

## Imam Ghazali's Educational Philosophy and Its Relevance to Social Science Learning in Primary School

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### ABSTRACT

This article aims to reveal the relevance of Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy to social studies learning at primary school (SD/MI). Through a literature study using documentation techniques as a collecting technique, the findings are (1) Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy focuses on the final goal of humans, namely the afterlife with worldly media. Apart from that, the key concept that must be understood is that teachers have a heavy responsibility towards students because they are not only responsible for student learning outcomes but also for students' morals, morals and character; (2) social studies learning at SD/MI has more contextual characteristics so that the learning process prioritizes direct experience gained by students; (3) the relevance of Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy to social studies learning at primary school can be done through the interconnection integration method without dichotomizing its epistemological aspects into the two poles of religious knowledge and general science; and (4) there are two ways to connect Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy and social studies learning, namely making Imam Ghazali's spirit or perspective on education the content of social studies learning in SD/MI indirectly or as a hidden curriculum and reconceptualizing social studies learning at primary school which is in accordance with Imam Ghazali's views on education.

### Introduction

In the world of education, educational philosophy has a strategic position in determining the direction and paradigm that will be developed in practice,

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whether formal, non-formal or informal schools. In contrast to the philosophy of educational science which focuses more on substantial aspects such as the epistemological and methodological aspects of education, the philosophy of education works in a more comprehensive area related to education philosophically (Situmeang 2021; Tarigan et al. 2023). In simple language, educational philosophy talks about the products resulting from the philosophy of educational science by asking various philosophical questions. Therefore, philosophical questions that arise in response to developments occurring in the world of education are part of educational philosophy. This is important to do so that reflective action always occurs so that education continues to run in accordance with the determined philosophical views.

The study of educational philosophy is less interesting when compared to the development of other new, more pragmatic sciences. Therefore, discussions of educational philosophy often cannot move from their original place and repetition occurs which is not relevant to the problems that arise today. In general, educational philosophy is discussed in two forms, namely thematic and character (Luthfiyah and Lhobir 2023; Jenilan 2018). Thematically, the main focus of the study is on certain themes which are then analyzed using various existing philosophical perspectives. Meanwhile, the study of educational philosophy figures focuses on exploring the thoughts of a philosophical figure. Sometimes, the exploration of this character's thoughts is related to certain themes or issues in education.

In Islamic educational philosophy, there are many figures or philosophers who have great attention to education so that their thoughts are used and used as guidelines in the educational process carried out. One of these great figures is Imam Al Ghazali who is famous for his title Hujjatul Islam. Hundreds of works he wrote in various scientific disciplines prove that Imam Ghazali is a figure in Islamic educational philosophy who is not only productive, but also inspires his followers to understand educational philosophy comprehensively.

This article aims to review Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy with the various works he has written while relating it to the theme of social studies learning in elementary/MI. Social studies learning in SD/MI itself is currently integrated in the independent curriculum with science learning so that the applicable subject nomenclature is the science (Natural and Social Sciences) subject ase (Sadli and Saadati 2023). Social studies learning in science subjects in SD/MI is described based on learning outcomes. Based on its characteristics, IPAS has two main learning elements, namely understanding IPAS (Science and Social) and process skills. These two main elements are then formulated into

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elements of learning outcomes in each phase (Azzahra, Aan Nurhasanah, and Eli Hermawati 2023). In the formulation of the learning objectives themselves, social studies learning is mostly discussed in the elements of understanding science and social sciences which are described separately.

It is important to reveal the meeting point between Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy and social studies learning in SD/MI so that the style of social studies learning does not only depart from developments in general science, but also gets a touch from the perspective of Imam Al Ghazali's Islamic educational philosophy by analyzing the substance of Imam Al Ghazali's thoughts. which are relevant to social studies learning in SD/MI.

## **Method**

The description in this paper uses content analysis techniques so that it is included in qualitative data. The data source comes from the works of Imam Ghazali on education such as Ayyuhal Walad and Ihya Ulumuddin and others. Apart from that, there is also a formulation of science and science learning outcomes published by BSKAP Number 008/H/KR/2022 regarding learning outcomes in early childhood education, basic education levels and secondary education levels in the independent curriculum. Other research articles related to the theme of the writing are also other secondary sources. Because the main data source is documentation, the data collection technique also uses documentation.

Meanwhile, the flow of analysis carried out uses Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis, namely recognizing data by repeated reading, coding interesting data and collecting data relevant to each code, arranging codes into potential themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, and producing a report (Braun and Clarke 2006). Using this method, Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy is described and analyzed in order to find its relevance to social studies learning in elementary/MI.

## **Result and Discussion**

### **Imam Ghazali's Philosophy of Education**

His full name is Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Muhammad Al Thusi Al-Ghazali, a Fuqoha, Sufi, Theologian who was born in 450H/1058M in Thus. He lived in a Sunni environment after the Seljuq people under the leadership of Tuhghrul Beg ended the domination of the Shiite Buwaihiyah dynasty in 447H/1055AD. An important Seljuq ruler who was associated with Imam Ghazali was Nizham Al-Mulk. The Seljuq rulers belonged

to the Shafi'iyah school of law and the Ash'ariyah school of theology as did Imam Ghazali (Bakar 1998).

In the process of developing his education, Imam Ghazali first studied in Thus City, the city of his birth. Two other cities as places of study were Jurjan in Mazardaran and Naisyapur under the guidance of Imam Al-Juwaini (Kusuma and Rahmadani 2023; Abd. Ghani and Moh Ali 2022). It was in Naisyapur that Imam Ghazali studied various fields of science such as fiqh, kalam, Sufism, and philosophy (logic and natural philosophy). Imam Ghazali's contact with the thoughts of mutakallimun, philosophers, Ta'limiyah and Sufis caused him to experience an intellectual crisis (Bakar 1998). Al Ghazali was confused by the conflict between reason's rational claims and suprarational claims until he was finally freed from the intellectual crisis by realizing that intellectual intuition is superior to reason. Al Ghazali's intellectual struggle was so complicated and long that his intellectual maturity cannot be doubted.

Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy is seen as leading to idealism as well as empiricism. This idealism is shown in the consistency of his thinking, which always uses religion as the basis of his views in his various opinions and works. Therefore, the title *hujjatul Islam* is actually a logical consequence of Imam Ghazali's consistency in making religion a principle. Even in the book *Tahafut al Falasifah*, Imam Ghazali was very clever in building arguments to attack the philosophical ideology that emerged from Greece. Although recently accused by several modern Islamic philosophers of being the cause of the emergence of the dichotomy of science (Agus Salim 2022). This was triggered by his opinion regarding the curriculum in Islamic education by not making philosophy a science that must be studied by Muslims. In the extreme, Imam Ghazali is seen as the cause of the decline of Islamic civilization because of the paralysis of the power of thought and the creation of the results of philosophy as a secondary science and always prioritizing revelation which is more dominant over pure reason.

Even though he is seen as an idealist, Imam Ghazali's view of the practice of Islamic education actually also leads to empiricism because of his belief in the importance of the role of parents and education in children's development (Putri et al. 2022). A positive environment will make children good. The environment in question is the family environment, school environment and community environment.

According to Imam Ghazali, the aim of education is more likely to be transcendent, namely to get closer to Allah (*Taqarub ilallah*). In the Book of *Ihya Ulumuddin* (Al-Ghazali 2020) explains that "The purpose of education is to get

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closer to God and improve one's morals, not just to seek worldly glory." Worldly goals are not the main thing because worldly goals are seen only as things that are not eternal or only temporary (Musyaffa' and Haris 2022). More specifically, forming students' personalities into perfect human beings (*insan Kamil*) is the goal of education which leads to more primary moral virtues. Sufistic nomenclature such as *zuhud*, *qona'ah* and others are the main keywords in positioning education as a means for forming these characters. Nevertheless, worldly life is still seen as important as a means to achieve the afterlife. This view shows that Imam Ghazali places empirical life in its correct position.

In terms of study methods, Imam Ghazali emphasized the aspects of love and gentleness in the book *Ihya Ulumuddin* (Al-Ghazali 2020) it is emphasized that:

"Teachers should teach with love and gentleness. "Don't use violence in educating, because this will extinguish students' enthusiasm and love for knowledge."

Then Imam Ghazali classified learning methods into *ta'lim humani* and *ta'lim robbani* methods (Abd. Ghani and Moh Ali 2022). *Ta'lim insani* is a learning method which in the process is more dominant in the use of the five senses. Because it uses the five senses, human *ta'lim* needs the help of other people such as teachers, tutors or facilitators in the learning process. This method is one of the most common methods used in the world of education. Meanwhile *Ta'lim Rabbani* is carried out with God's guidance. Technically, *ta'lim rabbani* is actually an explanation of learning from looking for *tazkiyat an nufus*. By always purifying the soul, spiritually, God will provide knowledge that emerges from the clean soul.

Imam Ghazali in terms of competence is in accordance with his philosophical outlook, so several things that teachers must have in the learning process for students are first, teachers must be able to guide the souls of students or students to achieve purity of soul. In this case, teachers are not only responsible for the knowledge or content studied by students, but are also responsible for the growth of students' morals and morals. Therefore, the second competency is that teachers must be good role models for students. This example is shown in the teacher's behavior which reflects *al karimah* morals such as being humble, loving science, asceticism and others while avoiding negative behavior or things prohibited by religion. The third teacher competency is love of science which is shown by a strong desire to continue learning (Olfah 2023). According to Imam Ghazali, teacher competency has a high weight because currently

teacher competency places more emphasis on the teacher's ability in terms of techniques and learning materials so it doesn't look at the morals and morals they have. Imam Ghazali's version of teacher competency can be found predominantly in teachers or ustadz in Islamic boarding schools, while teachers in formal schools are classified as minimal.

In the book *Ayyuhal Walad*, (Al-Ghazali 2012) discusses the concept of *tikrorul ilmi* as important advice to his students. *Tikrorul ilmi* refers to in-depth reflection on the knowledge being studied, where the learning process is not only limited to reading, but also involves deep introspection. Imam Al-Ghazali emphasized that the knowledge gained through reading must be absorbed and reflected on so that it can provide real benefits. This reflection allows students to not only memorize information, but also understand the meaning and essence of this knowledge. Apart from that, Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of applying knowledge in everyday life. Knowledge that is only stored in the mind without being applied has no true value. Therefore, *tikrorul ilmi* encourages students to connect knowledge with practice and practice it consistently. Imam Al-Ghazali also highlighted the quality of knowledge, suggesting that students choose knowledge that is relevant to their future needs. Students must be wise in choosing and exploring knowledge that will be useful for their lives in the future. Thus, through *tikrorul ilmi*, students are expected to not only become knowledgeable, but also have a deep understanding and ability to apply this knowledge in everyday life.

In terms of curriculum, Imam Ghazali divides knowledge based on the law as in *fiqh*, namely *fardhu science* and *fardhu kifayah science* (Sari and Marhaban 2022). This *fardhu science* is mandatory for all Muslims to learn, namely in the form of religious sciences. Meanwhile, general sciences such as mathematics, engineering, agriculture and others fall into the category of *fardhu kifayah sciences* which are only mandatory for some Muslims to support their worldly affairs. This view was later pointed out as the beginning of the emergence of the dichotomy of knowledge by contemporary Muslim figures because this view had a major impact on the paradigm of subsequent Muslims.

This view of the curriculum correlates with the things that students must prepare and do in the learning process. Suban summarizes several things that students must pay attention to as follows:

1. Study with the intention of worship in the framework of *taqarrub ila Allah*, so that in everyday life students always purify their souls with

the morals of al-karimah as in Q.S. Al-An'am: 162 and Q.S. Adz Dzaariyaat: 56 (Kementerian Agama RI, 2018).

2. Reducing tendencies towards worldly compared to ukhrawi problems as in Q.S. Adh Dhuhaa:4 (Kementerian Agama RI, 2018).
3. Be tawadhu' (humble)
4. Guarding thoughts and conflicts that arise from various schools.
5. Study commendable sciences, for the everyday and the worldly.
6. Learn in stages or stages, starting from easy (concrete) lessons to difficult (abstract) lessons or from fardhu 'ain science to fardlu kifayah science as in Q.S. Al-Fath:9 (Kementerian Agama RI, 2018).
7. Learn science until it is complete and then move on to other sciences, so that students have in-depth knowledge specifications.
8. Prioritize divine knowledge before entering worldly knowledge.
9. Recognize pragmatic values for science, namely knowledge that can be useful and can make you happy, prosperous and provide safety for life in the afterlife (Sholihin, 2001, p. 20). (Suban 2020)

Several points above show Imam Ghazali's consistency in his educational philosophy which is oriented towards spiritual education whose ultimate goal is things that are ukhrowi in nature.

### **Social Studies Learning in Elementary/MI**

Learning Social Sciences (IPS) in Elementary Schools/Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (SD/MI) can be interpreted as a process that facilitates students to study various aspects of social life, culture and the surrounding environment in a planned and systematic manner using various relevant methods and strategies (Hopeman, Hidayah, and Anggraeni 2022). The material coverage in social studies learning consists of various scientific disciplines such as sociology, geography, history and economics. Of course, the scope of the material presented is adjusted to the level of development of students, both cognitive, social and spiritual, namely elementary school age children.

SD/MI social studies learning has several characteristics, namely, first, it has relevance to everyday life. Presentation of social studies material that is contextual to students' daily lives so that students have a good understanding of the surrounding environment. Examples include using real case examples of students at school. Second, the use of interactive learning. With contextual learning content, SD/MI social studies learning is carried out interactively using methods such as discussions, simulations and presentations. Third, foster critical

thinking patterns. In the SD/MI social studies learning process, students are more required to be able to practice critical thinking patterns regarding social life and everyday life. Fourth, introduction to social and national values. This characteristic is more directed towards SD/MI social studies learning content which contains Pancasila values and the diversity of Indonesian culture (Hopeman, Hidayah, and Anggraeni 2022). Apart from that, nation character building is also included in this scope. And fifth, the use of a variety of learning sources. Disciplines such as sociology, history, geography and economics enable teachers to access a variety of relevant learning resources.

Specifically, SD/MI social studies learning in the independent curriculum is carried out in an integrated manner with science learning which is incorporated into the IPAS (Natural and Social Sciences) subjects (Widodo et al. 2020). Social studies learning in science subjects is reflected in separate learning outcomes in the learning achievement element in the form of understanding science and social sciences, even though the learning process is carried out in an integrated manner. The formulation of social studies learning outcomes is different for each phase. The following are some of the social studies learning achievements in science subjects in SD/MI.

#### **Fase A**

Students identify and ask questions about what is happening to them and the conditions in their home and school environments and identify simple problems related to everyday life.

Students are able to describe their own identity (physical characteristics, hobbies) and the people around them (family, friends and neighbors) so that they can accept the differences that exist in humans.

Students are able to describe their family tree, roles and responsibilities as members of a family/group/school.

#### **Fase B**

Students explain their duties, roles and responsibilities as school members and describe how social interactions occur around where they live and at school.

Students identify various natural landscapes and their relationships with community professions.

Students are able to show the location of the city/district and province where they live on a conventional/digital map. Students describe biodiversity, cultural diversity, local wisdom and conservation efforts.

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Students get to know cultural diversity, local wisdom, history (both figures and periodization) in the province where they live and relate it to the current context of life. Students are able to differentiate between needs and wants, recognize the value of currency and demonstrate how money is used to obtain useful value/meet daily living needs.

### **Fase C**

Students use conventional/digital maps to understand the location and geographical conditions of Indonesia. Students get to know the diversity of national culture which is associated with the context of diversity.

Students tell the story of the Indonesian people's struggle against imperialism, reflect on the struggle of heroes in their efforts to seize and defend independence and emulate the heroes' struggle in real daily actions.

At the end of this phase, students become familiar with various kinds of community economic activities and the creative economy in the surrounding environment. With full awareness, students carry out an action or make a decision related to daily life based on their understanding of the wealth of local wisdom that applies in their area as well as the scientific values of that local wisdom (Kemdikbud 2022).

Based on the formulation of learning outcomes above, the characteristics that exist in SD/MI social studies learning are clearly illustrated. This characteristic is important to understand because it determines further learning planning such as determining appropriate learning strategies and methods. This determination will later differentiate between SD/MI social studies learning and other learning.

### **The Relevance of Imam Ghazali's Educational Philosophy in Social Studies Learning in Elementary/MI**

Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy with social studies learning in SD/MI cannot actually be directly relevant because the fields of scientific discipline are quite distant. Specifically, the sources of knowledge that emerge in Imam Ghazali's philosophy predominantly come from in-depth Islamic scholarship, while social studies learning in SD/MI adopts more theories or scientific developments from the West. Therefore, in order to carry out a scientific dialogue, the method that can be used is interconnection integration as a method introduced by Amin Abdullah from his adaptation of the concept owned by Ian

Barbour. This method is also used as a way to reduce the old issue of what is called the dichotomy of science.

Technically, the integration of the interconnection between Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy and social studies learning in SD/MI is carried out by means of dialogue between the two without positioning the two topics at one pole and the other. Thus, Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy can be linked to social studies learning in elementary/MI in two ways. First, making Imam Ghazali's spirit or perspective on education the content of social studies learning in SD/MI indirectly or as a hidden curriculum. The operationalization is that Imam Ghazali's views about learning, teachers and students are applied in the process of implementing SD/MI social studies learning in the classroom, for example the teacher tries to instill student character when learning about describing self-identity. In learning, teachers not only direct students to recognize their physical identity, but also incorporate the spiritual potential that students possess. Even though students' textbooks or learning outcomes do not appear explicitly, teachers can independently elaborate on material that can be related to education from Imam Ghazali's perspective. The logical consequence is that class teachers in SD/MI must adjust their competence according to Imam Ghazali's views, namely having a good attitude and example and feeling morally and spiritually responsible regarding the learning outcomes that will be obtained by students.

Second, reconceptualize SD/MI social studies learning in accordance with Imam Ghazali's views on education. This reconceptualization is quite difficult to do because it has to deal with policy makers so that it can be implemented in elementary schools nationally. Without the support of these regulations, the reconceptualization carried out cannot be carried out properly. Reconceptualization of SD/MI social studies learning can begin by translating existing learning outcomes into learning objectives that are in accordance with Imam Ghazali's views. For example, the following formulation of phase A learning outcomes:

Students are able to describe their own identity (physical characteristics, hobbies) and the people around them (family, friends and neighbors) so they can accept the differences that exist in humans.

The learning outcomes above can be formulated into learning objectives that are in accordance with the substance of education in Imam Ghazali's view. As is known, the independent curriculum offers each educational unit the

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formulation of learning objectives in three categories, namely taking the formulation of learning objectives that have been prepared by the government, adapting and modifying the formulation of learning objectives that have been prepared by the government and formulating their own formulation of learning objectives with reference to learning outcomes. which exists. In the context of this paper, the third option can be made by teachers, namely formulating learning objectives independently by referring to existing learning outcomes. As a guideline, the formulation that is the national standard and must be followed is the formulation of learning outcomes, while the formulation of learning objectives is more flexible as previously explained. Therefore, the example of formulating learning outcomes above can be explained independently by the teacher by explicitly including the contents of Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy. The formulation of the learning objectives is for example that students are able to identify their physical characteristics and their hobbies honestly according to the principle of love of science. The main keyword that shows the content of Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy is love of knowledge. In the Learning Implementation Plan, the learning steps can be detailed, such as performing ablution first before learning takes place and so on.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the explanation above, the main conclusions that can be drawn are first, Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy focuses on the final goal of humans, namely the afterlife with worldly media. Apart from that, the key concept that must be understood is that teachers have a heavy responsibility towards students because they are not only responsible for student learning outcomes but also for students' morals, morals and character. Second, SD/MI social studies learning has more contextual characteristics so that the learning process prioritizes the direct experience gained by students. Third, the relevance of Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy to elementary/MI social studies learning can be done through the interconnection integration method without dichotomizing its epistemological aspects into the two poles of religious knowledge and general science. Fourth, there are two ways to connect Imam Ghazali's educational philosophy and SD/MI social studies learning, namely making Imam Ghazali's spirit or perspective on education the content of social studies learning in elementary/MI indirectly or as a hidden curriculum and reconceptualizing SD/MI social studies learning. in accordance with Imam Ghazali's views on education.

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