



Knowledge and Scholarly Authority in Al-Ghazali's Philosophy:
A Study of *Fatihatul 'Ulum*

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Abstract

*Islamic education is a place to form humans who can carry out their duties as caliphs on earth. Knowledge of the concepts of science and scholars is needed to understand and develop science and scholars in Islamic teachings combined with the philosophy of Islamic education. This concept is the basis for understanding the philosophy of Islamic education. The two have a close relationship. The purpose of this research is to describe the concept of science according to Imam Al-Ghazali and to find out the role of ulama' according to Imam Al-Ghazali in the book of *Fatihatul 'Ulum*. This research method uses a literature review focused on the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum*. The data collection technique uses the documentation method related to the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum* and other works that are still one theme of discussion. Analysis of this literature study uses content analysis by looking at the validity of the original data and explaining it again by comparing other sources. First, researchers found knowledge as the main foundation of a person so that he can know Allah SWT. Studying science is considered something with good intentions by seeking the pleasure of Allah SWT. After knowledge is obtained, a person will become more moral and can practice religious and general knowledge with a heart that is always linked to Allah SWT. Secondly, being an ulama' is a big responsibility because he is the heir of the Prophet SAW. Ulama' must link their hearts to seek the pleasure of Allah, leave the affairs or desires of the world, and teach all the knowledge they have so that their students can take the path of Allah's pleasure.*

Keywords: *Fatihah Al-Ulum; Islamic Scholar Authority; Knowledge.*

Abstrak

*Pendidikan Islam merupakan wadah untuk membentuk manusia yang dapat melaksanakan tugasnya sebagai khalifah di muka bumi. Pengetahuan tentang konsep ilmu dan ulama sangat dibutuhkan untuk memahami dan mengembangkan ilmu dan ulama dalam ajaran Islam yang dipadukan dengan filsafat pendidikan Islam. Konsep inilah yang menjadi dasar untuk memahami filsafat pendidikan Islam. Keduanya memiliki hubungan yang erat. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah untuk mendeskripsikan konsep ilmu menurut Imam Al-Ghazali dan untuk mengetahui peran ulama' menurut Imam Al-Ghazali dalam kitab *Fatihatul 'Ulum*. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan kajian pustaka yang difokuskan pada kitab *Fatihah al-Ulum*. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan metode dokumentasi yang terkait dengan kitab *Fatihah al-Ulum* dan karya-karya lain yang masih menjadi satu tema pembahasan. Analisis kajian pustaka ini menggunakan analisis isi dengan melihat keabsahan data asli dan menjelaskannya kembali dengan membandingkan sumber-sumber lain. Pertama, peneliti menemukan ilmu sebagai landasan utama seseorang agar dapat mengenal Allah SWT. Mempelajari ilmu dianggap sesuatu yang beritikad baik dengan mencari keridhaan Allah SWT. Setelah ilmu diperoleh, seseorang akan menjadi lebih berakhlak dan dapat mengamalkan ilmu agama dan umum dengan hati yang senantiasa terhubung dengan Allah SWT. Kedua, menjadi ulama merupakan tanggung jawab yang besar karena ia merupakan pewaris Rasulullah SAW. Ulama' harus menghubungkan hatinya untuk mencari keridhaan Allah, meninggalkan urusan atau hawa nafs dunia, dan mengajarkan semua ilmu yang dimilikinya agar para santrinya dapat menempuh jalan keridhaan Allah SWT.*

Kata Kunci: *Fatihah Al-Ulum; Otoritas Cendekiawan Muslim; Pengetahuan.*

INTRODUCTION

Humans are required to be perfect caliphs, and science is fundamental to be perfect caliphs or representatives of God on earth. Perfect humans mean communicating actively with God, fellow humans, and nature. However, according to the Qur'anic verses, education can be used to create perfect human beings. As Allah says in Surah Al Baqarah verse 31, Allah has taught the Prophet Adam all the objects in the universe while asking questions to the angels who do not yet have that knowledge.

The Qur'an gives higher honor and virtue to people of knowledge, both in this world and hereafter. According to the Qur'an, what is meant by "*ulul al-ilm*," "*al-rasikbun fi al-'ilm*," "*al-alimun*," "*al-ulama*," and "*ulu al-bab*" are people who have knowledge but also have faith. In other words, the knowledgeable people Allah elevates can lead themselves to good deeds (valuable work).¹

All people who embrace Islam are obligated to acquire knowledge, which is sourced from the Qur'an and as-Sunnah and supported by "Aql" for advancing Islamic education. Tarbiyah is closely related to Islamic life, and it is an effort to create a young generation that is intelligent and understands religion.² The truth must accompany knowledge because humans cannot live the life of this world and the hereafter without it. Many people today are knowledgeable, but they do not understand what truth is and are not based on religion.³

The method of religious education used by al-Ghazali is divided into two parts. The first focuses on the knowledge of aqidah. This is because religious education is more complicated than other education. After all, religious education focuses on intuitive issues and formation. Second, regarding the specific approach to the education of morals, al-Ghazali said, "As the doctor gives his patients only one type of medicine, it will undoubtedly kill most of the sick people who seek treatment from him, so the teacher shows the way to his students with one type of training, it will undoubtedly destroy and mislead their hearts."⁴

Knowledge has a very strategic position and role in Islam. Many verses of the Qur'an and al-Hadith affirm that Muslims must learn knowledge. The teaching of knowledge (*asmâu kullaha*) that Allah gave to Adam signaled his duty as caliph. This teaching enabled the angels to realize Adam. Allah has also promised that those who believe and possess knowledge will attain a higher level. The Islamic concept of knowledge must be understood in light of its strategic role. If one misunderstands the definition of knowledge in Islam, it can change the meaning of the religion itself. This is an alleged fact in Muslim societies. For example, *Syed M. Naquib al-Attas* says that the *corruption of knowledge* and the people's lack of mastery of *knowledge* are the causes of Islam's continuous decline over the past few centuries. These factors, *al-Attas* explained, caused Muslims to face many problems in the political, economic, social, and cultural fields.⁵

¹Mochamad Arifinal, "Konsep Ilmu (Al-Qur'an) Sebagai Wujud Ajaran Ilmu Allah," *Alqalam* 33, no. 1 (2016): 84, <https://doi.org/10.32678/alqalam.v33i1.386>.

²Nu'tih Kamalia, "Konsep Ilmu Pendidikan Menurut Imam Al-Ghazali Nu'tih Kamalia," *At-Ta'Dib* 10, no. 1 (2015): 1–15.

³Maula Sari and Marhaban, "Hubungan Ilmu Dan Agama Dalam Perspektif Imam Al-Ghazali," *At-Tajkeir* 15, no. 1 (2022): 30–43, <https://doi.org/10.32505/at.v15i1.4095>.

⁴Devi Syukri Azhari and Mustapa Mustapa, "Konsep Pendidikan Islam Menurut Imam Al-Ghazali," *Jurnal Review Pendidikan Dan Pengajaran* 4, no. 2 (2021): 271–78, <https://doi.org/10.31004/jrpp.v4i2.2865>.

⁵Muhammad Zainal Abidin, "Konsep Ilmu Dalam Islam: Tinjauan Terhadap Makna, Hakikat, Dan Sumber-Sumber Ilmu Dalam Islam," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Ushuluddin* 10, no. 1 (2016): 107, <https://doi.org/10.18592/jiu.v10i1.747>.

In addition to definitively explaining the existence of science and its existence in the life of *al-Ghazali* in his book *Fatihah Al Ulum*, *al-Ghazali* also reviews many things related to science carefully and in detail, whether it is about the existence of teachers as people who teach their knowledge, scholars as people who have students as people in the process of searching or even in the teaching and learning process is also reviewed with a description that cannot be separated from learning and wrong and the effects of all religions.⁶ *Reinterpreting, actualizing*, and such things require scientists and religionists with the *intellectual-religious* ability to think *integratively* and *inductively*. New people who can think *integratively* to actualize existing potential need tools.⁷

Akidah, ibadah, muamalah, and akhlak are the four main aspects of Islamic teachings that must be taught to the community. These four pillar teachings of Islam are essential in the revival of Islamic society from its decline. Thus, peace, prosperity, and social harmony will be created through the friendly hands of the scholars. Islam always prioritizes social harmony for the welfare of society. Therefore, the role of the ulama is significant and strategic in the community development process.⁸

The research then discusses the parasites of Islamic Education knowledge that produce arrogant attitudes when they know.⁹ Meanwhile, according to Al-Ghazali, education must produce good moral character and deep religious understanding.¹⁰ Education and misguided thinking are sometimes also experienced by knowledge seekers for religious learning, which is used as a guide when the mind goes astray.¹¹ Moral education is also needed for knowledge seekers trying to have commendable traits in the human person.¹² The educational process can be understood as the path taken by the learner to gain knowledge and become a critical-thinking human being.¹³ Moral education is also vital for humans, as morals are given to Allah. These morals can guide a person toward the nature of *uswatun hasanah*.¹⁴

Some of the information in the above research about Al-Ghazali's work mostly discusses the morals an individual must possess. Meanwhile, this article examines the concept of science and ulama'. Researchers see that Imam al-Ghazali is an ulama' who has a broad view of science and ulama', which is very important and needs to be studied in depth, which will later be used as a reference as well as a guide for all Muslims in applying the concept of science and ulama' in Islamic education. Therefore, this article aims to find out the thoughts of

⁶ Imam Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali, *Fatihatul Ulum*, trans. Ma'ruf Asrori (Surabaya: Progressive Library, 2002), 45.

⁷ Abubakar Madani, "Aktualisasi Filsafat Ilmu," *Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Sosial Keagamaan* XVI, no. 2 (2014): 170–75.

⁸ Juhari, "Pencitraan Ulama Dalam Al-Qur'an (Refleksi Peran Ulama Dalam Kehidupan Sosial)," *Jurnal Peurawi: Media Kajian Komunikasi Islam* 1, no. 2 (2018): 21–36.

⁹ M. Ulul Azmi et al., "Parasit Ilmu Dalam Pendidikan Islam Perspektif Ihya Ulumuddin," *Al-Qalam: Jurnal Kajian Islam Dan Pendidikan* 16, no. 2 (December 30, 2024): 445–57, <https://doi.org/10.47435/al-qalam.v16i2.3473>.

¹⁰ Agung Setiawan, "Konsep Pendidikan Menurut Al-Ghazali Dan Al-Farabi (Studi Komparasi Pemikiran)," *Tarbawiyah: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan* 13, no. 01 (May 16, 2016): 51–71.

¹¹ Hamriah Hamriah, "Konsep Pendidikan Al Ghazali," *PILAR* 3, no. 1 (2012), <https://journal.unismuh.ac.id/index.php/pilar/article/view/12747>.

¹² Ahmad Sahar, "Pandangan Al-Ghazali Tentang Pendidikan Moral," *AN NUR: Jurnal Studi Islam* 4, no. 2 (2012), <https://jurnalannur.ac.id/index.php/An-Nur/article/view/19>.

¹³ Syaripudin Basyar, "Pemikiran Tokoh Pendidikan Islam," *Ri'ayah: Jurnal Sosial Dan Keagamaan* 5, no. 01 (July 29, 2020): 96–102.

¹⁴ Zahrotul Muzdalifah and Ali Mustofa, "Konsep Pendidikan Islam Menurut Imam Al-Ghazali dalam Bidayah dan Implementasinya di Pesantren Darul Faqih Malang," *RABBAYANI: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Peradaban Islami* 2, no. 1 (June 30, 2022): 1–11.

Imam al-Ghazali in the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum*, which has to do with the concept of science and scholars that can be applied in this day and age.

METHODS

Literature research seeks to collect library data related to the research topic and then thoroughly collect and process selected materials to be used as research data. This literature study produces descriptive data such as expressions, writings, and behavior that can be read and appropriately understood. This research is focused on the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum*. The data collection technique uses the documentation method related to the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum* and other works that are still one theme of discussion. This literature review uses content analysis by looking at the validity of the original data and explaining it again by comparing other sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Knowledge (*al-Im*) According to Imam Al-Ghazali

According to Imam Al-Ghazali, knowledge is divided into three main categories: theoretical science (*al-'ilm al-naẓari*). This category includes sciences that focus on theoretical knowledge and philosophy. Theoretical sciences include mathematics, physics, logic, metaphysics, and cosmology. Theoretical sciences aim to understand the universe, its basic principles, and the knowledge structure. Practical Sciences (*al-'ilm al-'amali*): This category involves sciences concerned with applying knowledge in everyday life. Practical sciences include ethics, law, worship procedures, Qur'an interpretation, hadith, and history. The purpose of practical sciences is to provide guidelines and rules for living daily life following religious teachings.

Inner Science (*al-'ilm al-batini*): This category focuses on knowledge related to human beings' spiritual and inner dimensions. Inner sciences include *Sufism*, which studies self-development, the relationship with God, and understanding the nature of life. Inner sciences aim to achieve closeness to Allah and direct the soul towards spiritual perfection. According to Imam Al-Ghazali, the division of knowledge underlines the importance of theoretical, practical and inner knowledge in holistically developing a person. In addition, Imam al-Ghazali also emphasizes the importance of harmony between the three categories of knowledge. He argued that theoretical knowledge should be applied in practical life, while practical knowledge should be based on profound spiritual understanding.¹⁵

Imam al-Ghazali's thinking about the division of knowledge has significantly contributed to the development of Islamic education and the integration of science into the overall Islamic framework. Imam Al-Ghazali, in the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum*, provides an understanding of science as Science *fardhu 'ain*, namely knowledge that every individual, such as religious science and muamalah science, must learn. *Fardhu keifayah* science is a science that is not required to be studied by every individual but must be studied by some people to meet the needs of society, such as medicine and mathematics. There are also sciences related to human relations, such as ethics and law.

¹⁵ Samsul Arifin, "Kecerdasan Spiritual (SQ) Sebagai Faktor Pendukung Hasil Belajar Siswa," *La-Tabẓan: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 12, no. 2 (November 25, 2020): 201–14, <https://doi.org/10.62490/latahzan.v12i2.103>.

Another definition of knowledge, according to him, is the science of *mukasyafah*, which is knowledge related to spiritual experiences and knowledge derived from these experiences. According to Imam Al-Ghazali, the highest knowledge is spiritual knowledge, which can be obtained by honing intuition, studying religious knowledge, practicing it daily, carrying out *riyadhab*, doing self-introspection, and improving morals and behavior.¹⁶ The concept of knowledge poured by al-Ghazali in the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum* is explained through several clear explanations, among others;¹⁷

1. On the virtue of knowledge

In the book, *Fatihah al-Ulum* Al-Ghazali explains the virtues of knowledge by quoting the Qur'an Surah Ali Imran verse 18, which means "Allah declares that there is no god but Him, (Allah) who upholds justice. (Likewise) the angels and the people of knowledge. There is no god but He, the Mighty, the Wise. Al-Ghazali explains the verse above by connecting the testimony of Allah Almighty about establishing the Words of Tawhid with the angels and the people of knowledge to prove that knowledge is significantly prioritized. Allah mentions Himself as a witness and praises His angels. And a third of them are among the knowledgeable among His servants. Not to mention that they are given honor, virtue, majesty, and glory. If we look at it, it is recognized as the words of tawhid, the highest words, the head of happiness, and the foundation of worship. If we see a martyr, he is God Almighty, and if we see their martyred companions, he is. God Almighty and His angels, then God Almighty adds to it, removing the intermediary from the middle and making it clear. Sufficiency comes only from the testimony of God Almighty and the testimony of the scholars.

This concept that the virtue of knowledge is aligned with the testimony of Allah and the Angels is an extraordinary encouragement for knowledge seekers to seek knowledge to develop their understanding. The Quran explains the importance of knowledge. Human life would be awful without expertise. In addition, the Quran places knowledgeable people in a high position, as stated in the Quran letter al-Mujadalah verse 11. In line with al-Ghazali's thinking, al-Kindi, an Islamic philosopher born in the 8th century AD, provides information that one of the virtues of science is the philosophy of divinity. Al-Kindi's thinking about divinity states that God is a *haqq* form, which always exists and must exist, so God is a perfect form, which is not preceded by another form, and there will be no form but because of it. It can be concluded that God is the source of knowledge.¹⁸ While Islamic philosophers also agree with al-Ghazali and al-Kindi about the virtue of knowledge.

2. On the virtue of seeking knowledge.

Al-Ghazali quoted several hadiths of the Prophet about the virtue of seeking knowledge, one of which he mentioned was: "Whoever takes the path of seeking knowledge, Allah will facilitate for him the path to Paradise." The hadith quoted by al-Ghazali already represents that whoever seeks knowledge, Allah will facilitate all paths to Allah's paradise. And so necessary is the knowledge that Allah prioritizes it to be sought in human life.

¹⁶ Sahar, "Pandangan Al-Ghazali Tentang Pendidikan Moral."

¹⁷ Al-Ghazali, *Fatihatul Ulum*, 21.

¹⁸Nurul Islam, "Pemikiran Al-Kindi (Rasional-Religius) Tentang Pendidikan Islam Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Pendidikan Islam Kontemporer," *Madania: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 13, no. 1 (2023): 62, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jiik.v13i1.22055>.

Many commands in the Qur'an and al-Hadith talk about studying, the importance of mastering it, and why learning is an obligation in Islam.¹⁹ Ibn Khaldun, one of the Islamic philosophers, also explained the virtue of seeking knowledge, namely that anyone who seeks knowledge will know about the purpose of his creation in this world, namely to become a caliph. Allah created them with the intention of becoming the Caliph of Allah on this Earth. In other words, they were made with heads so that they could think and become leaders on Earth.²⁰

3. Straighten your intention in seeking knowledge.

In demanding knowledge, a person needs to set his intention so that in obtaining knowledge, he is always given the benefits and blessings of Allah, the owner of knowledge. In this case, Al-Ghazali quotes a lot of Hadith about the importance of intention and previous scholars who directly examined students' intentions before they studied a fan of knowledge. When a student wants to learn about knowledge, he should focus on several things that must be remembered and embedded in him.

One of them is to have good, honest, and sincere intentions in his heart. The main focus is to seek knowledge for the sake of Allah ta'ala. In addition, a learner should have strong motivation, especially intrinsic motivation, from within himself. However, extrinsic motivation may come from outside himself, such as from his teachers, in their efforts to gather helpful information for the public interest. Strong motivation with the expectation of Allah's pleasure will make learning easier and better when the goal is achieved.²¹

4. On the division of knowledge.

The division of knowledge of al-Ghazali in the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum* divides knowledge into two parts, namely knowledge that is *Fardlu 'Ain* and *Fardlu Kifayah*, with an explanation of the meaning of each of these types of knowledge. It differs from scholars who divide or classify knowledge with their respective opinions.²²

Ibn Khaldun, an Islamic thinker long before other Islamic thinkers, classified the various developed disciplines. They all fell into two categories of parent sciences: *al-'ulum al-naqliyyat* and *al-'ulum al-aqliyyat*. Most of their classifications focused on how Muslims could accept philosophy and other sciences and integrate them with their religion. In addition, Al-Kindi divided science into two broad categories: *taufiq*, which distinguishes religion and philosophy. Similar to al-Kindi, al-Farabi divided his knowledge into two branches. In his book *al-'ulum al-aqliyyat*, he divided the sciences of physics, metaphysics, politics, and music. Ibn Sina divided science into two significant branches, just like his predecessor.

The classification made by the scholars and philosophers above is based on the study of the science it discusses. However, to some other Islamic thinkers, the classification of knowledge is based on where the knowledge is obtained (*epistemology*). Suppose the thoughts of the scholars above are connected with al-Ghazali's thoughts on the classification of

¹⁹Fadhli Noer, "Menuntut Ilmu Sebagai Transformasi Perubahan Paradigma," *Jurnal Qathrunâ* 1, no. 1 (2014): 1–22.

²⁰Komarudin, "Pendidikan Perspektif Ibnu Khaldun," *PANDAWA: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Dakwah* 4, no. 1 (2022): 23–41.

²¹Ahmad Fauzi, "Urgensi dan Keutamaan Ilmu serta Kedudukan Ilmu yang Bermanfaat sebagai Aset Akhirat," *Journal of Education and Teaching* 2, no. 2 (August 15, 2021): 128–39, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jete.v2i2.12200>.

²²Al-Ghazali, *Fatihatul Ulum*.

science. In that case, it turns out that all of them are interrelated depending on the understanding and knowledge of each of these scholars.

5. About the *wadhjfab* (function) of knowledge and its manners.

The function of knowledge put forward by al-Ghazali in the book of Fatihah al-Ulum is evident and straightforward. However, from some scholars and science experts, many still understand it from different points of view concerning science itself and because of the many types of knowledge that knowledge seekers will study.

Of the many functions mentioned above, they are inseparable from the purpose of the search for knowledge because if we know the function and purpose of knowledge, then there will be no doubt in studying knowledge. Science in education that leads to optimal development must pay attention to several aspects of education, among others: ²³

- a. Pedagogical Aspect: In this case, humans are considered as "*Homo Educondum*," or creatures that must be educated, which distinguishes them from other creatures such as animals and angels. Therefore, education humanizes humans; without education, humans cannot become true human beings.
- b. Psychological Aspect: This aspect considers humans as "*Psychophysik Neutral*," meaning they have spiritual and physical. Humans have an essential potential for self-reliance, a seed that can grow and develop properly.
- c. Sociological and Cultural Aspects This aspect argues that humans have a fundamental nature and ability to live in a social society.
- d. Philosophical Aspect: In this aspect, humans are referred to as "*Homo Sapiens*," which is a creature that produces human beings who continue to strive to improve faith, piety, and human morals.

They are also active in building civilization and harmonizing life, especially in advancing the civilization of a country with dignity. Such people are expected to be resilient in the face of challenges, obstacles, and societal changes at local, national, regional, and global levels. They are also likely to be resilient in learning. Based on the above elements of education, Islamic education is expected.

6. On the virtue of the sciences of the hereafter

In terms of the virtue of the knowledge of the afterlife, Al-Ghazali, in the book of *fatibab al-ulum*, which the author of this study focuses more on respect for the scholars of the *madhab* who are *Tababur* in their knowledge by prioritizing respect for them because the scholars of the *madhab* we can see the virtue of the knowledge of the afterlife. Even in the previous statement, the author also took several verses of the Qur'an as the basis for the virtue of knowledge, especially the knowledge of the hereafter. By prioritizing understanding the hereafter, we can get closer to Allah.

The Concept of Ulama' According to Imam Al Ghazali

The Ulama are considered the heirs of the Prophet, meaning they function as leaders like the Prophet. Thus, what the prophets gave cannot be replaced with anything apart from this whole earth and sky. Based on their faith and knowledge, Ulama will continue to strive to

²³ Muhammad Sholeh, "Pembaharuan Aspek-Aspek Pendidikan," *La-Tabzan: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 11, no. 1 (May 25, 2019): 13–24, <https://doi.org/10.62490/latahzan.v11i1.4>.

guide the people to devote themselves entirely to Allah, both in political and spiritual life, in the hope of his pleasure.²⁴

A cleric is often described as a scholar who learns and masters religious sciences and knowledge, which gives rise to the nature or fear of God. Ulama is also referred to as a figure who understands the sciences or teachings of religion and knowledge, and they are also used as a guide for the people and instructions as well as a *motivator* to advance the quality of humanity so that their lives are better. In addition, religion and science are not separated by the ulama but have become one.²⁵

In a broader sense, along with the development of science and technology, Ulama must also have general knowledge in addition to knowing religion. As a result, they issue fatwas, teach, lead, attend seminars and scientific meetings, preach, and write in the mass media with references to general knowledge relevant to the times. Researchers think the ulama should be able to keep up with the times but not forget the original purpose of carrying out knowledge with guidelines to maintain good old traditions and make new and better things.

Like the Prophets, scholars are also human beings who face problems. To invite their people to know God, they face many trials. In today's digital era, da'wah can be done using advanced technology such as television, radio, blogs, YouTube, and others. Conversely, this da'wah media makes it easier for others to get spiritual inspiration. However, for preachers, this can confuse intentions. When da'wah starts with *lillah* worship, it can become lil-like, share, and comment. Media can make money with many viewers, likes, shares, and comments.

Since they are considered community leaders, the ulama function as protectors. During his stay at the pesantren, he provides guidance to his students. The cleric is essential in family, neighborhood, economic, and cultural conflicts. He is the person who is expected to nurture the feelings of others to reduce tension and conflict and even eliminate conflict without aggravating the problem. In reality, the presence of Ulama in society has lost its above-mentioned functions because some of them are more preoccupied with personal affairs or self-interest than helping the *ummah*, such as the actions of Ulama, who deviate from Islamic principles. Therefore, it is likely that some of the Ulama will lose their authority or their following will diminish.²⁶

As for the concept of 'Ulama, ' Al-Ghazali himself, in the book *Fatihah al-Ulum*, explains notions similar to the information above. The explanation has been placed in the previous chapter. Even when we are responding to the role of the Ulama and the types of Ulama when we are relevant to the present, there is a lot of misunderstanding about the nature of the Ulama. In the book of fatihah al-Ulum itself, Al-Ghazali provides an explanation of ulama' from several aspects, among others:

²⁴ Maftuh Maftuh, "Dikotomi Ulama' Menurut Al-Ghazali (Klasifikasi Ulama Al-Dunya Dan Ulama Al-Akhirat)," *MIYAH: Jurnal Studi Islam* 12, no. 1 (2016): 151–67, <https://doi.org/10.33754/miyah.v12i1.493>; Naibin, Edi Nurhidin, and Moh Rois Abin, "Paradigma Pendidikan Islam Integratif," *Prosiding Mukhtamar Pemikiran Dosen PMII* 1, no. 1 (July 27, 2021): 1027–40.

²⁵ Imam Hanafi and Sofiandi Sofiandi, "Desekulerisasi Ulama; Makna Ulama Menurut Nurcholish Madjid," *Madania: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 8, no. 2 (December 27, 2018): 181–200, <https://doi.org/10.24014/jiik.v8i2.5713>.

²⁶ Agung Mandiro, "Problematika Ulama," *Jurnal Ilmiah Spiritualis: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam Dan Tasawuf* 7, no. 2 (2022): 139–54, <https://doi.org/10.53429/spiritualis.v7i2.349>.

1. Signs distinguish between the scholars of the Hereafter and this world.

Al-Ghazali divides the ulama into two parts: the ulama of the hereafter and the world. One of the characteristics most highlighted by al-Ghazali is that the characteristics of the ulama 'hereafter are those not concerned with world affairs regarding knowledge. However, it is also a policy in thought about ulama' who take part in the results of teaching or spreading knowledge. Especially scholars involved in education, let's call it a teacher, Al-Ghazali said that pursuing the teaching profession means taking a very noble job. Therefore, he must always maintain the manners and responsibilities that accompany it. One of them is that a teacher must maintain his manners and responsibilities by emulating the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. Al-Ghazali explained that a sincere teacher is a teacher who can control his lusts, prioritize his duties as a teacher among others, does not eat much, does not talk much, does not sleep much, and is an expert in prayer, *sadaqah*, and fasting. He does all these things only to seek the pleasure of Allah and be close to Him. In addition, a teacher has a noble character in all his behavior, such as patience, diligence in performing his prayers, gratitude for the blessings he receives, and always tawakkal to Allah all his life.²⁷

The community always needs scholars because they are the role models of the Islamic community. T. Ibrahim Alfian explains that the role of the Ulama is significant in the spread and development of Islam from time to time. Likewise, it is considered one of the three dimensions of social life: the dimension of Ulama, umara, and society. Both need to cooperate reasonably with each other for the welfare of society. They are expected to contribute to fostering Islamic society towards *khairu ummah* (the best Ummah).²⁸ Also, because of the importance of the teacher figure in Islamic education, there is a popular poem, *lawla al-murabi maa arafta rabbi* (*If there were no educators, I would not know my God*). This verse means that without the existence of a teacher, with his guidance and upbringing, a person will never know his God. This sentence implies that the teacher carries a theological mandate in the construction of Islamic education. He holds a prophetic mission to introduce God to his students.

This further emphasizes that educators are like a "torch" that carries a lamp amid darkness. He offers a glimmer of hope so that the mind is not only free from the trap of *ignorance (jahil)* but also from the trap of not knowing his God. The task of the teacher is indeed quite heavy. In addition to teaching knowledge materials, whether in class, halaqah, assembly, and so on, he must also provide a good role model (*qudwah hasanah*) for students as their ovation to implement the knowledge they have known. Of course, this is done by a teacher with an *authoritative* scientific basis. In the Islamic scientific tradition, it is not allowed for a teacher to educate without a clear academic basis.²⁹

²⁷ Siti Rohmatul Hidayah et al., "Kompetensi Kepribadian Guru Di Lembaga Pendidikan Perspektif Imam Al-Ghozali Dalam Kitab Ihya'™ Ulumuddin," *PROCEEDING: The Annual International Conference on Islamic Education* 5, no. 1 (August 20, 2021): 1–19.

²⁸ Mohammad Saiful Rizal, Sri Suriana, and Nurfitri Hadi, "Ulama Dan Perannya Dalam Masyarakat Multikultural di Desa Sumber Jaya Kecamatan Sumber Marga Telang Kabupaten Banyuwasin," *Tanjak: Sejarah dan Peradaban Islam* 2, no. 3 (August 31, 2022): 322–31, <https://doi.org/10.19109/tanjak.v2i3.14030>.

²⁹ Winarto Eka Wahyudi, *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam: Teori dan Kontekstualisasinya di Era Revolusi Industri 4.0 dan Society 5.0* (Malang: Madani, 2023), 38.

2. Al-Ghazali's thinking about ulama' is that they take payment or wages from the knowledge taught or conveyed, both from students and salaries from the government.

According to al-Ghazali, taking wages from learning or teaching is permissible because if he takes wages for teaching, he does not teach to take salaries. If a teacher teaches to take wages, then al-Ghazali explicitly condemns it as forbidden. However, the problem of ulama' itself has two elements, sometimes internal and external. Regarding the internal element, scholars are judged based on their character. They are regarded as experts in the truth, but sometimes there are disputes, conflicts, and disharmony between them.

According to Said Nursi, seven factors affect this internal element: clerics who have obscure money and the social standing and honors they get. Many scholars want to earn money materially and psychologically, are arrogant and self-centered, have too high ideals but circumstances do not support them, lack sincerity in serving the community, have internal disputes such as dualism in intuition, hold on to the truth and feel they do not need the help of others and are unable to maintain nobility of character.

There are two external factors, namely workplace influence and environmental influence. Inappropriate clerics in da'wah are an example of an external element. That is the case with the Salafi Wahabi Islamic organization. Munzir Tamam talks about the way Salafi Wahabis teach, which does not include Sufism. Thus, the hadith and the Qur'an are propositions, laws, commands, and prohibitions. This teaching method will only make humans like robots without a heart, with the logic of thought (brain). However, Allah gave man a heart and a brain.

A famous scholar is an additional external component. Most people consider popularity to be a matter of pride. But that does not mean it does not pose a problem at that level. Sufyan al-Jazairi states that famous scholars can become *su'* scholars. One of the reasons they can become *ulama su'* is because they will conform to the opinions and thoughts of most people. They work hard to fulfill the wishes of their fans and always strive to achieve their wishes, even willing to put themselves down to accomplish them. He has a desire to gain as many supporters and disciples as possible. Thus, he always tries to fulfill the wishes of his fans, even if he has to do so at the expense of religious rules and breaking religious laws. *Iklas lillah* can be converted into likes, shares, and comments.³⁰

In this study, the author also reveals information about al-Ghazali's thinking regarding *Munadzarab* (arguing). As it is known that debating is the activity of arguing between two or more parties, *Mannā al-Qattān* said: In the Qur'an, Allah says that one of the human traits is to claim: "*And man is the most debating of creatures*" (Q.S. Al-Kahf [18]: 54), which means the most hostile. Debates happen everywhere, from laypeople to intellectuals, about simple things to serious ones. Many television or radio programs in Indonesia organize debates. Some examples include Mata Najwa on Metro TV and Indonesia Lawyers Club on TV One. That is bound to happen in people's social life at any time. This social aspect does not differentiate between groups of people.³¹ However, in his book

³⁰ Ahmad Nur Jali and Undang Ruslan W, "Konsep Adab Menurut Syed Naquib Al-Attas," *Al-Ulum Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Penelitian Ke Islaman* 11, no. 1 (February 25, 2024): 43–57, <https://doi.org/10.31102/alulum.11.1.2024.43-57>.

³¹ Aceng Zakariaa Ahmad Khoirul Anam, Rumba Triana, "Debat Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an (Studi Tematik Ayat-Ayat Tentang Debat)," *Prosa LAT* 8, no. 2 (2015): 1–18.

Fatihah al-Ulum, Al-Ghazali limits the debate, especially regarding behavior or manners in debating.

CONCLUSION

Al-Ghazali talks about the importance of seeking knowledge in various aspects of life. As a basis for learning knowledge, some of his statements in the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum* about the virtues of knowledge, the importance of seeking knowledge, how to straighten the intention to seek knowledge, the division of knowledge, the *wadhifah* (function) of expertise and its manners, and the virtues of the understanding of the hereafter. These concepts of Al-Ghazali are essential for education, especially for students. By looking at his concepts, students can assess the greatness of knowledge and become eager to learn because they see its greatness. In addition, by reading the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum*, students can set their intention to learn.

Al-Ghazali provides a concept of ulama' contained in the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum*, which is the concept of the difference between the scholars of the world and the scholars of the hereafter, the role of scholars and the government in terms of education, as well as information about how a scholar in terms of taking wages from teaching and spreading knowledge, whether it is allowed or not. Of course, the information in the book of *Fatihah al-Ulum* is an extensive explanation of it. At the same time, the details of debating Al-Ghazali are also pervasive in their discussion, which is certainly useful for students and scholars to apply in Islamic education.

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