



An Analysis Of Ethical Education In Imam Al-Ghazali's Bidayatul Hidayah

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Abstract

Education is a conscious and planned effort to create an environment and active learning processes aimed at developing individual potential, encompassing spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, and the skills needed by individuals, society, religion, the nation, and the state. In the modern era, many individuals focus solely on intellectual development, often neglecting the essential moral and ethical education that shapes societal attitudes towards education. This study examines the ethical education presented in the Bidayatul Hidayah, a classical Islamic text by Imam Al-Ghazali, which is expected to significantly support the 2013 Curriculum in fostering a generation with the desired Islamic educational characteristics. The research problem centers on identifying the forms of ethical education for teachers and students as outlined in Bidayatul Hidayah by Hujjatul Islam Imam Al-Ghazali. The aim of this research is to explore and understand the various aspects of moral education contained in this text. The study employs a library research methodology, collecting both primary and secondary data through document analysis. Data analysis is conducted using content analysis to ensure the validity of the findings through rigorous examination. The analysis reveals that Bidayatul Hidayah addresses a wide range of moral issues, including daily conduct, social ethics, teacher-student interactions, and the expected decorum of students when interacting with teachers.

Keywords: Ethical Education, Manners Education, Bidayatul Hidayah



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INTRODUCTION

The pursuit of knowledge is considered a noble form of worship in Islam, as it enables individuals to discern between right and wrong, and serves as a means to achieve well-being both in this world and the hereafter. Thus, seeking knowledge is regarded as an obligatory duty for every Muslim. Many individuals embark on the quest for knowledge driven by their faith in Allah SWT, as the process requires both physical and intellectual effort. The Prophet Muhammad SAW stated that those who strive in the pursuit of knowledge will receive assistance from Allah SWT, as He



delights in helping those who earnestly fulfill their religious duties (Juwariyah, 2010).

However, in the process of acquiring knowledge, one must first observe proper etiquette or adab. Adab is a crucial component of noble character, guiding individuals to become better people and helping them to behave appropriately in various situations and contexts (Mufron, 2013). In all circumstances, it is essential to observe adab, whether towards parents, teachers, peers, or society at large. This is especially true for students who are still in the process of seeking knowledge; they are obligated to uphold adab at all times.

Adab is also essential for the acquisition of knowledge. Knowledge gained without proper adab fails to bring blessings and benefits, whether in secular or religious fields (Gurusiana, 2023). It is crucial for students to maintain adab towards their teachers, as doing so pleases the teachers and leads them to pray for the student's success and the blessing of knowledge. Unfortunately, in modern times, adab has become increasingly neglected. It is often seen as unimportant, leading to a gradual decline in the quality of adab, especially in the context of seeking knowledge.

In the classical Islamic text *Ta'limul Muta'alim*, authored by Al-'Alim Al-Alamah Syaikh Zarnuji Al-Malibary, which is widely studied in traditional Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*), adab is highlighted as a critical aspect of education. It is even regarded as a key determinant of a student's success and the blessing they receive in their pursuit of knowledge, particularly in religious studies (Zarnuji, 1444). Furthermore, Syaikh Syatha Dimyathi Al-Bakri, in his work *Kifayah al-Atqiya wa Minhaj al-Ashfiya*, emphasizes:

"We are in greater need of a little adab than a lot of knowledge."

This statement underscores the importance of adab in education. A person with good adab is often more respected, even if their knowledge is limited, whereas someone lacking adab may not be valued, regardless of their extensive knowledge. There is a well-known saying that "Manners (adab) surpass knowledge," highlighting the necessity of integrating adab into one's character, as every aspect of life, even the smallest, has its own rules (Dimyathi, 2023).

These reflections form the basis for the author's decision to study the topic "An Analysis of Ethical Education in Imam Al-Ghazali's *Bidayatul Hidayah*." This research was motivated by the author's observations of several students who have completed their studies in both formal and non-formal educational institutions. Upon comparing the outcomes among these students, the author noticed significant differences in how they applied their knowledge in daily life. Some students effectively implement their knowledge, becoming beneficial members of society,



while others struggle to do so, appearing as though they have not gained any knowledge at all. This observation led the author to investigate the reasons behind these differing outcomes.

From these observations, the author concludes that the teaching of adab to students, who represent the future generation, is of utmost importance, particularly in the context of seeking knowledge. This research aims to explore, analyze, and delve deeper into the teachings of Bidayatul Hidayah as a reference for ethical education. Thus, the author has chosen to address this issue in a thesis titled "An Analysis of Ethical Education in Imam Al-Ghazali's Bidayatul Hidayah."

METHOD

The researcher employed a content analysis methodology in this study. Content analysis is a critical phase in the research process, where collected data is systematically analyzed to address the research questions. Through content analysis, the findings can produce outputs or recommendations that contribute to solving the identified research problem (Rakamin, 2023). The data for this study was primarily sourced from various literature, including books and classical texts (*kitab*)—a method commonly referred to as library research. This approach involves collecting and reviewing relevant data from secondary sources that are pertinent to the research topic (Penelitian Ilmiah, 2023).

Data Sources

Primary Sources: Primary sources refer to materials directly related to the main subject of the research. In this study, the primary source is the *Bidayatul Hidayah* by Imam al-Ghazali, which is regarded as a seminal text in Islamic ethics. Additionally, the researcher also utilized *Nashoihul Ibad* by Imam Nawawi Al-Bantani as a comparative study, along with other relevant classical texts that align with the research focus.

Secondary Sources: Secondary sources are supplementary materials that provide additional context or support for the primary data. In this study, secondary sources include the Quran, which is the foundational text for all knowledge in Islam, providing guidance on both religious and secular matters. The Quran encourages the development of balanced intellectual and spiritual capacities, as it functions as a comprehensive guide for human life (*manhaj al-hayah*), offering direction for achieving success and happiness in this life and the hereafter (Kemenag, 2023). Another key secondary source is the Hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), which complement the Quran and serve as a foundation for Islamic knowledge and civilization. Hadiths provide insights into deeper understandings of life and the universe, beyond mere superficial interpretations. Additionally, the researcher



consulted other secondary sources such as books, articles, journals, and relevant literature to gather comprehensive and in-depth information for the study.

Data Collection Techniques

The researcher employed a library research method to collect information from primary sources, including *Bidayatul Hidayah* by Imam al-Ghazali and *Nashoihul Ibad* by Imam Nawawi Al-Bantani, as well as secondary sources relevant to the study of *adab* (etiquette). Library research involves the systematic collection of data from literature that contains information pertinent to the research topic.

Data Analysis Techniques

Analysis is the process of examining and breaking down an object of study to understand and explore it in detail. It involves observing the composition of the object and reassembling its components to conduct a thorough examination. The term "analysis" originates from the Ancient Greek word "ἀνάλυσις" (*analysis*), meaning "breaking down" or "dissolution," which is derived from "ana-" (up) and "lysis" (loosening) (Harper, 2023).

In this thesis, the researcher utilized library research to gather data from relevant literature sources. Additionally, the researcher employed content analysis as a technique to analyze the content of classical texts, particularly those central to the research. This method allows for an in-depth examination of the content and components of the classical texts under study. The researcher focused on analyzing the ethical education and forms of *adab* presented in *Bidayatul Hidayah*, with the aim of providing insights that could benefit the broader field of education.

Data Validation

To ensure the validity of the data used in this study, the researcher employed rigorous observation techniques. The researcher meticulously focused on the context of the study to identify characteristics and elements pertinent to the research problem. This involved a detailed examination of *Bidayatul Hidayah* to collect data that aligned with the predefined research categories, thereby ensuring the data's validity.

Furthermore, the researcher adhered to specific guidelines for studying the *adab* of students towards teachers as described in *Bidayatul Hidayah* and other relevant sources to achieve optimal results. The validation process involved the following steps:

The researcher utilized their knowledge, understanding, analytical skills, and sensitivity to critically, carefully, and thoroughly review the sources. This involved repeated readings to deeply comprehend and critically engage with the content of the sources. The researcher also conducted a thorough evaluation of every detail



and piece of information contained in the sources to ensure accurate and in-depth understanding.

By equipping themselves with comprehensive knowledge, insight, and sensitivity, the researcher undertook a continuous and iterative process of marking, annotating, and coding the collected data. This methodical approach facilitated the identification and validation of data in alignment with the research objectives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the data presented in Chapter IV, the researcher analyzed the moral education values embedded within the *Bidayatul Hidayah* by Imam al-Ghazali, focusing on both the ethics of teachers and students. The moral education values discussed align with the standards set by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud), which form the basis for moral education in Indonesia. These values include:

Religious Values

Religiosity involves an attitude of devotion to one's faith, coupled with tolerance toward other religions (Nuriana, 2018). In *Bidayatul Hidayah*, this value is illustrated as follows:

وإن كانت نيّتك و قصدك بينك و بين هلاّ تعالى من طلب العلم الهداية دون مجرد الرواية فابشر ، فإن المألّكة تبسط " لك أجنحتها إذا مشيت ، و حيتان البحر تستغفر لك إذا سعت

"If your intention and purpose, between you and Allah, in seeking knowledge is to gain guidance rather than merely for storytelling, then rejoice, for the angels spread their wings for you as you walk, and the fish in the sea seek forgiveness for you as you strive." (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 1). The researcher concludes that religiosity, as represented by the intention to seek knowledge sincerely for the sake of Allah, cultivates a strong sense of devotion and leads to a greater capacity for tolerance toward other religions.

Honesty

Honesty is a behavior rooted in the effort to make oneself trustworthy in words, actions, and work (Nuriana, 2018). In *Bidayatul Hidayah*, it is stated:

"و ترك اللفّة من قول ال أدري"

"A teacher should not be ashamed to admit when they do not know something." (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 65). Honesty involves acting truthfully and transparently, driven by faith, which in turn strengthens trust between individuals.



Tolerance

Tolerance refers to the attitude or action of respecting differences in religion, ethnicity, opinions, and actions (Nuriana, 2018). In *Bidayatul Hidayah*, it is highlighted:

"وال يثير عليه بخالف رأيه فيرى أنه أعلم بالصواب من أستاذة"

"A student should not show disagreement with their teacher or imply that their own opinion is more correct than the teacher's." (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 56). Tolerance is the respect for differences in religion, ethnicity, opinion, and behavior, provided these differences uphold positive values.

Discipline

Discipline is the behavior that demonstrates orderliness and adherence to rules and norms (Nuriana, 2018). *Bidayatul Hidayah* mentions:

"و ال يسأل جلسه في مجلسه و ال يلتفت إلى الجوانب بل يجلس مطرقا عينه ساكنا متأديا كأنه في الصلاة"

"A student should not whisper to their neighbor or look around when the teacher is nearby; instead, they should sit quietly and respectfully as if in prayer." (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 66). Discipline is reflected in adherence to rules and the ability to position oneself appropriately in various situations to accomplish tasks effectively.

Creativity

Creativity involves the ability to find alternative solutions to problems from different perspectives, aiming to develop procedures or understand issues from new viewpoints (Nuriana, 2018). *Bidayatul Hidayah* states:

"وإصلاح البليد يحسن الإرشاد"

"A teacher must be creative in guiding and reforming a dull student through the most effective means." (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 65). Creativity involves mature and diverse thinking, using multiple perspectives to generate numerous ideas and solutions.

Independence

Independence is characterized by the ability to complete tasks without relying on others (Nuriana, 2018).

Democracy

Democracy is the attitude of thinking, behaving, and acting that values equal rights and responsibilities among individuals (Nuriana, 2018). In *Bidayatul Hidayah*, it is expressed:



"و قبول الحجة و النقياد للحق بالرجوع إليه عند الهفوة"

"A teacher should also accept corrections from their students and be willing to return to the truth when they make a mistake." (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 65). Democracy is an attitude of equality and mutual respect among individuals, recognizing and valuing the perspectives and rights of others.

DISCUSSION

The researcher undertakes a detailed analysis of the moral education values found in *Bidayatul Hidayah* by Imam al-Ghazali, particularly focusing on the ethics that govern both teachers and students. These moral values align with the educational standards set by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud), which provide the foundation for moral education in Indonesia. The study reveals a comprehensive exploration of the core values that should guide educators and learners in the pursuit of knowledge and personal development.

The first value discussed is religiosity, which is described as an individual's commitment to their faith, coupled with a profound sense of tolerance toward other religions. *Bidayatul Hidayah* emphasizes the importance of having a sincere intention to seek knowledge for the sake of Allah, rather than for mere academic or personal gain. The text states: "If your intention and purpose, between you and Allah, in seeking knowledge is to gain guidance rather than merely for storytelling, then rejoice, for the angels spread their wings for you as you walk, and the fish in the sea seek forgiveness for you as you strive" (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 1). This passage reflects that a genuine commitment to religious values, specifically the intention behind acquiring knowledge, fosters not only personal devotion but also a more tolerant attitude toward other beliefs. The act of seeking knowledge with sincerity is viewed as an act of worship, further strengthening the connection between religious devotion and tolerance toward others.

The second value explored is honesty, which is an essential component of moral behavior, involving transparency and truthfulness in speech, actions, and work. According to *Bidayatul Hidayah*, a teacher must exemplify honesty by being willing to admit when they do not possess knowledge on a particular subject. The text advises: "A teacher should not be ashamed to admit when they do not know something" (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 65). This directive emphasizes the importance of intellectual humility and honesty, where both teachers and students should feel encouraged to acknowledge their limitations. Such honesty builds trust, promotes mutual respect, and establishes a learning environment based on transparency and integrity.

The third value discussed is tolerance, which is defined as the ability to respect and accept differences in religion, ethnicity, opinions, and actions. Tolerance plays a critical role in the relationship between teachers and students, as well as in the broader social



context. In *Bidayatul Hidayah*, it is stated: "A student should not show disagreement with their teacher or imply that their own opinion is more correct than the teacher's" (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 56). This statement underscores the importance of respecting authority and acknowledging the perspectives of others, even when there are differences in opinion. Tolerance, in this sense, is not passive but an active effort to respect others' views while fostering a collaborative and harmonious learning environment.

The fourth value is discipline, which refers to the practice of adhering to rules and norms that maintain order and structure. Discipline is essential for creating a productive and focused learning environment. In *Bidayatul Hidayah*, it is mentioned that "A student should not whisper to their neighbor or look around when the teacher is nearby; instead, they should sit quietly and respectfully as if in prayer" (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 66). This directive reflects the importance of attentiveness, respect, and self-control within the classroom. Discipline is not merely about obedience; it is about creating an environment conducive to learning, where both teachers and students can engage in a focused and orderly manner.

The fifth value is creativity, which is defined as the ability to approach problems from various perspectives, generating innovative solutions and alternative ways of thinking. In *Bidayatul Hidayah*, the importance of creativity is emphasized in the context of teaching. The text states: "A teacher must be creative in guiding and reforming a dull student through the most effective means" (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 65). This reflects the role of teachers not just as transmitters of knowledge, but as facilitators of learning who must adapt their methods to the individual needs of their students. Creativity, in this context, is seen as a critical skill that enhances both teaching and learning, as it enables the exploration of multiple solutions to a given problem and fosters a deeper understanding of the material.

Independence, the sixth value, is characterized by the ability to carry out tasks without relying on others. Independence is a key trait for both students and teachers, as it encourages self-reliance, critical thinking, and personal responsibility. The value of independence emphasizes the importance of learners taking initiative and becoming proactive in their own educational journeys. It also encourages teachers to foster autonomy in students, empowering them to think critically and solve problems on their own.

Finally, the seventh value explored is democracy, which is an attitude of equality, mutual respect, and shared responsibility. In *Bidayatul Hidayah*, democracy is demonstrated through the reciprocal relationship between teachers and students. The text advises: "A teacher should also accept corrections from their students and be willing to return to the truth when they make a mistake" (al-Ghazali, *Bidayatul Hidayah*, p. 65). This illustrates the democratic nature of education, where both parties engage in a two-way process of learning and growth. Teachers are not infallible; they are also learners



who must remain open to feedback and willing to acknowledge when they have made an error. This mutual respect promotes a healthy and dynamic learning environment based on equality.

In conclusion, the moral education values outlined in *Bidayatul Hidayah*—religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, creativity, independence, and democracy—are highly relevant to the educational framework in Indonesia. These values not only align with the ethical standards set by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture but also provide a comprehensive guide for fostering moral and intellectual growth among both teachers and students. *Bidayatul Hidayah*, therefore, serves as both a religious and educational text, offering valuable insights for the development of character and moral conduct in an educational context.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the analysis of moral education values in *Bidayatul Hidayah* by Imam al-Ghazali highlights several core principles that align with the standards set by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (Kemendikbud). These values—religiosity, honesty, tolerance, discipline, creativity, independence, and democracy—serve as essential guidelines for both teachers and students in fostering a constructive learning environment. *Bidayatul Hidayah* emphasizes the importance of sincere intention in seeking knowledge, cultivating personal devotion, and promoting tolerance toward others. It encourages honesty and transparency, the respect for diverse perspectives, adherence to discipline, and the creative approach to teaching and learning. Furthermore, it underscores the significance of independence and mutual respect in educational settings, advocating for equality and shared responsibility between teachers and students. Overall, these values offer a comprehensive framework for moral education that not only contributes to individual character development but also enhances the broader educational experience.

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