



Ulul Albab Character Formation In Al-Ghazali's Intellectual Tradition: Wahdatul Ulum's Perspective

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Abstract

The term "ulul albab" is frequently mentioned in the Quran. Ulul albab refers to individuals known for their sharp intellect, unclouded by confusion, as well as strong spiritual and intellectual integrity. Drawing on the ideas of Al-Ghazali as a foundation, this study aims to explore Al-Ghazali's thoughts on shaping the character of Ulul Albab from the perspective of Wahdatul Ulum. Through qualitative approaches and a literature review, the integration of reason and revelation, the importance of Sufi practices, and the virtues of ethics in seeking closeness to Allah are analyzed. The research findings demonstrate that Al-Ghazali, as a brilliant Islamic scholar and humanist, mastered various branches of knowledge, ranging from jurisprudence, theology, logic, philosophy, and Sufism and ethics. In Al-Ghazali's view, Ulul Albab are depicted as individuals who combine knowledge and action, possess firm beliefs rooted in true understanding, and develop noble traits reflected in everyday life. This research significantly contributes to enriching insights into the concept of Ulul Albab from the perspective of Al-Ghazali's thought, while highlighting the importance of spiritual and moral practices in attaining perfection as servants of Allah, as well as the integration of reason and revelation.

Keywords: Character of Ulul Albab, Al-Ghazali, Wahdatul Ulum

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Introduction

Religious and general scholarship have long been separated. Some Muslims even argue that these two sciences are separate entities that cannot be reconciled. They believe that the formal and material objects, research methods, standards of truth, and status of each theory are distinct from one another. Apart from that, Barizi said that there is a disease of dichotomy and considers religion not science because religion is based on belief¹. According to historical records, mainstream epistemological traditions have led to differences of opinion about human knowledge since the time of Plato and Aristotle. This results in two types of knowledge: knowledge obtained through observing objects ('ilm al-hushuli) and knowledge that comes directly from God ('ilm al-hudhuri).

Islamic philosophers have made efforts to integrate these two sciences. For example, Abu Nashr al-Farabi, who lived from 870 to 950 AD, is considered Al-Farabi's second teacher. In terms of his attempt to harmonize the opinions of Plato and Aristotle, Al-Farabi said that even if Aristotle rejected Plato's ideas, he would have difficulty understanding first cause the universe and the problem of divine forms. There is also Ibn Sina, a Muslim philosopher, who tried to synthesize Platonic and Aristotelian epistemology by using the words of Allah in Surah al-Nur as the basis for his philosophical thinking. In this verse, Allah shows that the human mind has the ability of receptivity (*quwwat isti'dadiyah*), which is comparable to the niche (*misykat*) which has the ability to emit light.

Through his book *Tahafut al-Falasifah*, Imam al-Ghazali strongly criticized Ibn Sina and other Muslim philosophers. However, Ibn Sina's understanding of the verse in Surah Al-Nur: 35 which describes Allah as the light of heaven and earth has had an impact on the formation of epistemology. This building is clearly visible in Imam al-Ghazali's *Misykat al-Anwar*. In this book, Imam al-Ghazali explains the nature of light, or knowledge, and its relationship with Allah. He said that although there are degrees or grades of knowledge, knowledge is actually one.

According to Dwi Fitri Wiyono (2017:258) in a journal entitled *Islamic Educational Thought: Conceptualization of Character Education from a Classical Islamic Intellectual Perspective*. Where systematic-integralistic moral education, from the descriptions of classical ulama figures in this journal, the concept of character education in Islamic education needs to be formulated systematically and gradually, between the early childhood education curriculum, primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Second, education must pay attention to *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul), and education is oriented towards social and community character. Meanwhile, according to Maharani Sartika Ritonga and Salminawati, (2022: 743) in a journal entitled *Implementation of the Wahdatul 'Ulum Paradigm with a Transdisciplinary Approach to Produce Ulul Albab in Graduates of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra*. Which shows that the implementation of Wahdatul 'Ulum through an interdisciplinary approach includes education, research and community service, so that the goals set in the Wahdatul 'Ulum paradigm can be looked forward to in the future. Apart from that, UIN North Sumatra graduates are expected to have a servant personality, ethnic insight, responsibility and a sense of happiness.

¹ Ahmad Barizi, *Pendidikan Integratif: Akar Tradisi Dan Integrasi Keilmuan Pendidikan Islam* (Malang: UIN Maliki Press, 2011).

This research specifically discusses Al-Ghazali's thoughts in wahdatul ulum regarding the formation of the character of ulul albab. Because, currently the character emerging in society is showing a downward or declining direction. This happens because of the weakness of human aqidah, worship and morals. Therefore, the author wants to examine the discussion; The Formation of Ulul Albab Character in Al-Ghazali's Intellectual Tradition: Wahdatul Ulum's Perspective . The urgency of this research is to provide a comprehensive understanding of Ulul Albab's character formation, integrate Al-Ghazali's thoughts in the context of modern education, and develop a holistic approach through the Wahdatul Ulum perspective. It is hoped that the results of this research can make a real contribution in building wise, moral individuals and society, as well as making a significant contribution to the development of curriculum and learning methods.

Method

This study uses a qualitative method . According to Sugiyono , the qualitative method is collecting data to find the subject and resolve it down to its roots ². Apart from that, this research uses a library research approach . According to Mustofa, library research is a type of research that aims to obtain information from various written sources ³. The data analysis technique used is descriptive analysis, which aims to describe the research in depth. Apart from that, the primary sources in this research were obtained from classical books . Meanwhile , secondary data sources in this research come from tafsir and journal articles that discuss or are related to the formation of the ulul albab character in the al-Ghazali intellectual tradition: the wahdatul ulum perspective .

Results and Discussion

A. Ulul Albab character

The term Ulul Albab can be found in the Qur'anic text 16 times in several different places and topics, including in the QS: AlBaqarah; 179, 197, 269; Al-Imran: 7, 190; Al-Maidah: 100; Yusuf: 111, AlRa'd: 19-24, Ibrahim: 52; Shaad: 29, 43; Al-Zumar: 9, 18.21; Al-Mu'min: 54, and Al-Thalaq: 10.⁴ In the Al-Quran, Surah Al-Baqarah: 179, it is explained how the figure of ulul abab was able to apply the law of qisos. Because the law of qisos reflects justice, the figure of ulul albab is able to implement justice to ensure human life. QS Al-Baqarah: 197 suggests What are the morals of Ulul Abab when carrying out the Hajj? The figure of ulul albab has good morals which are shown by good, polite and smooth speech and always maintaining good deeds.

Several experts also stated what and who the ulul albab was. Etymologically, the word albab is the plural form of the word lubb, which means the essence of something. Nuts, for example, have a skin that covers the contents, the inside of the nut is called lubb.⁵ Based on this etymological definition, the terminology can be understood as that ulul albab is a person who has a pure mind, which is not covered by skin, namely a fog of ideas that can give birth

² Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan* (Bandung: Alfabetha, 2019).

³ Mustofa, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan (Library Research)* (Jakarta: G-Press, 2019).

⁴ Raharjo, M. Dawam. *Ensiklopedi Al-Quran: Tafsir Sosial berdasarkan konsep-konsep Kunci*. (Jakarta. Paramadina, 2022).

⁵ Shihab. *Tafsir Al-Misbab, Pesan, Kesan dan Keserasian al-Qur'an*. (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2000).

to confusion in thinking. Strictly speaking, the quality of ulul albab is a comprehensive quality or in language as a person or a number of people who have multi-layered qualities.⁶

The three elements of ulul albab, namely dhikr, fikr and good deeds, are not mutually exclusive qualities. Here there is a dialectic which states that the dhikr aspect also includes thinking. This means that the activity of dhikr also involves thinking, but at a higher level, because this thinking leads to maximum efforts to achieve the ultimate truth which is transcendental. In other words, dhikr is actually also an activity of thinking but accompanied by serious efforts to reach the essence of something, which leads to recognition of the greatness of God's Masterpiece as mentioned in the QS. Ali Imran: 190. The empirical reality that must be observed and studied, namely the change of day and night in this verse, is a powerful tool for someone who pays attention to God's power, to reach the conclusion that everything happens because of God's omnipotence. Thus, the activity of dhikr which includes thinking is the power that leads a person to obtain the degree of ulul albab.

Based on an understanding of the verse above, it can be stated that arrogance and arrogance due to the achievements a person gets in developing knowledge, are far from the quality of ulul albab. Acknowledgment of God's power is a statement that is always made by someone of ulul albab quality. Observing the various views about ulul albab as mentioned above, it can be said that the characteristics of ulul albab scientists reflects the integration between the power of revelation and the power of reason. Ulul albab scientists are people who are built on the basis of strong faith and high intellect. This integration is able to give birth to new ideas that are creative, dynamic and innovative, which can be translated into positive practical works (good deeds) .

Imam Suprayogo stated that through dhikr, fikr and pious deeds, the Ulul Albab scientist made himself the best human being, physically and spiritually healthy. As the best human being, he always carries out the best activities and services to others, "khair an-nâs anfa`uhum li an-nâs. Ulul albab scientists are characterized as someone who has extensive knowledge; able to see/read natural and social phenomena accurately; Have a smart brain; soft-hearted and; high fighting spirit because Allah is the embodiment of righteous deeds. With these characteristics, Ulul Albab scientists have strong beliefs and spiritual depth, noble morals, breadth of knowledge and professional maturity.⁷

B. Life History of Al-Ghazali

One of the important figures in the field of Islamic and humanitarian thought is Aql-Ghazali. Apart from that, he is a brilliant individual with many advantages and benefits in various fields. He mastered all the sharia knowledge of his time (except hadith, which he did not master in depth). He is an expert in fiqh, ushul fiqh, kalam science, logic (mantiq), philosophy, Sufism, morals, and other fields. He has written books on all these areas that

⁶ *Op, Cit* . Raharjo

⁷ Suprayogo. *Paradigma Pengembangan Keilmuan di perguruan tinggi: Konsep Pendidikan Tinggi yang dikembangkan UIN Malang*, (Malang: UIN Malang Press, 2005).

have been acclaimed as broad, insightful, and unique. Because of his extensive knowledge and expertise in various fields of religious knowledge, Al-Ghazali is known as Hujjatul Islam.⁸

In 450 AH/1058 AD, Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad ath-Thusi al-Ghazali also known as al-Ghazali was born in Tabaran, one of two cities in Thus, Persia, which is now near Mashhad in Khurasan, Iran.⁹ Another opinion states that the name of al-Ghazali's birth village, "Ghazalah", is taken from the word "Ghazali", which is also sometimes referred to as "al-Ghazzali". According to this opinion, because al-Ghazali's father's occupation was producing woolen thread, the word "Ghazal" means thread spinner.¹⁰ In addition, some say that he was born in a small village near Thus in Kurasan, which at that time was the center of science and the territory of Baghdad under the Seljuq dynasty. He died in Thusia, where he was born, on Monday, December 18, 1111 AD, or 14 Jumadil Akhir 505 H.

Al-Ghazali was also given the title *Zain Addin*, which means religious adornment. He was someone who was persistent in pursuing knowledge, starting from studying in his homeland, then moving and continuing to the city of Jurjan and also to Naisabur to study from Imam Juwaini until his teacher died in 478 H/1085 AD.¹¹ When discussing family life Imam Al-Ghazali, he was born in a very simple family.

A wara', al-Ghazali's father only ate from his own efforts. He worked as a spinner and sold wool. In legend, he often visited religious figures and jurists in various assemblies and khalawat to listen to their advice. It seems that not much has been written about the personality and characteristics of al-Ghazali's father, except for his admirable devotion to religious and scientific figures. Al-Ghazali and his sibling, Ahmad, were still small when their father died. After he died, the father asked one of his close friends, a Sufi expert, to educate and raise his two children. "I really regret not studying in the past," he told him. Thus, I hope that my wish will come true."¹²

In his childhood, Al-Ghazali studied the basics of jurisprudence from Ahmad bin Muhammad Al-Razakany in Thusia, after which he continued his journey to study in Naisabur, the capital of the Seljuq sultanate which was also nicknamed the city of students after Baghdad. There he studied with Imam Haramain who was known as a charismatic scholar, he studied diligently and was disciplined, and then he mastered various sciences, namely schools of thought in Islam and their thoughts, rhetoric, and also ushul fiqh, these sciences were very popular in the time. Therefore, Imam Haramain was amazed at his intelligence in revealing the meaning of words and also the breadth of his knowledge.¹³

After Imam Al-Haramain died, Al Ghazali went to al-Ashar to meet with the prime minister Nizam al-Mulk from the Seljuq dynasty government. The Prime Minister then appointed Al-

⁸ Yusuf al Qardhawi, "Pro-Kontra Pemikiran al-Ghazali", (Cet. II; Surabaya: Risalah Gusti, 1997), h. 9.

⁹ Salahuddin, *Misykat Cahaya-Cahaya: Telaah Pemikiran Tasawuf Falsafi Imam Al-Ghazali*, (Cet. I; Makassar: Alauddin Press, 2011), h. 22-23.

¹⁰ Sudarsono, *Filsafat Islam*, (Cet. I; Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 1990), h. 62.

¹¹ Zaini, Ahmad. "Pemikiran Tasawuf Imam Al-Ghazali." *Esoterik: Jurnal Akhlak dan Tasawuf* 2.1 (2016): h, 146-159.

¹² Dedi Supriyadi, "Pengantar Filsafat Islam". (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2013) h, 144.

¹³ Laila Laila. "Imam Al-Ghazali dan Pemikirannya." *Jurnal Eksbis* 1.1 (2023): h, 23-31.

Ghazali as a professor at the Nizamiyah college in Baghdad. In 1091 AD, Al-Ghazali was appointed rector in the field of Islamic religion.

In the introduction to the book *Mukhtashar Ihya Ulumuddin*, As-Subki said that Imam al-Ghazali wrote 58 writings. In *Mitah as-Sa'adah wa Misbah as-Siyadah*, Thasi Kubra Zadeh stated that his works reached 80 pieces. According to him, "His books and treatises are countless and it is not easy for one to know the titles of all his works." until it is said to have 999 letters. This is hard to believe. However, for those who know him, he will probably believe it."¹⁴ Among the book titles are *Ihya Ulum ad-Din*, which discusses religious knowledge; *Tabafut Al-Falasifah*, who examines the opinions of philosophers from a religious perspective; *Al-Iqtishad i Al-'Itiqad*, which discusses the core knowledge of kalam experts; *Al-Munqidz min adh-Dhalal*, which explains the purpose and secrets of knowledge; *Jawahir al-Qur'an*, which tells the secrets contained in the Koran; *Mizan al-'Amal* (about religious philosophy), *Al-Maqashid al-Asna i Ma'ani Asma'illah al-Husna* (about the meaning of God's name), *Faishal at-Tafriq Baina al-Islam wa al-Zindiqah* (about the differences between Islam and Zindiq), and *Al-Qisthas al-Mustaqim* (on how to overcome differences of opinion).

C. The Character of Ulul Albab from Al-Ghazali's Perspective

Creed

In Arabic, the word "aqidah" comes from the words *al-'aqdu*, which means bond; *al-ihkaamu*, which means to determine; and *ar-rabthu biqun-wah*, which means to tie tightly. Aqidah, on the other hand, is defined as faith that is firm and beyond doubt. Aqidah in Islam means faith. All religions and beliefs in the world can be classified as creeds. The foundation of the Islamic faith, which comes from the angel Gabriel, includes Islam, the pillars of Islam, the pillars of faith, ihsan, and final day events r.

Al-Ghazali was a prominent Muslim scholar who had extraordinary intellectual enthusiasm and continuously conducted research on various topics. Al-Ghazali said that the moral education system can be divided into two categories, namely praiseworthy and despicable morals. Commendable beliefs are achieved through generosity, habits, and obedience to the teachings of Allah SWT. Apart from eliminating bad morals, two forms of violence can be used, including principles.¹⁵ In its application, aqidah education in Islam aims to ensure that humans always stand on the right path and always stand on the straight path, of course the path that has been established by Allah SWT.¹⁶

Al-Ghazali is a Muslim figure who was very influential in building the Islamic faith system. Furthermore, there were many criticisms of his aqidah teachings because they were similar to the aqidah concepts of Greek philosophers, especially Plato and Aristotle. For example, Al-Ghazali's perspective on the development between the forces of the soul was influenced by Plato's "harmony theory", and Aristotle's "moderation theory" influenced Al-Ghazali's view of the intermediate state for the points of aqidah.

¹⁴Al-Ghazali, *Mutiarah Ihya Ulumuddin*. Diterjemahkan oleh Irwan Kurniawan dari *Mukhtashar Ihya Ulumuddin*. (Bandung: Mizan. 1997) h, 10-11.

¹⁵Nilna Fajral Wildati Haniyah, dkk. Pendidikan Aqidah Akhlak Dalam Perspektif Imam Al-Ghazali. "Jurnal Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (JMI)". Vol. 02. No. 01. 2023. H. 49.

¹⁶Muhammad Chairul Ashari Akhmad, dkk. Pendidikan Aqidah Akhlak Dalam Perspektif Al Ghazali. "Jurnal Pendidikan Islam". Vol. 18. No. 2. 2021. H. 57.

It is possible that Al-Ghazali's concept of *aqidah* was influenced by Greek philosophy and Muslim moralists. This is due to the fact that Al-Ghazali was a "bookworm" who read all the philosophical and ethical works of Greek philosophers as well as Muslim figures from his time. However, it is not true that he took his concepts extensively from Greek philosophy. Therefore, Al-Ghazali emphasized spiritual values such as gratitude, repentance and trust, and directed the goal of *aqidah* to achieve *ma'rifatullah* and happiness in the afterlife.

Al-Ghazali himself divided philosophers into three groups, namely:¹⁷(1) First, Materialistic philosophers, also known as *al Dhariyyun*, were Atheists who rejected the existence of God and stated that nature was created independently. (2) Second, Naturalist or Deistic philosophers (*Thabi'yyun*) investigate various things about plants, animals and the universe. They conducted research and discovered many miracles that made them recognize the existence of an all-wise creator. However, they do not accept resurrection, doomsday, or afterlife. (3) Third, theist philosopher or *al-Ilahiyyun*; they were Greek philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, and Socrates. Despite this, they still could not get out of the shackles of disbelief.

In addition, Al-Ghazali stated in *Tabaful al Falasifah* that a wrong understanding of existence, oneness, and *ukhrawi* revival was understood. In the case where Al-Ghazali considers three of the twenty issues to be "*kufr*", and not a single school of thought of the Muslims supports it, namely:¹⁸

About Natural Justice

All philosophers agree, according to Al-Ghazali, that nature is *qadim* and always exists (*maujud*) with God. There is a connection between sunlight and its sun. Two possibilities support this theory. The first is that God is previous in terms of substance and not in terms of time, which means that God exists simultaneously with nature in terms of era or time. The second is that God is prior to nature both materially and temporally.

Al-Ghazali answered the philosopher's argument by saying that nature is new and came into being because of the *qadim's* *iradat*. This means that the manifestation of nature begins when it is created, and does not materialize until it is not desired because the *qadim iradat* is the basis for the manifestation of nature and time. Apart from that, Al-Ghazali stated that if nature is called *qadim*, it means it was not created, because the only thing that was not created was Allah. This leads to polytheism. This made Al-Ghazali accuse philosophers who argued that nature is eternal as infidels.

Ju'iyah Matters

Al-Ghazali divided two groups of philosophers. First, God only knows himself and does not know anything else. Second, God also knows other than himself, but his knowledge is not limited to himself and is not limited to time. This is because knowledge follows the object of knowledge. In the second opinion, Al-Ghazali concluded that God only knows about human disbelief and Islam in general and does not know specifically what happens to humans. If God does not know specific things or *ju'iyat*, then God's will will be lost on his creatures. God only knows a human being in a cool form. Al-Ghazali stated that God knows everything

¹⁷Muliati. Al-Ghazali Dan Kritiknya Terhadap Filosof. "*Jurnal Aqidah-Ta'*". Vol. II. No. 2. 2016. H. 80

¹⁸ Muliati. Al-Ghazali Dan Kritiknya Terhadap Filosof. "*Jurnal Aqidah-Ta'*". Vol. II. No. 2. 2016. H. 81-

with knowledge that is one in its authenticity and eternity, without undergoing transformation.

Absence of Physical Awakening

Philosophers do not argue that heaven and hell exist, or that spirits will return to human bodies in the afterlife. Everything is just a symbol, according to philosophers. This can be demonstrated in two ways. First, angels are nobler than in animals because they enjoy perfection and its absence. Second, humans often use spiritual pleasure, such as when people forget to eat because they are preoccupied with thoughts. Regarding the immortality of the soul and how spiritual happiness is more important than physical happiness. Because the Shari'a suggests this, al-Ghazali agreed with the philosophers. However, al-Ghazali stated that this does not mean interpreting physical happiness or misery in the afterlife. Conversely, spiritual happiness or misery will offset physical happiness or misery. However, Al Ghazali stated that it is impossible to know about the soul, or happiness and misery in the afterlife. Unacceptable because this falls within the domain of revealed authority.

Therefore, as explained above, Al-Ghazali believes that the source of Islamic faith comes from the Koran and Sunnah. Apart from that, it is not true that Al-Ghazali was only guided by the teachings of previous Muslim moralists, because his concept of *aqidah* emerged as a result of his intellectual journey and plunged directly into the Sufi world, or intuitive world.

In this case, the connection between Al-Ghazali's creed and *ulul albab* is that Al-Ghazali rejected radical skepticism which doubts everything without a strong basis. *Ulul albab* are those who have firm beliefs and are based on deep understanding, both in terms of reason and revelation. This view is in accordance with Al-Ghazali who believes that strong faith must be based on correct understanding and deep reflection. Apart from that, *Ulul albab* are those who contemplate the universe as signs of Allah's greatness. Al-Ghazali also encouraged Muslims to reflect on Allah's creation as a way to strengthen their faith and deepen their understanding of Allah. Both teach that observation of the universe and reflection on Allah's verses can increase faith and spiritual understanding.

Worship

Imam Al-Ghazali's Sufism Thoughts

After traveling to find the path of truth, Al-Ghazali finally made the decision to embrace Sufism as a religious method. Because the path of the Sufis combines knowledge and charity, which produces morals, he argued that their path is the most obvious (*haqiqi*) path to seeking truth. He also believes that learning knowledge from their work is easier than putting it into practice. According to Sufis, privilege is not only obtained through education, but also through the relationship between inner and spiritual states. As a result, he argued that Sufism was a way to enjoy life's hardships.

Tauhid, Makhafah, Mahabbah, and Ma'rifat are explained in the book *Ihya'ulumud Diin* . Tawhid was first defined in kalam science as a pledge to the sentence of *tahlil* (*lailaha illallah*), the belief that there is no god but Allah, and the belief in the heart that God is one. According to Al-junayd in the book *al-Rasa'il*, "know that the beginning of worshiping Allah must first

know Him (Ma'rifat) while the essence of Allah's ma'rifat is to have monotheism towards Him."

The vehicle for ma'rifat consists of the heart, not thoughts or feelings; it is a spiritual drop of divinity, which is the principle of humanity. Only with a clean heart can ma'rifat be achieved, because only a clean heart can receive guidance and inayah from Allah to truly know Him. This can only be achieved through acts of obedience, which means doing what he commands and trying to avoid what he prohibits. And don't do anything unless you expect help from Allah SWT. Imam al-Ghazali also explained how tawakkal (surrendering oneself to Allah) and the attitude of tawakkal increase monotheism towards Allah.

Ma'rifat also has a separate level and position which is decorated with bonds of love and true love. Imam al-Ghazali said that ma'rifat is knowing the secrets and majesty that encompasses all of Allah's power, and knowledge is the highest enjoyment and enjoyment; a sign that someone has reached the peak of ma'rifat is that they always want to meet him rather than other people.

Everyone fears Allah and the two Makhafa. According to Imam Al-Ghazali, seeing the power and greatness of Allah can make people afraid of him. This could also be due to the many sins and disobedience that humans commit against Allah. "The fear of Allah is the source of wisdom" (*ra's al-hikmah makhafah ilallah*), and "I am the one who fears Allah the most among you". Allah" (*ana akhwafulukum lillah*). Fourth, mahabbah, love for God .

Imam al-Ghazali also uses the pronunciation "al-walud", which means "the one who loves and is loved," in the word mahabbah. In the Qur'an it is also stated that "Allah will bring an ummah that he loves and who loves him." stated in Surah al-Maidah verse 54, "And love can come from avoiding worldly qualities and realizing all actions that give rise to disobedience." Ma'rifat towards Allah creates a burning feeling of love. When all that is finished, Allah sends nur down to someone to reach the Sufi level, which means that when someone does all that out of love and affection for Allah, he will reach the peak of wisdom. All of this begins with faith and respect for Allah .¹⁹

Prayer Worship

As it is known that prayer is one way a servant can meet His God, there are several aspects that a servant must bring when meeting His God, according to Imam Al-Ghazali. One of them is the presence of the heart here, which means the heart is empty of everything that can disturb it and throws away everything that is not related to our prayer. When our thoughts turn away from what is in and in front of our hearts and remember Every prayer that does not have the heart will be punished more quickly, according to the Ihya Ulumuddin sharah. His prayer will be ruined if someone is not humble in his prayer.

To understand prayer, we must understand the lafadz and its meaning. If we do both, we will be able to understand the meaning of the prayer reading. To be an understander, you have to have heart and truly understand what you read. It is not surprising that prayer prevents sin and evil because understanding several things definitely prevents sin. Exaltation is the

¹⁹ Rozi, Fathur, Devy Habibi Muhammad, and Ari Susandi. "Pendidikan Tasawuf Dalam Perspektif Al Ghazali Dan Rabi'ah Adawiyah." *Jurnal Pendidikan dan Konseling (JPDK)* 4.1 (2022): 170-176.

presence of the heart and understanding; If someone speaks to his servant with words but does not exalt him, then additional exaltation for both.

We must respect it as the Almighty and Supreme Being in addition to having a heart and understanding its meaning. This fear is an expression of fear that comes from exaltation, because people who are not afraid are not called haib. Fear of things that are respected is not called fear (*mahabah*). but fear is the source of breeding. Hope, if not doubt, as many people glorify kings out of fear of their actions or power, but expect nothing in return from them. Although the servant can hope for rewards from Allah SWT through prayer, he is also afraid of the punishment they will receive for their mistakes. He also believes that He is the only God who always gives hope, a place to depend on, and a place to ask for help, because only to Him do we worship and ask for help.

We must always realize and believe that Allah SWT knows all our feelings and secrets, even the smallest and most subtle. Shame towards Allah SWT arises because we are not perfect creatures and continue to commit sins and mistakes. Shame will arise if this kind of knowledge is obtained with full confidence. Rasulullah SAW said, "You are ashamed of Allah, you are truly ashamed ."²⁰

The presence of the heart is the most important of these six elements, because that is where all ideals reside. Because the heart is always there when we want something, and vice versa. If he does not pray, it does not show that he is unemployed; on the contrary, it shows that he is involved in worldly affairs that he desires. Prayer is the only way to heal a heart that loves the world, because it is faith and tashdiq (justification) that the afterlife is better and more eternal, and serves as a link between him and the afterlife.

Fasting Worship

There are no orders or prohibitions in the Islamic religion that are made without a reason, purpose or wisdom behind them. This especially applies to religious orders such as the obligation to fast during Ramadan. It is important to remember that fasting is a way for a Muslim to train, hone and improve his religious observance. Therefore, a person who fasts tries hard to understand and apply the philosophical values of worship in his life. This is done to prevent someone who is fasting from getting caught up in the conditions, pillars, and issues regarding whether the fast is valid or invalid.

From the perspective of Sufistic andragogy, three benefits of spiritual education that can be obtained from the ritual of fasting will be discussed in this chapter. In terms of fasting in Islam. Spiritual values are taught to those who carry out fasting activities. This is related to the formation of their character. It is important to remember that the term "imsak", which means "restraint", is very important in the practice of fasting. This term not only means refraining from certain things that can break the fast, such as eating, drinking, or having sexual relations during the day, but also means refraining from all actions inspired by lust. So, fasting is considered a physical and spiritual worship.

khali values as a basis for spiritual and character education is a ritual part of the nafsani fast. Through the practice of fasting, it is hoped that a Muslim can build his character by

²⁰ Maryam, Sitti. "Shalat Dalam Perspektif Imam Al-Ghazali (Kajian Sufistik)." *AL-FIKRAH: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Pendidikan dan Keislaman* 1.2 (2018): 106-113.

protecting himself from various traits and actions that are not praiseworthy, both from a religious and social perspective. Cleansing oneself from all bad traits and actions as mentioned above is part of the takhalli value in fasting. Apart from that, Imam Al-Ghazali provides character education through six ethics (adab) that must be followed by those who fast. These ethics include eating halal food and not doing inappropriate things.²¹

Zakat Worship

Zakat, according to al-Ghazali, is a type of worship that is both ritual and material, different from the creed, prayer or fasting. To achieve this, a strong understanding is needed that zakat is a social obligation that is more than just a mahdhah ritual practice; it is self-righteousness through social endeavor. This awareness must be followed by social charity actions such as zakat, infaq and sadaqah. Because the perspective and social commitment of the teachings of zakat are very clear, especially from the perspective of economic needs, which are the most important for many people.²²

Then, Imam al-Ghazali limited and mentioned the category of fardhu 'ain knowledge, which includes religious literature such as the Koran and al-Hadith, as well as the basics of worship such as prayer, fasting, and zakat, among others. Basically, knowledge of the procedures for zakat is fardhu ain for those who are obliged to pay it, just as knowledge of prayer is fardhu ain for those who are obliged to pay it. However, the law on studying zakat will be different for those who are not required to pay it, such as poor people.²³

Hajj

Hajj is a mahdhoh worship that is highly ordered for Muslims who have material and non-material abilities. The beginning of the hajj comes from the Arabic word "Al-Hajju", which according to some scholars means "deliberately" visiting or going to the Kaaba with the aim of worshipping Allah SWT with specified conditions, obligations and times. There are some scholars who argue that the word "hajj" comes from the Arabic verb "hajja-yahujju-hajjan" and the word "hujja" which means "congregation." Haja or hiji can also mean a lot towards something that is glorified. Regardless of the various aspects, the main goal of every Hajj pilgrim is to receive the title of Mabrur Hajj. This philosophical predicate is related to human social interaction.²⁴

Imam Al-Ghazali emphasized the relationship between Sufism and psychology in his treatise al-ladunniyah. He explained that basically knowledge comes from Allah and is given to humans in two ways: sharia and reason. Al-Ghazali divided the furu'iyah of knowledge into three: worship (*haqqu Allah*), mu'amalah (*haqqu An-Naas*), and the soul (*haqqu An-Nafsi*). In essence, expert people—also known as "alim" or "wise"—are those who have the ability to realize the Shari'a using an optimal intellectual approach.

²¹ Islamy, Athoillah, and Nurul Istiani. "Pendidikan Spritual Ibadah Puasa: Perspektif Andragogi Sufistik." *Studi Multidisipliner: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman* 8.1 (2021): 1-18.

²² Baidowi, Ikbal. "Zakat Profesi (Zakat Penghasilan)." *Tazkiyya: Jurnal Keislaman, Kemasyarakatan dan Kebudayaan* 19.01 (2018): 40-54.

²³ Tambak, Syahraini. "Pemikiran Pendidikan Al-Ghazali." *Al-Hikmah: Jurnal Agama Dan Ilmu Pengetahuan* 8.1 (2011): 73-87.

²⁴ Islamy, Athoillah. "Haji Mabrur dalam Paradigma Fikih Sosial Sufistik." *Al-Qalam* 26.1 (2020): 107-116.

The main goal of every Muslim person who goes and performs the Hajj is to worship and gain Allah's blessing. There is a method to understand the ritual and perform it mindfully and truly. The symbols used during the Hajj are closely related to this tradition.²⁵

In this case, the connection between Al-Ghazali's worship and ulul albab is that Al-Ghazali really emphasized the importance of Sufism or spirituality in achieving knowledge of Allah (ma'rifatullah). Ulul albab are those who not only have knowledge but also wisdom gained through soul cleansing and a deep spiritual approach. Al-Ghazali saw Sufism as a path to achieving closeness to Allah, and Ulul Albab is an example of an individual who practiced Sufism in their lives. Apart from that, Al-Ghazali emphasized that knowledge without charity is useless. Ulul albab, according to their characteristics, are people who not only have knowledge but also practice it in everyday life. This is in line with Al-Ghazali's view which emphasizes the importance of correct religious practice based on correct knowledge. Ulul albab is thus an ideal model of the integration of knowledge and charity emphasized by Al-Ghazali.

In Islamic morals, good and bad are defined as good and bad based on these two sources, not based on human standards. This is because, if human measures are used, differences between good and bad can occur. One person may think something is good, but another person may not think it is good. Conversely, someone may think something is bad, but another person may think it is good. The two main sources of Islamic teachings, the Qur'an and the Sunnah, are considered by all Muslims as naqli propositions transferred from Allah SWT and the Prophet Muhammad. Except for the Prophet's sunnah, where many false hadiths (dha'if/false) appear from time to time.

Al-Ghazali places a strong emphasis on the importance of consistent teaching and habituation in forming good morals, according to a child's stage of development. He suggested that every educational approach taken must be adapted to the child's age, intelligence, talents and temperament, and must provide real and measurable benefits. In this case, Al-Ghazali integrated educational principles originating from Sufi teachings, which emphasize the importance of purifying the soul, with a practical approach that ensures the application of knowledge in everyday life²⁶.

Furthermore, Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of the mental component or attitude in the educational process. According to him, it is very important for children to cleanse themselves of negative traits and protect their souls from influences that can damage. He believed that a pure soul and noble character were an important basis for the healthy and beneficial growth of knowledge. To achieve this goal, Al-Ghazali suggested the use of various educational methods such as guidance, counseling, the use of educational stories, as well as motivational techniques that can arouse the enthusiasm and desire to learn in children.

In real life, this method not only helps in building good nature, but also helps in developing a balance between intellectual and spiritual development. The aim of Al-Ghazali's approach is to integrate scientific values, ethics and practice so that children are prepared to become people who are not only intelligent and skilled but also have high morality.

²⁵ Yussanti, Yussanti, and Dini Rahma Bintari. "Haji Mabruur Sebagai Konsep Transformasi Diri Dalam Perspektif Psikologi Islam." *Al-Mabsut: Jurnal Studi Islam dan Sosial* 17.1 (2023): 71-82.

²⁶ Syamsul Bahri, "Konsep Akhlakul Karimah Perspektif Imam Al Ghazali" 10, No. 2 (2022): 177-92.

Al-Ghazali suggested two important approaches in developing noble morals. The first method, *mujahadah*, emphasizes the importance of fighting against negative desires to improve oneself morally. The second method is through continuous practice in performing good actions, which gradually strengthens positive habits. Al-Ghazali also underlined that repeating good actions can strengthen and deepen these noble qualities. By actively directing oneself to behave in a noble manner through *riyadhah*, namely regular spiritual practice, individuals can cultivate *akhlakul karimah* more effectively. Basically, Al-Ghazali believes that education and moral training are the keys to forming a better and more ethical character ²⁷.

Al-Ghazali outlined the various traits that educators should possess to facilitate the moral growth of their students, underscoring the important role of coaching in achieving this goal. First, teachers must treat their students with the same compassion as they treat their own children. Second, teachers must remember that teaching is considered a sacred duty inherited by the Prophet Muhammad SAW, so material gain should not be the main motivation. Third, teachers must remind students that the purpose of learning is to get closer to Allah, not to gain material or personal gain. Fourth, educators must encourage students to acquire knowledge that brings happiness to their lives. Fifth, teachers must be good role models through polite and generous behavior. Sixth, teachers must adapt their teaching methods to the intellectual needs and learning styles of each student. Seventh, teachers need to practice the values they teach to maintain their credibility. Eighth, strong and positive relationships between educators and students are critical to academic success. Finally, teachers must create an atmosphere that makes students enjoy the learning process, thereby helping them achieve achievement ²⁸.

Al-Ghazali illustrates that the ideal teacher who is still relevant today must not only meet the high moral standards he described, but must also have adequate academic and professional qualifications. According to Al-Ghazali, adding academic requirements will further strengthen the role of teachers in modern society, making them more effective in conveying knowledge and values.

According to a person's moral abilities, Al-Ghazali divided people into four levels. People in the first level are careless and cannot distinguish between good and bad, and right and wrong. People at the second level recognize their mistakes but do not change, and sometimes disguise them as good things. People at the third level do not see a clear moral distinction between good and bad things, and they are at the last level, which is the most severe ²⁹.

In his classification, Al-Ghazali used terms such as "*jabil*" (foolish), "*dhall*" (deviant), "*fasiq*" (one who sins), and "*shirr*" (evil), to mark various levels of moral degradation. This approach illustrates how solid moral values and education are important in building strong foundations for individuals and society, and the important role of educators in this process. Al-Ghazali uses the analogy between physical health and mental health to illustrate how morality can also experience illness, or unhealthy conditions, just like the human body. According to him, the normal condition of the body is the basis of its health and any deviation from this condition can cause discomfort or disease. Similarly, moral deviation from ethical norms is considered a mental illness ³⁰.

²⁷ Al-Ghazali, *Ihya' Ulumuddin* (Darul Fikr., 2008).

²⁸ Al-Ghazali.

²⁹ Al-Ghazali.

³⁰ Al-Ghazali.

In this context, Al-Ghazali offered two healing methods known as “*mujabadah*” and “*riyadhatun nafs*.” *Mujabadah* is a spiritual process in which individuals struggle against negative desires and impulses that deviate from proper moral teachings. This is similar to fighting a disease by taking steps to strengthen the body against the disease. *Riyadhatun nafs*, on the other hand, is a continuous spiritual practice or discipline aimed at strengthening the soul, maintaining moral health, and ensuring that an individual's actions and decisions are in line with ethical values. This process is similar to a regular exercise routine that maintains physical health and prevents disease.

By using these two techniques, Al-Ghazali's goal is to motivate the soul to always follow correct moral principles, thereby creating a strong foundation for sustainable moral health. This underscores the importance of discipline and constant struggle in maintaining and improving morality, which is considered essential for one's spiritual growth and development.

Al-Ghazali proposed the *tadrij* technique, or gradual approach, as a method for changing immoral behavior into better behavior. This technique involves gradual change of bad attitudes and actions to milder levels and eventually achieving complete liberation from such behavior. This is an ongoing process, demanding consistency and persistence in the pursuit of self-improvement.

Al-Ghazali emphasized that behavior that is deep-seated and part of a person's character can be very challenging to change, but it is not impossible. For example, to overcome greed, he suggests the practice of fasting and reducing food consumption. This step not only limits physical access to desires but also teaches self-control and patience.

Al-Ghazali suggests that individuals who try to overcome greed must actively share with others. For example, by preparing nutritious food and offering it to other people while forbidding yourself from eating it. This action not only helps strengthen the spirit of giving, but also helps develop the habit of patience, thereby gradually eliminating greed.

Through the *tadrij approach*, Al-Ghazali showed that behavior change requires deliberate and gradual effort, combining physical and spiritual actions to overcome moral deficiencies and develop virtue. This is a process that requires strong self-discipline and a long-term commitment to growth and self-improvement.

In Al-Ghazali's view, to effectively change damaged morals into good ones, a person must first understand and analyze these bad morals in depth. This approach aims to understand the causes and origins of bad behavior, which then allows individuals to take practical steps in replacing it with more ethical and moral behavior.

In practice, this involves a conscious effort to fight bad tendencies and replace them with actions in accordance with higher moral norms, as alluded to in verses 40-41 of Surah an-Naziat. This shows that people who can restrain their base desires and fear God's greatness will enter heaven, illustrating that the struggle against evil desires is part of the spiritual journey towards moral perfection.

Al-Ghazali also suggested that approaches to moral education must be adapted to the individual's intellectual capacity and psychological characteristics. He identified three main

categories of individuals in the learning context, namely ³¹: (1) Laymen, namely those who have straightforward thinking and usually follow directions without many questions. An effective approach for this group is direct instruction and clear guidance. (2) The Chosen One. Individuals in this category have deeper intelligence and analytical abilities. They need intellectual challenges and usually value learning that enriches their understanding in greater depth. (3) Dissidents (*Abl al Jidal*). These groups often challenge norms and authority, requiring different strategies that may involve open debate or dialogue approaches to overcome their resistance.

Al-Ghazali emphasized that in education, it is very important to adapt teaching methods to the needs and characteristics of each student. This not only increases the effectiveness of learning but also helps students in building a closer relationship with spiritual and moral values, in line with seeking scientific and spiritual truths that ultimately bring them closer to Allah.

In this case, the relationship between Al-Ghazali's akhlakul karimah and ulul albab is that Al-Ghazali emphasized the importance of reason in understanding and strengthening faith. In the context of ulul albab, they are people who use their minds to reflect on Allah's creation and understand His revelation. Al-Ghazali believes that reason is an important tool for achieving deep belief and does not conflict with revelation. Ulul albab, in this sense, represents the balanced use of reason and is based on faith, in accordance with Al-Ghazali's views. Moreover, the introduction to ulul albab is not only intellectual but also spiritual, which connects them closer to Allah and makes them emulate his good qualities. In Al-Ghazali's view, good morals are a reflection of a servant's efforts to imitate the noble qualities of Allah, such as justice, compassion and honesty.

Conclusion

Based on the etymological definition, ulul albab is a person who has pure reason, which is not covered by skin, namely the fog of ideas that can give birth to confusion in thinking. The three main elements that make up Ulul Albab are dzikr (remembering God), fikr (thinking), and good deeds. These three elements are interrelated and lead to recognition of God's majesty, as mentioned in the QS. Ali Imran: 190. People who have the ulul albab character are humble, always acknowledge God's power, and are not arrogant about their scientific achievements. They are integrative scientists, combining strong faith with high intellect, and producing positive and innovative ideas and work. The link between Al-Ghazali's religious thinking and the concept of Ulul Albab lies in their emphasis on the balance between reason and revelation, as well as the importance of strong belief. Al-Ghazali rejects radical skepticism which doubts everything without a strong basis, similar to Ulul Albab who has deep beliefs and is based on correct understanding. In terms of worship, the link between Al-Ghazali's concept of worship and Ulul Albab lies in their emphasis on the importance of Sufism, the practice of knowledge, and the integration of knowledge and charity. As for morals, the link between Al-Ghazali's akhlakul karimah and Ulul Albab lies in the balanced use of reason, deep spiritual recognition, and efforts to emulate the noble qualities of Allah in everyday life. Ulul Albab reflects the ideal model of akhlakul karimah, in accordance with Al-Ghazali's view of the importance of the use of reason and spiritual knowledge in achieving wisdom and closeness to Allah.

³¹Al-Ghazali.

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