

## Nizāmiyyah School in History

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### Abstrak

Keberadaan sistem madrasah pada hari ini tidak dapat dilepaskan dari peran khalifah Nizam al-Mulk yang mendirikan sistem pendidikan Islam tahap lanjut setelah masjid Khan ataupun *kuttab*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui sejarah berdirinya madrasah Nizamiyyah dan mengidentifikasi sistem pendidikan madrasah Nizamiyyah. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian kepustakaan yang menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif. Pendirian madrasah Nizamiyyah bertujuan untuk menyebarkan ajaran Sunni di wilayah Dinasti Saljuk. Karena sebagian wilayah kekuasaan Dinasti Saljuk dulunya berada di bawah kekuasaan Dinasti Syiah Buwaihi. Sekolah ini dibangun dengan sistem modern. Nizamiyyah memiliki manajemen yang baik, terkelola dengan baik seperti sistem pembiayaan, bangunan yang baik dan dalam jumlah yang banyak. Guru digaji sesuai dengan jabatannya, perpustakaan yang lengkap, kantor, asrama dan makan untuk siswa, biaya sekolah gratis dan kurikulum yang ditetapkan oleh pemerintah Baghdad. Masing-masing departemen tersebut memiliki peraturan di bawah pengawasan seorang mutawali (wali). Kegiatan di perpustakaan dan masjid merupakan jantung dari madrasah. Oleh karena itu, tidak heran jika madrasah ini memiliki lulusan yang kelak menjadi ulama berpengaruh di dunia seperti Abu Ishak Shirazi, Al-Haramain Al-Juwayni dan Imam Al-Ghazali.

**Keywords:** *Madrasah Nizamiyyah, Lintasan Sejarah*

### Abstract

The existence of madrasah today cannot be separated from the role of the caliph Nizam al-Mulk who build a madrasah the next step system after masjid khan and *kuttab* . This study aims to find out the history of the establishment of the Nizamiyyah madrasah and identify the education system of the Nizamiyyah madrasah. This study is a literary study that uses a qualitative approach. The establishment of the Nizamiyyah madrasah aims to spread Sunni teachings in the territory of the Seljuq dynasty. Because part of the territory of the Seljuq dynasty was formerly under the rule of the Shia Buwaihi dynasty. This school was built with a modern system. Nizamiyyah has good management, well managed such

as a financing system, good buildings and in large numbers. Teachers are paid according to their position, a complete library, offices, dormitories and meals for students, free school fees and a curriculum set by the Baghdad government. Each of these departments has regulations under the supervision of a mutawali (wali). Activities in the library and mosque are the heart of the madrasah. Therefore, it is not surprising that this madrasah has graduates who will become influential scholars in the world such as Abu Ishak Shirazi, Al-Haramain Al-Juwayni and Imam Al-Ghazali.

**Keywords:** *Madrasah, Nizamiyah, History*

### **Introduction**

In Indonesian, the equivalent of the word *madrasah* is school. The definition of madrasa in Arabic illustrates that the place of study does not have to be carried out in a certain place. Learning can also be carried out anywhere, such as in a mosque or in a surau. In its development, the word madrasa technically has a certain meaning or connotation, namely a certain building or building complete with all the facilities and amenities that support the process of religious learning. The term madrasah also means school or school, which is a term for a group of experts who have the same view or understanding in Islamic sciences.<sup>1</sup>

At the beginning of the development of Islam, Muslims did not have madrassas or places of study like today. At that time, teaching and learning activities were carried out in mosques. At the time of Rasulullah SAW, the friends studied religion at the Prophet's Mosque. Inside the mosque there is a room for learning called a suffah, which is also a place to provide assistance to the poor.<sup>2</sup>

This situation continued until the time of the Khulafa ar-Rashidun (the four companions of the Nabis SAW) and the Umayyads. Madrasahs began to change during the era of the Abbasid dynasty. At that time science developed rapidly. Teaching and learning activities have been carried out in the library, the caliph's palace and the houses of the clergy and of course the mosque.

Most mosques during the golden age of Islam were equipped with study rooms, reading rooms and library rooms. Scholars and scholars teach with the halaqah system (students sitting cross-legged around the teacher), as is the case in the Grand Mosque, Medina Mosque and mosques in Baghdad, Kufa, Basra, Damascus and Cairo. The madrasah

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<sup>1</sup>Abuddin Nata, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam Periode Klasik Dan Pertengahan* (Jakarta: Gravindo Persada, 2004), 99.

<sup>2</sup>Samsul Nizar, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2008), 85.

which was first established in the Islamic world as an educational institution whose form and system approached what is now is the Nizamiyah madrasah in Baghdad. This madrasah was founded by Prime Minister Nizamul Mulk (1018-1092), a Seljuk ruler in the 11th century AD.<sup>3</sup>

Since then, madrasahs began to develop in various cities in the Islamic territories and gave birth to many scholars and scholars. In Indonesia, the development of Islamic education and teaching in the form of madrasahs is also a development of the traditional system held in surau, mosques and Islamic boarding schools.

In its development, the halaqah system began to change into a classical system. This was influenced by the discriminatory attitude of schools belonging to the Dutch colonialists towards Muslims. Aiming to compete with the schools owned by the Dutch colonialists, madrasah also changed form from the halaqah system to the classical one. In Indonesia, madrasah developed after the birth of Islamic organizations.

### **The history of the founding of the Nizhamiyah Madrasah**

In 750 AD was the beginning of the establishment of the Abasiyyah dynasty. At the beginning of the reign of the Abasiyyah dynasty, the Persians were very influential in government, so that Islamic culture was also influenced. Over time, the Persian influence was lost, replaced by Turkic influence. During the Abasiyyah dynasty, there were also many small dynasties under the auspices of the Abasiyyah dynasty, such as western dynasties and small eastern dynasties including Samaniyyah, Ghaznawiyah, Buwaihi, Seljuq etc. It was during this period that many madrasah were established throughout the Islamic territories.<sup>4</sup>

At the beginning of the 5th century H / 11 AD, it was the momentum for the founding of the Seljuq dynasty. The figure who plays a role in this dynasty is Thugril Bek. Tughril Bek and his brother succeeded in seizing Marv and Naisabur from the grip of Ghaznawiyah control, and they were also able to seize Balkh, Jurjan, Tabaristan and the Khwarizm, Hamadhan, Rayyi, Isfaham dynasty from the hands of the Buwaihi government. So the formation of the Seljuq Dynasty came from the conquest by Thurgil Bek of the Ghazwaniyyah and Buwaihi Dynasties.

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<sup>3</sup>George Makdisi, "Muslim Institutions of Learning in Eleventh-Century Baghdad," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 24, no. 1 (1966): 1–56.

<sup>4</sup> Mehdi Nakosteen, "SocietyHistory of Islamic Origins of Western Education, A.D. 800-1350," *History of Education Quarterly* 6, no. 1 (1964): 76–78.

Thugril Bek ruled the Seljuq dynasty from 1037-1063, after the death of Thugril Bek the government was continued by his nephew named Alp Arslan who ruled from 1063-1072. Many historians say that the golden age of the Seljuq dynasty was when it was led by Alp Arslan and Malik Syah who ruled from 1072-1092. During the leadership of Alp Arslan and Malik Syah, the Seljuq dynasty was led by a prime minister named Nizam Al Muluk. His most famous effort is the establishment of the Madrasah Nizamiyyah educational institution.<sup>5</sup>

The attempt to establish the Nizamiyyah madrasah was aimed at spreading Sunni teachings in the territory of the Seljuq dynasty. Because part of the territory of the Seljuq dynasty was formerly under the rule of the Shia Buwaihi dynasty. It is feared that the people who are Shiite will rebel against the rulers of the Seljuq dynasty and some even want to destroy the government of the Seljuq dynasty. As was done by Ibrahim Yanal and then continued by Basasiri in Mosul and Baghdad carried out revolutions twice where both of them almost totally destroyed the Sultanate of the Seljuq dynasty.



**Fig. 1. Location of Madrasah Nizamiyyah (Google Maps)**

The Nizamiyyah Madrasah is located in the Rusafa area in the city of Baghdad, which is on the east side of the Tigris river. This madrasa was built close to the banks of the Dijlah river, in the middle of the Tuesday market in Baghdad, construction began in 1065 AD and was completed in 1067 (two years had just been completed).

### **Background to the establishment of the Nizamiyyah Madrasah**

<sup>5</sup> Syamsul Nizar, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam: Menelusuri Jejak Sejarah Era Rasulullah Sampai Indonesia* (Jakarta: Fajar Interpratama, 2007), 77.

According to Muhamad Yunus, the background for the establishment of madrasas during the period of Turkish (Saljuk) influence was:

1. Taking the heart of the people, Turkish dignitaries who rule in the State, especially in matters of peace, they are not Arabs and are not descendants of the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore they must win the hearts of the people by advancing religion and prioritizing education and teaching. Sometimes even after they married the caliph's daughter. Many figures founded madrasas in the Islamic State. Thus the madrasas spread in the Islamic State during the period of Turkish influence and rule. They gave big spending money for these madrasah.
2. Hoping for rewards and forgiveness from God, at this time the dignitaries and sultah live in excessive luxury. Therefore, they do good deeds in spreading religion by holding madrasas to provide education and teaching to all people. The hope is to get the pleasure and forgiveness of Allah SWT.
3. Caring for the lives of their children in the future, Turkish officials who become guardians of a region have become very rich with the crops and wealth collected in their territory. They were worried that if they died their wealth would be taken by the sultan so that their children would be left stranded. Therefore they endow their land or houses. The conditions for waqf include that the waqf administrators are themselves hereditary until their grandchildren get a certain portion of the waqf.

Strengthening religious sects for sultans or princes, at this time anti-religious spread and there were many disputes over religious sects between Sunni and Shia. In order for their power to survive, of course, it must be supported by the ideology adopted by the government. Therefore, madrasas were established as tools of propaganda and ideological indoctrination in the areas controlled by the Seljuq Turks. Nizam Al Muluk is of the opinion "to deal with the development of the Shia school of thought and its Mutazilah allies in politics alone will not give success, unless this political resistance is balanced with intellectual resistance."<sup>6</sup>

From the description above, it is clear that the establishment of the Nizamiyyah madrasah during the Seljuq dynasty was very close to the interests of the government and authorities. The political-ideological

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<sup>6</sup> Mahmud Yunus, *Pendidikan Islam: Dari Zaman-Zaman Nabi Saw Khalifah-Khalifah Rasyidin, Bani Umayyah Dan Abasiyyah Sampai Zaman Mamluks Dan Usmaniyyah Turki* (Jakarta: Hidakarya Agung, 1992).

interests of the rulers seemed to be very dominant besides the interests of religious education and the personal interests of the rulers at that time. Madrasah Nizamiyah was used as a tool to legitimize the power of the Seljuq dynasty. Apart from that day, all Nizamiyah madrasas played a very important role in the government of the Seljuq dynasty during the reign of Nizam Al Muluk.

### **Nizamiyyah Madrasah Education System**

Le Strange in his book *Baghdad During the Abbasid Caliphate* mentions, the Nizamiyah madrasah is a very special madrasah.<sup>7</sup> This is because this madrasah had a modern teaching system for its time, by dividing the four teachings from the four Sunni schools into separate places. And each has a professor who is in charge of that faculty. In addition, this madrasa is also equipped with adequate facilities and infrastructure. From libraries to hospitals for academics, these madrasas are the pillars of the Islamic scientific tradition in Baghdad.



**Fig. 2. The Nizamiyah Madrasah Building**

Madrasah Nizamiyah is the first madrasah to appear in the history of Islamic education in the form of basic educational institutions up to tertiary institutions managed by the government. this institution has its own task, which is to teach fiqh that is in line with one or more of the expert sunnah schools. The most prominent schools of fiqh taught are Shafi'i fiqh and Ash'ari theology. Both are actively studied and experienced. Even though what stands out is the Shafi'I school, other schools are still being taught, it is evident that there are priests from each school.

Educational Objectives of the Nizamiyyah Madrasah in Baghdad is to cadre prospective scholars who spread Sunni thoughts in facing the challenges of Shi'a thought; providing qualified Sunni teachers to teach Sunni schools of thought and spread them elsewhere; to Form a group of

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<sup>7</sup> G. Le Strange, *Baghdad During the Abbasid Caliphate* (Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2004).

Sunni workers to participate in running the government, presiding over its offices, particularly in the areas of justice and management.

### **Curriculum and teaching methods of Madrasah Nizamiyyah Baghdad**

Mahmud Yunus said that the Madrasah Nizhamiyah curriculum was not clearly known. However, it can be concluded that syari'ah science materials are taught here while wisdom (philosophy) is not taught.<sup>8</sup> The facts that support this statement are: first, no one among historians says that among the subject matter there are general sciences. Second, teachers who teach at Madrasah Nizhamiyah are Shari'ah scholars. Third, the founder of this Madrasah is not a defender of philosophy. Fourth, the era of the founding of this Madrasa was an era of suppression of philosophy and philosophers. With the focus of teaching at Madrasah Nizhamiyah on sharia sciences, of course fiqh gets top priority. The discussion of fiqh, which involved almost all social issues, was appropriate as a provision for prospective bureaucrats or community leaders at that time. The teaching of fiqh is based on understanding Arabic sources, so the mastery of Arabic and its supporting knowledge is highly emphasized. From other information it was stated that lessons at the Nizhamiyah Madrasah centered on the Qur'an (reading, memorizing and writing), Arabic literature, the history of the Prophet Muhammad and arithmetic with an emphasis on the Shafi'I school of thought and the *Ash'ariyah* theological system.

Nizamiyah's educational attention focused on two core subjects, namely fiqh based on the Shafi'I school of thought and the Al Asy'ari philosophy of thought. However, there are also taught disciplines outside of fiqh (worship) and kalam such as hadith, Arabic and arithmetic.

As for the teaching method at the Nizamiyah Madrasah, as quoted from the Islamic Encyclopedia, teachers in Nizamiyah classes are present in front of the students. He stood while presenting kuliyyah materials (talqin). Meanwhile all the students listened intently while their hands were on the small tables that had been provided. After the talqin session, they are welcome to ask questions (dialogue session). In addition to lectures, there is also a discussion method. In this case, the teacher invites his students to exchange ideas for a few minutes. Next, each of them was asked to convey his opinion in front of the class.

The next method is memorization. This was mainly applied by Imam Al Ghazali, a rector of the Nizamiyah Madrasah who had been a student of Al Juwaini. Al Ghazali reminded his class not only to read but also to memorize the contents of books. In delivering lessons, a

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<sup>8</sup> Mahmud Yunus, *Sejarah Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: PT. Hidakarya Agung, 1990).

Nizamiyah teacher holds a syllabus known as ta'liqah. The document was compiled based on the previous notes he made himself when he was a student.<sup>9</sup>

Nizamiyah education focuses on two core subjects, namely fiqh based on the Shafi'I school of thought and faith. Apart from fiqh and monotheism, other branches of religious knowledge, such as ushul fiqh, the sciences of the Qur'an, the traditions of the Prophet, morality, are very likely to be taught there. The reason is that every Muslim is obliged to study these sciences. Imam Al Ghazali stressed the importance of this obligation in his work *Ihya Ulum Al Din*. It makes sense that Al Ghazali passed on the obligation of studying to his students in Baghdad because he wrote several of his books while teaching at the madrasah. It also makes sense that other branches of knowledge are also presented there even as a complement.

### **Teachers and Students of Madrasah Nizamiyah Baghdad**

Madrasah Nizhamiyah is a higher education institution that teaches higher education as well. Therefore, the selection of teachers to teach in Madrasahs is very selective. Leading scholars at that time and professors who were well-known and competent in their fields were chosen to teach. The status of these teachers was determined by appointment by the caliph and served for a certain period.

According to Mahmud Yunus, teachers who teach at the Nizhamiyah Madrasah include: 1. Sheikh Abu Ishaq asy-Shirazi, a Baghdad faqih, 2. Sheikh Abu Nasr as-Sabbagh, 3. Abu Abdullah at-Tabari, 4. Abu Muhammad ash-Shirazi, 5. Abu Qasim al-Alawi, 6. at-Tibrizi, 7. al-Qazwini, 8. al-Fairuzabadi, 9. Imam al-Haramain Abdul Ma'ali al-Juwaini, and 10. Imam al-Ghazali.

Nizam Al-Mulk also provides scholarships for students and provides them with hostel facilities. Those who live in hostels are given enough shopping. He provides assistance to all students without expecting anything in return, and all tuition fees there are free. Profile of Nizamiyah Lecturer, Abdul Ma'ali Al-Juwaini The 'Light of Religion' as a professor at Madrasah Nizaminah, where Imam al-Ghazali once studied. He was nicknamed Imam Haramain because he had lived in two holy cities, Mecca and Medina.<sup>10</sup>

This scholar's full name is Abdul Malik bin Abdullah bin Yusuf bin Muhammad Al-Juwaini An-Nisaburi. He was born in Bustanikan,

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<sup>9</sup> Shahab D Dargahani, "The Social Network of Nizāmiyyah School System Under Nizām Al-Mulk Administration (456-485/1063-1092)," 2019, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17120/omuifd.570901>.

<sup>10</sup> Nakosteen, "SocietyHistory of Islamic Origins of Western Education, A.D. 800-1350."

Nisabur, on 12 February 1058. His first education was obtained from his father, Sheikh Abdullah, who was of royal blood Arab descent. In addition, Al-Juwaini also studied at a religious school in the area where he lived. Al-Juwaini's name gradually became known among religious scholars and teachers in Mecca and Medina. This is due to the support of his qualified mastery of knowledge. Until then, his name reached the ears of Prime Minister Nizam al-Mulk, the ruler and founder of the Nizamiyah Madrasan in Nisabur, where he was born. Personally, Nizam al-Mulk asked Al-Juwaini's willingness to return to his country and become a teaching staff at the madrasa earlier. Al-Juwaini agreed to this request as a form of his contribution in advancing education in his own country.

The Nizamiyah Madrasah is also increasingly reckoned with in Middle Eastern educated circles. Especially when it is known that Imam al-Ghazali had studied there and was recorded as a graduate of this college that was cared for by Juwaini. The leader of the ahlusunnah wal jamaah scholars and followers of Imam Abu Hasan al-Asy'ari is also called Abdul Ma'ali to show his priority as a scientist, religious figure, and community leader. Diya ad-Din, which means the light of religion is another title given to al-Juwaini because of his excellence in illuminating the hearts and minds of defenders of the Islamic faith, who therefore fend off the attacks of followers of heretical groups who have fallen into darkness. Al-Juwaini is also prominent among Asy'ariyah scholars because he has a unique method of defending Sunni teachings. He argues, the true faith is based on reason and naql and a combination of the two. Intellect is God's light which is innate in nature as a sign of God's love for humans and to be a medium for knowledge. While an-naql is merely a matter of hearing absorption which must be believed to be true without requiring proof of reason for it. Because of his stance, Al-Juwaini is widely referred to as the fourth generation of Ash'ariyah leaders and scholars, on a par with Al-Baghdadi and Abu Qasim Abdul Karim al-Qusyairi.

His view that reason and reasoning will be able to lead people to firm convictions led him to the conviction that the use of reasoning in matters of religion is obligatory according to sharia. Because of the peculiarities of his method, he did not always follow the opinions of his predecessors, even Imam Abu Hasan Ash'ari. Apart from being a teacher and expert in religious studies, Al-Juwaini is also a prolific writer. His views and opinions on a religious issue are often expressed in the form of writings. It is noted that dozens of books and scientific works have been produced covering several branches of science. This cleric died in Bustanikan on August 20, 1085. Until the end of his life, he was known as an expert in fiqh, ushul fiqh, and kalam. His book is still studied today.

The levels of students at Nizamiyah are as follows. The most basic is the student (*thalib*), if he is getting more pious, then he will move on to the next level, namely educated (*mutssaqaf*), if he is getting deeper into certain scientific disciplines taught at the university, he is called an expert (*fakih*). The alumni student from the Nizamiyah madrasa who became a major scholar was Abu Ishak Shirazi, Al-Haramain Al-Juwayni and Imam Al-Ghazali.

### **Funding and facilities for the Nizamiyah Baghdad Madrasah**

The most common source of funding for Madrasah development is waqf institutions, a traditional Islamic way of supporting institutions that serve the needs of the general public. In the construction of Madrasahs, Vizier Nizam Al-Mulk provided waqf funds to finance young students, imams and also students who received scholarships and boarding facilities. With these funds, he founded Nizamiyah Madrasahs in almost the entire territory of the Bani Seljuks at that time. established a library with approximately 6,000 volumes of books complete with catalogs, as well as employees and a system that facilitates book lending activities.<sup>11</sup>

Nizam Al Mulk is among the largest wakifs who donate to the university network. According to Muhamad As Shalabi, in the rise and fall of the Bani Seljuq Daula, a Nizamiyah wakif was recorded as waqf of his wealth to genuine As Syafi'i friends. The giver of the waqf also put forward several conditions, including that the teaching staff recruited by Nizamiyah must belong to the Syafi'i school of law. as well as lecturers and librarians.

### **The Collapse of the Nizamiyah Madrasah**

Alp Arslan died at the age of 43. His son Malik Shah then rose to become the ruler of the Seljuqs. At that time Nizam Al Mulk was still vizier until he died in 1092.

One year before his return to Rahmatullah, Nizam still managed to appoint Imam Al Ghazali as the rector of Baghdad's Nizamiyah University. Meanwhile, in 1095 in France, Europe, Pope Urban II announced the formation of the Crusaders. The goal is to seize baitul Makdis from the hands of the Turks. About four years later, the Christian army with extreme ideology was able to realize its ambition. Many Muslims were massacred by the Crusaders. Unfortunately, the Abbasid Caliphate, which was based in Baghdad, did not seem to be quick to

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<sup>11</sup> Dargahani, "The Social Network of Nizamiyah School System Under Nizam Al-Mulk Administration (456-485/1063-1092)."

dispel the interference from Europe. As a result, the misery is felt by the Muslims in Palestine.

Madrasah Nizamiyah gradually declined after the death of Nizam Al Mulk. Madrasas, whose education system and organization were imitated in Europe, had triumphed until the end of the 14th century, when Tamerlane destroyed Baghdad. Timur Lenk with his army invaded the city of Baghdad and destroyed all civilizations and massacred thousands of people in the territories he conquered. Baghdad was destroyed around 1393 AD.<sup>12</sup>

### **The influence of the Nizamiyah Madrasah**

Madrasah Nizhamiyah has had a lot of influence on society, both in the political, economic and socio-religious fields. Madrasah Nizhamiyah is accepted by the community because it is in accordance with their environment and beliefs from a socio-religious perspective, this is due to several factors including: 1) The teachings given at the Nizhamiyah Madrasah were Sunni teachings, in accordance with the teachings adhered to by most of the community at that time; 2) Madrasah Nizhamiyah is taught by prominent scholars; 3) This Madrasah focuses on *fiqh* lessons that are considered in accordance with the needs of society in general in order to live and live according to their teachings and beliefs; 4) The presence of the Nizhamiyah Madrasah has had a great influence on society, both in the political, economic and socio-religious fields. In the economic field, this madrasa has produced graduates who are ready to become government employees in the fields of law and administration. In socio-religion, madrasas that focus on *fiqh* teachings are considered to be in accordance with the needs of society in general; 5) Madrasas during the Abbasid era seemed to be handled directly and seriously by the government. Through the madrasah institution, the love and passion of Islamic intellectuals for science emerged. This can be proven from the various religious and scientific knowledge they produce; 6) Remembering that his teacher was a famous scholar, one of whom was Abu Hamid bin Muhammad al-Ghazali. Al-Ghazali is famous for his teaching principles, namely: Pay attention to the level of thinking power of children, explain the lesson clearly, teaching from concrete to abstract and teach science gradually.

### **Conclusion**

Madrasah Nizamiyah was an educational institution in the form of a madrasa which was managed by the government during the Bani Seljuq period. This madrasa has a different style from previous

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<sup>12</sup> Ali Muhammad Ash-Shallabi, *Bangkit Dan Runtuhnya Daulah Bani Saljuk*, n.d.

educational institutions. These madrasas were founded in Baghdad and its surroundings (found in almost every area), founded by a prime minister who had great concern for science and education in addition to political and religious factors. The prime minister was named Nizam Al Mulk using a modern system. Madrasah Nizamiyyah has good management, is well managed as can be seen from the funding side, the buildings are good and in large numbers. Teachers are paid a salary during their term of office, a library that is complete with dormitories and meals for students, school fees are free and the curriculum is set by the Baghdad government.

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