Education as a Strategic Instrument of Arabization and Islamization in the Umayyad Caliphate (661–750 CE)

*Nikmatul Wafiroh

Universitas Ibrahimy Sukorejo, Jawa Timur Indonesia
*Correspondence: nikmatulwafiroh16@gmail.com

Abstract

This article analyzes the role of education as an instrument in the processes of Arabization and Islamization during the Umayyad caliphate (661–750 CE). Existing scholarship on the Umayyads often prioritizes political expansion and administration, while educational practices are frequently described without sufficient attention to how they operationalized language policy and religious consolidation. Using a qualitative historical-analytical literature approach, this study draws on classical historiographical sources and relevant contemporary works to examine the interaction between Umayyad reforms—especially the Arabization policy associated with ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān—and educational institutions such as the kuttāb, mosques, and ḥalaqāt. The analysis indicates that education facilitated Arabization by institutionalizing Arabic literacy and scholarly competence, which supported administrative integration and made Arabic the shared medium of worship, governance, and knowledge. At the same time, the same institutions advanced Islamization through the transmission of the Qurʾan, ḥadīth, and basic fiqh, alongside moral formation through taʿlīm, tarbiyah, and taʾdīb. These intertwined processes contributed to early intellectual infrastructures, including the development of Arabic linguistic disciplines to safeguard Qurʾanic recitation and a gradual shift toward written codification in religious learning. The article argues that education functioned as a strategic channel through which Arabization and Islamization were internalized as durable social practice in the making of early Islamic civilization.

Keywords: Umayyad Caliphate; Islamic education; Arabization; Islamization

Abstrak

Artikel ini menganalisis peran pendidikan sebagai instrumen dalam proses Arabisasi dan Islamisasi pada masa Dinasti Umayyah (661–750 M). Literatur tentang Umayyah umumnya menonjolkan ekspansi politik dan administrasi, sementara praktik pendidikan sering dipaparkan secara deskriptif tanpa penjelasan yang memadai tentang bagaimana ia mengoperasionalkan kebijakan bahasa dan konsolidasi keagamaan. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif dengan telaah pustaka historis-analitis, penelitian ini menggunakan sumber historiografi klasik dan literatur akademik kontemporer untuk menelusuri keterkaitan reformasi Umayyah—khususnya kebijakan Arabisasi yang diasosiasikan dengan ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān—dengan institusi pendidikan seperti kuttāb, masjid, dan ḥalaqāt. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan mempercepat Arabisasi melalui pelembagaan literasi Arab dan kompetensi keilmuan yang mendukung integrasi administrasi serta menjadikan bahasa Arab sebagai medium bersama ibadah, pemerintahan, dan produksi pengetahuan. Pada

saat yang sama, institusi tersebut mendorong Islamisasi melalui transmisi Al-Qurʾan, hadis, dan dasar-dasar fiqh, disertai pembentukan moral melalui taʿlīm, tarbiyah, dan taʾdīb. Keterkaitan kedua proses ini turut membentuk infrastruktur intelektual awal, termasuk berkembangnya disiplin linguistik Arab untuk menjaga akurasi qirāʾāt serta pergeseran bertahap menuju kodifikasi tertulis dalam tradisi keilmuan. Artikel ini menegaskan bahwa pendidikan menjadi kanal strategis yang membuat Arabisasi dan Islamisasi terinternalisasi sebagai praktik sosial yang bertahan lama dalam pembentukan peradaban Islam awal.

Kata Kunci: *Dinasti Umayyah; Pendidikan Islam; Arabisasi; Islamisasi*

A. Introduction

The Umayyad period (661–750 CE) was a crucial phase of transition and consolidation in the history of Islamic civilization. It marked the shift from the more collective leadership of the Rightly Guided Caliphs to a dynastic monarchy that governed a multiethnic and multicultural empire. As a political authority that expanded across three continents, the Umayyads increasingly treated education not merely as a social service, but as a strategic instrument for strengthening state stability and shaping a shared public identity.[1]

In cultural policy, education became central to the process of Arabization, especially under the reforms associated with ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān. The decision to establish Arabic as the official language of administration and as the principal medium for scholarly communication functioned as a unifying linguistic policy across diverse regions.[2] This reform elevated Arabic beyond the domain of religious practice and state bureaucracy, placing it at the heart of intellectual life and cultural expression. Over time, Arabic operated as a language of civilization, linking governance, knowledge production, and collective identity in a single communicative framework.[3]

At the same time, education served as a major pillar of Islamization, helping to stabilize religious foundations and disseminate Islamic teachings alongside territorial expansion. Through institutions such as mosques and kuttāb, scholars transmitted Islamic values and sought to preserve the integrity of prophetic teachings in newly incorporated regions.[4] Intellectual dynamics in the Umayyad era also suggest the early formation of an encounter

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[1] Abuddin Nata, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam* (Prenada Media, 2022); Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2018); Muhammad Faiq Hirzullah and Setiantono -, "Sejarah Pertumbuhan Dan Perkembangan Pendidikan Pada Masa Dinasti Umayyah," *Social Science Academic* 1, no. 1 (July 17, 2023): 151–62, https://doi.org/10.37680/ssa.v1i1.3375.

[2] P K Hitti, *History of the Arabs: Rujukan Induk Dan Paling Otoritatif Tentang Sejarah Peradaban Islam* (Jakarta: Serambi Ilmu Semesta, 2005).

[3] Nata, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*; G Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*, ACLS Humanities E-Book (Edinburgh University Press, 1981).

[4] Mahmud Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Hidakarya Agung, 1985).

between transmitted religious sciences (naqliyyah) and rational inquiry (ʿaqliyyah), even if these developments were not yet systematized in the way they later became under the Abbasids.[5]

Ultimately, education in this period provided a foundational infrastructure for later Islamic flourishing. The intellectual legacy shaped through the interaction between political authority and communal scholarly initiative did not only benefit Muslim societies; it also contributed to longer-term pathways of knowledge development that later intersected with broader histories of science and learning beyond the Islamic world.[6]

Yet, much of the existing scholarship on the Umayyads tends to foreground political history and territorial expansion, while education is often treated descriptively and positioned as a secondary supporting factor in civilizational development.[7] Many studies discuss Umayyad education in terms of institutional growth, curricula, or the roles of mosques, kuttāb, and study circles, but they do not always explain in a focused way how education operated as a primary instrument for Arabization and Islamization.[8] As a result, the relationship between education, language, and power in the formation of early Islamic civilization has not consistently received balanced analytical attention.

Building on that gap, this article proposes a perspective that places education at the center of Arabization and Islamization during the Umayyad period. Rather than treating education as an auxiliary to political expansion or as a neutral pedagogical activity, the study approaches education as a strategic mechanism through which Arabic and Islamic norms were internalized as social and cultural unifiers. Using a qualitative historical-analytical literature approach, the article aims to clarify how political reforms, educational institutions, and socio-cultural transformation interacted to shape the civilizational identity of early Islam.

B. Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach through library research, drawing on written sources as the primary data to examine an educational and historical phenomenon in depth.[9]

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[5] Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*.

[6] Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam*.

[7] Badri Yatim; ESSAM AYYAD, "How Were Young Muslim Minds Shaped? A Critical Study of the Kuttāb in Medieval Islam," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 32, no. 1 (January 11, 2022): 141–85, https://doi.org/10.1017/S135618632100002X; Hamilton A. R. Gibb, "Arab-Byzantine Relations under the Umayyad Caliphate," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 12 (1958): 219, https://doi.org/10.2307/1291121; Roberto Marín-Guzmán, "Arab Tribes, the Umayyad Dynasty, and the `Abbasid Revolution," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 21, no. 4 (October 1, 2004): 57–96, https://doi.org/10.35632/ajis.v21i4.513.

[8] Nurul Hidayah, Faridi Faridi, and Ishomuddin Ishomuddin, "ISLAMIC EDUCATION INTITUTIONS IN THE CLASSICAL PERIOD (UMAYYAD AND ABBASID PERIODS)," *Jurnal PAI Raden Fatah* 6, no. 1 (January 31, 2024): 89–114, https://doi.org/10.19109/pairf.v6i1.19843.

[9] Mestika Zed, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2014).

The materials consist of primary sources and secondary sources. Primary sources include classical historiographical works and foundational texts on early Islamic history and education that discuss Umayyad policies, educational institutions, and socio-cultural dynamics. Among the main references used is Philip K. Hitti's *History of the Arabs*, alongside core works in the historiography of Islamic education.[10] Secondary sources include contemporary academic books and peer-reviewed journal articles—particularly accredited national journals—that are directly relevant to education, Arabization, and Islamization in the Umayyad period.

Data collection was conducted using a documentation technique by systematically tracing classical and contemporary literature related to the study's theme. Sources were accessed through digital libraries and online journal databases. Selection of materials followed three criteria: (1) relevance to the topic, (2) academic credibility of the authors and publications, and (3) direct connection to educational policy and the socio-cultural transformation associated with the Umayyads.[11]

Analysis focuses on the relationship between political policy, educational institutions, and socio-cultural change in the processes of Arabization and Islamization. The literature was organized and interpreted through an analytic-historical reading, using targeted keywords such as "Islamic education in the Umayyad dynasty," "Arabization," and "Islamization," in order to map how language policy, pedagogical practice, and the transmission of Islamic teachings interacted within the broader project of early Islamic civilizational formation.

C. Results and Discussion

1. Education as a Vehicle for Arabization and Islamization

In the early formation of Islamic civilization, Arabization and Islamization operated as two closely connected strategic pillars, especially during the Umayyad dynasty. In this context, education was not simply a channel for transmitting knowledge; it functioned as a practical mechanism through which Arabic and Islamic norms were gradually internalized in everyday social life. The Umayyad period illustrates how educational spaces became the meeting point between political consolidation, cultural integration, and religious formation, allowing language and creed to work together as foundations of a shared civilizational identity.

1) Education as a Means of Arabization

During the Umayyad dynasty, education functioned as a principal vehicle for Arabization through the institutionalization of Arabic instruction in key educational settings such as the

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[10] Hitti, *History of the Arabs: Rujukan Induk Dan Paling Otoritatif Tentang Sejarah Peradaban Islam*.
[11] Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2019).

kuttāb, mosques, and *ḥalaqāt*. In the *kuttāb*, children were introduced to basic reading and writing skills using Qur'anic texts as the primary learning material. Through this arrangement, Arabic was positioned not only as the language of religion but also as the language of basic social literacy.[12] Meanwhile, mosque-based *ḥalaqāt* strengthened advanced linguistic competence—such as *qirāʾāt*, grammar, and Arabic literature—thereby encouraging the emergence of relatively uniform linguistic standards across territories under Islamic rule.[13]

In this way, education operated as a mechanism of cultural reproduction that transformed Arabic from an ethnic symbol into a civilizational language, bringing together religious, administrative, and intellectual domains within an integrated social system. This orientation was reinforced when Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān designated Arabic as the official language of administration. With this policy, institutions such as the *kuttāb*, mosques, and *ḥalaqāt* became the primary media for the systematic internalization of Arabic.[14]

Arabization was also implemented in social and political life. Arabic became a prerequisite for social mobility within structures of governance and scholarship. Individuals who mastered Arabic gained broader opportunities to access bureaucratic positions, judicial roles, and intellectual activity, where advancement increasingly depended on linguistic and scholarly competence rather than ethnic background. Accordingly, Arabization operated not merely as a language policy, but as a strategy of social transformation that cultivated loyalty to an Islamic civilizational identity.[15]

At the same time, the need to safeguard accuracy in Qur'anic recitation and reading contributed to the development of Arabic linguistic disciplines such as *naḥw* and *ṣarf*. This indicates that Arabization did not remain at the level of practical communication; it developed into a systematic scholarly tradition.[16] This development consolidated Arabic as a language of knowledge and provided an important foundation for the growth of Islamic intellectual traditions in later periods, particularly under the Abbasids.

The impact of the Arabization program also appears in the emergence of *bādiyah*—Bedouin desert settlements that served as destinations where the children of elites and scholars were sent to learn Arabic regarded as more "pure," fluent, and rule-governed, in order to protect the language from foreign influence. The promotion of these *bādiyah* settings is associated with

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[12] Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia*.
[13] Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam*.
[14] Badri Yatim.
[15] Badri Yatim.
[16] Badri Yatim; Hitti, *History of the Arabs: Rujukan Induk Dan Paling Otoritatif Tentang Sejarah Peradaban Islam*.

the Arabization agenda advanced under Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān. Over time, such *bādiyah* environments were recognized as centers of knowledge, especially in language and literature.[17] Thus, Arabization through education was not aimed solely at producing linguistic uniformity. It also contributed to the construction of a new social structure capable of integrating politics, administration, and intellectual life within a unified Islamic civilization. Education functioned as a mechanism of cultural reproduction that positioned Arabic simultaneously as a symbol of authority, knowledge, and religious legitimacy.[18]

2) Education as a Means of Islamization

During the Umayyad dynasty, education functioned as a primary instrument of Islamization through the systematic transmission of Islamic teachings in religious institutions such as mosques, *kuttāb*, and *ḥalaqāt*. In mosques, learning circles (*ḥalaqāt*) became a major medium for conveying the Qur'an, ḥadīth, and basic fiqh to communities across ethnic backgrounds, enabling Islamic values to be internalized not only at the cognitive level but also in everyday social practice and worship.[19] In parallel, the *kuttāb* played a foundational role in instilling the basics of creed (*ʿaqīdah*) and worship in children from an early age through Qur'anic learning and Islamic etiquette (*adab*), strengthening the formation of religious identity among the early generations of Muslim society.[20]

Islamization, in this study, refers to the process of instilling, strengthening, and disseminating Islamic values within individual life and the structures of society. In civilizational terms, Islamization is not merely a matter of religious conversion; it is a form of civilizational construction grounded in the principle of *tawḥīd*, oriented toward shaping social ethics and the formation of a complete moral personality often described as *insān al-kāmil*.[21] As an educational center that was open to all layers of society, the mosque supported this process through scholarly circles in which *ʿulamāʾ* taught the Qur'an, ḥadīth, and the foundations of fiqh, while also forming scholarly authority that safeguarded the integrity of

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[17] Juan Pedro Monferrer-Sala, "Entre Helenismo y Arabización. Sobre La Formación de Una Identidad Etnolingüística de Las Comunidades Melkitas En El Corazón Del Poder Islámico," *Al-Qanṭara* 33, no. 2 (December 30, 2012): 445–73, https://doi.org/10.3989/alqantara.2011.017; Jere L. Bacharach, "Signs of Sovereignty: The Shahāda, Qurʾanic Verses, and the Coinage of ʿAbd Al-Malik," *Muqarnas Online* 27, no. 1 (March 22, 2010): 1–30, https://doi.org/10.1163/22118993_02701002; Szombathy Zoltan, "Fieldwork and Preconceptions: The Role of the Bedouin as Informants in Mediaeval Muslim Scholarly Culture (Second-Third/Eighth-Ninth Centuries)," *Der Islam* 92, no. 1 (January 30, 2015), https://doi.org/10.1515/islam-2015-0005.

[18] Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam.*

[19] Nata, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam.*

[20] Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia.*

[21] Muhamad Fuad Hasim et al., "THE CONCEPT OF ISLAMIZATION OF SCIENCE: A STUDY OF THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF SYED MUHAMMAD NAQUIB AL-ATTAS," *Al-Mabsut : Jurnal Studi Islam Dan Sosial* 19, no. 2 (September 15, 2025): 241–63, https://doi.org/10.56997/almabsut.v19i2.2323.

Islamic teachings within a multiethnic community. Mosque-based education thus encouraged collective internalization of Islamic values, so that Islam was not understood solely as an individual religion but also as a system of social norms.[22]

The prominent role of ʿulamāʾ as instructors in these circles also created a practical synergy between political order and scholarly authority. Therefore, education during the Umayyad dynasty was not only a medium of daʿwah; it also operated as a structural device in shaping Islamic civilization. Islamization was advanced through guidance that integrated spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions, and it was carried out through interconnected educational modes: taʿlīm (knowledge transmission), tarbiyah (moral formation), and taʾdīb (the cultivation of proper conduct and ethics).[23] These processes did not merely build religious understanding; they also established moral standards and character formation. In this view, an Islamic polity cannot be sustained without a moral order shaped within the framework of Sharīʿah. Islamization is demanded within Islam itself, beginning from the smallest sphere of individual life and extending outward to influence wider society, with the expectation that it can attract sympathy not only from its own base but also from Muslims globally.[24]

This pattern also produced an adaptive cultural transformation. Across Umayyad territories, Islamization proceeded through an approach that was relatively adaptive to existing social and cultural structures. Islamic values were introduced through religious education in mosques and ḥalaqāt, allowing Islamic teachings to be integrated gradually into public life so that Islam could be received formally and also function as a system of social and political values. A further impact of Islamization was identity reinforcement through language. Islamization often unfolded in tandem with Arabization. The use of Arabic as the official administrative language helped communities learn and understand Qurʾanic and ḥadīth texts more accurately, accelerating intellectual transformation and strengthening Islamic identity.[25] In transitional periods such as the Umayyad era, Islamization therefore emphasized the consolidation of religious fundamentals among populations in newly incorporated regions, aiming to protect them from external influences considered harmful to the integrity of early Islamic teachings.

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[22] Nata, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*.

[23] Muhammad Yahya Azzam et al., "Basic Concepts of Tarbiyah Ta'lim and Ta'dib Education," *Bulletin of Islamic Research* 3, no. 1 (January 3, 2025): 95–102, https://doi.org/10.69526/bir.v3i1.173.

[24] Mar'atus Sholihah, "Rekonstruksi Sejarah Pemikiran Dan Peradaban Islam Era Dinasti Umayyah Dalam Pendidikan Islam," *FALASIFA : Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 10, no. 1 (March 19, 2019): 81–106, https://doi.org/10.36835/falasifa.v10i1.154.

[25] Wilda Apriliani, Muhammad Zalnur, and Fauza Masyhudi, "Dinamika Pendidikan Islam Pada Masa Daulah Umayyah Dan Peranannya Dalam Pengembangan Pendidikan Islam.," *Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu Akademik* 2, no. 1 (2024): 28–32, https://ejurnal.kampusakademik.co.id/index.php/jmia/article/view/3094.

3) Implications for Islamic Civilization

Education, Arabization, and Islamization in the Umayyad period did not operate as separate processes. Rather, they functioned as three interconnected elements that mutually reinforced one another in forming a unified civilizational system. Education served as an institutional medium that translated political policy and religious teachings into social practices rooted in society. Arabization facilitated the spread of language and culture needed to access Islamic sources, while Islamization disseminated Islamic religious values alongside religious legitimation for Arab dominance.[26] In this sense, education became the central channel for spreading Islamic teachings through educational institutions that operated as mechanisms of social and cultural integration.

From another angle, education also functioned as a means of transforming state policy into lived social practice. The policy designating Arabic as the administrative language could not operate effectively without educational institutions that prepared human resources capable of reading, writing, and understanding the language. Through *kuttāb* education and mosque-based *ḥalaqāt*, communities gained access to Arabic literacy alongside Islamic teachings.

Arabization and Islamization generated broad implications for intellectual development and stability in the Islamic world, particularly during the Umayyad dynasty (661–750 CE). One significant outcome was the formation of linguistic unity across the Islamic world. This unity strengthened political integration and provided an important foundation for interregional intellectual networks and wider transmission of knowledge across Umayyad territories.[10] By establishing Arabic as the official language of administration, Arabization also positioned Arabic as the principal medium of knowledge. This linguistic unity facilitated intellectual exchange and scholarly communication across a vast domain spanning three continents. Arabic was no longer perceived only as the language of revelation; it increasingly functioned as a universal language of civilization.

At the same time, the combined agenda of Arabization and Islamization encouraged the development of linguistic scholarship to safeguard the purity of Arabic and the accuracy of Qur'anic recitation within a heterogeneous society. This development is associated with the emergence of disciplines such as *naḥw* and *ṣarf*, linked to figures such as Abū al-Aswad al-Duʾalī and al-Khalīl b. Aḥmad, including efforts to refine Qur'anic writing through the use of diacritics and dotting. More broadly, Arabization and Islamization created cognitive and

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[26] Badri Yatim, *Sejarah Peradaban Islam*.

epistemological infrastructures that later supported scientific advancement and became part of the intellectual foundation for subsequent periods of flourishing.

Islamization also strengthened the urgency of systematic recording of revelation and ḥadīth. This shifted Islamic civilization from a culture that relied primarily on memorization toward a text-based civilization oriented to codification, producing an intellectual legacy for later generations. Furthermore, the processes of Arabization and Islamization contributed to the emergence and consolidation of institutions such as the *kuttāb*, *ḥalaqāt*, and the specialized *bādiyah*. Toward the end of the Umayyad period, an early form of public health service is also noted in the emergence of *bīmāristān*, which later developed more extensively under the Abbasids.

Finally, the implications were not limited to knowledge and scholarship. The integration of diverse peoples and cultures could be consolidated in a multicultural manner, unified through *tawḥīd* and language in both political and social domains. Thus, these developments illustrate the relationship between education, language, and religion in shaping an early ecosystem in which political policy gained effectiveness through cultural internalization enacted within educational institutions such as mosques, *kuttāb*, and *ḥalaqāt*.[27]

2. The Education System during the Umayyad Dynasty

Discussing the education system of the Umayyad period is essential because the structure and forms of educational institutions constituted the main channels through which the processes of Arabization and Islamization examined in this article were implemented. Through the *kuttāb*, mosques, and *ḥalaqāt*, Arabic language policy and the consolidation of Islamic teachings were not merely conveyed as doctrine; they were internalized through sustained educational practices embedded in social life. For that reason, this section analyzes the Umayyad educational system in order to show how institutions and educational patterns functioned as concrete mechanisms for disseminating Arabic and Islamic values, thereby directly addressing the article's main question concerning the role of education in Arabization and Islamization during the Umayyad dynasty.

The Umayyad education system (661–750 CE) developed alongside the expansion of Islamic rule and the growing need for social and administrative stability. Although the state had not yet established a fully formal educational system, education underwent early institutionalization through nonformal institutions that served as centers for transmitting

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[27] Badri Yatim.

knowledge and Islamic values.[28] The government paid considerable attention to the formation of educational institutions, and the Umayyad administration contributed—though indirectly—to educational consolidation through the Arabization of administration and support for scholarly activity in major mosques. These policies encouraged communities to learn Arabic as the official language of government and religion, positioning education as a strategic means for producing human resources able to read, write, and understand Islamic teachings.

By placing knowledge at the center of Umayyad priorities, Umayyad caliphs contributed ideas and orientations that shaped education, drawing lessons from earlier generations who had established Islamic education as a form of knowledge accessible to society. The educational mission in this period is mapped into several Islamic education policies, including: providing balanced instruction in Islamic religious sciences and general knowledge; conducting institutional mapping and identifying aspects that support education; ensuring fair and balanced educational services; and empowering communities to address problems according to individual capacities. Within the broader history of Islamic education, the Umayyad period shows early integration between religious knowledge and rational sciences, alongside an expansion of educational access. This indicates a reciprocal relationship between political authority and government policy in shaping civilizational progress through knowledge.[29]

Education at this time largely remained informal, with mosques, scholars' homes, and *ḥalaqāt* serving as learning centers. Scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) played a key role in disseminating religious knowledge even though they were not directly funded by the state. The Arabization agenda adopted by Umayyad rulers supported the wider spread of Islamic knowledge, especially in Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr*), ḥadīth, and fiqh. In addition, education also encompassed other fields—such as history, literature, and natural sciences—shaped by Greek and Persian intellectual traditions. All of these developments later became an important foundation for scientific and intellectual growth in the Abbasid period.[30]

1) Kuttāb

Among the educational institutions that emerged and supported Umayyad governance was the *kuttāb*. The term derives from the Arabic root *kataba* ("to write"), and *kuttāb* denotes a place for learning to write. The *kuttāb* served as a site where children learned to write, read, and memorize the Qur'an, while also studying basic Islamic teachings.[31] In Umayyad Spain,

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[28] Nata, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*.

[29] Zainal Abidin and Tobibatussaadah Obibatussaadah, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam: Studi Dinamika Sosial-Intelektual Dan Transformasi Kelembagaan* (Metro: CV. Laduny Alifatama, 2013).

[30] Nata, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*.

[31] Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam Di Indonesia*.

the *kuttāb* continued to play an important role as an educational institution. It became increasingly structured and spread to areas extending to the outskirts of cities, with a growing number of students and a sufficient number of teachers. In these settings, students typically studied the Qur'an, ḥadīth, history, and other subjects.

2) Madrasah

During the Umayyad era, madrasahs began to appear as supporting institutions in education. Educational institutions were managed more effectively, although they remained nonformal and not yet fully structured. What did emerge was a differentiation of instructional levels based on scholarly competence. At the lower level, instruction focused on religious sciences. At more advanced levels, learners began to study rational disciplines such as philosophy, mathematics, pharmacy, medicine, navigation, as well as the development of transmitted (*naqlī*) sciences related to the Qur'an and ḥadīth.

3) Mosque

Since the time of the Prophet, the mosque had served as a center for education. Accordingly, during the Umayyad dynasty the mosque remained a vital educational space across levels—basic, intermediate, and advanced. Beyond functioning as a site of worship, the mosque provided a setting where teachers and students could meet for the transmission of knowledge, discussion, and dialogue. The text also notes that Caliph al-Ḥakam built twenty-seven schools that included mosques and provided educational access to students without charging fees. In Spain, mosques played an even more prominent educational role than in other regions. In many places, madrasahs gradually assumed the mosque's earlier educational function, but in Spain the mosque continued to remain the primary institution for educational activities.[32]

Beyond these institutional forms, the transmission of language and Islamic values also proceeded through scholarly networks, *ḥalaqah*-based teaching traditions, and the use of Arabic as the language of knowledge and administration. This made Arabic an entry point for cultural Islamization in non-Arab regions, reinforcing education as a mechanism of social integration and the internalization of Islamic identity.[33]

D. Conclusion

The Umayyad period (661–750 CE) marks a pivotal transitional phase in early Islamic civilization in which education functioned as a strategic instrument for both Arabization and

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[32] Nata, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam*.
[33] Makdisi, *The Rise of Colleges: Institutions of Learning in Islam and the West*.

Islamization. Through largely nonformal institutions—especially the *kuttāb*, mosques, and *ḥalaqāt*—Arabic was institutionalized not only as a religious language but also as the language of literacy, administration, and scholarship, reinforced by Caliph ʿAbd al-Malik b. Marwān's decision to adopt Arabic as the official administrative language. This interaction between language policy and education strengthened linguistic unity across multicultural societies, facilitated knowledge transmission across regions, and supported the emergence of Arabic linguistic disciplines such as *naḥw* and *ṣarf* to safeguard accuracy in Qurʾanic reading.

In parallel, education enabled the systematic transmission of Islamic teachings and the consolidation of religious fundamentals in newly incorporated communities. A key implication was the gradual shift from predominantly oral transmission toward written practices and codification, contributing to a more text-based intellectual tradition. Overall, this article confirms that education, Arabization, and Islamization operated as an interconnected triad that translated political policy and religious norms into durable social practice, providing an important foundation for later intellectual development in the Islamic world. This study is limited by its library-based, conceptual-historical design; future research may focus on specific Umayyad regions (e.g., Syria, Egypt, or North Africa) to capture local variations in educational dynamics and Islamization processes.

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