

## RECONSTRUCTION OF EDUCATION IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF IMAM AL-GHAZALI

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### **Keywords**

Reconstruction,  
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### **Abstract**

This paper aims to present the educational thoughts of Imam al-Ghazali in contemporary Islamic education. Al-Ghazali's educational thoughts can be used as inspiration in upholding quality Indonesian education. The concept of al-Ghazali's educational thought is religious-ethical. Al-Ghazali's educational goals cover three aspects, namely cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. In addition to placing two important things as an educational orientation, namely achieving human perfection to qualitatively get closer to Allah SWT; and achieve human perfection to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter. Educators are individuals who master a scientific discipline and are able to practice it as well as human figures who totally concentrate on the field of education. Students are placed as objects as well as subjects and set ideal criteria that students must strive for in order to be successful in education. Al-Ghazali mentions four categories of scientific classification, namely; classification of syar'iyah (religious) science and 'aqliyah (reasoning); theoretical and practical science. Al-Ghazali's teaching method emphasizes that teachers who provide knowledge are required to use exemplary methods and dialogue in the learning process.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The problem faced by society today is economic backwardness as a result of the low level of quality education. Efforts to catch up have been carried out in Islamic education. It's just that the development strategy that adopts the West and places the capitalist model as a mecca that must be emulated has implications for the creation of a hedonic, individualist and materialistic society.

In fact, world history has recorded a golden era in the world of Islamic education that lasted hundreds of years. One of the most important factors for the progress of civilization at that time was the formulation of an adequate education system (al-Ahwani, 1979:78). Previous Muslim figures had laid a strong foundation in the field of education and had ideal

conceptions of their time, both codified in written works and mere conventions based on empirical practice.

During the Seljuq dynasty, an educational institution with a madrasa system was established. This madrasah is listed as the first educational institution owned by a Sunni group. The figure who pioneered it was Prime Minister Nidzam al-Muluk. In subsequent developments, these madrasas were known as Nizhamiyyah and were spread in several major cities throughout the Islamic territories, such as Baghdad, Naisabur, Moshul, and Haran (Yunus, 1990:73).

It was in this institution that al-Ghazali grew up. He has served as Chancellor of the Nidzamiyah Madrasah in Baghdad. Since then al-Ghazali has been active in the world of education. Even in the history of his intellectual development, al-Ghazali started to get serious since his career as a lecturer. His attention is very great for science and the world of education. This can be seen in the book *Ihyâ 'Ulûmuddîn*, where he places the science chapter at the beginning of his discussion.

Al-Ghazali is a source of inspiration for the restlessness of reason. His integrity as an educational practitioner has encouraged many people to study his thoughts on education. So exploring al-Ghazali's thoughts on education within the framework of compiling a systematic conception of Islamic education is the right step.

In the Indonesian context, the quality of national education related to Muslims is still far from expectations. Criticism of the failure of education that has a religious platform is also often heard loudly. Improvements have also been made. For example, in order to integrate religious sciences with general sciences, a strategic breakthrough has been made in Islamic higher education institutions, by turning the Islamic Religious Institute into a State Islamic University. It is hoped that the integration of the two disciplines which are often confronted vis a vis will be the first step in the process of Islamization of science to welcome the Islamic renaissance.

In this context, the figure of al-Ghazali as an educator with ideas and methodologies in the field of education is very relevant, amidst the desire to improve oneself towards revival. Al-Ghazali's thoughts in the field of education can at least be used as one of the inspirations to start to rise. In this paper the author tries to describe how the reconstruction of education from the perspective of Imam al-Ghazali?.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The study of this research uses a literature review in which the literature is taken in accordance with the subject matter and is analyzed in depth so that conclusions and findings can be drawn in the research. Literature taken from books, journal articles both nationally and internationally and other literature (Hendriarto et al., 2021); (Nugraha et al., 2021); (Sudarmo et al., 2021); (Hutagaluh et al., 2020); (Aslan, 2017); (Aslan, 2019); (Aslan, 2016); (Aslan et al., 2020).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Education Reconstruction

Al-Ghazali's thoughts on education were heavily influenced by his mastery of Sufism. According to al-Ghazali (1996:13), education is a means to get closer to Allah SWT, worldly activities are only a supplementary factor for achieving eternal happiness hereafter. So to achieve this the world of education must pay attention to several factors that are quite urgent. Al-Ghazali (1996:13) is of the view that education must place knowledge in a very respectable position.

Islamic education experts need to retrace the nature of education from an Islamic perspective. Islam recognizes the term education with the term al-tarbiyah, which means nurturing, bearing, nurturing, raising, growing, producing and taming (al-Attas, 1984:66).

This is related to the word of Allah SWT which reads: "Didn't We raise you among our (family) when you were still children". (QS. Al-Syu'ara, 42: 18). Whereas in the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him it is stated that: "Be you educators who are guided and have knowledge. People who are called 'rabbani (educators) are people who have educated people with knowledge, starting from the smallest to the highest". (Narrated by Bukhari from Ibn Abbas).

In this context, both the Qur'an and al-Hadith explicitly never mention the word tarbiyah. Muhaimin and Mujib (1993:129) argue that based on the hadith above, al-tarbiyah is a process of transforming knowledge from the basic level to the next level.

Apart from tarbiyah, Islamic education also recognizes the term al-ta'lim, meaning teaching or education (Ali & Muhdhar, 1996:520). This is in accordance with the word of Allah, SWT, "...and He taught Adam the asthma in its entirety, then conveyed it to the angels ...". (QS. al-Baqarah, 2:31).

Another term for education is al-ta'dib, which means education, improvement, and discipline. Al-ta'dib is defined as an educational process that is oriented towards the formation of students who are civilized, law-abiding, upholding ethics or good manners (Ali and Muhdhar, 1996:64). This can also be seen in the words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, "God has educated me personally so I will become a civilized human being". (Narrated by Bukhari).

Education in Islam is also known as al-tadrîs, meaning education, teaching, tutorials (Ali & Muhdhar, 1996:445). This word can be seen in the words of Allah SWT which reads, "You should be rabbani people, because you always teach the Bible and because you have learned it." (QS. Ali Imran, 3:79).

From the above understanding it can be understood that al-tadrîs is an educational process based on theory (scientific) and practice (experience) which allows students to become more mature, mature individuals, and able to build strong emotional bonds between teachers and students as a whole. Al-tadrîs emphasizes the exploratory efforts of educators (teachers) in imparting empirical knowledge to students along with the totality of their scientific experience (Siradj, 2003:3).

Meanwhile, the last known idiom in the world of Islamic education is al-riyâdhah which means training, ethics education (Ali & Muhdhar, 1996: 1001). Al-Ghazali (t.t.: 125) calls it "riyâdhah al-syibyân", which means education in the childhood phase. The meaning of al-riyâdhah in the context of Islamic education here is educating children's souls with noble morals. Each terminology does have a different meaning according to the variety of texts and the context. Specifically, educational figures tend to note that the meaning of al-tarbiyah is more specific than al-ta'lîm because it is aimed at the object of ownership related to the relational type. Variety of terminology is still a concept that has both strengths and weaknesses. In this regard, it is certain that the concepts offered enrich the treasures of Islamic education which have references, namely the Qur'an and al-Hadith.

### **Educational Objectives**

The purpose of education according to al-Ghazali includes three aspects, namely cognitive aspects, which include the development of reason, such as intelligence, intelligence, and thinking power; affective aspect, which includes the development of the heart, such as the development of taste, heart, and spirituality; and psychomotor aspects, namely physical development, such as body health and skills.

Al-Ghazali explicitly places two important things as educational orientations; first, achieving human perfection to qualitatively draw closer to Allah SWT; secondly, achieving human perfection to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter.

According to al-Ghazali the happiness of the world and the hereafter is the most essential thing for humans. The happiness of the world and the hereafter has universal, eternal, and more essential value. So that in the end the second orientation will be synergistic and even blend with the first orientation.

Al-Ghazali's concept is interesting if it is related to the latest conception of education. Al-Ghazali formulated a macro educational orientation and tried to avoid situational problems. So that al-Ghazali's conception can be said to be the "end of orientation" (al-ahdâf al-'ulya) which can be translated into more specific orientations, namely general (instructional) orientation and special orientation.

While the main means to achieve educational goals consist of educational materials. That is, students must be prepared with a set of material (curriculum) that is ready to be learned. In addition, educators must also have teaching methods that can support a good learning process. Educational material that is appropriate for students, al-Ghazali provides criteria; First, material that is useful for humans in an effort to realize a religious life, such as ethics education or something else. Second, educational materials provide convenience and support for humans to study religious knowledge, such as linguistics, grammar, and others. Third, educational materials that are useful for the provision of life in the world, such as medicine. Fourth, educational materials that are useful in building culture and civilization, such as history, literature, politics, and others.

Al-Ghazali also determined educational materials hierarchically. The first level, the

Qur'an and religious sciences, such as fiqh, hadith science, and others. The second level is linguistics and grammar, including tajwid. The third level, knowledge in the fardhu kifâyah category, such as medicine, arithmetic, politics, and others. The fourth level, knowledge of culture, such as history, and several branches of philosophy. Besides that, Al-Ghazali himself did not deny the importance of studying all kinds of knowledge that are beneficial to humans. He only emphasized the need for humans to prioritize education by placing religious knowledge in the most urgent position.

## **Education and Students**

In the present context, the conception of education offered by al-Ghazali is worthy of consideration while still criticizing the sides that are considered no longer relevant to the present.

Among al-Ghazali's ideas that need to be reviewed now is al-Ghazali's paradigm regarding the correlation between educators and economic problems. Al-Ghazali (1997:98) argues that educators are human beings who totally concentrate on the field of education. He is not allowed to do any other activity. But on the other hand, he may receive proportional material rewards to meet his needs.

From al-Ghazali's idea above is the need for educational loyalty to science as well as the transformation process. While the economic aspect is a secondary orientation which automatically takes place simultaneously with the process of scientific transformation. Proportionally, the achievement of material obtained by education is congruent with a total contribution to the continuity of the teaching and learning process. Educators in al-Ghazali's perspective are individuals who master a scientific discipline and are able to practice it. Al-Ghazali (t.t.: 12) says in his book *al-Munqidz min al-Dhalâl* as follows: "Now I have a strong determination to reform myself and also others. I asked Allah SWT to first renew my own behavior. Then use myself as a reformer. I also ask Allah, SWT to guide me, then use myself as a guidance tool.

Al-Ghazali gave a respectable place to the teaching profession. In the book *Ihya 'Ulûmuddîn* (1996:86), he aligns educators with the prophets, as it is written: God's most important creature on earth is human. The most important human part is the heart. While an educator is busy repairing, cleaning, perfecting and directing the heart so that it is always close to Allah SWT. According to al-Ghazali (1996:86), the most urgent main task of education is perfecting, cleansing, purifying, and bringing the human heart to taqarrub ila Allâh. Educators should direct students to know God more closely through all of His creation. Educators are required to be able to purify the souls of their students. Only by going through holy souls can humans be close to their Creator.

With regard to this concept an-Nahlawi (1992:239) reveals that apart from being in charge of transferring various knowledge and skills to students, the main task that needs to be carried out by educators is tazkiyat al-nafs, namely developing, cleaning, elevating the souls of students to the Creator. Him, keeps him away from evil, and keeps him in

accordance with His hanîf nature.

The very noble position of educators is a consequence of the strategic position of educators in the community. Al-Ghazali (1996:84-89) also agreed that the teaching profession must receive serious attention. Al-Ghazali provides strict limitations for the teaching profession as a prerequisite that must be met.

In addition to educators, al-Ghazali (1996:75) also believes that an important element of education is students. No matter how sophisticated the method used, if it is not supported by the best conditions of the students then the educational process will not be successful. Students in the educational process are placed as objects as well as subjects. The condition of students greatly determines the success of the educational process. To support students to achieve ideal conditions, al-Ghazali (1996:75-82) has ten criteria that students must strive for, namely:

First, before starting the learning process, students must first purify their souls from bad behavior and despicable traits. Second, as much as possible students must distance themselves from dependence on the world, because it will interfere with students' concentration on the knowledge they are learning. Third, students must always be humble, pay attention to the instructions and directions of educators, and be able to control their emotions. Fourth, students must avoid confusing debates. Students also need to focus on the areas that have been directed by their educators before studying other opinions. Fifth, a student must have the enthusiasm to learn all knowledge that is worth studying (al-'ulûm al-mahmûdah) as a consequence of the interdisciplinary linkages of knowledge. Sixth, students must learn gradually. He needs to determine the priority scale of science with reference to its benefits, in this case is the science of religion. Seventh, students must understand the hierarchy of knowledge. Because there are natural stages in science, because studying one branch of science will lead to another branch of knowledge. Eighth, students must understand the value of the knowledge they are learning and determine which one is more important than the other. Ninth, students must have an orientation towards their education; short-term goals, namely to repair and cleanse his soul; while the long-term orientation is to get closer to Allah SWT and try to raise his rank to the level of angels. Tenth, students must be careful in selecting educators for the continuation of a positive learning process.

### **Science Classification**

In the book *Ihyâ Ulûmuddîn*, al-Ghazali (1996:15) mentions four categories of scientific classification, namely; First, the classification of syar'iyah (religious) and 'aqliyah (reasoning) sciences on knowledge of the hereafter and worldly knowledge. On the other hand, there is the science of ghairu al-syar'iyah (non-religious) which is divided into commendable (mahmûdah), permissible (mûbah) and reprehensible (madzmûmah) knowledge. Second, the classification of theoretical and practical science. Third, the classification of knowledge into presented knowledge (hudhûri) and acquired knowledge

(hushûli). Fourth, the division of knowledge into fardhu 'ain (compulsory for every individual Muslim) and fardhu kifâyah (compulsory for the Muslim community).

Of the four classifications, al-Ghazali broadly describes the categorization of intellectual knowledge and religious science. This category was very important in the process of developing Islamic education at that time. Each classification is based on aspects of the relationship between humans and knowledge. The four classifications are based on al-Ghazali's empirical experience during his life as a scientist as well as an educator. The classifications of these sciences are also interrelated, making it possible for a science to have more than one classification.

### **Teaching Method**

According to Imam Al-Ghazali (1996:89), that only religious education is able to early direct students to be 'close' to Allah SWT. So in the learning method of students, al-Ghazali places the basics of religious education as the top priority. In matters of religious principle, al-Ghazali's method of teaching religion begins with memorizing, then understanding, then believing and accepting. Furthermore, the presentation of argumentative evidence to strengthen the teachings that have been accepted.

Al-Ghazali also suggested that educators pay attention to the classification of students using exemplary methods as in surah al-Ahzab, 33:21. Al-Ghazali's exemplary method is very relevant to be developed in the world of global Islamic education. Given the moral decline has become a sweet conversation in the world of modern education. In educational practice, children tend to imitate their educators and this is recognized by almost all educational experts. Basically, psychologically children like to imitate, not only the good things but also the bad things they imitate, and humans need role models in their lives.

This exemplary is mainly obtained from good role models from educators or people, especially in the environment around the child or even exemplifying the sirah Rasulullah SAW (Supriyono, 2001:47). This example can be actualized through habituation in children. If teachers want to educate children to have a generous attitude and compassion for each other, then educators are required to show good attitudes and provide examples in everyday life.

Education by example in Islamic education according to al-Ghazali al- (1996: 114) requires education by example, both in the form of behavior, traits, ways of thinking and so on.

In addition to the methods above, al-Ghazali also uses the dialogue method in providing learning to students. Imam al-Ghazali had conducted dialogues with well-known scientists during the time of Nizam al-Mulk and he won thanks to virtue, depth of scientific intellect, eloquence and strength of argument. This happened in 484 H/1091 AD.

The dialogue method is an educational method that allows for direct communication that is two-way traffic because at the same time dialogue occurs between students and

teachers. Dialogue motivates students to raise their minds to ask questions, as long as educators provide educational guidance at certain times. According to al-Ghazali (1996: 132), the existence of ongoing dialogue has the aim that children can understand and remember facts that are learned, heard or read, so that they have a deep understanding of those facts.

The dialogue method provides freedom of opinion, does not aim to win or bring someone down, in fact, it actually aims to make children arrive at a better perception related to each issue discussed.

Al-Ghazali's opinion about the dialogue method above is very relevant to be applied in Islamic education today. Because in cultivating mindsets and giving courage in communicating also has persuasive language skills.

## CONCLUSION

From the description above, Al-Ghazali's educational thinking can be concluded from several things, namely:

First, al-Ghazali's educational thought is religious-ethical and places science in a very respectable position. Education is a means to get closer to Allah SWT who can lead people to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter.

Second, al-Ghazali's educational goals cover three aspects, namely the cognitive aspect, which includes the development of reason, such as intelligence, intelligence, and thinking power; the affective aspect, which includes the development of the heart, such as the development of taste, heart, and spirituality; and psychomotor aspects, namely physical development, such as body health and skills. In addition to placing two important things as an educational orientation, namely achieving human perfection to qualitatively get closer to Allah SWT; and achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter.

Third, educators according to al-Ghazali are individuals who master a scientific discipline and are able to practice it. Educators are human figures who totally concentrate on the field of education.

Fourth, teaching methods. Al-Ghazali emphasized that teachers who provide knowledge are required to use exemplary methods and dialogue in the learning process.

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