

## GLORIOUS HISTORY OF THE ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE THE FATIMID DYNASTY IN EGYPT

Dhiyaa' Ulfah<sup>1</sup>, Juliani Damnur<sup>2</sup>, Ellya Roza<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup> Universitas Islam Negeri Sultan Syarif Kasim, Indonesia

### Corresponding Author:

Dhiyaa' Ulfah,

Postgraduate Sultan Syarif Kasim State Islamic University, Indonesia

Jl. H.R. Soebrantas No. 155 KM. 15, Simpang Baru, Tuah Madani District, Pekanbaru City, Riau.

Email: ulfahdhiyah@gmail.com

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### Abstract

The Fatimid Dynasty (909–1171 AD) in Egypt marked one of the most important phases in the history of Islamic education. As a dynasty that embraced Ismaili Shi'ism, the Fatimids not only strengthened their political power, but also actively developed an education system as a means of spreading ideology and knowledge. One of their most monumental contributions was the establishment of Al-Azhar University in 970 AD, which initially functioned as a center for spreading Ismaili teachings, but later developed into an inclusive center of Islamic scholarship. The Fatimid government provided significant support for the development of educational institutions through funding, establishing libraries, and appointing prominent scholars as teachers. This article aims to historically examine the development and role of Islamic educational institutions during the Fatimid Dynasty and their contribution to the Islamic scholarly tradition. The method used is a literature study with a historical-critical approach to primary and secondary sources. The results of the study show that the Fatimid Dynasty succeeded in creating an organized education system that became a model for the development of Islamic educational institutions in subsequent periods.

**Keywords:** Fatimid Dynasty, Al-Azhar, Islamic Education, Islamic History, Medieval Egypt



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## INTRODUCTION

The modern era places education as a major factor in building civilization and progress of a nation. This view is not new, because since the classical Islamic period, education has had a very important position in the lives of the people. Through the process of education, a

generation was born that not only studied religious knowledge, but also mastered general knowledge that became the foundation for the advancement of human civilization. Thus, education plays a major role in shaping the character and intelligence of society so that it is able to face the challenges of the times with broad and deep knowledge (Al-Attas, 1980).

Madrasahs, as Islamic educational institutions that have existed for centuries, are clear evidence that Islamic education has a long history and has contributed greatly to the development of civilization. However, despite being older than modern schools, madrasahs today are often unable to create a conducive and effective learning environment. This condition poses a challenge for the development of the quality of Islamic education so that it remains relevant to the demands of the times (Azra, 2012).

In the early days, the Islamic education process took place in places of worship such as mosques and prayer rooms, which functioned as centers of learning as well as places for the community to gather. Thus, educational and religious activities ran harmoniously side by side. Throughout history, various Islamic dynasties have played an important role in pioneering and developing educational institutions with different characteristics and approaches. One of the dynasties that paid great attention to education was the Fatimid Dynasty (909–1171 AD) based in Egypt (Hitti, 2008).

This dynasty was not only known for its political power and system of government, but also for its contributions to the field of science. During the Fatimid reign, famous educational institutions such as Dar al-'Ilm or Dar al-Hikmah were established in Cairo, which became centers of learning for various disciplines, ranging from religion, philosophy, medicine, to astronomy (Nasr, 1994).

Historically, the Fatimid dynasty began in Tunisia in 905 AD and then conquered Egypt in 969 AD (338 AH). This dynasty was a Shiite Ismaili Islamic kingdom (Sunanto Musyrifah, 2003) that ruled the North African coast before making Egypt the center of its government. After founding the city of Cairo, the Fatimid Dynasty made the region a center of Islamic culture, intellectualism, and science (Lapidus, 2002). One of their greatest contributions was the establishment and development of Islamic educational institutions that played an important role in the advancement of religious and general knowledge (Makdisi, 1981).

This article will explore the types of educational institutions, the advantages of the education system, government policies, teaching methods, and the intellectual legacy of the educational institutions that flourished during the Fatimid Dynasty. Based on previous studies, it can be said that this research focuses on discussing the glorious history of Islamic educational institutions during the Fatimid Dynasty. This dynasty is known as one of the Islamic governments that paid great attention to the development of science and education, especially through the establishment of scientific institutions such as Al-Azhar University, which remains a leading center for Islamic studies to this day.

Research conducted by Al-Maqrizi shows that the Fatimid Dynasty not only contributed to politics and religion, but also played an important role in the development of educational institutions. Support for scholars and the establishment of large libraries were strong indicators of an organized education system.

Ahmad Syalabi, in his work *Tarikh al-Tarbiyah al-Islamiyyah*, explains that the Fatimid Dynasty was a pioneer in establishing a well-organized Islamic higher education institution, namely Al-Azhar University in 359 AH/970 AD. The initial purpose of establishing this institution was to strengthen the Ismaili Shi'a da'wah, but in its development, Al-Azhar became a center of knowledge that was open to various schools of thought and disciplines (Syalabi, 1987). This view shows that education in the Fatimid era was not only politically oriented but also intellectual and scientific.

Ali Abdul Wahid Wafi, in his book *Islamic Education from Time to Time*, traces the changes in Al-Azhar's function after the collapse of the Fatimid dynasty and the emergence of the Ayyubid dynasty. He concludes that although Al-Azhar's orientation shifted to become a Sunni institution, the institutional structure and scientific traditions inherited from the Fatimid period were maintained and became the foundation of the Islamic education system until modern times (Wafi, 1996).

Another study by Farhad Daftary explains that the Ismaili Shiite ideology embraced by the Fatimid Dynasty also influenced the structure of the educational curriculum and scientific approach at that time. Education was not only oriented towards the teaching of fiqh and tafsir, but also included philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and various other branches of science.

Another study was conducted by Jamil M. Abun-Nasr in his work *A History of the Maghrib in the Islamic Period*, which emphasizes that the Fatimids used educational institutions as political and ideological tools to expand the influence of Shi'a Ismailiyyah. However, these educational institutions remained open to the general public and contributed greatly to the advancement of science (Abun-Nasr, 1987). These findings reveal the close relationship between power, ideology, and the education system at that time.

Meanwhile, Syed Hossein Nasr in *Science and Civilization in Islam* highlights the function of Dar al-'Ilm as a research center and large library in Cairo. This institution accommodated various scientists in the fields of astronomy, philosophy, medicine, and other rational sciences. According to Nasr, this institution was an example of the synergy between religious knowledge and rational knowledge ('aqliyyah) that developed rapidly during the Fatimid period (Nasr, 1968).

Furthermore, Philip K. Hitti, in his book *History of the Arabs*, argues that the education system during the Fatimid period consisted of several levels, ranging from kuttab as a basic institution, halaqah in mosques, to higher institutions such as Dar al-'Ilm. The Fatimid government paid great attention to education by covering all costs through the baitul mal fund, making education free and accessible to the wider community (Hitti, 1970). This finding confirms that the Fatimid Dynasty was among the first Islamic kingdoms to make education a state responsibility.

However, most existing studies are still limited to general aspects of the history of the Fatimid Dynasty, and not many have specifically examined the education system that was implemented comprehensively. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the Islamic education system during the Fatimid Dynasty, including the structure of institutions, curriculum, learning methods, and its impact on the development of Islamic education in the Islamic world in the following period.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

### *Research Design*

This study employs a qualitative historical research design aimed at reconstructing and interpreting the development of Islamic educational institutions during the Fatimid Dynasty. The design is interpretive in nature, emphasizing contextual analysis of historical events, institutional structures, and ideological influences. The qualitative historical design enables a systematic reconstruction of past realities through critical examination of sources, while also allowing analytical exploration of the relationship between educational policy, political authority, and Ismaili Shi'i ideology. The research does not merely describe chronological developments but seeks to uncover patterns, causality, and institutional dynamics within their socio-cultural and political contexts.

### *Research Target/Subject*

The primary focus of the research is the system and dynamics of Islamic educational institutions during the Fatimid Dynasty in Egypt. The institutional targets include Al-Azhar Mosque and Dar al-‘Ilm as major centers of learning, along with their administrative structures, curriculum orientation, ideological foundations, and socio-political functions. Conceptually, the study targets the interaction between educational development, state authority, and Ismaili doctrinal influence. The temporal scope covers the Fatimid period (10th–12th centuries CE), while the thematic scope concentrates on institutional organization, educational objectives, curriculum content, and intellectual networks.

### *Research Procedure*

The research procedure follows the classical stages of the historical method. The first stage involves heuristic activities, namely the systematic collection of primary and secondary sources from libraries, archives, and academic databases. The second stage consists of source criticism, including external criticism to verify authenticity and authorship, and internal criticism to assess credibility, consistency, and bias. The third stage is data interpretation, where validated information is analyzed contextually to identify relationships between educational institutions and political-ideological structures. The final stage is historiography, which organizes interpreted findings into a coherent, chronological, and analytical historical narrative.

### *Instruments, and Data Collection Techniques*

In qualitative historical research, the researcher functions as the primary instrument. Analytical sensitivity, critical reading skills, and historiographical competence are essential tools in interpreting historical data. Supporting instruments include source evaluation checklists for external and internal criticism, document analysis matrices for categorizing themes (institutional structure, curriculum, ideology, governance), and note-taking frameworks to ensure systematic documentation of relevant findings. These instruments facilitate consistent comparison across diverse sources and enhance analytical rigor. Data were collected through library research. Primary sources consist of classical historical texts, manuscripts, and documented accounts related to the Fatimid educational system. Secondary sources include scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and contemporary historiographical analyses. The data collection technique involves document identification, classification, and thematic coding based on relevance to institutional development, ideological orientation, and socio-political context. Source triangulation is applied by comparing information across multiple references to enhance credibility and reduce interpretive bias.

### *Data Analysis Technique*

Data analysis is conducted through qualitative historical analysis. The first stage involves data reduction by selecting relevant information aligned with the research focus. The second stage includes verification and critical comparison of sources to ensure authenticity and minimize distortion. The third stage involves contextual interpretation, where historical facts are analyzed within broader ideological, political, and cultural frameworks. The final stage is narrative synthesis, which integrates verified data into a systematic, logical, and interpretive historical reconstruction. The analytical process emphasizes causality, structural relationships, and institutional dynamics rather than mere descriptive chronology.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The Fatimid dynasty was founded in 909 AD / 296 AH by 'Ubaid Allah al-Mahdi Billah, who proclaimed himself Imam Mahdi and caliph, first in Ifriqiyah (the territory of modern Tunisia) (Harun, 2019: 45). The dynasty reached its peak of glory during the reign of al-Hakim bi Amrillah (996–1021 AD), who was known for his unique and controversial political and religious policies (Nasution, 2020: 88).

During this period, the Fatimid developed an efficient bureaucratic system, as well as provided great support for the development of science, philosophy, medicine, and the arts (Hassan, 2018: 112). Various educational institutions were established and used as centers for scientific development and development, including Mosque as an Islamic Educational Institution, Dar al-'Ilm / Dar al-Hikmah / Library, The Palace and the State Leadership Institution as Scientific Centers, Discussions and A brief history of the Fatimid dynasty

Islam entered Egypt during the reign of Caliph Umar bin Khattab. At that time, Amr bin Ash was sent to lead the Islamic army to conquer Egypt because of the strategic position of the region which directly borders Palestine, which had been conquered first (Watt, 2018: 42). After Egypt was conquered, Amr bin Ash was appointed governor (632–650 AD) and made Fustat (near Cairo) the capital of his government (Lapidus, 2014: 133). Furthermore, the Islamic State took turns occupying Egypt, among others, the Umayyad Empire, the Abbasid Empire, and the Fatimid Empire which was marked by the success of Jauhar Al Katib (Commander-in-Chief), Caliph Muiz Lidinillah established the oldest university in the world Al Azhar in 972 AD (Syamruddin Nasution, 2018:165)

The formation of the government at that time was usually carried out with hope because towards the 10th century the condition of the Abbasid Empire in Baghdad began to weaken because its vast area of power could be consodalized again or precisely entered a period of disintegration. Such conditions opened up opportunities for the emergence of small daulah in the regions that freed themselves from the central government, especially for their governors and caliphs who already had their own armies, among them the Fatimid Daulah Daulah As its power grew, the Fatimid Empire became known in history as the Fatimid Dynasty.

The Fatimid dynasty is one of the most important dynasties in Islamic history, especially because of its success in establishing political power with Shia Ismaili ideology in Sunni-majority areas, as well as its role in the development of science and education in the Islamic world, especially in Egypt (Heinz Halm, 1997:1).

The name Fatimid is taken from the name of Fatimah az-Zahra, the daughter of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. This dynasty claims direct descent from Fatimah and Ali bin Abi Talib, through the lineage of Ismail bin Ja'far, which became the basis for the Ismaili Shia school (Farhad Daftary, 2007:95). The dynasty was founded in 909 AD / 296 AH by 'Ubaid Allah al-Mahdi Billah, who proclaimed himself Imam Mahdi and caliph, first in Ifriqiyah (the territory of modern Tunisia) (Farhad Daftary, 2007:95). He succeeded in overthrowing the Aghlabiyah dynasty that had previously ruled the region and establishing a sovereign Shia caliphate. After consolidating power in North Africa, the Fatimid Dynasty continued its expansion eastward. In 969 AD / 358 H, under the leadership of General Jawhar al-Siqilli, they succeeded in capturing Egypt from the Ikhsyidiyah Dynasty (Syamsuddin Arif, 2017:110). After the conquest, they built a new capital called al-Qahirah (Cairo) and founded Jami' al-Azhar, which later developed into one of the largest centers of Islamic scholarship in history. From then on, Egypt became the center of power of the Fatimid Dynasty until the end of their reign (Al Husaini M. Daud, 2022:15).

The Fatimid dynasty reached its peak of glory during the reign of al-Hakim bi Amrillah (996–1021 AD), known for its unique and controversial political and religious policies. They developed an efficient bureaucratic system, as well as supporting the development of science, philosophy, medicine, and the arts. Fatimid policies are known to be quite inclusive, even though they have Shia ideology, they still employ Sunni and non-Muslim clerics and administrators, including Jews and Christians, in the government (Jonathan Bloom and Sheila Blair, 2000:84).

#### Educational Institutions and Their Brilliance in the Fatimid Dynasty

Educational institutions have a big role in the journey and development of education, of course it is undeniable that. Its function is not only as a meeting place, but also as a center for

the study and development of science. During the Fatimid period, education was not only a means of spreading religious knowledge, but also a political and ideological tool to strengthen the legitimacy of the dynasty (Ahmad, 2017: 103).

History records that during the time of the Prophet (saw), mosques were used as the main means of learning the main values of Islamic teachings. Subsequent developments showed that Islamic educational institutions were no longer limited to mosques, but gave birth to new institutions that had a more complex role according to the needs of the community during each period of dynastic rule. Similarly, in the Fatimid Dynasty era, various educational institutions were established and used as centers for the development and development of knowledge, including:

#### Mosque as an Islamic Educational Institution

One of the main indicators of the Fatimid Dynasty's attention to the world of education can be seen from the construction of mosques as a center of scientific activities. The establishment of mosques at that time was not only intended as a means of worship, but also a symbol of the glory of Islamic educational institutions. The mosque has a dual function, namely as a place to carry out worship rituals as well as a center for the transmission of knowledge, especially the teaching of the Qur'an, hadith, and various other Islamic scientific disciplines.



Gambar 1. Mosque Al Azhar, Cairo

The mosque referred to here is the Al Azhar mosque located in Cairo, the seat of the Fatimid dynasty. This mosque is seen as the most important building ever erected. This mosque is the official mosque of the State, right where Islamic da'wah is located as well as a religious symbol of the ruler of the Fatimid dynasty (Misbah Muhammad, 2016). Furthermore, the mosque serves as a meeting forum for fiqh scholars, especially those related to the Isma'iliyah Shi'a madhhab, together with viziers and judges. In the intellectual forum, they not only exchange ideas, but also prepare scientific works that explain the principles of teachings and the laws of the school. One of the prominent figures in this intellectual tradition is Ya'qub ibn Killis, who is known as a writer and a driving force in the development of Shi'a Isma'iliyah scientific literature (Nata Abuddin, 2024).

The existence of judges in the scientific assembly serves an important function to provide juridical authority, especially in deciding legal issues arising from the discussion of the school. Thus, educational institutions built by the Fatimid Dynasty not only served as a vehicle for the dissemination of religious knowledge, but also as an ideological instrument to strengthen the intellectual hegemony and political legitimacy of the dynasty. Through these institutions, the Fatimid sought to maintain the continuity of scientific tradition, strengthen the identity of the Shi'a school of Isma'iliyah, and at the same time affirm its position as a political and spiritual authority in the Islamic world. From a historical perspective, it shows how education not only functions in the context of scientific development, but also as a strategic means to build power and ideology that has a wide influence in society. Thus, it is clear that these institutions are a means for the organizers of their ideology.

#### Dar Al-Ilm/ Dar Alhikmah/ Library

During the Fatimid Dynasty, a monumental educational and research institution was established, namely Dar al-Hikmah. This institution not only functions as a learning center, but also as a giant library that stores various manuscript collections. Its existence is one of the clear proofs of the Fatimid seriousness in developing scientific traditions. In Dar al-Hikmah, scientists and scholars carry out various academic activities, ranging from collecting classical manuscripts, translating the works of foreign scientists, to compiling new literature that enriches Islamic intellectual treasures.

The brilliance of Dar al-Hikmah can be seen from its role comparable to the major academies in the Islamic world at that time, such as the scientific centers in Cordova and Baghdad. In fact, this institution is seen as one of the symbols of Fatimid intellectual progress that is able to match the scientific hegemony of the Abbasid in Baghdad and the glory of Andalusia in Cordova. As the main support for scientific activities (Sunanto Musyrifah, 2003), Dar al-Hikmah is equipped with a magnificent library called al-'Ulum, which holds thousands of collections of books from various branches of science, both religion, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and linguistics.

As a result, Dar al-Hikmah not only enriched the internal scientific tradition of the Shi'a school of Isma'iliyah, but also made a great contribution to the development of science in the Islamic world more broadly. This institution became a space for intellectual interaction that allowed the birth of new ideas, strengthened cross-regional scientific networks, and showed how education was used as a strategic instrument by the Fatimid Dynasty in building power, expanding ideological influence, while leaving a monumental legacy of civilization.

#### The Palace and State Leadership Institutions as Scientific Centers

The hallmark of the glory of educational institutions in the Palace is not only for state events but also as scientific activities (Nata Abuddin, 2024). In the history of the Fatimid Dynasty, the caliph's palace not only functioned as a center of government, but also as an intellectual space that brought together scholars and scholars. The caliphs often invited writers, religious scholars, and scientists from various fields to gather at the palace. One of the important activities they carry out is copying and disseminating valuable works, ranging from Qur'anic manuscripts, hadith books, jurisprudence, to literary literature and even medical texts. This activity shows the caliph's great concern for efforts to preserve and disseminate knowledge in the community.

As a form of appreciation, the scientists and writers involved received special awards from the caliph. Not infrequently, they were given honorable positions, including being assigned as imams in palace mosques. This shows the synergy between political power and scientific authority, where the ruler uses scholars and scholars to strengthen spiritual legitimacy while reviving scientific activities in the palace environment.

To support these intellectual activities, the caliph provided the facilities needed by writers and scientists. Paper, ink, and various stationery are specially provided so that the process of copying and compiling scientific papers can run smoothly. This kind of practice not only shows concern for knowledge, but also reflects the model of intellectual patronage that is prevalent in the tradition of classical Islamic civilization. The material and moral support of the caliph allowed the birth of many valuable works that later became a reference in the development of religious science, literature, and science in the Islamic world.

#### Al Azhar University as an Islamic Educational Institution

One of the most famous institutions is AlAzhar University. Founded during the Fatimid rule, AlAzhar developed into a higher education institution that taught various disciplines: religious science, Arabic, literature, logic, and even philosophy (Asriati Amliyah, 2013). Al-Azhar University is one of the oldest and most influential Islamic educational institutions that still exists in the world today. There is no doubt that it played a huge role in preserving the Arabic language while maintaining the purity of Islamic religious teachings for centuries.

Since its inception during the Fatimid Dynasty, al-Azhar has become a strategic forum for Muslim students from various parts of the world to deepen their religious knowledge, linguistics, and other disciplines that develop along with the dynamics of Islamic civilization. The uniqueness of al-Azhar lies not only in the sustainability of its traditions, but also in its status as one of the holy centers of Muslims, after Makkah, Medina, and Jerusalem.

One of the greatest achievements recorded by this institution is its ability to defend and disseminate Islamic scientific treasures in the midst of difficult times, such as when the Islamic world experienced intellectual decline, dark times, as well as political pressure and oppression. Through a structured education system, distinctive teaching methods in the form of halaqah, and the active role of scholars, al-Azhar has succeeded in maintaining the continuity of scientific traditions in the fields of interpretation, hadith, jurisprudence, linguistics, and rational science. Its rich library, lively tradition of scholarly debate, and openness to students across nations make al-Azhar a beacon of knowledge in the Islamic world.

No less important, this institution also gave birth to many great scholars who played an important role in the history of Islamic thought. Thousands of scholars, scholars, and linguists gained knowledge under the guidance of the al-Azhar community, then spread that knowledge to various regions. Until now, al-Azhar continues to stand as an educational institution that is able to combine religious, academic, and social functions, as well as become a symbol of Islamic intellectual heritage that continues to contribute to the development of global civilization (Muntashir Abdul Halim, 2023).

#### Government Policies and State Support for Education During the Fatimid Dynasty

The Fatimid dynasty is known as one of the caliphate in Islamic history that paid great attention to the development of science and education. Government policies at this time were not only focused on the political and military fields, but were also directed at efforts to build the intellectual and spiritual strength of the community. State support is realized through the establishment of educational institutions, the provision of learning facilities such as mosques, madrasas, and libraries, and the provision of facilities for scholars and scholars.

The Fatimid government viewed educational institutions not only as a means of religious teaching, but also as an important instrument to strengthen the legitimacy of power and spread the ideology of the Shi'a Isma'iliyah school that they adhered to. Therefore, the state is directly involved in regulating, financing, and even supervising the course of education. Material support, such as the provision of books, manuscripts, ink, and paper, is provided to facilitate scientific activities. Meanwhile, awards to scholars in the form of positions, salaries, and social positions also strengthened the scientific tradition at that time. Evidence of the government's support for educational institutions at that time include The government finances educational institutions, allocates budgets, and provides facilities such as libraries and teaching buildings, The Fatimid also supported the translation of foreign scholarly works into Arabic and recruited scholars from other Islamic regions to teach in Egypt and The education system includes formal, informal and non-formal. Students learn in formal classes in madrasas, but also informally through halaqah in mosques or libraries (Isiani, 2023).

With policies that favored science and education, the Fatimid Dynasty was able to give birth to prestigious institutions such as al-Azhar University and Dar al-Hikmah, which not only functioned as a center for religious studies, but also as a place for the development of general science. This confirms that the role of the government and state support were key factors in making the Fatimid era one of the golden periods in the history of Islamic education.

#### Curriculum and Teaching Methods in Educational Institutions During the Fatimid Dynasty

During the Fatimid Dynasty, the educational curriculum was designed to fulfill two main objectives: the mastery of religious sciences as well as the development of rational science. This can be seen from the teaching materials that include the Qur'an, hadith, fiqh, ushul fiqh, and kalam science, in addition to the teaching of Arabic and its grammar (Asriati Amliyah, 2013). The curriculum shows the synergy between religious orientation and scientific rationality that characterized Islamic education during the Fatimid period (Maryono & Nugroho, 2021). The teaching methods used at that time varied greatly, but the most dominant was the halaqah system (Syamruddin Nasution, 2018). Some of the characteristics of teaching methods and materials The curriculum combines religious sciences (tafsir, hadith, fiqh) and general sciences (Arabic, literature, logic, philosophy, sometimes medicine or astronomy) depending on the demand and capabilities of the teacher/institution, Traditional teaching methods (teachers in front, students listening and discussing), halaqah or scientific assemblies, the use of libraries and manuscripts as teaching materials and Quality control. The government also supervises the quality of education, both from the moral, methodical, and curriculum aspects, to ensure that teaching is in accordance with the set standards (Ramdane & Souad, 2014).

#### The Challenges and Limitations of the Fatimid Dynasty in Maintaining the Existence of Islamic Education

Although the Fatimid dynasty made great achievements in the political, religious, and educational fields, their journey did not go entirely smoothly. Behind the apparent glory, there are a number of obstacles that must be faced, both from within the government itself and from external factors. The unstable political situation, ideological differences with the majority of Muslims, and administrative problems are part of the challenges that limit the influence and sustainability of this dynasty. Therefore, it is important to understand some of the challenges and limitations that the Fatimid Dynasty faced in maintaining its existence and influence, including Sectarian conflicts between the ruling Ismaili Shia and the majority Sunni community may give rise to resistance to some aspects of education if it is considered to promote Shia doctrine, Financial and resource crises, especially when power faces economic difficulties or when there is an outbreak/famine. Large expenditures on science sometimes have to be compensated through additional taxes or fundraising and External threats and political changes, such as when the Ayyubid dynasty replaced the Fatimites, which later changed some of its educational institutions and ideological orientation.

#### The Legacy of the Fatimid Dynasty in Islamic Education

The Fatimid dynasty was not only known for its political power and ideological influence, but also left a very valuable legacy in the field of Islamic education. During his reign, educational institutions developed rapidly, both in the form of madrasas, libraries, and scientific assemblies that were open to the wider community. The support of the Fatimid

caliphs for scientific activities made education one of the important instruments to strengthen the legitimacy of power as well as a means of spreading religious thought.

Some of the important legacies of the Fatimid Dynasty in the field of Islamic education are Among the most famous educational institutions that still survive today is AlAzhar University in Cairo, Egypt (Nata Abuddin, 2024). The university still exists and is one of the most influential centers of Islamic education in the world. The AlAzhar educational model that combines religious science and general knowledge has become an inspiration for madrasahmadrassas in many Islamic countries (Rofiqoh Maulidatur, 2022).

The tradition of large libraries and appreciation of texts and manuscripts as sources of knowledge remain strong in Islamic culture in Egypt and the surrounding region. The development of scholars and teachers from abroad and intellectual exchanges have long contributed to the cosmopolitanism of Islamic science, in which knowledge from various regions is integrated. The structure of formal and non-formal educational institutions as part of religious and cultural life is still visible in madrasahmadrassas and mosques in various Islamic regions.

## CONCLUSION

During the reign of the Fatimid Dynasty (969–1171 AD) in Egypt, significant progress was recorded in the field of Islamic education, especially through the establishment of educational institutions that were systematic, inclusive, and structured. One of its greatest achievements was the establishment of Al-Azhar University in 970 AD, which became a center for scholarship, da'wah, and the development of Islamic thought. Al-Azhar was not only a place to study religious science, but also included rational sciences such as philosophy, medicine, mathematics, and astronomy, demonstrating the Fatimid Dynasty's commitment to science in general. The Fatimid dynasty is also known for encouraging scholarly tolerance, providing access to education for various groups, and enriching the Islamic intellectual tradition with an Ismaili Shia approach without marginalizing other streams. State support for education can be seen from state financing for teachers, students, and educational infrastructure. Thus, it can be concluded that the Fatimid Dynasty has made a great contribution to the development of Islamic educational institutions, especially in Egypt, whose legacy lives on today through Al-Azhar University, one of the oldest and most influential Islamic institutions in the world.

The Fatimid dynasty played a very important role in the transformation of Islamic education in Egypt. By establishing various educational institutions—mosques, madrasas, Dar alHikmah, libraries, and government institutions that support science—they facilitate the growth of religious and general science. Structured government policies, financial support, traditional teaching methods, and a multi-disciplinary curriculum made the Fatimid period a golden era of Islamic education in Egypt. Despite facing sectarian and political challenges, their legacy lives on and inspires today.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Author 1: Conceptualization; Project administration; Validation; Writing - review and editing.

Author 2: Conceptualization; Data curation; In-vestigation.

Author 3: Data curation; Investigation.

## CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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