

## Al-Ghazali's Education Theory Towards Islamic Lifelong Learning

### *Teori Pendidikan al-Ghazali ke arah Pembelajaran Sepanjang Hayat menurut Islam*

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#### ABSTRACT

*Al-Ghazali was an outstanding physicist, thinking philosopher who produced scientific works in many areas, including theology, philosophy, mysticism, morals, and education. The book of Ihya' Ulumuddin, is one of his great work in Islamic literature. This research aims to examine the education theory of Al-Ghazali to determine what the learning methods suggested in education means for lifelong learning. Nowadays, lifelong learning is emphasized at all levels by its application internationally. By studying Al-Ghazali's education method, educators will utilize the idea for the sustainability of education towards lifelong learning. This study uses a qualitative approach through document analysis, such as books, journal articles, and academic works, to be reviewed. The result from this study is identified the education methods implemented by Al-Ghazali in Ihya' Ulumuddin towards Islamic lifelong learning.*

**Keywords:** *Al-Ghazali Education Theory, Education Sustainable Development, Islamic Lifelong Learning, Islamic Education*

#### ABSTRAK

*Al-Ghazali adalah seorang ahli fizik terkemuka dan pemikir Islam yang menghasilkan karya ilmiah dalam pelbagai bidang, termasuk teologi, falsafah, mistik, moral dan pendidikan. Kitab Ihya' Ulumuddin merupakan salah satu karya agungnya dalam kesusasteraan Islam. Pendidikan kini penuh cabaran dengan perkembangan teknologi dan lambakan informasi yang canggih. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji teori Al-Ghazali dalam pendidikan untuk menentukan kaedah pembelajaran yang disarankan ke arah pembelajaran sepanjang hayat. Pada masa kini, pembelajaran sepanjang hayat ditekankan di semua peringkat dan aplikasinya sehingga ke peringkat antarabangsa. Dengan mengkaji kaedah pendidikan Al-Ghazali, pendidik akan dapat menggunakan idea untuk kelestarian pendidikan ke arah pembelajaran sepanjang hayat. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui analisis dokumen, seperti buku, artikel jurnal, dan karya akademik, untuk dikaji. Hasil daripada kajian ini dapat mengenal pasti kaedah pendidikan yang dilaksanakan oleh Al-Ghazali dalam kitabnya, Ihya' Ulumuddin dan memberi kepentingan kepada pendidik ke arah pembelajaran sepanjang hayat Islam.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Teori Pendidikan al-Ghazali, Pembangunan Kelestarian Pendidikan, Pembelajaran Sepanjang Hayat Islam, Pendidikan Islam*

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## Introduction

Since ancient times, the meaning and purpose of education are two interrelated elements that have attracted philosophers and educators' attention. The existence of differences in conceptualization and explanation of these two elements is due to differences in understanding the facts, roles, and purposes of human life related to a series of questions about the reality of science and absolute truth (Migdadi, 2011). Therefore, it is not surprising if we find differences of opinion among philosophers and educators about education's purpose and curriculum.

Al-Ghazali is one of the great scholars of Islam in philosophy, education and other fields (Sajid Ullah Sheikh & Muhammad Abid Ali, 2019). He produced dozens of works in various Islamic science areas, but the essence of all his works is the book of *Ihya' Ulumuddin*. After recovering from a psychiatric crisis, an incident in his life led him close to the divine's consciousness to cleanse the soul from moral stains and reprehensible nature. Al-Ghazali claimed that knowledge is a form of worship of the heart, prayers of conscience, and the soul's approach to Allah SWT (Hughes, 2008; Zaini, 2017). Many educators using his works as a basis of learning and education to produce a better generation in the future. The objectives of this research are to examine the education theory of Imam Al-Ghazali and to determine the learning methods towards lifelong learning in Islamic education. The research is using qualitative method through document analysis in books, journal articles, library research and literature review.

## Life of al-Ghazali

His name is Abu Hamid Muhammad bin Muhammad bin Ahmad al-Ghazali. In the West, he was known as "Algazel." He was born in a small village called Ghazalah; the district of Khurasan, Persia (Iran), 450 H / 1058 M. Researchers differ on the origin of the term "al-Ghazali" (Nur Aeni Jam'iyah, 2001). One opinion says "al-Ghazali" is a ratio (classification) to his birth area, namely Ghazalah. In contrast, other views say that "al-Ghazali" is taken from the background of his father's profession, namely *Ghazzal al-Shuf* (wool yarn spinner). His father died when al-Ghazali was still young (Hughes, 2008).

Al-Ghazali began his religious education in his hometown, Thus. At the age of 15 al-Ghazali went to the city of Jurjan to study with Sheikh Abu Nasr al-Ismaili. After graduating from Jurjan, al-Ghazali returned to Thus to teach. Not long after, al-Ghazali decided to leave his homeland to embark on a scientific journey to Naisabur. In this city, he studied with Imam al-Haramain at *Madrasah* Nizhamiyah Naisabur (Hughes, 2008; Zaini, 2017). It is from al-Haramain that al-Ghazali knows the science of kalam and philosophy. Because of his intelligence al-Ghazali was later appointed as an assistant in the madrasah. In fact, in the year 479 H, after Imam al-Haramain, al-Ghazali was appointed as the Headmaster. Holding the title of Headmaster does not make al-Ghazali's intellectual desires satisfied. He resumed his scientific journey to the city of Mu'askar to meet Nidzam al-Mulk, a Prime Minister of the Seljuk Kingdom who was also known as a scientist. Al-Ghazali's intelligence invited Nidzam al-Mulk's admiration until 481 H / 1091 A.D. al-Ghazali was appointed Professor at the *Madrasah* (University) of Nizhamiyah Baghdad at the age of 31. Entering 34, he was appointed Rector of the University (Abdul Salam, 2005; Hughes, 2008; Zaini, 2017).

Four years later he left Baghdad for Mecca in performing Hajj. Some scholars doubt al-Ghazali's motives for leaving Baghdad only for the pilgrimage (Abdul Salam, 2005). They believe that al-Ghazali is no longer interested in activities in Baghdad because the city's

atmosphere is no longer supportive of his efforts to deepen Sufism. Al-Ghazali's Sufi journey first led to Syria and settled in the Great Mosque of *al-Umawiy*. In this exile, al-Ghazali did contemplation with himself. In 489 H / 1096M, he continued his Sufi adventure to Palestine and stayed in the Zawiya (Sufi room) (Abdul Salam, 2005; Hughes, 2008). A few months later, he went to Mecca's holy land to perform the pilgrimage, and a year later, he returned to Syria to settle there (Hughes, 2008). However, he was soon urged to return to Baghdad. But Baghdad has become a sick city for its contemplation process. Finally, in 492 H / 1099 A.D. al-Ghazali left Baghdad and returned to Thus, his hometown. After eleven years of Sufistic solitude and reaching a spiritual peak, al-Ghazali decided to return to teaching at Madrasah Nidzam al-Mulk. Al-Ghazali taught there for three years. Stepping into the fourth year (504 H / 1110 A.D.), he returned to Thus and established an educational institution in his hometown. One year later, precisely 14 *Jumadil Akhir* 505 H / 1111 A.D., al-Ghazali died at 53 years (Abdul Salam, 2005; Anas et al., 2016; Zaini, 2017)

### **Trend and Evolution of Al-Ghazali's Theory of Education**

Education is seen as a social phenomenon that has unfolded in the long history of human life embedded in human society's culture. Al-Ghazali writes on educational issues in many of his works, including *Fatihah al-'Ulum*, *Ayyuha al-Walad*, and *Ihya' Ulum ad-Din*. In *Ihya' Ulum ad-Din*, he began his writing with a description of the virtues of knowledge and education, then gave a high predicate to scholars and strengthened by Allah's word, the Prophet and Messenger's confession, the terms of poets, scholars, and thinkers. He revealed the scholar's height of rank and position often repeated in various books (Putra, 2017).

Al-Ghazali's idea of education in *Ihya'* revolves around three main points (Ridha, 2002):

- i. An explanation of the superiority of education and knowledge over ignorance
- ii. Classification of education included in the curricular program.
- iii. Code of ethics for educators and learners.

Al-Ghazali's educational thinking can be known from various educational goals: educational goals, curriculum, code of ethics for teachers/educators and learners, and the following teaching methods.

#### **1. Purpose of Education**

Educational goals according to Al-Ghazali, include three aspects; namely cognitive aspects, which include cognitive development such as intelligence and thinking ability; affective aspects, which include the development of the heart, such as the development of the senses, and the spiritual; and psychomotor aspects, namely physical development, such as physical health and skills (Asrorun Niam Sholeh, 2004).

Al-Ghazali puts two important things as the ultimate goal of education. First, the attainment of human perfection that springs from a personal approach to God. Second, human perfection leads to happiness in this world and the hereafter (Zaini, 2017). This goal seems religious and moral but does not ignore worldly problems. Al-Ghazali thinks that the happiness of the hereafter is the essential thing for human beings. Happiness in this world and the afterlife has universal, eternal, and more critical values (Asrorun Niam Sholeh, 2004). Human perfection in this world and the hereafter, according to al-Ghazali, can only be achieved by mastering the nature of virtue through the right path of knowledge. This priority will make the humankind find happiness in this world and bring them closer to Allah, and they will be satisfied in the hereafter (Mohd Fauzi Hamat et al., 2019). This educational orientation may be the fruit of al-

Ghazali's consciousness after experiencing a spiritual crisis, which he documented in the work of *al-Munqidz min al-Dhalal* (Ridha, 2002).

## 2. Curriculum

The concept of curriculum initiated by al-Ghazali is closely related to his concept of education. In *Ihya' Ulum al-Din*, he classifies knowledge into four categories (Nur Aeni Jam'iyah, 2001).

- i. First, the classification of the science of *sharia* (religion) and *'aqliyah* (reason/intellectual) on the science of the hereafter and worldly life. On the other hand, there is the science of *ghairu syar'iyah* (non-religious) which is differentiated into praiseworthy knowledge (*Mahmud*), permissible (*mubah*), and reprehensible (*madzmum*).
- ii. Second, the classification of theoretical and practical sciences.
- iii. Third, knowledge classification becomes part of the knowledge presented (*hudhuri*) and acquired knowledge (*hushuli*).
- iv. Fourth, the division of knowledge into *fardhu' ain* (obligatory on every individual Muslim) and *fardhu kifayah* (obligatory on the Muslim community).

These four categories or classifications can be described as follows.

### a. Religious Science and Intellectual Science

Religious Science is revealed knowledge obtained from the prophets who are not present through logical activities such as mathematics, not through experiments such as the science of medicine, nor auditory skills such as language (Putra, 2017; Zaini, 2017). As for intellectual knowledge (*'aqliyah*) are various sciences obtained through human intellectuality. According to Osman Bakar (2001), the categorization of experience on religious (*syar'iyah*) and intellectual (*'aqliyah*) is a logical consequence of the *mutakallimun* (theologian) conception of the relationship of revelation and reason. More specifically, the classification reflects al-Ghazali's exoteric theological attitude towards philosophy. Al-Ghazali argues that religious and intellectual sciences are complementary, not contradictory.

### b. Theoretical Science and Practical Science

In the book of *Maqasid al-Falasifah*, the science of philosophy or the science of wisdom includes theoretical and practical. The theoretical part makes the condition of existence known as it is. The valuable part concerns man's positive action for creating human well-being in this world and the hereafter (Ridha, 2002; Zaini, 2017). In *al-Risalah al-Ladunniyyah*, al-Ghazali states that divine knowledge includes the science of basic principles (*ushul*) as theoretical knowledge and branch knowledge (*furu'*) as practical science.

### c. Hudhuri Science and Hushuli Science

The science of *hudhuri*, which al-Ghazali is often referred to as *mukasyafah*, is direct, immediate, intuitive, suprarational, and contemplative. While the science of *hushuli* is indirect, rational, and logical, obtained from the learning outcomes and learning process (Zakaria Stapa, 2010).

### d. Ilmu Fardhu' Ain and Ilmu Fardhu Kifayah

According to al-Ghazali, the effort to classify knowledge into *fardhu' ain* and *fardhu kifayah* are highly dependent on one's condition and the needs of the community in one place. The category of *fardhu' ain* knowledge includes religious knowledge, such as the Qur'an and Hadith, and the principles of worship. At the same time, the science of *fardhu kifayah* is a science that must exist for the sake of world expression. Medical science is very much needed

to maintain the health of living beings. Similarly, mathematics plays an essential role in the world of trade. This kind of knowledge should be mastered by Muslims, although it should not involve every individual Muslim. Each of the above classifications of science is based on the relationship between human beings and knowledge and is based on al-Ghazali's practical experience as a scientist and educator. These classifications are also interrelated so that one science can have more than one classification (Osman Bakar, 2001). In Abuddin Nata's observation, the category of science by al-Ghazali refers to the dimension of benefits and harms (Abuddin Nata, 2000). Further Abuddin Nata concluded that the subjects that should be taught and included in the curriculum, according to al-Ghazali, are based on two tendencies. First, the trend of religion and mysticism. With this tendency, al-Ghazali is very concerned about ethical education, because according to him, this science is closely related to religious education. Second, the pragmatic trend. This tendency is evident in his writings, which repeatedly mention his science-based assessment on its benefits for human beings, both for life in this world and in the hereafter (Zaini, 2017).

The classification of knowledge by al-Ghazali does not mean that he rejects the importance of learning all kinds of knowledge beneficial to human beings. It only emphasizes human beings' need to prioritize education by placing religious knowledge in the most urgent position (Abdul Salam, 2005; Zakaria Stapa, 2010). This is based on al-Ghazali's awareness that only religious education can direct learners to be close to God. Looking at the side of science, al-Ghazali belongs to the adherents of pragmatic theological understanding, meaning that is based on the purpose of faith and close to God Almighty. This is inseparable from his attitude as a Sufi who has practical and factual trends (Abdul Salam, 2005). Al-Ghazali's Sufistic thinking and his ideas about the classification of knowledge are often blamed by critics (Abdul Salam, 2005) as one of the causes of the decline of knowledge in the Islamic world. They accused the vibration of categorizing knowledge by al-Ghazali as socially lulled by religious sciences and not ignoring rational science. This assumption can be wrong because historically, the classification of science is not something new. Before al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, Ibn Arabi (Tajudin & Badaruddin, 2018) had also recognized the classification of science between religious and intellectual (Osman Bakar, 2001; Putra, 2017).

Apart from that debate, the classification of science by al-Ghazali was a practical step at a time. At that time, society's lifestyle tended to be materialistic and hedonistic, and human beings increasingly became gods above the "limits" of their authority. Unbeknownst to them, the divine dimension (divine / transcendence) began to be uprooted from the middle of their lives. The classification of al-Ghazali's science may be a rebuke and an answer to society's conditions at that time. If observed, epistemologically, such categorization is very helpful in the learning process. It is very logical if the limitations of time and age of science students and the differences in science needs by each individual and society demand a conceptual learning process, precise orientation, and scale of priority (Zaini, 2017). Thus, al-Ghazali's classification of science finds its momentum and its logic logically.

### **3. Code of Conduct for Educators and Learners**

In al-Ghazali's view, central in education is the heart because the heart is the essence of man. The human substance does not lie in his physique's elements, but a man's heart and views as a theocentric. The concept of his education is more directed at the formation of noble morals. A teacher's job is to enlighten the mind and guide, direct, enhance, and purify the heart to draw closer to Allah SWT (Putra, 2017; Rofiq, 2019).

So, teachers' role is vast, not only teaching, transferring knowledge but also educating. Al-Ghazali's view of teachers is very romantic. A teacher's ideal is knowledgeable, charitable, and leading (Hermawan, 2017). Departing from such an ideological perspective, al-Ghazali stressed that educators or teachers need to maintain their profession's ethics and code of ethics. The code of ethics or professional duties that teachers (educators) must adhere to includes eight things (Osman Bakar, 2001):

- i. Loving her learners, even treating them like a teacher's treatment and love for her child.
- ii. The teacher is willing to follow the Prophet's guidance to earn a wage or get awards and service marks. However, seek the pleasure of God and draw closer to Him.
- iii. Teachers should not neglect the task of advising their learners, which includes advice on the stages of seeking knowledge (including the priorities of scientific studies to be pursued) and advice on the purpose of seeking knowledge-oriented on a personal approach to God.
- iv. Prevent learners from getting caught up in reprehensible morals through the best way possible and in a loving way, not sarcastically and rudely.
- v. Teachers' expertise in specific scientific specialities does not cause them to underestimate other scientific disciplines.
- vi. The teacher delivers the teaching material following the level of understanding of the learners.
- vii. Teachers convey material, concretely, and according to learners' level of knowledge in digesting it to students with low ability.
- viii. Teachers want to practice their knowledge to distinguish between the teacher's words and actions. However, knowledge is only known with the heart's eyes (*basha'ir*), while deeds are known with the head's eyes (*abshar*). When there is a contradiction between knowledge and charity, it will undoubtedly hinder the example.

Not only teachers or educators are required to adhere to the code of ethics, but also learners. There are ten points of obligation, which al-Ghazali termed *wadlifah*, which must be complied with by the learners (Nur Aeni Jam'iyah, 2001; Putra, 2017; Zaini, 2017).

- i. Prioritize self-purification from reprehensible morals and bad traits, because knowledge is a form of heart worship, spiritual prayer, and an inner approach to God.
- ii. Learners take care of themselves from worldly pursuits and should travel far from where they live.
- iii. Do not confuse the pious towards the pious (teacher), but be willing to obey in all matters and listen to his advice.
- iv. Beginner science students should refrain from studying variations of thoughts and figures, both concerning worldly sciences and *ukhrawi* sciences. Because it can confuse the mind, twist, and break the concentration.
- v. Students of science do not ignore any praiseworthy discipline of science but are willing to learn it until they know the discipline's orientation in question. If age and opportunity allow, he can delve further. If not, he needs to prioritize the most important disciplines to deepen. However, it must be realized that the sciences are interconnected, so that students do not close their eyes and underestimate other fields that they do not know.
- vi. Students of science to deepen a science discipline are not done all at once but need to be gradual and prioritize the most important.
- vii. The student does not go into the next level of knowledge until he masters the previous knowledge level.
- viii. Students of knowledge should know the factors that cause to obtain the most glorious knowledge.

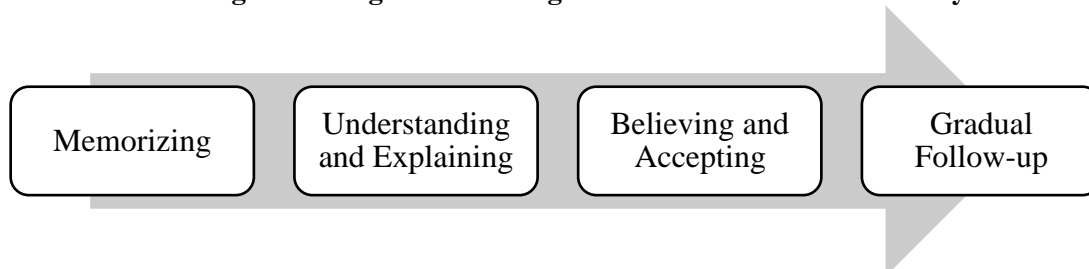
- ix. The purpose of learning knowledge is to purify the mind and decorate it with priorities and approach to God and increase his spiritual maqam.
- x. Students of knowledge know the sciences' relationship with the intended orientation to sort and choose which sciences should be given priority.

#### 4. Methods of Education and Teaching

In general, al-Ghazali does not explicitly suggest specific methods to be applied in such or teaching. However, al-Ghazali's attention is more focused on the particular mode of religious instruction for children. In this case, the example is an essential method in the child's educational process. The reason, according to al-Ghazali, education is an activity that requires a close relationship between two individuals, namely teachers and students (Gade, 2018). Besides, positive habits are also an educational method that is considered necessary by al-Ghazali. In *Riyadlat al-Nafs*, al-Ghazali emphasizes that if children are accustomed to good things and taught in the right way, they will grow in goodness and find happiness in this world and the hereafter. (Hermawan, 2017). Technically al-Ghazali asserted that the study of religious sciences should begin early. At first, children are asked to memorize the basics of religion at an early age. Then, as the child's age and intellectuality develop, education is continued by explaining and understanding the material. Students are encouraged to understand the substance with rational argumentation. Such religious teachings are acknowledged by al-Ghazali as imperfect and should be followed by a gradual follow-up (Gade, 2018).

In religious principles, al-Ghazali's teaching religion method begins with memorizing, then understanding, then believing and accepting. Furthermore, the presentation of argumentative evidence to strengthen the teachings that have been received. Al-Ghazali also suggested that educators pay attention to the classification of learners. This classification related to selecting teaching materials and education to suit learners' level of reasoning ability (Gade, 2018; Hermawan, 2017; Khairani, 2012).

**Figure 1: Stages of Learning in al-Ghazali Education Theory**



Source: (Hermawan, 2017)

#### The Relevance of al-Ghazali Educational Thought in the Current Era

The global era is marked by the development of technology that is increasing day by day. Billions of information we can access every day very easily. This vast world seems small and close by many times (UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning, 2018). As a result, science is overgrowing. The turbulence (turmoil) of global currents (Carr et al., 2018) is extreme and impacts all aspects of human life, including Islamic education. Islamic education does not want to fall into the current trap and experience this turbulence. For Islamic education, global currents' turbulence can give rise to paradoxes or symptoms of anti-morality, i.e. moral opposition on a moral side (Rusitoru & Kallioniemi, 2019), such as teachers ordering children not to engage in clashes. But in the community, the environment is often shown the conflict between citizens or groups; in schools, pornography raids are held, but the mass media is

increasingly reluctant to unleash everything that stimulates lust. Because of this, the hope for learners to appear creative and egalitarian, but at home, he witnessed the authoritative behaviour of parents. Globalization has a counter-morality impact between what is idealized in Islamic education and reality in the field (Qais Faryadi, 2015).

On the other hand, if global currents drag Islamic education, an educational process will be suppressed by additional power without Islamic influence. Closing oneself or being exclusive to globalization can lead to being outdated while opening oneself is also at risk of losing one's personality. Therefore, Islamic education needs to stretch against global currents; whichever is excellent and appropriate, taken; and not right and unsuitable, released or abandoned (McKay, 2018; Qais Faryadi, 2015). Among the real impacts of global currents are changing in human lifestyle that is increasingly materialistic and pragmatic. This condition found similarities with al-Ghazali's life, where the Muslim community also had such a tendency (Zaini, 2017). The social reality of Muslims society today, which is materialistic and hedonistic, is almost no different from Western society's conditions. If pulled back, this time is also already simmering in the time of al-Ghazali. Learning and scientific activities are purely oriented towards material and worldly achievements. It was then that al-Ghazali's thoughts on education and Sufism emerged as a correction of society's materialism and hedonism at that time (orientation crisis) (Abuddin Nata, 2000; Asrorun Niam Sholeh, 2004).

In the community of educators, for example, al-Ghazali highlights the symptoms of materialism from the point of view of the morality of the scholars in his writings about the scholars' wrongdoings; namely the figure of scholars who use his knowledge to achieve material satisfaction and position and lick the rulers to maintain the office (Zaini, 2017). This problem of morality is also the challenge of Islamic education today, where learners no longer seek knowledge for the sake of knowledge itself, but merely to satisfy material lust. Teachers are busy taking care of all administrations to get the certification but neglect their loyalty to education and students. It is not excessive if we conclude that al-Ghazali's thoughts are still relevant to be hailed as an attempt to improve Muslims' Islamic education and morality in the world. However, even criticizing the sides should contextualize its relevance to the current era (Abdul Salam, 2005; Nur Aeni Jam'iyah, 2001; Rofiq, 2019). For example, the teacher reprimanded by al-Ghazali for not looking for a wage in teaching. This code of ethics for educators by al-Ghazali should be interpreted that teachers/education must have loyalty to knowledge and the educational process. As for wages or economic aspects, educators should consider it as second things with their total contribution to educational progress. Thus, it can be understood that al-Ghazali's opposition is not to educators' economic right, but the commercialization of knowledge (Putra, 2017; Zaini, 2017).

Following al-Ghazali's view of man and his deeds, the deeds will not be the first to appear except following the right knowledge. According to Al-Ghazali, knowledge is based on all happiness in this world and the world to come (the hereafter). Meanwhile, satisfaction is the highest attainment that human beings can attain, but knowledge is something of a very high value. Learning is a virtue without considering the known object, so the knowledge of magic remains a virtue, even if useless. Besides being an intrinsic virtue, knowledge is also essential, because it allows a person to achieve the most valuable thing: eternal happiness. No one will achieve this happiness without obeying the commandments of God, or without doing righteous deeds.

On the other hand, no one knows the good and bad of something without knowledge, so obeying God and doing good deeds requires knowledge. This means that eternal happiness can only be achieved by knowing. Related to learning, Al-Ghazali stated that learning is a

process of transferring knowledge from teacher to student (Hermawan, 2017; Sajid Ullah Sheikh & Muhammad Abid Ali, 2019). In learning, students need a teacher in acquiring their knowledge. A sheikh's education is like farmers' work, which removes thorns from disturbing wild plants to grow well and be productive. Therefore, a *salik* must have a sheikh who will educate and guide him to the path of Allah Ta'ala. In the hadith of the Prophet revealed that it is obligatory to study (seek knowledge). Concerning learning, al-Ghazali views children as a gift from God and at the same time as a trust for their parents (Gade, 2018). Parents play an essential role in achieving child learning success. Therefore, if a parent can perform the trust, he will be rewarded in the sight of God, and conversely, if he neglects the duty and confidence, he will get sin. In connection with the purpose of learning, he emphasizes learning as efforts to draw closer to Allah. He does not allow understanding with worldly objectives. In this regard, he states:

*"The result of true knowledge is to get closer to Allah, the Lord of the worlds, and to connect with the high angels and gather with the spirits. All of that is instinctive dignity and respect."* (Zaini, 2017)

Based on the above statement, there are a few things to consider al-Ghazali, namely:

1. Education and learning is a process of humanizing human beings. This principle is in line with the psychology of humanism learning, which offers the tenets of humanistic education, namely: - Humans can learn naturally - Learning means if the subject fits their purpose - Learning will be meaningful if students do it, responsible, initiative, confident, creative, reflective, and open.
2. Learning is a lifetime, starting from birth to death. Al-Ghazali asserts that the parent as the first child learner begins the learning process before the child is born to succeed. That is when he wants to have a marital relationship because it will affect the child's quality. In this regard, he states in *Adâb al-Mu'âsyarah* (Adab Association of Husband and Wife), in performing the right relationship between husband and wife according to the Prophet's sunnah. It should be mentioned in a state of purity from ablution, reciting basmalah, Surat al-Ikhlâs, reciting takbir, tahlil, and other prayers (Hermawan, 2017). Learning is a transfer of knowledge. This is following the opinion of one of the figures of cognitive psychology Reber and Wilke, as follows:

*"Learning is a relatively permanent change in response potentiality resulting from enforced practice."* (Asrorun Niam Sholeh, 2004)

## **Elements and Benefits of Al-Ghazali's Education Theory Towards Lifelong Learning**

Education is part of a civilization, and knowledge is the most valuable thing to do in education. The knowledge is developed, disseminated, and taught can be directed from society to the future because knowledge is the foundation, content, and energy of a continuation of a culture that develops and continues to survive.

### **Elements of Lifelong Learning (LLL)**

There has been an increased research interest (Lynch, 2013) in how people engage in new teaching and learning styles in everyday life. Lifelong learning is generally characterized by three types: lifelong learning through formal classes, non-formal, and informal learning (Samsudin, 2015). It is beneficial for individuals to improve their lives through enhanced work skills, self-improvement, and knowledge enhancement. Different researches were described as

the definitions of LLL in many ways, depending on the objectives. The context of lifelong learning did happen in rapid technology changes and affected the people's lifestyle, which took over traditional forms of teaching and learning systems (Zulita, 2017).

Understandably, conventional teaching is the slightly sophisticated teacher-centred method rather than modern student-oriented applications and teaching and learning (Belias et al., 2013). Hence, LLL through distance education, e-learning, and part-time based learning has become a part of the culture and way of life-supporting human capital development (Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia, 2007). In the Ministry of Education statement in 2011, the government is prompted to publish the blueprint on the Enculturation of Lifelong Learning in Malaysia that outlines strategic initiatives to develop the lifelong learning industry for the ten years of 2011-2020. In the blueprint, lifelong learning is defined as the development of human potential through a continuous supportive process, which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills, and understanding they will require throughout their life. LLL also lead people to practice new knowledge with confidence, creativity, and enjoyment in all roles, circumstances, and environment (Zulita, 2017). It should benefit participants in increased competency in their work, upgrade skills, widen and update knowledge and improve social networking. It also equips people with skills and knowledge that will advance their careers. The definition of LLL and traditional learning is explained in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Lifelong Learning Definitions**

<b>Traditional Learning</b>	<b>Lifelong Learning</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The teacher is the source of knowledge</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners receive knowledge from the teacher</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners work by themselves</i></li> <li>• <i>Test are given to prevent progress until student have completely mastered a set of skills and to ration access to further learning</i></li> <li>• <i>All learners do the same thing</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers receive initial training plus ad hoc in-service training</i></li> <li>• <i>'Good' learners are identified and permitted to continue later education.</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Educators are guides to source of knowledge</i></li> <li>• <i>Educators serve ad facilitators for student's acquisition of knowledge</i></li> <li>• <i>People learn by doing, or 'Acting Learning'</i></li> <li>• <i>People learn in groups and from each other</i></li> <li>• <i>Assessment is used to guide learning strategies and to identify pathways for future learning.</i></li> <li>• <i>Educators develop individualized learning plans</i></li> <li>• <i>Educators are lifelong learners. Initial training and ongoing professional development are linked.</i></li> <li>• <i>People have access to learning opportunities over a lifetime.</i></li> <li>• <i>Learning is put into practice</i></li> <li>• <i>Learners reflect upon learning and analyze their personal development.</i></li> </ul>

Source: The World bank (2003) ; (Samsudin, 2015)

Another research by Nordstrom (2008) listed ten benefits of the applications of lifelong learning to all parties as shown in the figure below;

**Table 2: Benefits of Lifelong Learning**

1. *Lifelong learning helps fully develop natural abilities.*
2. *Lifelong learning opens the mind.*
3. *Lifelong learning creates a curious, hungry mind.*
4. *Lifelong learning increases our wisdom*
5. *Lifelong learning makes the world a better place.*
6. *Lifelong learning helps us adapt to change.*
7. *Lifelong learning helps us find meaning in our lives.*
8. *Lifelong learning keeps us involved as active contributors to society.*
9. *Lifelong learning helps us make new friend and establish valuable relationships.*
10. *Lifelong learning leads to an enriching life of self-fulfillment.*

**Source: (Nordstrom 2008)**

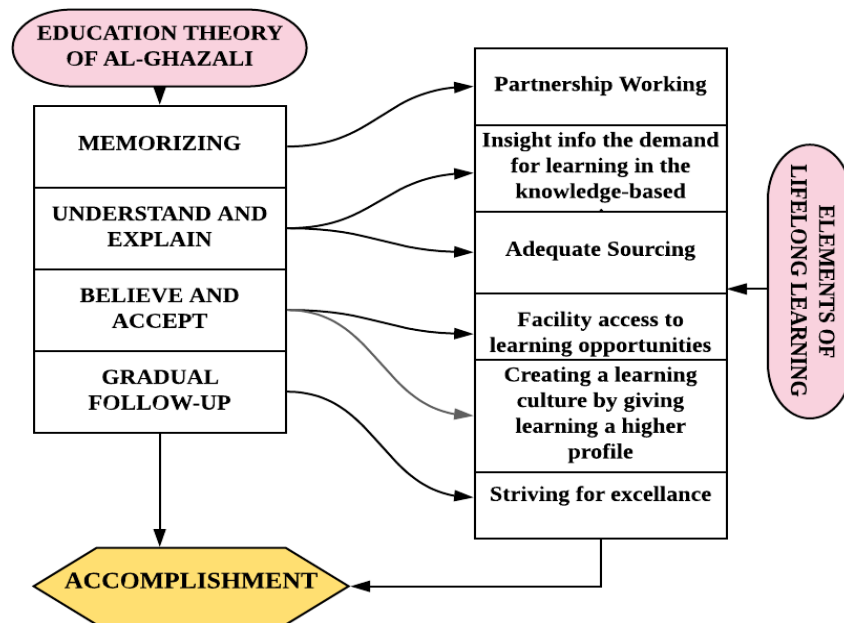
Summing up the central core elements of lifelong learning provided by (Laal & Laal, 2012) in his study, as mentioned by the Commission of European Communities (CEC) are:

- Partnership working;
  - not only between decision-making levels (national, regional, and local) and between public authorities and education service providers (schools, universities, etc.), the business sector and the social partners, vocational guidance services, research centres, etc.
- Insight into the demand for learning in the knowledge-based society;
  - which will entail redefining necessary skills, to include, for instance, the new information and communication technologies. Analyses should take into account foreseeable labour market trends.
- Adequate resourcing;
  - involving a substantial increase in public and private investment in learning. This implies increasing public budgets, ensuring the effective allocation of existing resources, and encouraging new investment forms. Investment in human capital is essential at all points in the economic cycle; skills gaps and shortages can undoubtedly co-exist with unemployment.
- Facilitating access to learning opportunities;
  - by making them more visible, introducing new provision, and removing obstacles to access, such as creating more local learning centres. Special efforts are necessary for different groups such as ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, or people living in rural areas.
- Creating a learning culture by giving learning a higher profile;
  - both in terms of image and by providing incentives for the people most reticent to opt for learning.
- Striving for excellence;
  - through the introduction of quality control and indicators to measure progress. In concrete terms, provision must be made for standards, guidelines, and mechanisms whereby achievements can be recognized and rewarded (CEC, 2001; Sultana, R. G., 2007).

**Finding: Integration of Al-Ghazali's Theory and Lifelong Learning Elements**

Al-Ghazali’s education theory greatly benefits educators in effective teaching and learning for the new education era 5.0. Nowadays, the United Nations emphasized the importance of lifelong learning worldwide in every aspect. The researcher found a connection between these two elements that benefit educators in cultivating lifelong learning integrated with Al-Ghazali education theory. The illustration is as shown in the figure below:

**Figure 2: Integrated framework of Al-Ghazali’s theory and Lifelong Learning Elements**



Source: Researcher (2020)

For the first stage of learning, students are encouraged to memorize the lessons. Al-Ghazali recognizes the importance of childhood age in the character building. He explains that a good childhood will give young people a good personality and help them continue an honourable life, and a lousy childhood will ruin their character. Once the character is lost, it won't be easy to redevelop it (Putra, 2017; Sajid Ullah Sheikh & Muhammad Abid Ali, 2019). Education is not limited to training the minds only and pouring information into it, but it involves all aspects; religious, moral, intellectual and physical personality. Through memorization at an early age, the lessons will easily absorb in human personality. The memorizing stage needed an excellent partnership to sustain the lifelong learning phase. This phase will help learners to accomplish the lesson thoroughly. At the second stage of learning, Al-Ghazali considers the heart as a spiritual subtlety (Zolondek, 1963) connected to the physical heart; and this spiritual subtlety is the core of man, which learns, comprehends, and knows. Al-Ghazali asserts that the process of education should result in cleansing the heart, as a result of which the ‘light of knowledge’ will brighten his heart. He assures that youngsters’ moral development is one of the fundamental objectives of education. He gives an example of a garden to explain the processes of moral education; before planting flowers, the ground must be cleared of weeds.

Similarly, teachers must purify the students’ soul by removing from it filthy thoughts and immoral deeds before teaching moral goodness and then all acts should be carried out for

the sake of God (Al-Ghazali, 2005). Al-Ghazali views various people's role as necessary in influencing a child's moral development, especially the parents, peers, and teachers (Zolondek, 1963). This matter is how students or learners will understand the lessons and impart or explain it to others. Teachers must provide adequate sourcing in terms of materials, support system, physical system and everything related to knowledge-based. Through all these characteristics, learners can develop their believe and accept the lessons.

In order to achieve a successful life, the gradual follow-up is needed in individual lessons. Al-Ghazali considers parents' role as significant because a child communicates more than any other person with his parents and affects them the most. He emphasizes the responsibility of parents to develop all aspects of a child's initial education. These aspects include language, cultural traditions, religious and moral beliefs. His parents influence a child for good, as well as for evil. Parents admired their child, built a strong character and kept themselves accountable if their child develops unacceptable characteristics (Sajid Ullah Sheikh & Muhammad Abid Ali, 2019). When a student starts seeking knowledge from his teacher, Al-Ghazali emphasizes that the teacher's role and impact are more important than parents (Nur Aeni Jam'iyah, 2001; Sajid Ullah Sheikh & Muhammad Abid Ali, 2019). He believes that the educator's own life must be filled with the characteristics that instruct young people to achieve it. Children have a strong impersonation propensity and probably benefit from what the instructor does rather than what he says (Zolondek, 1963). Al-Ghazali views the efforts and conduct of students as equally significant as those of teachers and parents. Consequently, in his book *Ihya Ulum Ad-Din*, he also guided students to prepare themselves to get knowledge thoroughly. In sums, to achieve lifelong learning in education, Al-Ghazali's education stages are in line with the UNESCO's lifelong learning elements. To accomplish all lessons, learners must have gradual follow-up from parents, teachers and from theirselves to sustain the knowledge for lifetime.

## CONCLUSION

Al-Ghazali was a conservative religious thinker. One of them is reflected in the purpose of education that he expressed, namely the achievement of human perfection that leads to a personal approach to God and human model that leads to happiness in this world and the hereafter. This human perfection in this world and the afterlife can only be achieved by mastering the nature of virtue through the path of knowledge. In the case of al-Ghazali curriculum, he classifies science into several parts: (1) science *syar'iyah* (religion) and *'aqliyah* (reason/intellectual), as well as science *ghairu syar'iyah* (non-religious) both praiseworthy (*mahmud*), allowed (*mubah*), or reprehensible (*madzmum*); (2) theoretical and practical science; (3) knowledge presented (*hudhuri*) and knowledge acquired (*hushuli*); as well as (4) the science of *fardhu' ain* and the science of *fardhu kifayah*. The classification of science by al-Ghazali does not mean a rejection of the importance of learning all kinds of science. Al-Ghazali emphasizes human beings' need to prioritize education by placing religious knowledge in the most significant position.

More importantly, al-Ghazali concludes that the centre of education is the heart because it is man's essence. He believed that the human substance lies not in his physique's elements, but his heart and sees man as a theocentric element. The concept of his education is more directed at the formation of noble morals. To realize the virtuous learners, al-Ghazali looked at the importance of exemplary methods and habits in the educational process. In the context of the present and the present, al-Ghazali's thinking is still relevant to be actualized as an attempt to cure and end the crisis of Islamic education orientation.

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