

The History of *Iṣlāḥ* al-Gazālī's Movement and Its Relevance to Contemporary Education Concept

Azwar*¹, Muhammad Ikhsan**²

^{1,2}Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Islam dan Bahasa Arab (STIBA) Makassar, Indonesia

Author's correspondence: *azwar.iskandar@gmail.com

Abstract

The aim of this research is to understand the history of the *islāḥ* al-Gazālī movement and its relevance to the concept of contemporary education. This research method is qualitative-descriptive, using library research techniques and historical and sociological approaches. The findings indicate that al-Gazālī started the *islāḥ* movement by repairing himself first. Further, al-Gazālī diagnosed the problems faced by the Islamic community and found that the quality of society, good or bad, depended on the knowledge and credibility of scholars. Based on this diagnosis, al-Gazālī took improvement measures by including: producing a new generation of scholars and educators; designing educational systems and curricula in accordance with Islamic principles; reviving the mission of *al-'amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahyī 'an al-munkar*; and fighting for social justice. Al-Gazālī's thoughts and actions played a crucial role in the process of reform and renewal in society, which produced the generation of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī through reform of thought and education. In today's context, al-Gazālī's thought and movement suggest that the problem of Islam needs to be overcome from its root, namely "moral reform". The role of the scholar and the leader of the people are the two main elements that support the survival of the people, and both of these aspects should get serious attention.

Keywords: *Al-Gazālī; Iṣlāḥ; Ṣalāḥuddīn Al-Ayyūbī; Education; Contemporary.*

Introduction

In the 5th century Hijri (11th century AD), Muslims experienced a downturn that culminated with the attack of the Crusades by European Christians. The condition of Muslims at that time was very complex and influenced by a number of factors that caused them to suffer defeat in the conflict. The defeat did not just happen, but was a consequence of what developed in the lives of Muslims at that time (Zamzamy, Manurung, & Irfani, 2019). One of the biggest issues causing strife among Muslims was

the inter-madhab or group strife, where each group considers itself to be the sole representation of Islamic truth. This creates an internal rift that weakens the unity of Muslims and makes them vulnerable to external attacks. Al-Kilani (2019) mentions that disputes between madhab, tribes and political groups cause Muslims to be divided and unable to unite their forces to face common threats. These disputes resulted in strategic weakness and inconsistency that were exploited by their enemies.

The problems faced by Muslims at the time resulted in significant negative impacts on thought, education and social interaction, degrading the strength of the Ummah and demeaning the dignity of Islam. The influence of sectarian fanaticism on the education system was immense as sectarian leaders were actively involved in the activities of schools and educational institutions. They have a strong influence on the curriculum, goals, vision and lifestyle that develops in the educational environment. One of the negative impacts that occurs was the distortion of the purpose of education. The purpose of education becomes eroded because it was only focused on preparing students to fill certain positions in society (Zamzamy et al., 2019).

Each madhab competed to dominate their thoughts in these areas as a first step to controlling positions and institutions of power. In addition, the deviation of educational goals caused the curriculum at that time to be limited, only focusing on fiqh studies of worship and muamalat which could not be separated from the views of the madhab. The curriculum tended to emphasize aspects of cognitive rationality with a focus on maintaining the teachings of the madhab and disseminating them to students, rather than presenting solutions to various life problems (al-Kilani, 2019). As a result of these conditions, the Muslim community was faced with a dilemma; either to make a fundamental transformation from within or to succumb to threats that could potentially lead to destruction. Some members of the Muslim Ummah at that time chose to adopt change and began to reassess their mistakes. There was a demand for transformation among Muslims, which of course required a process and stages that were not easy and time-consuming.

After decades of struggle, Muslims achieved victory over the Crusaders in the mid-6th century Hijri, led by Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī (Ash-Shallabi, 2013). Unfortunately, in the historical narrative of this victory, many researchers tend to view it too simplistically. They focus more on the movements and achievements of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī, without regard to the long-time span. Researchers tended to highlight the military jihad initiated by Nuruddīn al-Zankī's family and later followed by Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī, who succeeded in liberating colonized Islamic territories and reclaiming the holy land.

Such an approach can actually lead to the conclusion and understanding that what Muslims need to face significant internal and external challenges is a Muslim leader who is passionate about jihad, has skills in organizing troops, and is capable of leading a war (al-Kilani, 2019). Such an understanding has the potential to distract the Ummah from the problems that exist within the Ummah and can create a passive mentality. In addition, such an approach tends to overemphasize the individual and his or her actions, discourages collaborative efforts ('amal jamā'i), and diminishes the role of the ulama and leaders of the ummah in assuming collective responsibility for the challenges faced by the ummah.

Therefore, Muslims should explore the changes that took place during the half century after the Muslims' defeat in the Crusades until they were able to rise up, achieve victory, and reclaim Palestine. It was important for Muslims to understand how Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī's leadership emerged and led to the glorious victory, and whether Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī was a sudden individual phenomenon or part of a larger change. Muslims need to explore the thoughts and improvements that took place at that time to promote change and create a figure of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī's stature. This should be the main focus of thinkers and activists of Islamic propagation and education so that Muslims can take many lessons. The process and stages of change are important to be studied by Muslims today in order to form a pattern of education and the development of contemporary Islamic civilization that can change the condition of the ummah towards a better purpose.

One of the main figures who promoted the *islāḥ* (improvement) movement in the condition of Muslims, which became the basis for extraordinary changes in Islamic society at that time, was al-Gazālī (Hasib, 2017b). He is known as the *hujjah* of al-Islām (Hasyim, 2005) and given the nickname *Zainuddīn*, born in Thus region of Khurasan in 450 AH (Syafiril, 2017). Al-Gazālī became a key figure and fighter of the improvement and renewal movement in the midst of the weakness and decline of Muslims at that time.

Taking into account the above description, it is important to investigate and explore in depth the history of the *islāḥ* movement carried out by al-Gazālī during the period of struggle and change. The study of the history of al-Gazālī's movement is very relevant as a source of inspiration and reference for Muslims in their efforts to improve, especially in the context of education in Islamic society today. Some previous studies have examined al-Gazālī's thoughts and movements of change such as al-Kilani (2019), Zamzamy et. al. (2019), Hasib (2017b), and others, but these studies have not discussed the relevance of al-Gazālī's movement (including his ideas and thoughts) to the concept of contemporary education. Therefore, this study is conducted with the aim of understanding the history of *islāḥ* al-Gazālī movement and its relevance to the concept of contemporary education, especially those related to the role of science and scholars. The research problem that arises to be answered is how did al-Gazālī start the *islāḥ* movement in society? What are the steps in the *islāḥ* movement in overcoming the problems that occur in society? How did al-Gazālī play an important role in the reformation of the *ummah*, influencing the birth of the generation of *Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī*? How is the *islāḥ* movement by al-Gazālī relevant to contemporary education?.

This research is a descriptive-qualitative research with library research technique (John, 2013). This research uses a multidisciplinary approach (Rohmatika, 2019), namely: (i) historical approach, which is the study of sources containing information about the past and carried out systematically, to know and understand and discuss in depth the intricacies or matters related to the topic of study, both related to teachings, history and practices of real implementation in everyday life, throughout its history

(Haryanto, 2017); (ii) sociological approach, which is a study that makes society the object of study seen from the point of view of the relationship between humans and the processes arising from human relations in society (Rifa'i, 2018).

The type of data used in this research is qualitative data collected or sourced from literature, directly from books/magazines related to al-Gazālī's thoughts such as his thoughts, movement of change, *iṣlāḥ* movement and *tajdīd*, including the book titled *Hakaẓa Ẓahara Jīl Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī wa Hakaẓa 'Adatul Quds* (translation: *Model of Muslim Awakening: 50 Years of Education Movement's Efforts to Raise a Generation of Ṣalāḥuddīn and Reclaim Palestine*), *The Mystery of Islam's Dark Period and the Victory of the Crusades* (Al-Kilani, 2007), *Iḥyā' 'Ulūmuddīn* (Al-Ghazālī, 2005), and other books, papers, research/scientific journals related to the object of research.

Discussion

Iṣlāḥ al-Gazālī's Movement in Society

The first step of *iṣlāḥ* taken by al-Gazālī was *al-insiḥab* (withdrawal). Al-Gazālī started the improvement of his own soul and self first. *Al-Insīḥab* is the process of withdrawing from all busyness with public affairs and replacing it with busyness in improving the soul or self (*al-naḥs*) specifically with two things that must be passed (Hasib, 2017b). In doing so, al-Gazālī, took two kinds of evaluation (al-Kilani, 2019). First, evaluating all the thoughts, beliefs and perceptions received from his society at that time which was full of various *madhhab*s and sects that contradicted each other, stifled their ability to reason, and strengthened *taqlīd* and *madhhab* fanaticism. Secondly, evaluating the tendency of the soul and the real goal obtained during the activity of the *madhhab*, which is the tendency that only makes the figures of the *madhhab* as the authority of law and not Islam. This tendency has thrown the scholars into disgrace and made them the playthings of the rulers.

Al-Gazālī is one of the outstanding scholars who is able to bring great changes in the history of Muslims (Sholehah & Muali, 2018). The maturity of his thinking, along with his extensive knowledge and *ṣaḥābah*, made him a person who is able to get out of

problems well and calmly, with definite stages and appropriate methods in many issues, especially in the issue of *iṣlāḥ* conditions of Muslims at that time. This is embodied in the following three basic rules of his *iṣlāḥ* method (al-Kilani, 2019). The first rule is that the basic purpose of the existence of Muslims (al-ummah al-muslimah) is to carry the message of Islam to the entire universe. If this ummah stands idly by and does not convey the message of Islam, then the world will be filled with various kinds of chaos and great damage. The second rule is that Muslims are required to spread the mission of reform (*iṣlāḥ*) to all corners and corners of the earth. The third rule is that the ultimate goal of efforts to improve the ummah is to diagnose and provide solutions, not just to show negative emotional reactions by busy looking for scapegoats and accusing each other.

The condition of the ulama who are not right will cause many problems and diseases in the body of Muslim society. Therefore, it is no exaggeration when al-Gazālī says in his book, *Iḥyā' 'Ulūmuddīn* (Al-Ghazālī, 2005), that the corruption of a nation (society) is due to the corruption of the leaders (state rulers), the corruption of the leaders is due to the corruption of the scholars, and the corruption of the scholars is because they are enslaved by the love of wealth and position (Kurniawan, 2018). Therefore, al-Gazālī views that anyone who is controlled by the love of the world will certainly not be able to carry out *hisbah* (enjoining right and forbidding wrong) to ordinary people, let alone to rulers and great people (Choiriyah, 2020). Al-Gazālī said that religion is the foundation while the ruler is the guardian (Hasib, 2017a). Anything without a foundation will be destroyed and anything without a guardian will be neglected.

In performing *iṣlāḥ*, al-Gazālī diagnosed the diseases in the society. Among the diseases that al-Gazālī successfully diagnosed are the following (al-Kilani, 2019):

- a. Scholars are far from crucial issues in society and are busy with small issues that do not benefit the people much. Al-Gazālī saw that this damage to the purpose of education and the mission of scholars had encouraged students to work on *fiqh*

issues that were characterized by sectarianism and neglect other sciences needed by society.

- b. The rise of madhhab fanaticism and the loss of the value of knowledge. When the credibility and capacity of scholars and the value of knowledge fall, there will be all kinds of disputes and sectarianism.
- c. The breakup of the unity of the ummah and the emergence of communities of madhhabs. Al-Gazālī states that the sectarian disputes and sectarian behavior that are rampant among the scholars continue to grow and spread so as to eventually nourish sectarian groups, destroying the integrity of society and spreading fanaticism throughout its layers. This is driven by the ulama's desire to have dignity and a high position in society, so they try to recruit followers and build exclusive communities that are educated with the value of fanaticism instead of correct understanding.

In this case, the researcher agrees with the typology proposed by al-Gazālī for several reasons. Firstly, al-Gazālī diagnosed these diseases in a historical context where clerics had great influence in society. His criticism of scholars who are preoccupied with minor issues indicates an awareness of the need to focus on more fundamental and crucial issues that affect the ummah at large. History proves that excessive attention to minor issues often neglects major issues resulting in social and intellectual decline. Second, al-Gazālī rightly identified the danger of sectarian fanaticism leading to inter-group strife and hostility. When the focus of education shifts from the true value of knowledge to the defense of a particular school, the result is the degradation of the credibility of scholars and the value of knowledge. This is relevant to the current situation where sectarian disputes often hamper the progress of Muslims. This kind of madhhab fanaticism will result in the erosion of the value of knowledge.

Third, al-Gazālī's emphasis on the danger of breaking the unity of the ummah due to exclusive sectarian communities is very relevant. When clerics and community leaders focus more on their own group interests, this can divide the ummah and hinder the cooperation and solidarity needed to face common challenges. Clerics' desire for

dignity and high standing often leads them to neglect the public interest and foster harmful exclusivism. Fourth, al-Gazālī saw that education that focused on narrow fiqh issues and sectarianism neglected other disciplines that were urgently needed by society. This reflects a holistic view of education, where all useful sciences should be taught and studied for the welfare of society as a whole. Furthermore, fifth, this typology was highly relevant for today's educational and social reforms. By understanding and addressing the ills diagnosed by al-Gazālī, we can build an education system and society that was more inclusive, oriented towards the common good, and based on true knowledge and high moral values.

Furthermore, according to al-Gazālī, after performing *iṣlāḥ* on himself and then diagnosing the disease that is attacking Muslims, al-Gazālī then used the results of the diagnosis as a preliminary step to find treatment measures. Al-Kilani (2019) summarized the scope of *iṣlāḥ* al-Gazālī's as follows:

- a. Trying to produce a new generation of scholars and murabbi (educators). The first step taken by al-Gazālī in making changes and *iṣlāḥ* is to raise awareness of the urgency of this model of scholars and explain the institutional model, curriculum, methods means and conditions needed to give birth to a new generation of scholars and murabbi.
- b. Creating a new system of education and teaching. Al-Gazālī considered that the education system that developed at that time had been damaged in its goals and targets, no longer focusing on realizing the purpose of education, according to the message of Islam. Education at that time only aimed to produce people who were ready to work as government employees to hold positions in the *qaḍa* (judiciary), *iftā'* (fatwa), *waqf* and others, which according to al-Gazālī they were scholars of the world not scholars of the hereafter. Al-Gazālī then formulated a new system as an alternative that is expected to produce and give birth to scholars of the afterlife (aiming at Allah) (Suhaimi, 2019) who were able to fight for religious goals and targets in accordance with the mission of *al-'amr bil ma'rūf wa al-nahy 'an al-munkar*. The curriculum launched by al-Gazālī has a specialty, different from the

curricula of his day, which is far from the partial nature (juz'i) that developed in the tradition of sectarianism. The al-Gazālī curriculum did not stop at the sciences of fiqh determined by the madhhab, but formed a whole framework that combined all religious sciences such as tawhid, Sufism and fiqh. This system later became a model followed by a number of schools interested in his preaching, one of which is the al-Qadiriyyah school (madrasah al-qadiriyyah) in Baghdad which also had a very significant role in the iṣlāḥ preaching movement.

- c. Reviving the mission of *al-'amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahyī 'an al-munkar*. Al-Gazālī views *al-'amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahyī 'an al-munkar* (enjoining right and forbidding wrong) as the most vital center of the religious movement, because it is the greatest task and mission of all prophets sent by Allah Swt. According to him, if knowledge and practice are ignored, the mission of the prophets will not function, religion will become weak, misguidance will be rampant, ignorance will spread everywhere, riots will erupt and the state would collapse.
- d. Calling for social justice. Al-Gazālī's attention to the issue of social justice is similar to his attention to the issue of creed and the call for iṣlāḥ. The basic principle of al-Gazālī's view on this issue is that wealth is a means bestowed upon His servants as a means to fulfill their needs and a means to perform full obedience. Therefore, al-Gazālī views that the distribution of wealth based on religious ethics must be prioritized over the interests of the state (Santoso, 2019). Al-Gazālī always paid great attention to social justice in society (Parrott, 2017).

In this case, we agree with the typology regarding the scope of iṣlāḥ al-Gazālī, for several reasons. First, al-Gazālī initiated reform by raising awareness of the importance of new scholars and educators with integrity. This step demonstrates a deep understanding that sustainable change must begin with quality human resources. Secondly, the attempt to formulate an institutional model, curriculum, methods, and necessary conditions indicates a systematic and comprehensive approach to educational reform. This is relevant to contemporary efforts to design an education system that produces leaders with integrity. Third, al-Gazālī rightly identified the

defects in the goals and targets of education in his day, which were more oriented towards governmental careers than devotion to God. This critique is relevant to the problems of modern education which often focuses on utilitarian and materialistic aspects. Fourth, the curriculum that al-Gazālī formulated is not limited to fiqh, but included tawhid, tasawwuf, and other religious sciences, indicating the holistic approach required to form balanced and well-rounded scholars. This contrasts with the partial approach that developed in the tradition of sectarianism.

Fourth, al-Gazālī emphasizes that enjoining to the good and forbidding the wrong is central to the mission of the prophets and vital for the continuation of religion. This emphasis is relevant to the important role of religion in maintaining morality and ethics in contemporary society. Fifth, al-Gazālī views social justice with the same seriousness as the issue of faith. The principle that wealth should be distributed based on religious ethics demonstrates his commitment to just social welfare. This approach emphasizes that the distribution of wealth should prioritize religious ethics over state interests, which is relevant to issues of wealth distribution and economic injustice in the modern world. Overall, al-Kilani's proposed typology of *islāḥ* al-Gazālī movement offers a comprehensive and relevant framework for educational and social reform. This approach includes the formation of quality human resources, a holistic education system, the role of religion in maintaining morality, and attention to social justice, all of which are highly relevant to contemporary challenges.

The Birth of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī's Generation: The Influence of *islāḥ* al-Gazālī Movement

Al-Gazālī has played a vital role in the process of reform (*islāḥ*) and renewal within the ummah. This role had a great influence on the history of the birth of the generation of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī. Although al-Gazālī could not directly influence Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī and his generation (the two did not meet), because he died almost thirty years before the birth of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī (532 AH), al-Gazālī's influence could give birth to a great generation educated with the treatise of Islamic

struggle like Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī and the youth of his era. There are several dominant influences on the process of the iṣlāḥ movement that gave birth to the generation of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī (al-Kilani, 2019).

First, al-Gazālī's da'wah pattern that applied the principle of al-insiḥab wa al-'audah became a model followed by a number of figures from various Islamic schools and groups. They abandoned all forms of sectarian disputes and disputes and focused their attention on educating their primordial communities (khaṣat al-anfus) and after successfully cleansing themselves, they immediately returned to the community scene by bringing their share of change in it. Minhaj al-Gazālī emerged as a solid vision, implementing holistic change efforts, developing diverse areas of specialization and choosing to refer directly to the Qur'ān and Sunnah rather than to the madhhab's books and works.

Secondly, the impact of al-Gazālī's hard work that succeeded in eroding the heretical schools of thought represented by mysticism and philosophy. The thoughts and discourses developed by them began to fade and were abandoned by the general public until they finally completely disappeared and collapsed. Through sharp criticism and rational argumentation, al-Gazālī is able to point out the fundamental flaws in these teachings, so that people began to doubt and abandon these deviant thoughts. Al-Gazālī not only attacked from the theological aspect, but also through a strong philosophical and scientific approach, which proved that these teachings were contrary to the basic principles of Islam. As a result, the thoughts and discourses developed by mysticism and philosophy began to fade and were abandoned by the general public until they finally completely disappeared and collapsed. Al-Gazālī's efforts not only purified the faith of the people, but also strengthened the intellectual foundation of Islam which later gave birth to a generation of scholars who were more adherent to pure Islamic values. Thus, al-Gazālī's efforts in facing and conquering heretical thoughts made a major contribution in maintaining the integrity and purity of Islamic teachings amidst the onslaught of various deviant thoughts.

Third, starting from al-Gazālī's desire and efforts to give birth to a new generation (scholars and educators of the people) and initiate a new education system that is holistic and in accordance with the Islamic treatise, al-Gazālī seriously fixed the problem of scholars and education, because as he said that the destruction of a society stems from sick scholars. Al-Gazālī developed a directed education and teaching system and created an independent curriculum, so as to produce many students who followed his personality and continued his vision and mission. They then carried the vision and mission of al-Gazālī and struggled to spread it to all levels of society through schools and mosques under their management control (al-Kilani, 2019).

For example, among al-Gazālī's students who continued his struggle were Abdul Karim bin Ali bin Abu Talib al-Razi who memorized the book *Ihyā' 'Ulūmu al-Dīn* by heart, Sa'ad bin Muhammad al-Bazzar, a member of the board of teachers at al-Nizamiyyah school and known as one of the leading intellectual figures, Muhammad bin Yahya, one of al-Gazālī's main students and called his teacher the "Second Shafi'i", and others. It is from these students of al-Gazālī that the main influence of his *islāḥ* movement continues. Among the main influences of the *islāḥ* movement from his students:

First, the emergence of *islāḥ* and reform madrasas that embraced a new and distinctive educational model that adopted the spirit of the educational methods developed by al-Gazālī. The curriculum, methods and teaching system in these schools were Islamic in nature, combining the fields of creed, *tazkiyah* (self-purification) and *fiqh*. Everyone is involved and joined hands to overcome the various diseases of the mind and spirit that had hit the Islamic society at that time and caused so many serious negative impacts in political, social, cultural, economic and military aspects.

Among the main madrasahs, the al-Qadiriyyah Madrasah is located in the capital city of Baghdad. It is founded by Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Jilani. He presided over all its activities for half a century so as to be able to widen its influence and connections to all corners of the Islamic world, especially when the Zankī empire is established. It can be said that Abdul Qadir al-Jilani is a scholar who continued *islāḥ* al-Gazālī movement,

because in fact, if analyzed more deeply according to al-Kilani (2019), the education system implemented by him is strongly influenced by al-Gazālī's curriculum; a holistic curriculum with the aim of preparing the scientific, mental and social aspects of all students and students so that they are able to carry out the mission of al-amr bil ma'rūf wa al-nahyī 'an al-munkar. While others are branch madrasas located in regions, villages and rural areas.

Secondly, coordination and cooperation between iṣlāḥ madrasas and their teachers' unions. Between 546 A.H. and 550 A.H., there is a movement to build coordination and communication between iṣlāḥ madrasas, with the aim of uniting steps and organizing cooperation. In terms of structure, the coordination and cooperation efforts succeeded in forming a unified leadership of the iṣlāḥ madrasas that reflected a collective (jama'ī) and universal character that covered all parts of the Islamic world.

The iṣlāḥ movement spearheaded by al-Gazālī's madrasa and other madrasas as described earlier produced results in various fields of life. This movement succeeded in giving birth to a new generation with spiritual strength and actions that were able to actualize the teachings and morals of Islam without being contaminated by the sentiments of sectarian fanaticism or the lust of the world. As this new generation spread and occupied strategic political, military, educational, social and economic positions in the areas they had fought for, the impact of their policies and actions in the face of problems and challenges arising from within the Muslim scene and in the face of external dangers could be seen.

This widespread and generalized influence is the result of the hard work of all Muslims who continued the iṣlāḥ and reform movements of al-Gazālī and other Muslim scholars. When the scholars had found unity of heart and were able to cooperate and respect each other without sacrificing religion to various groups or for the sake of worldly gains, it is at this point that a new generation of scholars and educators of the Ummah is born. It is the generation of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī, who educated and led the reformation of the Muslims and defeated the Crusaders and recaptured the Muslim shrines.

There are two important points of general influence of the *iṣlāḥ* movement in producing Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī's generation. First, the birth of *ummah al-mahjar* (a solid community that embraces all the potential of *iṣlāḥ*), namely the Zankī sultanate and its role in *iṣlāḥ* and reform. According to al-Kilani (2019), since Nūruddīn Zankī ruled, the sultanate of the Zankī family became a meeting center for *iṣlāḥ* reformers and students of reform madrasas. They made it a place of migration, where they came from all over and the sultan opened his doors wide to everyone who is sincere and willing to act in the way of Allah, even if their *madhhab* and affiliation differed. Secondly, preparing an Islamic society and complementing each other in educational and other endeavors. The Zankī Sultanate viewed the Muslim man as the primary basis for the construction of *al-ummah al-muslimah* (Muslim community). For this reason, it developed a holistic strategy in an effort to prepare an Islamic society. This strategy reflected the integrality of all institutions and agencies, thus encompassing education that made the younger generation the focus of its aim, recitations and public lectures that served to direct the general public and military education to prepare all elements of the *ummah* to face the various challenges and dangers that existed at that time.

Thus, the results of persistent efforts in the field of education to change the various negative sides of society in terms of thoughts, perceptions, and values, succeeded in giving birth to a Muslim generation that is far different from the previous generations described by Ibn Jabir (Kilani, 2019) as full of lust and heresy. Among the new generation is a mature young man named Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī, who is none other than the result of Nūruddīn Zankī's upbringing.

As in Nuruddin Zanki's time, the figures around Ṣalāḥuddīn were also students of Imam al-Gazālī's disciples, who had a great influence on his personality. One of al-Gazālī's students, al-Ḥafīẓ Ibn Asākir, besides being an advisor to Nuruddin Zanki, also advised Ṣalāḥuddīn, who consistently invited him to give his views in meetings with his officials (Al-Dīn, 1997). Besides Ibn Asākir, there is also al-Ḥafīẓ al-Silafī, a scholar of Iskandariyah who became a source of fatwa for Ṣalāḥuddīn and also his hadith teacher.

Al-Silafī is a student of al-Sulamī, a disciple of al-Gazālī, and learned from Shaykh Ahmad, al-Gazālī's brother who summarized our *Ihya' Ulumu al-Dīn* (Al-Subkī, 1993).

In Ṣalāḥuddīn's circle, there is also a scholar named Najmuddīn al-Khubusyanī, an advisor to Ṣalāḥuddīn who is instrumental in the fall of the Faṭimid dynasty. He is a student of Ahmad ibn Yahya, who is also a student of al-Gazālī (Al-Suyūṭī, 1967). Ibn Shaddad, a military qāḍī and advisor to Ṣalāḥuddīn, taught Ṣalāḥuddīn in fiqh and hadith, is a student of Najmuddīn Abū Maṣṣūr Muḥammad al-Tūsī, who is also a student of al-Gazālī. Ibn Shaddad wrote the book *al-Jihād* for Ṣalāḥuddīn and his descendants (al-Dzahaby, 2004).

Therefore, it is not surprising that al-Gazālī held a special place in the heart of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī, who endowed land for the al-Gazālīyah madrasa in Damascus, where al-Gazālī taught (Al-Ṣadafī, 2000). The disciples of al-Gazālī played an important role in the jihadi movement, from the time of 'Imāduddīn Zankī, Nuruddīn Zankī, to Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī, and of course, influenced the character of the figures of the jihadi movement. As a result, although al-Gazālī did not see the direct results of his efforts, the movement he started continued through his students, producing a generation that fought to liberate al-Quds.

Relevance of islāḥ al-Gazālī to the Concept (Philosophy) of Contemporary Education

The story of the rise of Muslims during the Crusades, despite the decline and suffering caused by the attacks of the Crusaders from Europe, can be a valuable lesson for Muslims today. The rise of Muslims at that time is not solely due to the existence of an extraordinary leader like Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī, but also due to the hard efforts of the scholars and the achievements of madrasas that produced a proud generation, namely the "generation of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī" (jīlu Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī). This is in line with what Allah affirms in the Qur'ān that all forms of crisis experienced by a society begin with what is in themselves. Allah subḥānahu wa ta'āla says in surah al-Anfāl: 53,

ذَلِكَ بِأَنَّ اللَّهَ لَمْ يَكُ مُعَيِّرًا نِعْمَةً أَنْعَمَهَا عَلَى قَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُعَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَأَنَّ اللَّهَ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

"That is because Allah will not change a favor that He has bestowed upon a people until they change what is in themselves. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing, All-Knowing."

In his attempt to build the morality of Muslims at the beginning of the Crusades, al-Gazālī emphasized the importance of jihad against passions and vices, more than jihad against enemies. His aim is to help Muslims reform themselves. Nevertheless, al-Gazālī also later taught jihad in the context of "war" (qitāl). In short, during the Crusades, Muslims managed to integrate the concepts of jihad al-naḥs and jihad against the enemy effectively. Al-Gazālī's approach to jihad highlights the importance of combining various potentials in the struggle of the ummah, including spiritual, material, and intellectual potentials. This is al-Gazālī's intelligence; in the situation of war, he is able to see the problems of the ummah in a comprehensive and fundamental manner. In the midst of this situation, al-Gazālī emphasized the urgency of education. He actively criticized views that he considered to be misleading the ummah, and showed great concern for scholarly issues and scholars.

In the current context, the challenges faced by Muslims are not only related to surface issues such as politics or economics. Instead, the problems of the ummah today must be addressed from their very basic roots, as Ali al-Sulamī refers to the stage of "moral reform" (Husaini, 2006). This stage of awakening and improvement of the soul certainly cannot be carried out without a strong foundation of scientific understanding. Knowledge is the foundation of understanding and belief. Correct knowledge will guide towards correct beliefs and right deeds. On the other hand, erroneous knowledge will lead to erroneous understanding.

In the struggle of the Ummah today, a comprehensive understanding of the problems facing Muslims is essential. Issues such as political, scientific, moral, social, and so on, must be analyzed and understood in a proportional and fair manner. This is where al-Gazālī wrote the book *Ihyā'Ulūmuddīn*, which translates as "bringing the sciences of religion to life". At that time, al-Gazālī seemed to see that the religious sciences had experienced their death, so they needed to be revived. In his work, al-

Gazālī strongly emphasized the importance of intention and the procedure for the division of knowledge and its placement according to its proportion.

The political problems facing the Ummah today are profound. However, the scientific and moral issues are the more fundamental core, so that the solution in the political field will not be achieved without first addressing the damage in these more fundamental aspects. Al-Gazālī and the scholars of his time endeavored to correct the thinking of the scholars and Muslims and emphasized the importance of acting on the basis of knowledge, so as to prevent them from making mistakes. For flawed knowledge and unscrupulous scholars are the root of corruption for Islam and its community. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) gave the scholars the responsibility of maintaining the integrity of this religion. He even warned about the coming period full of trials and the spreading of fatwas by uninformed people. The Prophet said,

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ انْتِزَاعًا يَنْتَزِعُهُ مِنَ النَّاسِ، وَلَكِنْ يَقْبِضُ الْعِلْمَ بَقْبِضِ الْعُلَمَاءِ، حَتَّى إِذَا لَمْ يَبْقَ عَالِمًا اتَّخَذَ النَّاسُ زُؤُوسًا جُهَالًا، فَسُئِلُوا فَأَفْتَوْا بِغَيْرِ عِلْمٍ، فَضَلُّوا وَأَضَلُّوا.

"Allah does not take away knowledge from people all at once. But Allah takes away religious knowledge by killing the scholars. When the scholars are gone, the people will choose fools as their leaders. When the ignorant leaders are questioned, they will give an opinion without knowledge. They are misguided and misleading." (Al-Naisābūrī, 1955)

Throughout the course of Islamic history, true scholars have been very active in defending the fundamental principles of Islam, developing Islamic sciences, and protecting them from the encroachments of unrighteous or evil scholars. Scientific misconduct is not left unchecked, but is always met with strong, academic opposition.

In today's context, scholars and leaders of the people (umarā') are two important pillars in maintaining the continuity of the ummah. These two aspects must be taken seriously. Political activists within the ummah must have a correct understanding of Islam. Otherwise, those who are supposed to be political leaders may pose a great threat to the survival of Islam. Due to their lack of knowledge, wrong actions may take place. It is not right that we put aside any one aspect of life in the struggle. However,

what is correct is that everything should be placed according to its proportion and standing. This is the concept of justice.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) began the spread of Islam by emphasizing the aspect of knowledge, giving people a correct understanding of the basic concepts in Islam, such as the concepts of God, the Prophet, revelation, justice, religion, and others. The foundations of Islamic thought, understanding, standards of values and obedience were firmly planted by the Prophet Muhammad to his companions. They later became formidable figures of scholars, intellectuals and fighters in various fields of life.

Therefore, al-Gazālī's thoughts and movements have a strong relevance to contemporary education in the aspect of educational philosophy. Al-Gazālī's philosophy of education, rooted in the basic principles of Islam, emphasizes not only on the transfer of knowledge but also on the formation of individual character and morals. This makes a significant contribution to the way we view education today. The concept of contemporary education philosophy that can be offered based on the relevance of *islāḥ* al-Gazālī described above includes:

1. Holistic and Integrative Education, an educational concept that emphasizes the integration of spirituality, morality, and intellect. Taking a lesson from al-Gazālī who emphasized *jihād* against lust as the first step before physical *jihād*, education today needs to develop individuals comprehensively, covering mental, moral, and physical aspects.
2. Moral Reform in Education, namely by prioritizing character building and noble morals as the main foundation of education. This moral reform is in line with al-Gazālī's approach which emphasizes the importance of morality in facing the challenges of the times.
3. Criticalism and Deep Research, namely by emphasizing the importance of scientific criticism and in-depth research. al-Gazālī is known for his criticism of misleading views and this can be implemented in contemporary education by encouraging students to always think critically and deeply in understanding various issues.

4. Central Role of Ulema and Scholars. Revive the role of ulama and scholars in society as moral and intellectual guardians. Contemporary education must produce a generation that is able to understand and develop religious knowledge correctly, and can be a moral example for society.
5. Contextual Learning, namely by applying learning that is relevant to the context of the times and the challenges facing Muslims today. al-Gazālī is able to see the problems of the people as a whole and fundamental, and contemporary education must be able to contextualize past lessons with today's challenges.
6. Leadership Education with Integrity, by building leaders who have integrity and a correct understanding of Islam. This includes education that combines political, social, and moral aspects, so that the leaders produced are not only intellectually intelligent, but also have strong morality.
7. Strengthening the Foundations of Knowledge and Religious Understanding, in line with al-Gazālī's work, "Ihyā' 'Ulūmuddīn" which means "bringing the sciences of religion to life", contemporary education should focus on strengthening the foundations of knowledge and deep religious understanding. This includes in-depth education in aqidah, fiqh, tasawwuf, and various other Islamic sciences.

These concepts offer a comprehensive and relevant approach to contemporary education, integrating the values and principles taught by al-Gazālī and adapting them to the challenges and needs of today.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion, we can conclude several things. First, al-Gazālī started by performing *iṣlāḥ* on himself, evaluating and correcting his thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions. He diagnosed the ills of Islamic society, finding that the damage lay in the relationship between creed, politics, society, and the credibility of the ulama. The main problems included scholars who were distant from crucial issues, fanaticism of the madhhab, and a rupture in the unity of the ummah. Second, after diagnosing, al-Gazālī took steps to give birth to a new generation of scholars and educators, develop an

education system and curriculum that is in accordance with Islam, revive the mission of al-'amr bi al-ma'rūf wa al-nahyī 'an al-munkar, and call for social justice. Third, al-Gazālī played an important role in the reform of the ummah, influencing the birth of the generation of Ṣalāḥuddīn al-Ayyūbī. His preaching patterns, the principle of al-insiḥāb wa al-'audah, and his new educational curriculum inspired the iṣlāḥ madrasas that produced important leaders. Fourth, al-Gazālī's thought and movement emphasized that the problems of today's Muslims must be solved from their moral roots. Moral reform and correct scientific understanding are the basis of revival. Ulama and umarā' as the two pillars of the ummah must be considered, and political leaders must have a correct understanding of Islam to avoid greater damage.

The results of this study make several important contributions to contemporary education and science. It emphasizes the importance of individual self-improvement as the first step in reforming society. In the context of contemporary education, it underscores the need for a holistic approach that includes developing students' character, spirituality and morality, in addition to academic achievement. Then, by developing a system and curriculum that is in line with Islamic values, al-Gazālī points out the importance of a curriculum that not only focuses on cognitive aspects but also on moral and ethical aspects. This contribution is highly relevant for today's curriculum designers who seek to integrate ethical and religious values in education. Overall, the results of this study provide valuable guidance for building an education system that focuses not only on intellectual development but also on character and moral formation, all of which are essential to face current and future global challenges.

Bibliography

- Al-Dīn, A. al-Q. S. (1997). *Al-Rauḍatain fī Akhbāri al-Daulatain*. Bairūt: Mu'assasah al-Risālah.
- Al-Dzahaby, S. al-D. (2004). *Siyar A'lam al-Anbiya*. Bairūt: Mu'assasah al-Risalah.
- Al-Ghazālī, M. bin M. bin M. (2005). *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. Dār Ibnu Ḥazm.
- al-Kilani, M. I. (2019). *Model Kebangkitan Umat Islam: Upaya 50 Tahun Gerakan Pendidikan*

- Melahirkan Generasi Shalahuddin dan Merebut Palestina* (1st ed.; Yudha Hidayat, Ed.). Depok: Mahdara Publishing.
- Al-Naisābūrī, M. bin al-Ḥajjāj al-Q. (1955). *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*. Dār al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyyah al-Kubrā.
- Al-Ṣadafī, Ṣalāh al-Dīn Khalīl. (2000). *Al-Wāfi bilwafayāt*. Bairūt: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Turās.
- Al-Subkī, T. al-D. ‘Abd al-W. bin T. al-D. (1993). *Tabaqāt al-Syāfi’iyyah al-Kubrā*. Hajru Liṭṭibā’ah wa al-Nasyr w al-Tauzī’.
- Al-Suyūṭī, ‘Abd al-Raḥmān bin Abī Bakr Jalāl al-Dīn. (1967). *Ḥusn al-Muḥāḍarah fī Tārīkh Miṣr wa al-Qāhirah*. Miṣr: Dār Iḥyā’ al-Kutub al-‘Arabiyyah.
- Al Kilani, M. I. (2007). *Misteri Masa Kelam Islam dan Kemenangan Perang Salib*. Bekasi.
- Ash-Shallabi, A. M. (2013). *Shalahuddin Al-Ayyubi: Pahlawan Islam Pembebas Baitul Maqdis*. Pustaka Al-Kautsar.
- Choiriyah, C. (2020). Peranan Kepemimpinan Dakwah Dalam Melaksanakan Amar Ma’ruf Nahi Munkar. *Yonetim: Jurnal Manajemen Dakwah*, 3(01), 1–16. Retrieved from <http://jurnal.radenfatah.ac.id/index.php/yonetim/article/view/6119>
- Haryanto, S. (2017). Pendekatan Historis Dalam Studi Islam. *Manarul Qur’an: Jurnal Ilmiah Studi Islam*, 17(1), 127–135. Retrieved from <https://ojs.unsiq.ac.id/index.php/mq/article/download/927/498>.
- Hasib, K. (2017a). Konsep Siyasaḥ dan Adab Bernegara Menurut Imam Al-Ghazali. *FALASIFA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman*, 8(1), 1–16. doi: <https://doi.org/10.36835/falasifa.v8i1.35>
- Hasib, K. (2017b). Tasawuf Dan Reformasi Umat Berdasarkan Pemikiran Imam al-Ghazali. *Al-Rasikh: Jurnal Hukum Islam*, 6(02), 83–99. doi: <https://doi.org/10.38073/rasikh.v6i02.58>
- Hasyim, M. S. (2005). Al-Asy’ariyah (Studi Tentang Pemikiran Al-Baqillani, Al-Juwaini, Al-Ghazali). *HUNAFA: Jurnal Studia Islamika*, 2(3), 209–224. doi: <https://doi.org/10.24239/jsi.v2i3.317.209-224>
- Husaini, A. (2006). *Hegemoni Kristen-Barat dalam studi Islam di perguruan tinggi*. Gema insani.
- John, W. C. (2013). *Research Design Pendekatan Kualitatif, Kuantitatif dan Mixed*. Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Kurniawan, Y. (2018). *Hubungan Ulama Dengan Umara’ menurut Imam Al-Ghazali Dan Relevansinya Di Indonesia*. UIN Raden Intan Lampung. Retrieved from

<http://repository.radenintan.ac.id/id/eprint/4732>.

- Parrott, J. (2017). Al-Ghazali and the Golden Rule: Ethics of Reciprocity in the Works of a Muslim Sage. *Journal of Religious & Theological Information*, 16(2), 68–78. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1080/10477845.2017.1281067>
- Rifa'i, M. (2018). Kajian Masyarakat Beragama Perspektif Pendekatan Sosiologis. *Al-Tanzim: Jurnal Manajemen Pendidikan Islam*, 2(1), 23–35. Retrieved from <https://ejournal.unuja.ac.id/index.php/al-tanzim/article/view/246>.
- Rohmatika, R. V. (2019). Pendekatan Interdisipliner dan Multidisipliner Dalam Studi Islam. *Al-Adyan: Jurnal Studi Lintas Agama*, 14(1), 115–132.
- Santoso, I. R. (2019). Konsep Marketing Berbasis Maqoshid Al-syari'i Imam Al-Ghazali. *Jurnal Ilmiah Ekonomi Islam*, 5(3), 157–165. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.29040/jiei.v5i3.557>
- Sholehah, B., & Muali, C. (2018). Pendidikan Akhlak Perspektif Al-Ghazali. *At-Tajdid: Jurnal Ilmu Tarbiyah*, 7(2), 190–205.
- Suhaimi, A. (2019). Concept of idealism philosophy in Islamic education according to imam Al-Ghozali. *Utopia y Praxis Latinoamericana*, 24, 359–369. doi: <http://orcid.org/0000-0001-8337-3598>
- Syafril, S. (2017). Pemikiran Sufistik: Mengenal Biografi Intelektual Imam Al-Ghazali. *SYAHADAH: Jurnal Ilmu Al-Qur'an Dan Keislaman*, 5(2). doi: <https://doi.org/10.32520/syhd.v5i2.184>
- Zamzamy, M. B., Manurung, N. S., & Irfani, F. (2019). Gerakan Da'wah Ishlah Imam Al-Ghazali Dan Pengaruhnya Dalam Sejarah Lahirnya Gerakan Shalahuddin Al-Ayyubi. *Komunika: Journal of Communication Science and Islamic Da'wah*, 2(2), 93–104. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.32832/komunika.v2i2.4615>