ottoman Turks
Intellectual Education	Existence of Oral Tradition	Development of the building as an education center	Environment supporting knowledge development	Establishment of Kuttab	the emergence of leading figures in the field of knowledge	The rise of Modernization of knowledge and education
Social Civilization	The existence of tribal solidarity	Changes in social behavior	The emergence of a religious tolerance policy	Inclusive society	Social decline due to western invasion	The existence of social justice and gender equality policies
Islamic Culture	Strong tradition and cultural identity	Great contribution to culture	Cultural influences on art and aesthetics	The traditions of the people involved in the culture	Culture as a bridge in both art and architecture	Cultural integration of politics

Spiritual	The persistence of ancestral beliefs, paganism, and idol worship	The beginning of Islam's influence on Arab society	Integration of religious values in the political system of the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties	The great influence of religion on social and political affairs	Contribution of spiritual values in knowledge development	The aspect of renewal at this time requires the strength of spiritual values
Political Governance	Outside influences affect existing political structures	Political government based on Islamic justice	Establishment of Diwanul Jundi	The existence of an organized system of government	Centralization of government and diplomacy	Military policy and territorial expansion

Source: Analysis Results

CONCLUSION

The educational values contained in Islamic history and Arab culture have a significant impact in shaping the identity and character of individuals and society. The integration of cultural, social, political, spiritual and intellectual values in education not only preserves cultural heritage, but also promotes positive changes in social structures and governance systems. Education based on these values plays an important role in creating individuals who are ethical, responsible and caring towards others, as well as supporting the pursuit of knowledge and innovation. Thus, education that emphasizes these values is expected to form a generation that is equipped with more abilities to answer the challenges of the future.

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