

Inclusive Education Policy in the Abbasid Era: A Study of Educational Thought Harun ar-Rasyid's Response to Today's Educational Challenges

Ratna Etikasari Agus

Univeristas Islam Negeri Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari Ponorogo, Indonesia

ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Keywords: Inklusif; Harun Ar-Rasyid; ; Abbasiyah; Islamic Education	The educational ideas written by Harun ar-Rasyid provide the concept that improving reason and knowledge are key components in philosophy. Harun ar-Rasyid was a staunch supporter of the development of science and art, especially through educational institutions such as Baitul Hikmah, a research center and library established during his reign. This study aims to analyze the policy of inclusive education in the Abbasid era, a study of Harun ar-Rasyid's thoughts. The method used in this study is qualitative descriptive analytical, with a historical approach and literature study, namely research that describes past phenomena and analyzes them in depth sourced from books, journals and historical documents. Based on the review that has been done, inclusive education in the Harun ar-Rasyid era has the following characteristics: open access, state support, cultural and religious collaboration, and the movement of translating works from various civilizations. Thus, Harun ar-Rasyid's thoughts contribute to the development of Islamic education and are relevant to be studied in facing the challenges of today's education.
Corresponding Author: Ratna Etikasari Agus Email: etikasari@iainponorogo.ac.id	

INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the fundamental aspects that plays an important role in shaping and improving the quality of individuals and society (Nurkholis, 2023). In the development of modern education today, education no longer only plays a role as a means of transferring knowledge, but also has an important role in developing skills, social emotions, and character

of students (Wasin, 2025). Therefore, the education system is expected to be able to provide fair and quality services for all. In this case, inclusive education is an approach that emphasizes and recognizes the right of children to receive the best education regardless of their background or abilities (Khairuddin, 2020). Inclusive education provides an illustration that every individual has the same right to obtain access to equal and quality education (Milo, Moi, Kaka, & Lawe, 2026).

In its concept, inclusive education provides a special education service system that requires all children with special needs and children with disabilities to receive educational assistance in local schools in regular subjects with their classmates. However, its implementation faces various challenges, such as the educational gap between urban and rural areas, limited educational infrastructure, ranging from a shortage of schools to a shortage of qualified teachers. This inequality exacerbates social and economic disparities. Inadequate facilities make it difficult for students with special needs to participate in the learning process. To address these issues, studying the history of Islamic education is crucial.

One period known as the golden age and progress of Islamic education was education during the Abbasid dynasty under the leadership of Harun Ar-Rasyid (Mustofa, n.d.) (Rohana, 2021). Harun Ar-Rasyid was the fifth caliph of the Abbasid dynasty who was famous for his generosity and also as a poet (Dasopang, 2025). He ruled for 23 years and made the peak of progress of Islamic civilization in the fields of economics, politics, and science. Some aspects of reform that have attracted the attention of Islamic thinkers include the purification of monotheism, politics, economics, socio-cultural issues, military, science and technology, women's emancipation, and the education system (Hidayatullah, 2024).

Reformist thinking on the education system has always been a primary concern for every reformist thinker. Education is considered a never-ending arena of learning, because the issues it focuses on are related to humanity in all its aspects. Furthermore, various efforts to achieve the goals of thought were carried out through formal and non-formal education (Ardiansyah, Ramadhan, Naja, & Nur, 2023). During the leadership of Harun Ar-Rasyid, education became a concern of the government through policies and the development of educational institutions (Munjahid, 2020). In several historical literatures, the progress of philosophy, poetry, medicine, mathematics, and astronomy developed not only in the city of Baghdad but also in cities such as Kufa, Basrah, and Harram. During this period, education made significant progress. This is illustrated by government support for scientific activities, expanding access to learning, fulfilling infrastructure, empowering scientists as an effort to

support the learning process.

Various educational policies during the reign of Harun Ar Rasyid showed that his policies paid attention to the development of science and the expansion of learning opportunities for the community (Tadjuddin & Maulana, 2018). Although the concept of inclusive education has not been formally recognized in the context of modern education, the policies and values implemented by Harun ar-Rasyid are in line with the principle of inclusivity. This condition shows values that are in accordance with inclusive education that is developing in the current modern era. Therefore, Harun ar-Rasyid's leadership policies are interesting to study as an answer to contemporary education.

Several studies on Harun ar-Rasyid generally focus only on the economic and political sectors and the progress achieved by Islamic civilization during the Abbasid dynasty. Meanwhile, studies discussing and examining educational policies with inclusive concepts and values as a conceptual foundation are still limited. Yet, the values contained in these policies contribute to and address current educational challenges. Therefore, this study seeks to analyze the relationship between Harun ar-Rasyid's educational thinking and its relevance to inclusive education today.

RESEARCH METHOD

The research method uses qualitative descriptive with library research. The approach used is a historical and philosophical approach to investigate the concept and practice of inclusive education policies in the government of Harun ar-Rasyid during the Abbasid period from various literature sources. Data sources use Islamic History books, Islamic Education literature, journals related to contemporary education and inclusive education. Data analysis techniques use descriptive analysis techniques. This stage is carried out to identify and describe the educational policies implemented by Harun Ar-Rasyid. Furthermore, the analysis stage is carried out by examining the values of inclusive education and assessing their relevance in answering current educational challenges. With this, it is hoped that this study contributes and provides a comprehensive picture of Harun ar-Rasyid's thoughts in the development of contemporary inclusive education..

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Subheading (bold, Garamond 12)

The Values of Inclusive Education During the Time of Harun al-Rashid

1. Open Access to Education

The Abbasid education policy was open to all, including non-Muslims and Muslims. State Support for Education One of the main characteristics of the Abbasid Dynasty's golden age was the rapid development of science and culture (Gadafi, Hamid, Wandu, & Sabri, 2024). The establishment of the House of Wisdom became an important symbol of intellectual progress during that period (Masrurroh, 2021) (Gadafi et al., 2024). The Abbasid government viewed education as a fundamental tool in building civilization and strengthening the legitimacy of its rule. The intellectual movement was marked by projects to translate works from Persian, Sanskrit, Syriac, and Greek into Arabic (Hidayati, 2021) (Yusuf, 2021). The Caliph allocated a special budget to pay translators from Christians, Sabians, and star worshippers. Despite being non-Muslims, Caliph Harun remained neutral and responsible for funding the advancement of Islamic education.

Several efforts undertaken by Caliph Harun to advance Islamic civilization were essentially an acculturation of Islamic civilization with other civilizations, particularly Persian and Greek. These included translation efforts, the establishment of Islamic educational institutions such as the Baitul-Hikmah (House of Wisdom), later renamed Khizanatul Hikmah (House of Wisdom), Kuttab/Maktab (Teaching House), bookstores, literary assemblies/salons, libraries, mosques, houses of scholars, madrasas, palace education, and Ribath (Zalnur, n.d.), (Humaidi, Desta, Ananda, & Fitri, 2026). The establishment of educational institutions that supported the public's pursuit of knowledge, along with the policies established by Harun al-Rasyid, made Baghdad a city of literacy.

Harun al-Rasyid was able to make education more famous than in previous eras. This is due to his high attention to the development of science accompanied by strong leadership. The concept. A number of educational components were also created, namely: professional and character educators, learning methods such as the qira'ah method, oral, lecture, memorization, discussion, and writing, compulsory and optional educational materials, and the division of time starting from morning to Asr. The educational curriculum during Harun's time was divided into three, namely: elementary level curriculum, secondary education curriculum, higher education curriculum (Afif & Agus, 2025). The multicultural concept with this set of values was developed as a supporting pillar of the Islamic education system implemented by the Caliph Harun al-Rasyid.

2. State Support

Caliphs, such as Harun al-Rashid and Al-Ma'mun, were known as patrons of knowledge because they provided financial support, facilities, and political protection to scientists and educational institutions (AR-RASYID, 2024) (Tadjuddin & Maulana, 2018). Before Islamic rule, the majority of the Arab population was illiterate, relying on memory and memorization to transmit or transmit their traditions orally. The intellectual revival during the reign of Caliph Harun al-Rashid ushered in a golden age for this Islamic city, marked by impressive scientific knowledge, civilization, and culture. It was recognized worldwide as a mecca for knowledge and civilization. Muslim scholars contributed significantly to the advancement of education.

During his reign, Baghdad became a center of intellectual and cultural influence. Harun established the House of Wisdom, an institution that served not only as a library but also as a center for translation and research. This step enabled the absorption of Greek, Persian, and Indian knowledge into the Islamic world (Hidayati, 2021) (Yusuf, 2021). By supporting translation activities, Harun sought to expand public access to knowledge, encourage intellectual discussion, and integrate various foreign knowledge into Islamic teachings. Openness to external intellectual influences enriched Islamic civilization and enabled Muslims to compete with other civilizations. Third, they saw education as a tool for achieving greater social and political progress, as well as maintaining the stability of the Caliphate. Knowledge was viewed as something very noble and valuable. The caliphs and other leaders opened up the widest possible opportunities for the advancement and development of knowledge. In general, the caliphs were scholars who loved knowledge, respected scholars, and venerated poets.

3. Culture and Religion

The Abbasid period successfully combined the administrative power of the established Arab nation with the scientific and cultural traditions of Persia, Byzantium, India, and Greece (Humaidi et al., 2026) (Gadafi et al., 2024). This created a cosmopolitan society, thriving in intercultural interaction and dialogue. This development occurred not only domestically but also spread to Europe and Asia, laying the foundation for the Renaissance in the West. The emergence of a tradition of rationalism and the integration of 'aql (reason) and naql (textual tradition) encouraged contextual philosophical thought

(Rohana, 2021) (Dasopang, 2025). Another important aspect reflecting the intellectual and cultural revival achieved by Caliph Harun ar-Rashid was the establishment of Bayt al-Hikmah, a library that also functioned as a translation bureau. It was in this library that intellectual activities such as the translation of Greek works took place. Thus, the brilliance achieved by Caliph Harun ar-Rasyid, both materially and intellectually, was further enhanced. The development of intellectual and religious life in Islam brought about a new situation in the Islamic education curriculum, leading to the teaching of new sciences, such as interpretation, hadith, jurisprudence, grammar, literature, mathematics, theology, philosophy, astronomy, and medicine.

4. Translation Movement

Harun al-Rashid's policies transformed Baghdad into a city of literacy. Baghdad flourished as a city of books. The paper industry transformed Baghdad. Education and the intellectual scene grew rapidly and spectacularly. Harun al-Rashid desired that the flow of civilization should refer to writing (Rohana, 2021) (Mustofa, n.d.). Scientific agendas and government administration began to use paper. The trade system also took place through paper records. During the reign of Caliph al-Ma'mun, the translation movement took off on a large scale. Various works from Greece, India, and Persia were translated, including almost all of Aristotle's works, who was al-Ma'mun's most influential inspiration.

Harun al-Rashid mobilized power and civilization through literacy. Harun al-Rashid's policies resulted in intellectual passion spreading from Baghdad. Scholars used books and paper to disseminate knowledge (Hidayatullah, 2024) (Munjahid, 2020). Translation during this period was carried out based on Muslims' awareness of the importance of knowledge, as reflected in the values and teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith, which encourage the pursuit of knowledge. Just as the principle of da'wah (preaching) contains a call to the path of Allah, a call to self-improvement and social progress, a call to develop knowledge, and so on, the movement to absorb knowledge through translation also aimed to understand, explore, and practice Allah's teachings contained in the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Awareness of the importance of knowledge as embodied in these two sources of Islamic teachings became a driving force for Muslims to translate works from various regions (Gadafi et al., 2024). In addition to these motives, the role of the government (the caliph) in encouraging scientific advancement through both policies and generous

financial support contributed to the revitalization of the translation movement at that time. Implicitly, this indicates that the translation carried out by Caliph Harun was part of the da'wah activity through the absorption of knowledge from various places.

CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis conducted, inclusive education during the Harun ar-Rasyid era had the following characteristics: open access, state support, cultural and religious collaboration, and a movement to translate works from various civilizations. Thus, Harun ar-Rasyid's thoughts contributed to the development of Islamic education and are relevant to study in facing today's educational challenges.

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