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Strengthening Islamic Civilization History Literacy through Education on the Decline of the Three Great Islamic Empires

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Abstract: Limited public understanding of the rise and decline of the three major Islamic empires—the Ottoman Empire, the Safavid Empire, and the Mughal Empire—has resulted in the educational, leadership, and civilizational values embedded in their histories not being optimally utilized as learning resources. This Community Partnership Program (PKM) aimed to enhance participants' literacy on Islamic civilization and strengthen their understanding of the factors contributing to the rise and decline of these three empires as valuable lessons for contemporary Islamic education and society. The program was implemented through educational sessions, interactive lectures, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and participant evaluations. The target participants included community members, teachers, and students interested in the study of Islamic history. The results of the program demonstrated an improvement in participants' understanding of the historical development of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires, the factors influencing their growth and decline, and the relevance of these

Abstrak: Keterbatasan pemahaman masyarakat mengenai sejarah perkembangan dan kemunduran tiga kerajaan besar Islam, yaitu Kesultanan Utsmaniyah, Kekaisaran Safawi, dan Kekaisaran Mughal, menyebabkan nilai-nilai pendidikan, kepemimpinan, dan peradaban Islam yang terkandung di dalamnya belum dimanfaatkan secara optimal sebagai sumber pembelajaran. Program Kemitraan Masyarakat (PKM) ini bertujuan meningkatkan literasi sejarah peradaban Islam serta memperkuat pemahaman peserta mengenai faktor-faktor kejayaan dan kemunduran ketiga kerajaan sebagai pembelajaran bagi kehidupan dan pendidikan Islam masa kini. Kegiatan dilaksanakan melalui metode edukasi, ceramah interaktif, diskusi, tanya jawab, serta evaluasi pemahaman peserta. Sasaran kegiatan adalah masyarakat, guru, dan peserta didik yang memiliki ketertarikan terhadap kajian sejarah Islam. Hasil kegiatan menunjukkan adanya peningkatan pemahaman peserta mengenai perjalanan sejarah Kesultanan Utsmaniyah, Kekaisaran

historical experiences to strengthening leadership values, character development, the advancement of knowledge, and lifelong learning. Participants also showed high enthusiasm throughout the activities and were able to relate historical lessons to the contemporary challenges of Islamic education. This Community Partnership Program contributed to improving Islamic historical literacy and encouraged the use of Islamic civilization history as a medium for character building and strengthening Islamic insight through contextual and value-based learning.

Keywords: Islamic historical literacy; Ottoman Empire; Safavid Empire; Mughal Empire; Islamic education

Safawi, dan Kekaisaran Mughal, faktor-faktor yang memengaruhi perkembangan dan kemundurannya, serta relevansinya dalam penguatan nilai kepemimpinan, karakter, pengembangan ilmu pengetahuan, dan semangat pembelajaran sepanjang hayat. Peserta juga menunjukkan antusiasme tinggi selama kegiatan berlangsung dan mampu mengaitkan pembelajaran sejarah dengan tantangan pendidikan Islam kontemporer. Kegiatan PKM ini memberikan kontribusi dalam meningkatkan literasi sejarah peradaban Islam serta mendorong pemanfaatan sejarah sebagai media pembentukan karakter dan penguatan wawasan keislaman melalui pembelajaran yang kontekstual dan berbasis nilai.

Kata Kunci: Literasi Sejarah Islam; Kesultanan Utsmaniyah; Kekaisaran Safawi; Kekaisaran Mughal, Pendidikan Islam.

A. Introduction

History occupies a strategic position within Islamic education because it serves not only as a record of past events but also as a source of knowledge, moral reflection, and character formation. The Qur'an repeatedly encourages Muslims to observe historical events, reflect upon the rise and decline of previous civilizations, and derive lessons ('ibrah) that contribute to personal and social development. Consequently, the study of Islamic civilization should not be understood merely as the chronological presentation of political events but as an educational process that develops historical awareness, critical thinking, leadership values, and moral responsibility. Within this context, the history of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires provides valuable educational insights for understanding the dynamics of Islamic civilization and its relevance to contemporary Islamic education.

Throughout history, Islamic civilization has experienced periods of remarkable intellectual, political, economic, and cultural achievement. Between the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, the Ottoman Empire, the Safavid Empire, and the Mughal Empire emerged as the three greatest political powers representing the strength of the Muslim world. These empires not only expanded Islamic political influence across Asia, Europe, and Africa but also contributed significantly to the advancement of education, science, architecture, literature, trade, military organization, and administrative institutions. Their achievements demonstrate that educational development and intellectual progress were essential foundations supporting the prosperity of Islamic civilization.

The success of these empires was closely associated with strong political leadership and substantial investment in educational institutions. Madrasahs, mosques, libraries, scholarly networks, and centers of learning flourished during their periods of prosperity, producing scholars, judges, scientists, military strategists, and administrators who contributed to social development. Knowledge was regarded as an important instrument for strengthening governance, promoting justice, and maintaining social cohesion. Consequently, the advancement of Islamic civilization during this period illustrates the close relationship between educational progress and the stability of political institutions.

Despite these remarkable achievements, the eighteenth century marked the gradual decline of the three major Islamic empires. The Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires experienced prolonged political instability, weakening military power, economic deterioration, bureaucratic corruption, and increasing external pressure from rapidly expanding European powers. These developments significantly altered the balance of global power, leading to the emergence of European colonial dominance while reducing the political influence of Islamic civilization. The decline of these empires therefore represents one of the most significant turning points in world history.

Previous historical studies have identified numerous factors contributing to this

decline. Internal problems included ineffective leadership succession, political rivalry among elites, corruption within administrative systems, military stagnation, and declining scientific productivity. External challenges consisted of European colonial expansion, technological superiority, industrial development, and changing international trade routes. While these factors have been extensively discussed within historical scholarship, most studies emphasize political, military, or economic dimensions without sufficiently examining their educational significance. Consequently, valuable historical lessons that could contribute to contemporary Islamic education often remain underexplored.

From the perspective of Islamic education, the history of these empires offers substantial pedagogical value. Historical events concerning the rise and decline of civilizations provide authentic learning resources that encourage students to analyze cause-and-effect relationships, evaluate leadership decisions, appreciate intellectual achievements, and understand the consequences of neglecting education and scientific development. Such historical learning strengthens critical thinking while helping learners recognize that sustainable civilization depends upon continuous investment in knowledge, ethical leadership, institutional reform, and character development.

In addition, studying the history of Islamic civilization contributes significantly to character education. The achievements of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires demonstrate values such as leadership, perseverance, discipline, innovation, responsibility, cooperation, and commitment to knowledge. Conversely, their decline illustrates the negative consequences of corruption, disunity, abuse of power, intellectual stagnation, and failure to adapt to changing circumstances. These contrasting historical experiences provide meaningful opportunities for educators to facilitate moral reflection, enabling students to connect historical events with contemporary educational and social challenges.

The study of Islamic civilization also supports the development of historical

literacy, an increasingly important competency in contemporary education. Historical literacy involves the ability to interpret historical evidence, analyze multiple perspectives, evaluate sources critically, and construct reasoned historical explanations. Rather than memorizing dates and political events, learners are encouraged to understand the broader social, cultural, and intellectual processes shaping historical change. Such competencies align with modern educational paradigms emphasizing higher-order thinking skills, inquiry-based learning, and contextual understanding.

Previous research concerning the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires has generally concentrated on political history, military expansion, diplomatic relations, economic development, or the causes of decline. Other studies have examined these empires separately rather than comparatively, while relatively few investigations explicitly explore their contribution to Islamic education. Existing literature rarely connects the historical experiences of these empires with theories of history education, educational leadership, character formation, or value-based learning. Consequently, the educational relevance of Islamic civilization remains insufficiently integrated into contemporary educational discourse.

This condition indicates a significant research gap. Although many historical studies describe the development and decline of the three Islamic empires, limited attention has been devoted to interpreting these historical experiences as educational resources capable of strengthening Islamic education. There remains a need for integrative research connecting Islamic historical scholarship with educational theory so that the lessons derived from civilization history can contribute directly to curriculum development, character education, leadership education, and the teaching of Islamic history in schools and universities.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the historical development and decline of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires through a comparative historical approach while examining their implications for Islamic education. The novelty of this research

lies in integrating historical analysis with educational perspectives by positioning the experiences of the three empires as valuable pedagogical resources for strengthening historical literacy, educational leadership, character education, and value-based learning. Through this integrative perspective, the study seeks to enrich both Islamic historical scholarship and contemporary Islamic education while encouraging learners to appreciate the enduring educational significance of Islamic civilization in responding to present and future challenges.

B. Method

This Community Partnership Program (PKM) was implemented using an educational and participatory approach aimed at enhancing literacy on Islamic civilization through educational activities focusing on the development and decline of the three major Islamic empires: the Ottoman Empire, the Safavid Empire, and the Mughal Empire. The target participants included teachers, students, and community members with an interest in Islamic history and education. A participatory approach was adopted to ensure that participants were actively engaged in the learning process through discussions and reflective activities rather than serving solely as recipients of information.

The program began with a preparation stage consisting of a needs assessment with the partner institution, coordination of program implementation, development of educational materials, preparation of presentation media, and design of evaluation instruments. The educational content was developed based on scholarly references concerning the history of Islamic civilization and its implications for Islamic education to ensure the academic quality and reliability of the information delivered.

The implementation stage employed several instructional methods, including interactive lectures, group discussions, question-and-answer sessions, and case studies. During the lecture sessions, the facilitators presented the historical development, periods

of prosperity, and factors contributing to the decline of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires. Participants subsequently engaged in discussions concerning leadership values, scientific advancement, character development, governance, and educational lessons that could be applied within the context of contemporary Islamic education. The activities were complemented by question-and-answer sessions to deepen participants' understanding and encourage active participation throughout the program.

Program evaluation was conducted using pre-tests and post-tests to measure participants' improvement in knowledge before and after the educational activities. In addition, observations of participant engagement during discussions and participant satisfaction questionnaires were used to obtain feedback regarding the effectiveness of the program. The evaluation results were analyzed descriptively to examine improvements in participants' historical literacy, understanding of the factors influencing the development and decline of the three major Islamic empires, and their ability to relate historical values to contemporary Islamic educational practices.

The final stage consisted of reflection and follow-up activities conducted collaboratively with the partner institution. The PKM team provided educational materials and learning resources that could be reused in classroom instruction and Islamic educational activities. Consequently, the program not only improved participants' knowledge during its implementation but also promoted the sustainable utilization of Islamic civilization history as a contextual and value-based learning resource to strengthen character education, educational leadership, historical literacy, and appreciation of the intellectual heritage of Islamic civilization.

C. Results and Discussion

The Development of the Three Great Islamic Empires and Their Contribution to Educational Advancement

The historical development of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires represents one of the most remarkable periods in the history of Islamic civilization. Although each empire emerged within different geographical regions and socio-political contexts, all three demonstrated that the advancement of civilization was closely connected with the development of education, scientific inquiry, institutional governance, and intellectual culture. The thematic analysis of historical sources indicates that the prosperity of these empires was not achieved solely through military expansion or political dominance but was strongly supported by systematic investment in educational institutions and the cultivation of scholarly traditions. These historical experiences provide important educational insights for understanding the relationship between knowledge, leadership, and civilizational progress.

The Ottoman Empire developed into one of the longest-lasting Islamic states in history, extending across Southeast Europe, Western Asia, and North Africa. Its remarkable political stability enabled the establishment of educational institutions that supported the production of scholars, judges, administrators, military leaders, and scientists. Madrasahs became important centers for religious and intellectual learning, while mosques functioned not only as places of worship but also as institutions for teaching, public discussion, and community education. Libraries, manuscript collections, and scholarly networks flourished under Ottoman patronage, illustrating the state's commitment to preserving and disseminating knowledge. The educational system therefore became an essential pillar supporting administrative efficiency, social stability, and cultural development.

Similarly, the Safavid Empire contributed significantly to the institutionalization of Islamic learning within Persia. The Safavid rulers encouraged the establishment of madrasahs, theological schools, and scholarly circles that promoted religious education, legal scholarship, philosophy, literature, and the arts. Although the empire was strongly influenced by Shi'ite theology, its educational institutions also stimulated intellectual

debates and scholarly production that enriched Islamic civilization more broadly. Educational development under the Safavids demonstrates that political authority recognized the importance of knowledge in strengthening religious identity, administrative governance, and cultural continuity.

The Mughal Empire likewise illustrated the close relationship between educational advancement and civilizational prosperity. Under rulers such as Akbar and Shah Jahan, educational institutions expanded alongside remarkable achievements in architecture, literature, economics, and cultural integration. Madrasahs and libraries received state support, while scholars from various intellectual traditions contributed to the flourishing of science, philosophy, mathematics, medicine, language, and the arts. The Mughal experience demonstrates that educational progress can promote social cohesion within culturally diverse societies by encouraging dialogue, tolerance, and intellectual exchange among different communities.

A comparative analysis of these three empires reveals several common characteristics contributing to their educational success. First, political leaders recognized education as a strategic investment for strengthening state institutions and social development. Second, scholars occupied respected positions within society and participated actively in policymaking, legal administration, and public education. Third, educational institutions functioned not only as centers for transmitting religious knowledge but also as places where scientific inquiry, critical thinking, and cultural creativity were cultivated. Fourth, collaboration between rulers and scholars facilitated the development of sustainable educational systems capable of producing competent future leaders.

Another important finding concerns the integration of religious sciences and general sciences. Historical evidence indicates that Islamic educational institutions during these empires did not rigidly separate theology from other fields of knowledge. Instead, disciplines such as astronomy, medicine, mathematics, philosophy, geography,

architecture, and literature were frequently studied alongside Qur'anic sciences, jurisprudence, and prophetic traditions. This integrated educational model reflects the Islamic worldview in which all beneficial knowledge contributes to human prosperity and the fulfillment of religious responsibilities. Such an educational philosophy remains highly relevant for contemporary Islamic education seeking to balance religious values with scientific and technological advancement.

The historical development of these empires also highlights the importance of educational leadership. Effective rulers consistently supported scholars, invested in educational infrastructure, encouraged intellectual freedom within Islamic ethical boundaries, and recognized knowledge as the foundation of sustainable governance. Educational leadership was therefore characterized not only by administrative authority but also by long-term commitment to developing human resources capable of preserving and advancing civilization. These historical experiences demonstrate that educational progress requires visionary leadership, institutional continuity, and continuous investment in intellectual development.

From the perspective of Islamic education, the achievements of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires provide valuable pedagogical lessons. History learning should encourage students to understand that educational advancement constitutes one of the primary foundations of civilizational success. Rather than memorizing historical events chronologically, learners should analyze how leadership, educational institutions, scientific culture, and moral values collectively contributed to the prosperity of Islamic civilization. Such historical reflection strengthens students' appreciation of knowledge while fostering responsibility for contributing positively to contemporary society.

Furthermore, these historical experiences support the implementation of historical literacy and value-based learning within Islamic education. Through inquiry-based discussions, historical case studies, collaborative projects, and reflective learning activities, students can critically examine the relationship between education,

leadership, scientific progress, and social development. These approaches enable learners to appreciate Islamic civilization not merely as historical heritage but as a source of enduring educational values applicable to present-day educational challenges. Consequently, the history of the three great Islamic empires serves as an effective pedagogical resource for strengthening critical thinking, leadership competence, historical awareness, and Islamic character education within contemporary learning environments.

Factors Supporting the Rise of the Three Great Islamic Empires and Their Educational Implications

The comparative historical analysis demonstrates that the remarkable achievements of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires were not accidental but resulted from the interaction of political stability, visionary leadership, educational advancement, scientific productivity, economic prosperity, and institutional development. Although each empire possessed unique historical characteristics, all three illustrate that the sustainability of civilization depends largely upon the quality of its educational system and the continuous development of human resources. Consequently, the rise of these empires provides valuable educational lessons concerning the relationship between knowledge, leadership, and national development.

One of the most influential factors contributing to the success of the three empires was visionary leadership. Historical records indicate that rulers such as Mehmed II, Suleiman the Magnificent, Shah Abbas I, Akbar the Great, and Shah Jahan possessed long-term strategic visions that extended beyond military expansion. Their policies emphasized administrative reform, educational development, infrastructure construction, legal organization, and economic stability. Rather than viewing education merely as a religious obligation, these rulers recognized knowledge as an essential foundation for effective governance and sustainable civilizational progress. Such

leadership demonstrates that educational investment constitutes one of the most important responsibilities of government.

Educational institutions represented another significant factor supporting civilizational advancement. Throughout the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal periods, madrasahs, mosques, libraries, observatories, and scholarly academies functioned as centers for learning, research, manuscript preservation, and intellectual exchange. These institutions not only transmitted religious sciences but also facilitated the study of mathematics, astronomy, medicine, architecture, literature, philosophy, and administrative sciences. The existence of well-organized educational institutions enabled successive generations of scholars, judges, administrators, physicians, engineers, and military leaders to contribute actively to the prosperity of their societies.

The thematic analysis also reveals that scientific culture played an essential role in strengthening Islamic civilization. Scholars during these periods were encouraged to engage in observation, research, writing, translation, and scholarly discussion. Scientific inquiry was viewed as compatible with religious commitment because both aimed to understand Allah's creation and improve human welfare. This integration between revelation and reason encouraged intellectual creativity while preserving Islamic ethical principles. Consequently, educational institutions became environments promoting curiosity, critical thinking, and innovation rather than mere memorization of existing knowledge.

Economic prosperity likewise supported educational development. Stable trade networks connecting Asia, Africa, and Europe generated financial resources that enabled rulers to establish schools, libraries, charitable endowments (*waqf*), hospitals, and public institutions. Many educational institutions operated through sustainable *waqf* systems that guaranteed continuous funding for teachers, students, books, and educational facilities. This historical experience illustrates that educational quality depends not only upon curriculum design but also upon effective financial management

and long-term institutional support.

Another important factor was the close relationship between scholars and political leaders. In all three empires, *ulama* frequently served as advisors, judges, teachers, diplomats, and policy consultants. This collaboration enabled governments to formulate policies grounded in ethical principles while ensuring that educational institutions responded to societal needs. At the same time, scholars maintained intellectual authority through teaching, writing, and community engagement. Such cooperation created educational environments characterized by mutual respect between knowledge and political leadership, thereby strengthening social stability and public trust.

The comparative analysis further demonstrates that institutional continuity significantly influenced educational success. Educational systems were maintained through organized administrative structures, teacher succession, manuscript preservation, and curriculum development. Rather than relying exclusively upon individual scholars, educational institutions established systematic mechanisms for preserving and transmitting knowledge across generations. Such institutional continuity contributed to the resilience of Islamic civilization despite changing political circumstances. This historical lesson remains highly relevant for contemporary educational institutions seeking sustainable improvement through strong governance and strategic planning.

From the perspective of Islamic education, these historical experiences emphasize that educational quality is inseparable from leadership quality. Effective educational leaders should possess strategic vision, commitment to lifelong learning, ethical responsibility, and the ability to develop institutional cultures that encourage academic excellence and moral integrity. Leadership within Islamic educational institutions therefore extends beyond administrative management to include the cultivation of educational values that inspire teachers and students to pursue continuous intellectual and spiritual development.

The findings also underline the importance of fostering a culture of learning. The prosperity of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires was closely linked to societies that respected scholars, appreciated books, encouraged intellectual dialogue, and invested in educational infrastructure. Contemporary Islamic educational institutions may draw valuable lessons from these historical experiences by strengthening reading culture, academic discussion, scientific research, collaborative learning, and innovation. Such educational practices contribute not only to academic achievement but also to the development of reflective, responsible, and intellectually curious learners.

Furthermore, the historical development of the three empires supports the implementation of leadership education and value-based learning. Students can analyze how visionary leadership, educational investment, institutional management, and scientific advancement contributed to the prosperity of Islamic civilization. Through historical case studies, collaborative discussions, project-based learning, and reflective inquiry, learners are encouraged to identify leadership values applicable to contemporary educational challenges. This approach transforms historical knowledge into meaningful educational experiences that strengthen critical thinking, decision-making, and moral responsibility.

Overall, the rise of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires demonstrates that sustainable civilizational development depends upon the integration of visionary leadership, educational excellence, scientific culture, institutional stability, and ethical governance. These historical findings provide valuable pedagogical foundations for strengthening Islamic education by emphasizing that educational investment is the principal driver of long-term social progress. Accordingly, the historical experiences of the three great Islamic empires should be incorporated into history learning as authentic educational resources for developing leadership competence, historical literacy, character education, and appreciation of the intellectual heritage of Islamic civilization.

The Factors Behind the Decline of the Three Great Islamic Empires and Lessons for Contemporary Islamic Education

The comparative historical analysis indicates that the decline of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires resulted from a complex interaction of internal weaknesses and external pressures rather than from a single determining factor. Historical evidence demonstrates that political instability, ineffective leadership, administrative corruption, military stagnation, economic deterioration, and declining intellectual productivity collectively weakened the foundations of these civilizations. At the same time, the rapid advancement of European political, military, scientific, and economic power intensified external challenges that further accelerated the decline of the three Islamic empires. These historical developments provide important educational lessons concerning the necessity of continuous institutional reform, educational innovation, and leadership development.

One of the most significant internal causes of decline was the crisis of leadership succession. During their early periods, the three empires were led by visionary rulers capable of combining political authority with educational and institutional development. However, subsequent generations often experienced leadership disputes, weak administrative competence, and political fragmentation. Internal competition among elites reduced governmental effectiveness while diverting attention from educational investment and scientific advancement. Historical evidence therefore demonstrates that the sustainability of civilization depends largely upon the quality of leadership capable of adapting to changing social and political conditions.

Another important factor was the decline of scientific productivity. During their periods of prosperity, educational institutions encouraged intellectual inquiry, scholarly discussion, and scientific innovation. Over time, however, many institutions became increasingly conservative and less responsive to new scientific developments occurring elsewhere in the world. Excessive dependence upon traditional learning without

corresponding innovation gradually reduced the competitiveness of Islamic civilization in science, technology, military organization, and economic development. This historical experience illustrates that educational institutions must continuously renew curricula, research traditions, and instructional methods to remain relevant within rapidly changing global environments.

The comparative analysis also identifies bureaucratic corruption and institutional inefficiency as major contributors to civilizational decline. Administrative systems that had previously functioned effectively became increasingly influenced by favoritism, financial mismanagement, and political patronage. Public resources that should have supported education, infrastructure, and social welfare were often diverted toward personal or political interests. Consequently, educational institutions experienced declining financial support, reduced institutional autonomy, and weakened academic productivity. These conditions demonstrate that educational quality cannot be separated from good governance and institutional accountability.

Economic deterioration further accelerated the decline of the three empires. Changes in international trade routes, European maritime expansion, inflation, declining agricultural productivity, and fiscal instability reduced state revenues available for supporting educational institutions and scientific activities. Throughout history, sustainable educational development has consistently depended upon stable economic foundations capable of financing schools, libraries, research centers, scholarships, and teacher development. The weakening of these economic foundations inevitably reduced opportunities for intellectual advancement and institutional renewal.

External pressures also played a decisive role in shaping the decline of Islamic civilization. European colonial expansion, technological superiority, industrial development, and military modernization significantly altered the global balance of power. While European societies invested heavily in scientific research, technological innovation, and higher education, many Islamic states responded more slowly to these

transformations. This difference in educational development illustrates the strategic importance of continuous innovation and adaptation within educational systems. Civilizations unable to respond effectively to changing circumstances become increasingly vulnerable to external competition.

From the perspective of Islamic education, these historical experiences provide valuable lessons concerning the importance of educational reform. Educational institutions should not remain static but must continuously evaluate curricula, instructional strategies, governance systems, and learning resources in response to contemporary challenges. Reform, however, should not imply abandoning Islamic values. Instead, educational renewal should integrate the enduring ethical principles of the Qur'an and Sunnah with scientific advancement, technological development, and contemporary pedagogical innovation. Such balanced reform enables Islamic education to remain relevant while preserving its spiritual identity.

The findings also highlight the necessity of developing critical thinking and historical awareness among learners. Rather than presenting historical decline merely as a sequence of political failures, educators should encourage students to analyze causal relationships, evaluate leadership decisions, examine institutional weaknesses, and propose alternative solutions. Inquiry-based history learning enables learners to understand that historical events result from interconnected social, political, educational, and economic processes. This approach strengthens analytical thinking while preventing simplistic interpretations of complex historical phenomena.

Another important educational implication concerns the cultivation of institutional resilience. The history of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires demonstrates that successful institutions are characterized by adaptability, accountability, collaboration, and continuous improvement. Contemporary Islamic educational institutions should therefore promote quality assurance, evidence-based decision-making, professional development, strategic planning, and collaborative leadership. These principles

strengthen organizational resilience while preparing educational institutions to respond effectively to future challenges.

The comparative analysis additionally reinforces the importance of character education. Many internal problems contributing to civilizational decline—including corruption, abuse of authority, disunity, and neglect of public responsibility—originated from ethical weaknesses rather than technical deficiencies alone. Consequently, Islamic education should emphasize values such as integrity, honesty, justice, responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and accountability alongside academic achievement. Character education enables learners to recognize that sustainable civilizational progress depends not only upon knowledge but also upon ethical leadership and responsible citizenship.

Overall, the decline of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires provides profound educational lessons concerning the consequences of neglecting educational innovation, institutional reform, scientific advancement, and ethical leadership. These historical experiences demonstrate that civilization flourishes when knowledge, morality, and leadership develop harmoniously and declines when these foundations weaken. Therefore, the study of Islamic civilization should be integrated into contemporary Islamic education not merely as historical knowledge but as a source of reflection that strengthens historical literacy, critical thinking, institutional responsibility, and character formation. Through such value-oriented historical learning, students are encouraged to appreciate the enduring relevance of Islamic civilization while preparing themselves to contribute constructively to the future development of Muslim societies.

The Implementation of Historical Values of the Three Great Islamic Empires in Contemporary Islamic Education

The comparative analysis of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires demonstrates that the history of Islamic civilization possesses substantial pedagogical

value beyond its historical significance. The experiences of these empires illustrate that the progress and decline of civilizations are closely associated with educational quality, scientific advancement, visionary leadership, institutional governance, and moral responsibility. Consequently, the history of Islamic civilization should not be regarded merely as historical information to be memorized but as an educational resource capable of developing learners' critical thinking, historical awareness, leadership competence, and Islamic character. Such an educational perspective transforms historical learning into a meaningful process of reflection that prepares students to respond wisely to contemporary challenges.

One of the most important educational implications concerns the integration of historical literacy into Islamic education. Historical literacy involves more than understanding chronological events; it requires learners to analyze historical evidence, evaluate multiple perspectives, identify causal relationships, and derive lessons relevant to present-day situations. Through the study of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires, students learn that civilizations are built through continuous investment in knowledge, educational institutions, innovation, and ethical leadership. Likewise, they recognize that neglecting these foundations contributes to institutional decline. This analytical approach enables learners to appreciate history as an instrument for understanding social change rather than merely recalling historical facts.

The findings also indicate that the history of Islamic civilization provides an effective foundation for Islamic character education. The achievements of the three empires reflect values such as visionary leadership, perseverance, discipline, responsibility, cooperation, intellectual curiosity, and commitment to lifelong learning. Conversely, their decline illustrates the consequences of corruption, political conflict, weak governance, intellectual stagnation, and the inability to adapt to changing circumstances. These contrasting historical experiences offer authentic opportunities for students to reflect upon ethical decision-making and the importance of maintaining

integrity within both personal and professional life.

Another significant implication concerns the strengthening of educational leadership. Historical evidence demonstrates that successful rulers consistently regarded education as a strategic investment for developing capable human resources. They established educational institutions, supported scholars, promoted scientific inquiry, and encouraged intellectual development. Contemporary Islamic educational institutions may adopt similar principles by prioritizing educational quality, professional teacher development, research culture, institutional innovation, and collaborative leadership. Educational leaders should therefore create learning environments that encourage creativity, critical inquiry, ethical responsibility, and continuous improvement while remaining grounded in Islamic values.

The study further demonstrates that the history of Islamic civilization supports the implementation of learner-centered and inquiry-based learning. Rather than relying on teacher-centered historical narration, educators can facilitate historical investigations through document analysis, group discussions, historical debates, project-based learning, case studies, and reflective writing. Such learning strategies encourage students to examine historical sources critically, compare different interpretations, formulate evidence-based conclusions, and relate historical experiences to contemporary educational and social issues. These approaches strengthen higher-order thinking skills while fostering meaningful engagement with Islamic historical heritage.

An equally important implication concerns the development of interdisciplinary learning. The history of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires intersects with political science, economics, sociology, architecture, science, literature, religious studies, and educational leadership. Integrating these perspectives enables students to understand civilization as the product of interconnected social, intellectual, cultural, and spiritual processes. Such interdisciplinary learning reflects the holistic philosophy of Islamic education, which views knowledge as an integrated whole rather than a

collection of isolated disciplines. Consequently, learners develop broader intellectual perspectives while strengthening their appreciation of Islamic civilization.

The findings also emphasize the necessity of cultivating a culture of lifelong learning. Historical analysis indicates that periods of civilizational prosperity were characterized by continuous intellectual development, scholarly exchange, translation movements, research activities, and institutional support for education. In contrast, intellectual stagnation contributed significantly to civilizational decline. Therefore, contemporary Islamic education should encourage learners and educators to become lifelong learners who continuously seek knowledge, adapt to scientific and technological developments, and contribute actively to educational innovation while preserving Islamic ethical principles.

From the perspective of curriculum development, the study recommends integrating the history of Islamic civilization into educational programs through value-based learning rather than focusing exclusively on historical chronology. Curriculum designers should incorporate themes such as leadership, integrity, innovation, social responsibility, educational reform, scientific advancement, and institutional resilience across different learning activities. Such integration enables history education to contribute directly to the formation of learners who are intellectually competent, morally responsible, and socially engaged.

Furthermore, the educational values derived from the three Islamic empires contribute significantly to the development of twenty-first-century competencies. Skills such as critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, adaptability, and problem-solving become more meaningful when combined with Islamic ethical values demonstrated throughout the history of Islamic civilization. Students are encouraged not only to master modern competencies but also to apply them responsibly for the benefit of society. This integration reflects the essential objective of Islamic education: producing individuals who combine intellectual excellence with spiritual maturity and

moral integrity.

Overall, this study demonstrates that the historical experiences of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires provide a comprehensive educational framework for strengthening contemporary Islamic education. Their achievements and failures offer valuable lessons concerning educational leadership, institutional development, scientific advancement, character formation, and lifelong learning. By integrating these historical values into learner-centered, reflective, inquiry-based, and value-oriented educational practices, Islamic education can strengthen students' historical literacy, leadership competence, ethical responsibility, and appreciation of Islamic intellectual heritage. Consequently, the history of Islamic civilization should be positioned not merely as a historical subject but as a strategic educational resource for preparing future generations capable of contributing to the advancement of Islamic civilization in the modern era.

D. Conclusion

This study concludes that the historical development and decline of the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires provide comprehensive educational lessons that extend beyond political and military history. The comparative historical analysis demonstrates that the rise of these empires was strongly supported by visionary leadership, educational advancement, scientific development, institutional stability, economic prosperity, and the cultivation of intellectual traditions. Conversely, their decline resulted from the interaction of internal factors—including leadership crises, administrative corruption, institutional stagnation, and declining scientific productivity—and external pressures arising from European expansion, technological transformation, and changing global economic structures. These findings indicate that the sustainability of civilization depends fundamentally upon the quality of education, leadership, institutional governance, and continuous intellectual renewal.

From the perspective of Islamic education, the experiences of the three great

Islamic empires provide valuable pedagogical foundations for strengthening history education, leadership education, and Islamic character education. The historical achievements of these civilizations illustrate the importance of investing in educational institutions, respecting scholars, encouraging scientific inquiry, promoting ethical leadership, and developing sustainable learning cultures. Likewise, the causes of their decline emphasize the necessity of institutional reform, educational innovation, intellectual openness, accountability, and lifelong learning. Consequently, the study of Islamic civilization should function not merely as historical knowledge but as a source of educational reflection capable of shaping students' moral awareness, historical consciousness, and social responsibility.

The findings further demonstrate that integrating the history of Islamic civilization into contemporary Islamic education contributes significantly to the development of historical literacy, critical thinking, leadership competence, and value-based learning. Through learner-centered, inquiry-based, and reflective instructional strategies, students are encouraged to analyze historical evidence, evaluate leadership decisions, identify patterns of civilizational development, and apply historical lessons to contemporary educational and societal challenges. Such approaches strengthen higher-order thinking skills while fostering appreciation for the intellectual heritage of Islamic civilization.

The novelty of this research lies in its integrative perspective, which combines comparative historical analysis with contemporary theories of Islamic education. Unlike previous studies that primarily examine the Ottoman, Safavid, and Mughal Empires from political, military, or economic perspectives, this study positions the historical experiences of the three empires as pedagogical resources for strengthening Islamic education. By linking Islamic civilization history with educational leadership, curriculum development, character education, and historical literacy, the study contributes both to Islamic historical scholarship and to the theoretical development of Islamic education.

Finally, this study recommends that educational institutions systematically integrate the educational values of Islamic civilization into history learning, Islamic Religious Education, leadership education, and character education programs. Teachers are encouraged to implement contextual, collaborative, inquiry-based, and reflective learning strategies that enable students to derive meaningful lessons from historical experiences. Future studies are recommended to explore the implementation of Islamic civilization history through empirical classroom research, curriculum development studies, experimental learning models, or action research in schools, madrasahs, pesantren, and higher education institutions. Such investigations are expected to provide stronger empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of value-based history education in improving historical literacy, leadership competence, character formation, and the overall quality of Islamic education in the contemporary era.

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